UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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The Imperfect Form:

Literary Fragments and Politics in the Early Republic

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in English

by

Daniel Couch

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Professor Christopher J. Looby, Chair

"The Imperfect Form: Literary Fragments and Politics in the Early Republic" examines a style of writing that grew in popularity in America from the 1770s through the middle of the nineteenth century—the fragment. In the burgeoning literary culture of the early American republic, authors commonly titled essays, poems, articles, and portions of novels "fragments" to create an unfinished aesthetic. Early republican reading audiences regularly encountered literary fragments in the corners of periodicals, in newspaper columns, in the pages of novels, and scattered throughout verse collections.

By and large, literary fragments exemplify two trends: the political, in the late eighteenth century, and the aesthetic, in the early nineteenth century. In the first half of my project, I examine how writers in the late eighteenth century consistently associated fragments with

marginalized individuals. Material texts like a fragment of a letter, the shred of a diary page, or an illegible pamphlet provided resonant symbols for the fractured subjectivities of veterans, prostitutes, slaves, free blacks, the disabled, and other outcasts. The fragment form presents a way of accessing identities that are otherwise relatively unavailable, and authors like Samuel Jackson Pratt, Mathew Carey, Susannah Rowson, and Hannah Webster Foster used fragmentary texts to reconstruct the political agency of marginal individuals in new, vitally significant ways.

However, during the turn of the century writers began to move away from the intensely political emphasis and toward a more aesthetic fragment (though this movement transpired unevenly). The second half of my project focuses on writers like Charles Brockden Brown, Washington Irving, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, who all explored the formal features of the fragment. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the first usage of "fragment" as a verb occurs in a line from John Keats's poem *Endymion* in 1818. Influenced by British and German Romantics, early nineteenth-century American authors begin to think of the fragment more as a verb—something in motion or in process. Attending to the literary history of the fragment thus provides insight into the complex connections among politics, material form, and aesthetic tradition in the early years of American literary culture.

The dissertation of Daniel Couch is approved.

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2016

For my parents, Donald and Marilú, and my brother, Edward.

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"An Extravagant Economy: Literary Prizes and Alcott's Sensational Fiction." Urban Mysteries: Crime Fiction from Eugène Sue's Mysteries of Paris to the American Noir, Santa Barbara, CA. February 2014.

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"The Sensuality of Political Change in Leonora Sansay's *Secret History*." Northeast Modern Language Association (NeMLA), Boston, MA. March 2013.

"The Illusions of the Transnational: The Place of Perspective in 'The Piazza.' " International Herman Melville Society Conference. Rome, Italy. June 2011.

Introduction

Yorick's Love of Fragments

In Laurence Sterne's unfinished novel, *A Sentimental Journey* (1768), the narrator, Yorick, revels in tangential stories and takes his readers through a complex series of physical and narrative paths. As Yorick travels from England to France and then through the French countryside, he details the smallest events of his journey—among a variety of occurrences, he exchanges snuff-boxes with a monk, buys a chaise, hires a servant, acquires a passport to travel in France, encounters a character from *Tristram Shandy* named Maria, and spends a night in an inn (in bed with a traveling Lady). Yorick not only describes all the minor and major moments in his account of his travels, he also takes a great deal of pleasure in the process of storytelling. The mélange of topics that he presents to his reading audience follow an intentionally disjointed course, and Sterne interweaves Yorick's narrative with halts, breaks, hiccups, redirections, reversals, lapses, and other playful disruptions. Through the style of Yorick's writing, Sterne reveals his epistemological commitment to partial explanations since the plot follows a meandering, inexplicable development.

Sterne's proclivity for incompletion and unfinished tales finds one of its clearest definitions in what Yorick calls "fragments." Over the course of his travels through Europe, Yorick offers his readers two brief, incomplete tales that he calls "fragments," pieces that serve as extensions of the main plot and which reveal the seams in the narrative. The pieces at once further Yorick's narrative and also present a point of fracture within the novel—following this contradiction, the fragments are related to the central course of events, but are not essential to the progress of Yorick's journey or to the telling of his story. Situated between the center of the text

and its verge, the fragments that Yorick presents exist in an in-between state, at once conjoined to the novel, yet also separate from it.

The first of these pieces, simply titled "A Fragment," interrupts the development of events in the novel and serves to exemplify Yorick's optimistic declaration (made earlier in the novel) that people should always be falling in love. Yorick makes this statement in support of his servant, a French man named La Fleur, who constantly falls in and out of love with chambermaids, servant girls, ladies in waiting, and almost any woman who crosses his amorous path. The fragment presents the story of Abdera, a town that was "the vilest and most profligate town in all Thrace. What for poisons, conspiracies and assassinations—libels, pasquinades and tumults, there was no going there by day—'twas worse by night" (29). A distinct shift occurs in the life of the village after a performance of *Andromeda*, a tragedy written by Euripides. *Andromeda* causes the town to get drawn up in raptures of virtuous poetic love, and all of the people miraculously cease their immoral, wicked behavior. The day after the performance all of the men begin speaking in iambics and amazingly refuse to purchase the poison and weapons so crucial to the local economy. Love settles over the entire town. Because of this change in Abdera, the fragment functions like an interpolated tale or an anecdote by presenting an exemplum that demonstrates Yorick's claim about the improving effects of romance. Insofar as it achieves this particular end, the piece hardly functions like a fragment at all, but in fact serves to deepen and extend the events of the plot.

And by referring to *Andromeda* in Yorick's fragment of a story, Sterne also builds on the play's own history, since it only survived into the eighteenth century (and indeed into the present day) in an incomplete form. *Andromeda* existed and exists in glimpses, mostly through references to the tragedy in other texts like Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Frogs*, an

anecdote by Diogenes Laertius, and a story in the writings of Lucian.[1] The complete content of the love-inducing play was thus unavailable and inaccessible to Sterne's eighteenth-century readers (and even the few references to the play were not readily available). While "A Fragment" depicts a scene of personal transformation and the creation of communal intimacy in Abdera, Sterne's use of the play in his novel activates an alternative possibility. Euripides' fragmentary text can never be fully "completed" or turned into a "whole," and the odd story about Abdera cannot be verified. As a result, the fragment intimates the presence of historical lacunae that persist continuously, even into the present. In addition, Sterne's own unfinished novel (he died before completing *A Sentimental Journey*) turns this miniature set piece into a *mise en abyme* that presents a fragment of a fragment of a fragment.

In the second fragment from *A Sentimental Journey*, Sterne weaves the piece of writing into Yorick's own life by endowing it with a material existence in the form of waste paper. Yorick acquires a fragment of writing—a shred of print that has a past existence, a present one, a (possible) future one, and thus contains a miniature history of transmission. Near the beginning of the novel Yorick hires the ardent La Fleur as his servant, who loyally attends to Yorick and brings him his meals. One morning La Fleur lays a "print of butter upon a currant leaf" (84) when he serves Yorick breakfast; La Fleur then places the leaf on a random piece of waste paper to avoid getting his hands greasy. After Yorick finishes eating, he notices that the piece of paper has some Old French printed on it "in a Gothic letter, and that so faded and gone off by damps and length of time, it cost me infinite trouble to make any thing of it" (85). Curiosity overtakes Yorick when he finds the paper, so he spends the majority of his Sunday leisurely deciphering, reading, and translating the old scrap, and he calls the resulting text, "The Fragment: Paris" (since the action of the story takes place in Paris). The tale abruptly ends at a decisive moment,

right when a mysterious character decides to finally unfold his personal history. After Sterne cuts off the tale, La Fleur conveniently enters the room and Yorick immediately demands of him, "And where is the rest of it, La Fleur?" (88). As it turns out, earlier that day La Fleur had used the rest of the paper to wrap a bouquet of flowers he gave to a "*demoiselle* upon the *boulevards*" (88) as a token of his admiration. Eager to please his employer, La Fleur flies away to find the young lady and request the paper back so that Yorick can finish translating the story and find out what happened to the mysterious character. But when La Fleur finds the "*demoiselle*" he discovers that she took the wrapped flowers and gave them to "one of the Count's footmen—the footman to a young sempstress—and the sempstress to a fiddler, with my fragment at the end of it" (89).

La Fleur's bouquet of flowers gets passed around in a comedic chain from the admirer to the admired, and each subsequent movement takes the conclusion of the story further away from Yorick. The mysterious character's secret *stays* a secret as a result of the impulsive gestures of love that carry the scrap of paper. The fickle lovers and their generous gifting make it progressively less likely that Yorick will ever obtain any narrative resolution for the initial piece. In Sterne's treatment of the scene, he depicts Yorick's excitement at finding the old story and his angry desire to recover the accompanying piece, a plot point that emphasizes the tantalizing but ultimately futile desire to reconstruct lost texts from the past. Both of the fragments in *A Sentimental Journey* aptly reflect the mood of incomplete writing, which stands at once on its own and also seems to call for conclusion. While the ending of "The Fragment: Paris" gets irrevocably lost by the series of inconstant lovers, each successive gifting of the flowers recalls the first fragment and disproves its narrator's claim (who may or may not be Yorick) that love can bring back "the golden age" (29). La Fleur denounces the idyllic view of love presented by

the Abdera fragment after he reconstructs the chain of gifting and angrily exclaims, "How perfidious!" (89). La Fleur's critical response shows how the two fragments in the text contradict and correspond with one another thematically because the passing around of the second fragment modifies the conclusions made in the first piece, giving it an additional element. The diptych that Sterne creates with the two pieces does not, however, function in a perfect narrative unity; after all, the content still differs a great deal and Sterne positions them in two separate places in the novel. Equally significant, Yorick presents the Abdera fragment in a form like an anecdote or a tale told to exemplify a point, while the Paris story enters the novel in a material form that Yorick discovers by accident.

By thematically unifying the two pieces and also identifying them as distinct from one another, Sterne isolates a guiding narratological tension that belongs to what I call the fragment form. As a literary form in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the fragment inherently brings into relief the relation between a part and the whole of a text. The two fragments complete one another in one sense, and in another way the novel provides an even larger context that completes them. But also, by calling these pieces "fragments," Sterne implies that they belong to some other, unavailable text—their new context only completes them in a limited sense. Of course, Sterne's own novel remains unfinished, a portion of a larger whole that can only be imagined by his readers, and which might have contained the rest of the second fragment—Yorick leaves that possibility open when he knowingly remarks that whether or not he finds the conclusion to "The Fragment: Paris" "will be seen hereafter" (89).

The fragments from *A Sentimental Journey* bring up two central lines of investigation that will be further developed in this dissertation. First, why did Sterne use the term "fragment" and what might that word have implied for his Anglo-American readers in the late eighteenth

century and onward? *A Sentimental Journey* demonstrates the flexibility and intricacy of the term "fragment" in the eighteenth century, and indicates a contemporary literacy surrounding the word. In Sterne's novel, the term explicitly refers to two types of writing: a concise piece of text analogous to a short story, an anecdote, a sketch, or a parable, and also (and perhaps more uniquely) a torn piece of paper that can be physically passed around, shared, used to wrap flowers, or pasted on the inside of a book on the end-paper. As Joseph A. Dane observes, "[l]oose sheets or leaves of books are routinely used as pastedowns or binding material, whether originally printer's waste (that is, proofsheets or unused sheets) or binder's waste (leaves from books that have been in circulation)" (156).[2] The former definition veers more towards a category of writing that can be integrated into a novel or published separately, while the latter invokes that category and also activates a material definition that focuses on the physical deterioration of writing over time (fictionally represented, of course). These two ways of using the word "fragment" are not mutually exclusive since an old scrap of paper can also contain a brief story, and vice versa. How might an audience react, then, to a piece of writing called a "fragment"?

A second point taken up in this introduction will be how Sterne's two fragments point toward epistemological quandaries about narrative completion—they do not fit in seamlessly with the rest of Sterne's tale. Fragments are at once situated as independent texts (due to their suggestion of a violent fracture), but also indicate a relation to an original, predecessor text. This in-betweenness of the fragment situates it in something like a ghostly network with its previous existence, as if the original texts haunt the fragment continuously. What is the exact relation between the fragments and their previous existence? And, what relation does the imaginary,

original text bear to Yorick's narrative? The fragments are surely a part of Yorick's account, but just as surely they are texts that resist being fully integrated into his writing.

Rather than work from a strong definition of what a fragment is, or was, I undertake to historicize it throughout my chronology in order to show the different work that fragments have done in American history, the different forms that fragments have taken, and the new insights into literary and cultural history that emerge once synchronic, monolithic definitions of the form are abandoned. The archive of American literary engagements with the fragment form contains numerous surprises that demonstrate a sustained interest in partial narratives.

Transatlantic Beginnings

I began with the example of Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* because fragments play a crucial role in English literary traditions throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Eighteenth-century writers like Sterne, Henry Mackenzie, and Frances Sheridan used fragments in their works, and major Romantic poets like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and John Keats gave the form an even greater prominence in the early nineteenth century by including it in their collections of verse. Perhaps the most famous example of a Romantic fragment poem comes from Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," which he ultimately subtitled "Or, a vision in a dream. A Fragment" in 1834, after he defended the incomplete aesthetic of the work for many years.[3] Other famous Romantic fragments include "Christabel" (left unfinished by Coleridge), Keats's "Hyperion," and Byron's "The Giaour: A Fragment of a Turkish Tale" and his "Fragment of a Novel" (one of the earliest vampire stories in English).

Because so many major British poets wrote fragments, historians of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature have written a great deal on fragments and fragmentation, while almost no comparable studies exist for American literature. The writings of scholars who work in the British Romantic Period—D.F. Rauber, Thomas McFarland, Ballachandra Rajan, Marjorie Levinson, Sandro Jung, Anne Janowitz, Alexander Regier, and Andrew Allport—have created a tight generic association between poetry and the fragment. Despite the almost exclusive attention to verse in studies of British Romanticism, a survey of early American literature reveals that across the Atlantic poetic fragments only comprised a small portion of the total number of published fragments. As a result of the prominence of the fragment form in the work of major canonical authors like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and Lord Byron, critics like Levinson have constructed teleological narratives that build towards the Romantics, neglecting the importance of prose fragment that populated novels, magazines, newspapers, and miscellanies.

Indeed, an almost exclusive focus on Romantic poets has given the study of fragments an unbalanced feeling because scholars always tend to examine the form with an eye toward the Romantic period and toward poetry. While I try not to discount the influence and importance of any of those poets, my account draws on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature insofar as it offers an important historical context for many of the American writers that I discuss. As a result of the energetic transmission of English texts across the Atlantic, colonial Americans and inhabitants of the early U.S. widely read pirated editions, authorized reprints, and English editions. A writer like Sterne, for instance, was extremely popular in colonial America and into the early Republic, and his formal experiments in *A Sentimental Journey* provided aesthetic models that American authors could play with and adapt into their own texts. Thus, by

examining the cultural influences on writers like Sterne and Byron, the effect of their work on the American literary scene becomes more perceptible.

The literary fragments presented by *A Sentimental Journey* and "Kubla Khan" stemmed from three principal kinds of cultural practice: antiquarian recovery, literary hoaxes, and posthumous publication. First, throughout the eighteenth century and the early Romantic period, scholars in England eagerly recovered, translated, and published fragments of writing from the Classical period. Writers like Anacreon, Epictetus, and Sappho found their way into British and American periodicals and newspapers, and commentators provided readers with glimpses of the erudite cultural life of another era. Translators made these works available to a wide audience, and these "found fragments" helped publicize the concept of incomplete writing—readers became more and more familiar with the idea of a written fragment that lingered from past civilizations. The historical recovery of these textual remains also complemented a related interest in the collection of objects like architectural ruins, broken statues, and shattered relics. By gathering fractured writing and material objects from the Classical period, eighteenth-century amateurs, scholars, writers, and antiquarians participated in a widespread cultural attempt to recreate the empires of the past.[4]

In contrast, many eighteenth-century Americans incorrectly believed that their newer continent lacked evidence of past civilizations that was so apparent in the ruined castles and archeological finds of England. The misconception about the continent did not stop writers from thinking about contemporary antiquarianism—Caroline Gelmi has recently argued that Sappho's fragments held an important place in American periodical writing, and provided a canvas on which "early national verse culture Americanized the figure of Sappho by using…parodies to ridicule England and criticize the figure of Englishness in American public life" (152). Gelmi

suggests that in the translation and management of the fragment form literary figures like Joseph Dennie and Philip Freneau politicized Sappho's writing by emphasizing that through "mediation and context, made and remade to perform different cultural and political work, the verse trades on and deflates the fantasies of sublimity and poetic mastery" (155) associated with British translation of the Classical poet. To be sure, colonial Americans and early U.S. scholars engaged in collecting, recovery, and assembling, but the practice also received criticism and parody, as in the collaboratively authored *The Anarchiad: A New England Poem* (1786-87) (written by David Humphreys, Joel Barlow, John Trumbull, and Lemuel Hopkins).

The Anarchiad and the examples provided by Gelmi demonstrate a literacy of antiquarianism that infiltrated belles lettres in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. American writers, too, understood the significance of Classical ruins. While the texts just mentioned explicitly advertise their parodic status, this clarity of intent did not always hold true. The recovery of fragments through anthropological, philological, and archeological work opened the door for literary charlatans who capitalized on the growing interest in the historical past (these impostures had the effect of bringing fragments to cultural prominence in a second important way). Throughout eighteenth-century England, authors appropriated antique styles and wrote their own fictional fragment poems that purported to be authentic historical findings. Most notoriously, the Scottish poet and philological imposter James Macpherson manufactured an epic cycle of poetry ostensibly collected from oral tradition and translated from Scottish Gaelic. This literary hoax, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language* (1760), was narrated (and supposedly authored) by a poet named Ossian. The collection of poetry exploited the appetite for fragmented works from

the past and earned Macpherson an infamous, international literary celebrity when they exploded in popularity.

Not surprisingly the Ossian poems also created a great deal of controversy because skeptics (rightly) questioned their claimed authenticity.[5] Macpherson's work models itself on the recovery of ancient Classical fragments, but because he imaginatively manufactures the poetic relics, his work helped open the door for authors (like Sterne) who wrote fictional fragments. Of course, Sterne did not expect his readers to believe that he had found, like Yorick, a scrap of paper containing a story in Old French, but the veneer of authenticity helped Sterne to capitalize on a popular aesthetic, a method used by the majority of authors that appear in this study.

Finally, the popularization of the fragment form took place in a third essential way when the practices of a wide reading audience recursively shaped the work of editors, publishers, and literary executors. Throughout the eighteenth century and the Romantic period unfinished works began to appear in anthologies that contained an author's entire corpus of writing. In *The Romantic Fragment Poem*, Marjorie Levinson argues that as a result of the developing interest in fragments, more and more editors included fragments, posthumous works, and unfinished writings in the collected works of famous authors (these additions became increasingly common as the nineteenth century progressed).[6] These "authorial fragments" included scraps of verse, journal reflections, letters, forgotten works that had never been completed, or (most commonly) texts that the author was working on right before his or her death, as in the case of *A Sentimental Journey* (Levinson, 50-59). By including additional material in complete editions, editors could advertise the comprehensiveness of the volumes and even suggest to readers that the book contained the intangible components of an author's life—the moments before death, after all, seemed to inhabit a state of in-betweenness. Through strategic marketing, posthumous fragments

of writing provided readers with a sense of closeness to the moment of a writer's death, thereby creating an intimacy with the recent process of composition.[7] The agents of the literary market encouraged the perception that the final, incomplete writings of an author portrayed him or her more authentically; this premise allowed editors and publishers to continue releasing new and revised editions even after an author died and stopped producing literature (a trend exemplified even today by the editorial interest in promoting final editions, as in Walt Whitman's so-called "deathbed edition" of his works).

The interest in fragments in eighteenth-century England was thus spurred by authentic translations, contrived falsehoods, and unfinished works. It took shape around a (paradoxical) vision of life and history that attempted to create an organic unity with past lives and eras by filling in gaps in knowledge and translating arcane languages into the vernacular. This project fulfilled an academic venture in line with the progressive tradition of Enlightenment thought. Levinson writes that "as archaeological relics attesting to the universality of fundamental human emotions and experience (much as one might regard some primitive but functionally familiar household item), the classical fragments did not manifest their irresolution as a literary feature" (21). By reconstructing fragments from antiquity and from the careers of deceased authors, scholars could tacitly recognize the superior insight of their own century over the thinkers in previous epochs, who let such cultural treasures go to waste and fall by the wayside. Equally significant, the recovery of Classical artifacts, the publication of the Ossian poems, and the inclusion of posthumous papers in editions represented an ongoing and vexed desire to provide an authentic form of history and writing. As Cornelia Vismann explains (though in a slightly later, nineteenth-century context), "historical fragments are assigned a clear epistemic place as an unintentional source" (201). The lack of intention proves important "because they were not

intended to be sources," a fact that makes them (according to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thinkers) testify more objectively and authentically to the processes of the past (201).

Recovered ancient remains and unfinished works provide a significant context for understanding the object of this study; however, the authors examined in the coming chapters borrowed from these sources to depict another version of the fragment. Rather than consider the interest in "unintentional sources" throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, writers like Sterne mobilized the interest in authenticity to construct an *aesthetic* version of historical fragments. But, to be sure, the fragment form presents a persisting interest in the resonances of the past, and how it reaches forward in the present (and possibly future) through lingering, haunting remains. On the one hand, eighteenth-century scholars approached fragments with a view towards the authentic reconstruction of a lost past, a historical desire that inevitably reached for something that could never be fully regained. On the other hand, as I'll argue, this view of fragments elides the fact that many writers of fiction aestheticized fragments and found them interesting less because of an actual historical past, and more because of the contradictions and possibilities embedded in a remnant.

American Politics and the Fear of Fragments

Eighteenth-century British fragments evoked the moldering remains of history along with a sense of lingering death, topics that translated dangerously into the colonial American and early Republican context. The question of how to treat a remnant, remain, or fragment in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America took on an intensely political meaning for thinkers and writers (a fact that distinguishes my treatment of the fragment from studies of British literature, which largely focus on the formal contours writing). While England plumbed

antiquarian discoveries for a shared communal past, American political writers communicated a widespread fear of ruins because the remains provided evidence of fallen empires and lost nations. Fragmented artifacts and writings represented the possible failure of the new democratic experiment—if the Grecian and Roman republics failed, what would prevent the United States from similarly falling into ruins? This section explores the underlying political anxieties surrounding fragments, an explanation that will help clarify the basis for the politically-inclined aesthetic experimentation of the writers discussed throughout this dissertation (particularly in the first two chapters).

The word "fragment" aptly complements and contests the problems of governmental consolidation that plagued America in the years surrounding the Revolution and the ratification of the Constitution. In the words of Matthew Garrett, "public writing shaped and responded to the structuring dilemmas within the postindependence framework of national formation, each of which was itself conceptualized as a problem of the integration of parts into whole" (16). Public writing primarily considered how "the integration of parts into whole" might be managed on a national scale. In its incipient stages the nation only existed as an "imagined community" (to borrow Benedict Anderson's phrase) in which individuals abstractly conceived of other people outside of their local communities who also constituted the state. For Anderson, this imaginative process took shape in the eighteenth century around a growing print culture of widely circulating newspapers, periodicals, and novels. While the degree of circulation has been highly contested in recent studies of the American eighteenth century (Michael Warner presents a view that borrows from Anderson, a position that Trish Loughran recently argued against by claiming that print circulation did not exist on a national scale until the Civil War era), Anderson's imaginative communities reflect an ideological goal consistent with eighteenth-century writers. According to

Loughran, for instance, a group of texts like *The Federalist Papers* emphasizes the way in which its many parts could be unified into a single, coherent text, just as the many states of the union could compose a nation (even if for Loughran such a textual unification stays imaginary and does not actually occur in the print circulation of *The Federalist Papers*). The decades of the late eighteenth century show the nation poised between a desire for unification and the "problem of the integration of parts into whole."

To emphasize the importance of national unification, political writers highlighted the negative connotations of ruins, remains, antiquities, relics, and fragments, objects that contained a threat to union. Rather than see potential in these material remnants, politically-minded thinkers perceived the failures of the past and the ruination of previously great empires. The difficulty underlying the attempt to hold a large, diverse group of people together made political thinkers constantly worry over the tensions created by separations among the populace—especially since so many individuals were excluded from citizenship in the new nation by law and by practice. Retrospectively the unification of the United States seems inevitable, but in the historical moment there was no guarantee that the unstable nation would survive after the Revolution and would be able to integrate its many parts into a single political body.

Most dramatically, writers used fragments pessimistically to describe the tragic fate of the nation if the states chose not to ratify the Constitution. The recent failure of the Articles of Confederation created additional political volatility in the 1780s, and for proponents of Constitutional ratification fragments represented the failure of nation-states, rather than a proleptic stage in their development. Perhaps most famously, on Wednesday, November 14, 1787, the *Independent Journal* published Federalist No. 6, in which Publius (Alexander Hamilton) warned about the danger of internal fractures in an effort to make the theoretical unity

of the nation into a lived reality: "A man must be far gone in Utopian speculations who can seriously doubt that, if these States should either be wholly disunited, or only united in partial confederacies, the subdivisions into which they might be thrown would have frequent and violent contests with each other" (26). Throughout the installments of *The Federalist Papers* Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay strongly argue that the unification of the nation under the Constitution will help prevent the escalating threat of "subdivisions"—minority, local groups that might disagree over any number of issues and take up arms against one another. These fears stem from a Hobbesian belief that individuals cannot regulate themselves and therefore require an external motivating force (like a strong federal government) that causes them to act in a civilized manner.

In a similar vein, a political image from the August 2, 1788 edition of *The Massachusetts Centinel* depicts the solidity of the federal edifice after New York ratified the constitution, and contrasts the strength of the newly combined states to the threat of disunion elicited by North Carolina and Rhode Island.[8] The artist of the illustration draws the states that have agreed to the constitution as united and solid columns, while North Carolina and Rhode Island both stand apart from the group, falling into ruins and fragmented pieces. In the final pillar, the name of Rhode Island can barely be distinguished in "R. Island"; according to the artist, the resistance of Rhode Island to the ratification of the Constitution means that the state now lacks the most basic form of identification granted to all of the other states. Paradoxically, unity also creates a stable identity for each individual state—the drawing simultaneously depicts the domed connection among the states and their separation from one another. In addition, the poem under the drawing of the pillars of state italicizes the word "*whole*," emphasizing the structure of completion created by the new constitution, and the verse purposefully neglects mentioning North Carolina and

Figure 1. Detail from The Massachusetts Centinel, August 2, 1788

Rhode Island in its panegyric to Columbia. Recently, Nick Yablon observed that "[i]t became almost an oath of patriotism to denounce the veneration of ruins as decadent and aristocratic, and thus anathema to virtuous republicans" (30). The newly founded nation lacked the historical makeup that afforded Europeans the pleasure of examining ruins, so the preference for crumbling antiquities took on a markedly transatlantic, anti-American tenor. Fragments presented a temporality of the faulty past of decay that created anxiety for Enlightenment thinkers who proceeded from utopian visions of national achievement and unification. Interestingly, though, while the denunciation of ruins certainly takes place in the image, an "oath of patriotism" also prevailed in the commitment to take broken relics and *rebuild* them into the fabric of the national whole.

About two months after the publication of "The Federal Edifice" in *The Massachusetts Centinel* (and in sympathy with its staunchly Federalist standpoint), George Washington wrote a letter to Henry Lee (a Lieutenant Colonel who was a delegate to the Congress of the Confederation and became governor of Virginia in 1791) in which Washington expressed great relief regarding the current state of the nation. Like the image printed in the *Centinel*, Washington's letter presents a belief in the Federalist majority and the Constitution, and it contrasts the strength of the new Republic with the failure associated with fragments:

> In our endeavors to establish a new general government, the contest nationally considered, seems not to have been so much for glory, as existence. It was for a long time doubtful whether we were to survive as an independent Republic, or decline from our foederal [sic] dignity into insignificant and wretched Fragments of Empire. The adoption of the Constitution so extensively, and with so liberal an acquiescence on the part of the Minorities in general, promised the former.

For all of these political intellectuals, ruins and fragments held a strong symbolic resonance with failed nation-states, and provided a way to comprehend the constantly abiding tension between unity and disunity. As in the political cartoon and Federalist No. 6, Washington uses the word "Fragments" in an extremely pejorative fashion, diametrically opposing the "independent Republic" he so earnestly desires with "insignificant and wretched Fragments of Empire." The unification generated by the Constitution required the "acquiescence on the part of the Minorities in general," an act of consent that gave power to the federal government over smaller political groups like states and localities. And, like Washington, the thinkers just mentioned felt aggravated by the thought that the national whole did not actually exist, and strongly argued for a politics that helped the country elide difference in order to constitute a

singular national presence. The advocacies for strong national unity consistently appeared in each of these documents, to the point where the corresponding, insistent rejection of fragmentation creates doubt—skeptical readers and writers could see that the disavowal stemmed from the actual, politically threatening existence of fragmentation within the country.

Federalists by and large moved against the desire for separation evinced by certain "Minorities" because they believed that the strength of the federal union would help protect individuals from one another. Drawing on Hobbesian political theory (and also on deeply held Calvinistic understandings of original sin), Federalists argued for the necessity of a large federal government that could ensure the cooperation of all individuals within the nation. And even in the years following the ratification of the Constitution, writers continued to express a great deal of doubt about the ability of the nation to remain unified.[9] In Hugh Henry Brackenridge's magnum opus, *Modern Chivalry*—a novel that imbricates and disimbricates itself on the level of plot and in Brackenridge's discontinuous publication of the work—Captain Farrago cynically remarks that the dis-union of the states is "an event certain, and inevitable; but which, the wise and the good delight to contemplate as remote; and not likely to happen for innumerable ages" (282-3). Farrago's pessimistic take on the tumultuous years following the ratification indicates the sense of hesitancy and uncertainty that trailed the formation of the country (also evident in Washington's letter). The fear that the nation would fall back into a set of fragments persisted through the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.

A few key moments from Charles Brockden Brown's unfinished, serialized tale, *Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist* (1803-05) serve to illustrate in a condensed form the anxieties surrounding the fragmentation of the early United States. The events in *Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist* precede the events in Brown's most well-known novel, *Wieland* (1798)—the

unfinished novel introduces Carwin, whose youthful naivety, trust, and ambition lead him astray. He falls prey to an enigmatic, aristocratic, and ultimately dangerous patron named Ludlow. While Ludlow grooms Carwin, they converse on philosophical topics, and at one point in the text they consider the viability of new political states. In discussion with Ludlow, Carwin describes his interest in political organizations dedicated to creating a utopia in uncivilized and unspoiled lands:

> Resting on the two props of fidelity and zeal, an association might exist for ages in the heart of Europe, whose influence might be felt and might be boundless, in some region of the southern hemisphere; and by whom a moral and political structure might be raised, the growth of pure wisdom, and totally unlike those fragments of Roman and Gothic barbarism, which cover the face of what are called the civilized nations. (256)

Carwin imagines the possibility of a geographical space unhampered by the "fragments of Roman and Gothic barbarism" that tie Europe to the past and prevent it from promoting "the growth of pure wisdom." His desire for a Rousseauian utopia takes his thoughts to the "southern hemisphere," where the lack of "civilized nations" and therefore the lack of a political past will help create a vision of futurity based around "moral and political structure." Shortly after Carwin describes this utopia, Ludlow acquaints him with exactly such a secret "association" and offers Carwin membership under the conditions that Carwin submit to extensive scrutiny and swear complete "fidelity and zeal." In the days following Ludlow's offer, Carwin considers the conditions of entrance into the secret society and at one point during his reflections he wanders into Ludlow's library for some light reading. While there, he looks over some volumes of literature, and finds a book of maps that includes an unfamiliar representation of two islands:

"From the great number of subdivisions, and from signs, which apparently represented towns and cities, I was allowed to infer that the country was at least as extensive as the British isles. The map was apparently unfinished, for it had no names inscribed upon it" (270). In contrast to Carwin's criticism of the "fragments of Roman and Gothic barbarism, which cover the face of what are called the civilized nations," he feels intrigued by the map that he finds, especially because "it had no names inscribed upon it." He surmises that the map of the islands imply that "Ludlow's plans of civilization had been carried into practice in some unvisited corner of the world" (272).

While the "unfinished" nature of the map connects it in some degree with the "fragments of Roman and Gothic barbarism" that Carwin denigrates, the difference in temporal valence creates a key distinction. In Brown's representation of political rhetoric, fragments hold a strong association to the failed civilizations of the past, making them an analeptic form.[10] The unfinished, on the other hand, symbolizes (for Carwin) a proleptic idealism familiar to political theorists interested in the *tabula rasa* of the young American nation. Carwin makes a crucial separation between the political meanings underlying "fragments" and the "unfinished"—this distinction, however, did not hold across the board throughout the nation. Writers in the early Republic (including Brown himself) reinvented the fragment form and revitalized its political and aesthetic viability.

Style and a Sense of Aesthetic Possibility

The political criticisms surrounding fragments emphasized an atmosphere of unity and homogenization that superseded any local or personal differences within the nation. Responding to these attitudes, many authors in eighteenth-century Anglo-America moved away from the

broad, blurry focus on national unity and instead emphasized the way in which particular individuals lived their lives "fragmented" from the larger body politic. Authors applied the fragment form to ostracized figures on the margins of society who did not fit neatly into other literary forms. The fragment thus offered a means of reconceptualizing marginal identities in the early American republic by endowing dispossessed individuals with an unexpected agency. In the texts examined in the first two chapters of this dissertation, authors literalize and make human what Balachandra Rajan calls "the fragment's colonial status...its right to existence without incorporation" (309). The "existence without incorporation" described by Rajan precisely isolates the ways in which fragments and marginal figures are simultaneously separate, and also part of a larger text or social body.

Rather than using the fragment form to represent Classical antiquities, gothic ruins, or the problems of empire, in the hands of writers like Samuel Jackson Pratt, Mathew Carey, Susanna Rowson, Hannah Webster Foster, and Charles Brockden Brown, the fragment form became an intensely political aesthetic. These authors carefully considered how applying the fragment form to individuals functioned to create a new ontological status of identity outside of the conventional male liberal subject advocated by particular versions of eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought. By engaging with the aesthetic possibilities of the fragment, these authors created the potential for new forms of affiliation and individuality based in partial, past, ruined, and fractured lives. Writers in the late eighteenth century aligned the fragment form with representations of veterans, women, slaves, freed blacks, American Indians, and prostitutes, attaching the form analogically to a variety of different peripheral identities. The fragment form served as a catch-all device and provided authors with a means to represent individuals on the outskirts of society. Contemplating the place of these figures took on a large significance during

the attempt at colonial unification exhibited in the Revolutionary years, and in the years surrounding the ratification of the constitution in 1787, when delegates voted to aggregate a diverse, dissimilar populace into a united whole. Many individuals who existed on the borders of legal representation lived fragmented lives outside of the body politic, but literary authors found ways of making that partiality resonant with presence and agency.[11]

In contrast to the resistant imperatives of the fragment form, a variety of literary genres in the late eighteenth century sought to reconcile individuals within the broader canvas of the nation. Adding to the project of national consolidation, many writers rallied to forms of literature like the epic, the prospect poem, and the verse satire, all of which played a major role in the consolidation of nationalism and literature in the early Republic. To take an example, the maximalist scope involved in the composition of epics fit well with the ideal prospects of the young nation. Recently, Christopher Phillips recovered the significant place of epic poetry in the first few decades of the country's existence, arguing that "epic's (more or less) recognizable form and ideology would make the monumental task of civic reeducation more feasible, while the form's prestige would attract the greatest minds to step forward as the nation's literary Founders, as the prestige of chartering a new nation had seemed to produce heroes organically out of the colonies" (11). While Phillips admits that the epic never actually lives up to the impossible standard of "civic reeducation," the genre did "offer a literary solution to the formal problem of extending a federal republic across a vast geography" (11). Phillips goes on to examine what he calls "an accumulative series of associations" and "a planned network of fragments" (61) within poetry of the early Republic (especially that of Sarah Wentworth Morton), but spends less time with the particular tensions created by the fragmentary qualities of the poetry. Rather than capitulating to "chartering a new nation," the minimalism of the fragment

form and the way it condenses large social problems made it an effective vehicle for considering the place of *individuals* within the "vast geography" that Phillips describes. Unlike prospect poems or epics, fragments presented individuals who existed offset from the most prevalent codifications of nationality.

Fragments fit much more closely with the account that Matthew Garrett provides of the "episode" in the early American Republic, a piece of literature that is "an *integral* but also *extractable* unit of any narrative" (3). Like the episode, the fragment form stages a tension between the "*integral* but also *extractable*" nature of a prose piece; fragments present a dynamic movement between an entire narrative and something leftover, broken off from its original context yet still haunted by a former structure. As Garrett describes, "[c]onsolidation is enacted through the prior effect of *dispersion*: consolidation is only meaningful, only persuasive, when it unites elements whose complexity would otherwise threaten to overwhelm or subvert the centralizers themselves" (26). The dispersive nature of the fragment form and the way it "continually teases toward *multiple* possible endings" turns it simultaneously into an aesthetic arrangement of mourning (an elegy for what was lost) and hope (containing potential beginnings) (81).[12] A more heightened version of the episode, the fragment creates an even stronger oscillation between "dispersion" and "consolidation" because of the violence involved in splitting a text—all of the prose pieces examined in this study point toward a rupture that breaks off a piece of text and leaves it with ragged, unkempt, torn edges.

More so than the "episode," the fragment embodies the complex political dynamics of colonial America and postcolonial United States, which existed within a tenuous atmosphere of uncertainty. Situated between an unknown future and a lost, violent past, the political tone of the fragment strikes a rough balance between what R.W.B. Lewis, following Emerson, describes as

"the party of Hope and the party of Memory" (7). Like so many of the authors examined in Lewis's study, *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*, the writers of fragments try to redeem individuals, but also recognized the deep sense of tragedy embedded within those identities. In this way, the writers of fragments capture a position between these poles that at once recognizes the persistence of the past and tries to imagine new forms of identity and community that circumvent national codifications. And through the lapses, absences, and ragged edges, fragments take part in Richard Poirier's description of how "figures in American literature… [can] 'swell' into shapes or defy the realities of space and time," articulating alternate universes of identity through distorted aesthetic forms (6). Poirier enthusiastically argues that the "extravagances of language are an exultation in the exercise of consciousness momentarily set free" (7), a statement that captures the sense of "extravagance" within the aesthetic play of the fragment. The moments of missing or absent language within fragments inherently create a space of "consciousness momentarily set free" that exists outside the confines of representation. Lewis and Poirier offer compelling understandings of American literature based on the imaginative openness and possibility created by literature, a view that finds a heightened existence in the fragment form's relationship among concrete part, fictional whole, and the "*multiple* possible endings" contained therein.

While Poirier's emphasis on a "consciousness momentarily set free" primarily focuses on the writer's consciousness, the following pages examine how the artistic freedom extends to marginalized figures represented in fragments. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American authors situated the place of style in brief glimpses of alternate, partial identities depicted in fragments.

Fragmentary Evolutions

This project examines two broad ways in which fragments represent "extravagances of language" that create "a consciousness momentarily set free." The first two chapters focus on the political resonances of the fragment form by examining the relationship between two bodies—material texts and marginalized figures. In the last few decades of the eighteenth century, the word fragment found it primary cultural usage as a noun, and writers used it almost exclusively to connect the two physical bodies. The second two chapters track a movement in the early decades of the nineteenth century in which the cultural definitions of the fragment turn away from political states of identity and physicality and toward a stylistic understanding in prose and verse. Rather than consider the fragment purely as an object, the latter two chapters consider it as a process—a change demonstrated by the first usage of fragment as a verb in the early nineteenth century. Despite the organization of the study into these two historical tendencies, they do overlap unevenly. The politics of the fragment never quite disappears in the nineteenth century, and the fragment's aesthetic openness can be found in the earliest examples of the form in the eighteenth century.

The late eighteenth century publication of fragments capitalized heavily on the interest in the recovery of antiquarian artifacts and remnants from past civilizations (as previously described). These historical practices set the basis for establishing the fragment as a physical, object-form that contained within it a particular kind of "deficiency." Because of its broken status the fragment lacked complete existence as a material object and only existed as a severed part. While American political thinkers reacted harshly to the ruination represented by fragmented and recovered objects, the writers examined in the first half of this project turn the fragment into a proleptic form of hopefulness by analyzing the way in which it might yield a

transformative potential. For them, the deficiency of textual fragments offered a compelling comparison to bodies that were perceived as "defective" by eighteenth-century bodily norms. A deep physical connection exists between fragments—a word that designates the torn letters, missing pages, and illegible writing endemic to broken circuits of communication—and marginal bodies in the eighteenth century. Eighteenth-century writers and thinkers believed that defaced pieces of writing and social outcasts both contained within them a "defect" or "deficiency" that placed their physical existence in contrast to complete texts and normative bodies.

On the one hand, printers, editors, publishers and writers referred to manuscript blemishes, tears, and missing pages using a discourse of bodily deficiency. The lexicon surrounding the physical page and the published book borrowed from the vocabulary of the human body because printing a sheet involved a wide range of manual acts. Print existed in tight coordination with the body in the eighteenth century, so imperfections in manuscripts and printed sheets read as "defects" and "deficiencies" to observers.[13] In conjunction with the interest in disfigured texts, eighteenth-century Anglo-American culture constructed a sense of physical normality by differentiating and classifying the exceptional bodies of women, racially marked individuals, and what Felicity Nussbaum calls the "anomalous." In the words of Nussbaum, these "monstrous" individuals were broadly "[c]haracterized by asymmetrical or misshapen" bodily qualities and stood out in contrast to the healthy, functioning, male European body (27). Throughout the eighteenth century (and into the nineteenth) the normative body was constructed through a combined discourse of medicine, politics, and aesthetics that emphasized the negativity of the deficiencies explored by Nussbaum. Rosemarie Garland Thomson describes how this hierarchization took place in American culture as well:

> [M]ale, white, or able-bodied superiority appears natural, undisputed, and unremarked, seemingly eclipsed by female, black, or disabled difference…without the monstrous body to demarcate the borders of the generic, without the female body to distinguish the shape of the male, and without the pathological to give form to the normal, the taxonomies of bodily value that underlie political, social, and economic arrangements would collapse. (20)

The analogy between person and text consistently fashioned by authors in the early republic thus becomes a politically charged one: The torn page or defaced writing resonates with the veteran missing a limb, the woman without masculine genitalia, or the black slave who lacks the appropriate skin color. In the first two chapters of this project, fragments present a dual concept of "defect" that links exceptional bodies to a partially destroyed material text. By resisting the subjugation associated with "defects" and "deformities," the authors analyzed in the first two chapters of this study—Samuel Jackson Pratt, Mathew Carey, Susanna Rowson, and Hannah Webster Foster—create an alternative discourse of identity that considers lack a prospect, instead of a liability. Rather than use fragments to enable the construction of normative identities, these authors give voice to material "defects" and use the form as a source of imaginative individuality.

At the end of the eighteenth century, however, a change occurs in the status of the fragment that shifts its tight relationship to the material text and the physical body. The first two chapters closely track the way that authors deploy a *fragment* as a noun that connects a defaced text with a "monstrous" individual. But the loose, general sense of materiality surrounding fragments (originally stemming from the antiquarian interest in shattered remains) intensifies, transforms, and becomes increasingly specific at the end of the eighteenth century. In its place

arise the protocols and technicalities of disciplinary knowledge. Instead of referring to any broken piece, the fragment becomes a specialized term for archival sciences. The professionalization of archival collecting, the rise of museums, and the increasingly specific archaeologies of knowledge turned material fragments into official objects to be studied and classified. In his examination of national archives, Stefan Berger explains the rise in the scientistic approach:

> It was the professionalizing of historical sciences in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which created the historical infrastructure, i.e. history departments at universities, learned societies, journals, academies, libraries, scholarly book series and, not least, the national archive. The new breed of the professional historian was deeply concerned with erecting firm disciplinary boundaries. Only the professional historian could speak authoritatively about the past. (8)

Like the construction of any technical academic field, the rise of "disciplinary boundaries" in the "historical sciences" demanded the creation of a specific lexicon to serve the needs of an emergent community of professionals. And, along with the rise of the historical sciences, a new methodological approach to materials from the past took hold. Terry Cook clarifies this change when he describes how "[a]ttitudes toward the preservation of artifacts from that past consequently shifted radically as well, from the antiquarian to the professional, from the passive neglect to active collecting. This collecting *mentalité* was also influenced by a growing nineteenth-century empiricism that venerated facts, statistics, and the scientific method" (603). The early nineteenth century also saw the establishment of institutions that supported the new cadre of professional historians and antiquarians. In addition to the infrastructures identified by

Berger, Cook notices how the "new collecting *mentalité* and reverence for a distant past led to the establishment in Western countries of 'public' museums, galleries, libraries, archives—even zoos—as major state institutions to preserve artifacts, specimens, images, books, and records" (604). The institutions that housed these material objects thus participated in the creation of a historical past—one that relied on increasingly specialized knowledge.

To place the rise of archival sciences in more specific terms, Michel Duchein indicates that institutes of archival science rose quickly in the nineteenth century in order to meet the needs of a newly secularized Europe: "The first school to attempt to meet this need was the Scuola del Grade Archivio in Naples, established in 1811. Later came the Archivalische Unterrichts-institut in Munich, in 1821, and today's Ecole des Chartes in Paris, started in 1821 and revived in 1829 after a brief hiatus" (17). A "fragment" thus increasingly became a technical, archival term sometime in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (and it of course continues to be used today in the catalogs of Anglo-American libraries, archives, and collections to denote a partial text, image, or manuscript). And while the historians mentioned above tend to rely on the example of a European intellectual context, a similar shift took place in the United States.

Readers of periodicals in nineteenth-century America encountered the technical definition of the fragment in articles that reported on specific intellectual developments. Along with the rise in European archives and schools in the early nineteenth century, the printer Isaiah Thomas established the American Antiquarian Society in 1812.[14] Less than a decade later, *The National Recorder* reported on the advancements of the AAS after the society published a volume entitled *Archæologia Americana, or Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society* (1820). According to *The National Recorder*'s introduction to a set of

extracts taken from the volume, it "attempt[s] to give something like form and durability to the fragments of the early history of our country, and to preserve a record of the antiquities and monuments of the people of other days, the origin of which is already forgotten, and which are themselves fading away, under the dilapidations of time, assisted by the rapid progress of settlement and cultivation" (237). The writer of the article uses "fragments" in a technical, historical sense that attaches it to "the early history of our country." Similarly, in an article entitled "Plan For Collecting Historical Records" (1827) a writer for the *Literary and Evangelical Magazine* worries that "future historians [will] search in vain among the hints and fragments which have escaped the general oblivion, to discover adequate materials for an accurate delineation of the age" (173). The author of the "Plan" places "fragments" under the professional responsibility of "future historians," indicating its specialized importance for research.

These histories of collecting, cataloging, accessioning, and archiving amplify the institutional conditions of materiality, establishing the fragment as a physical object from the past made available for study through its placement in an archive. Rather than being *any* scrap of paper, fragments become scraps that are preserved for study in a professional setting. Paradoxically, because the material definition of the fragment gets progressively more specific following the rise of historical research, the aesthetic openness presented by the fragment form becomes more available for general use. Because the materiality of the fragment aligns with more technical and specific fields, authors in the early nineteenth century instead focus on the aspect of the fragment that does *not* enter into a narrow lexicon—the stylistic openness. Thus, the increasing methodological specification of the fragment made the word's other, wider meanings more available in literary writing. Whereas eighteenth-century fragments typically

refer to a material object—the shard of pottery from antiquity, the defaced text, and the ruined body—nineteenth-century fragments emphasize stylistic characteristics of textual openness and overlap. Nonetheless, the transition from materiality to stylistics occurs unevenly over the course of several decades, and most nineteenth-century fragments retain a strong underlying connection to physical deformity. The meanings overlap in powerful and provocative ways, but the weight shifts to the aestheticization of the fragment in the nineteenth century, a track that eventually reaches its climax in the irregular formal experimentations of Modernist writers.

The evidence for the shift from material to aesthetic fragments can be found on a philological level as well. After examining the usage of the fragment as a noun, the second half of my project follows the use of the word *fragment* as a verb, a practice that arises in the early nineteenth century. The Oxford English Dictionary marks the first use of fragment as a verb in 1818, with the publication of John Keats' *Endymion: A Poetic Romance* (it was fitting that a Romantic poet experimented not only with the fragment form, but the definition of the word): "Copious wonder-draughts / Each gazer drank; and deeper drank more near: / For what poor mortals fragment up, as mere / As marbles was there lavish, to the vast / Of one fair palace, that far far surpass'd / Even for the common bulk, those olden three, / Memphis, and Babylon, and Nineveh" (III: 849-55). The "Copious wonder-draughts" of the palace provide a lush comparison to the way "poor mortals fragment up" paltry "marbles." Keats' usage of "fragment" proves interesting because he uses "fragment" not just to convey a breakage, but to communicate a piecing together, what "mortals fragment up." Instead of focusing on the breakage and destruction implied by the word, Keats fragments up a collage of pieces. Even before Keats experimented with the practice of using the word "fragment" as a verb in *Endymion*, writers in the early Republic like Charles Brockden Brown used the idea of a "fragment" to link together a

series of texts. Using the fragment as a building block, authors like Brown and Nathaniel Hawthorne used the word fragment to indicate a *process* within their production of literary texts.

Chapter Summaries

To introduce the way readers encountered fragments in the eighteenth century, the first chapter of my project focuses on how fragments were represented on the printed page. Printers used a variety of techniques to depict the overlap of two different media types (fragments involved the representation of manuscript in print). To create an intermedial effect and convey a manuscript tear, an ink blemish, or a missing page, printers often used inventive combinations of punctuation, printer's marks, typesetting, and formatting. Through the work of two writers who also oversaw the printing of their work—Samuel Jackson Pratt and Mathew Carey—this chapter examines how printers used particular elements of the page to represent fragments and the experiences of marginalized figures. In Pratt's novel about the American Revolution, *Emma Corbett* (1780), he uses inventive punctuation to depict the fractured bodies of veterans. By aligning bodily, textual, and national fractures, Pratt launches a critique of the violence of the American Revolutionary war. Following Pratt's desire to create peaceful, non-national affiliations, Mathew Carey's periodical fragments emphasize the construction of religious sentimental relationships instead of political ones. Carey juxtaposes multiple fragments on the periodical page in order to create new permutations of identity that circumvent legislative codifications of citizenship. Through a careful manipulation of the physical space of the page, both printers represent the fragmented experiences of marginal figures and seek to endow them with a resonant political agency.

In contrast to the readable, visual, and printed depictions of fragments described in the first chapter, the second chapter considers fragments of writing that disappear from their texts. Through the work of Susanna Rowson and Hannah Webster Foster, I examine how the figure of the seduced woman represented a fragmented individuality prone to novelistic erasure. Without a doubt, the seduced woman was central to the creation of norms surrounding gendered morality in the early American republic, but she was made "central" through her repeated and continual marginalization—she is almost always placed outside of reproductive communities that pertain to the body politic. I argue that Rowson and Foster actually make the erasures of these women powerful by placing them outside epistolary circuits of legibility. In *Charlotte Temple* and *The Coquette*, torn, illegible writing by the fallen women paradoxically provides them with political agency. The mode of individualism presented by Rowson and Foster embraces passivity and erasure in a way that preserves the fragmentary individual.

While the first two chapters of the project primarily examine marginalized figures, chapter three presents the turn of the century movement between the politicized notion of the fragment and the aesthetic one (tracking the shift from *fragment* [n.] to *fragment* [v.]). The work of Charles Brockden Brown functions as a crucial hinge point in this historical moment, as his writing simultaneously evokes the political implications of representing an ostracized figure, and also the incipient trend toward John Keats' aesthetic construction of "fragment[ing] up." Through a close attention to the publication history of Brown's periodicals and novels, I reveal his complex manipulation of fragments (a methodological approach that makes sense with Brown because he was a lifelong editor of and contributor to different periodicals). His composition of several fragments related to *Edgar Huntly* (1799) creates a confederacy of texts that indicates that *Edgar Huntly* should *not* be read as a single, bound novel as critics have done

for generations, but as a series of associated prose segments, similar to Judith Sargent Murray's prose experiments in *The Gleaner* or Susanna Rowson's in *The Inquisitor*. On the one hand, tracing the publication history of Brown's fragments reveals his representation of a medically marginalized identity; and on the other hand, it reveals an intermingling of natural and prose pieces that "fragment up" into an innovative structure of publication.

Finally, in my fourth chapter I extend my discussion of the fragment's aesthetic significance in the early nineteenth century through an examination of Nathaniel Hawthorne's unfinished story cycle, "The Story Teller." Hawthorne wrote "The Story Teller" throughout the 1820s and 30s and then broke it apart to publish the individual components in different periodicals—a decision that represents a theory of circulation. The first time Hawthorne tried to publish *The Storyteller* he wanted to release it as a novelistic work in a single volume; however, the process was never completed. He and his publisher decided instead to publish the work piecemeal, over a number of years, and without any specific indications that the stories originally made up the same volume (other than a few character repetitions and narrative arcs). While previous chapters examine the "fragment form," by the 1830s the rise of British and German Romanticism transformed the fragment into a fully-fledged genre. Hawthorne builds on these traditions in the publishing structure of his works and in the content of his stories. In "The Devil in Manuscript" and "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man," Hawthorne critiques the category of "posthumous writing" popularized in the early nineteenth century and argues against the editorial mediation practiced so commonly in publication. Contrastingly, Hawthorne advocates a mode of publication based on fragmenting, non-mediated distribution.

The dissertation begins with an examination of highly political fragments that reveal tensions underlying the union of the nation in its incipient decades. Following a shift in the usage

of "fragment," the later chapters move into an aesthetic register, but do not entirely eliminate the political concerns—they are only set aside for a few brief decades in the nineteenth century. The epilogue to the dissertation engages with the reemergence of political fragments in the years leading up to Mexican-American War and the Civil War, when the concepts of rupture, fracture, separation, and fragmentation take on a renewed political resonance.

Chapter 1

Fragments on the Printed Page: Depicting Marginal Identities after the Revolution

In late eighteenth-century America, the political discourse surrounding the establishment of the new nation did not primarily focus on the lived experiences of people like veterans, seduced women, beggars, and the insane. Critiquing this lack of regard for the lives of ostracized individuals, authors like Samuel Jackson Pratt and Mathew Carey used their writing and printing to generate alternative means of envisioning and representing identity. Their printing provided a lexicon of partially linguistic representation that afforded a physical existence on the page to an otherwise (largely) invisible group of people. Reacting to the exclusions created by the legally binding codifications of republicanism, the work of Pratt and Carey looked to the specificities of political dispossession and presented possibilities for recharging personal agency. This strand of thinking considered how the early United States might look if the emphasis were not on the unified national whole represented by the domes linking the states together in the image from *The Massachusetts Centinel*—but rather on the individual parts or fragments that together constituted that single nation. On closer inspection, would those portions actually add up to a unified country? What generative forms of affiliation might prove more cohesive and inclusive than the republican nation?

Attuned to the fractional realities dividing individuals from the newly founded United States, writers and printers turned to the fragment form in order to consider the place of marginal figures—a clear and sustained attention that differed from other treatments of similar individuals. As Partha Chatterjee explains in a critique of post-Enlightenment writing, much late eighteenth-century Anglo-American thought "proclaims its own unity and homogeneity by declaring all other subjectivities as inadequate, fragmentary, and subordinate" (xi). But the declaration of

early national writers for "homogeneity" does not occur as universally as Chatterjee describes. A multitude of authors took the "inadequate, fragmentary" subjectivities and instead found vibrant political possibilities within them. As a result, the "fragmentary" did not always take on a subordinate, secondary meaning, but rather presented an absence or rupture that indicated a plenitude. Identifying a marginal individual with a material fragment makes visible the way in which both consist of "something in motion" (Tronzo, 4) that can potentially exist in a process of becoming, in a preserved state of ruin, or in an accelerating disintegration. The movements from these three volatile points become complicated in a way that displays how an aesthetic form can transform a simple assessment of proclaiming political "homogeneity." For the writers in this project, the concept of the "fragmentary" did not equate in any simple way to the "subordinate."[15]

Since authors in the United States read a wide variety of reprinted fragments from across the Atlantic (particularly the three kinds outlined in the introduction—fragments from antiquity, the Ossian fragments, and posthumous papers), the use of the fragment brought marginalized figures into a strong connection with the past. Associations with antiquity endowed fragmented individuals with a disjointed temporal state, ensuring that representations of their existence created a tension with the contemporary movement of forward-progressive time.[16] By invoking the past, the fragments and the individuals they represented brought a recursive, haunting quality to the present of the early Republic, and constantly troubled the political voices that wanted to relegate ruins to the casket of history. Summarizing Jacques Derrida's concept of hauntology, Frederic Jameson comments that "[s]pectrality does not involve the conviction that ghosts exist or that the past (and maybe even the future they offer to prophesy) is still very much alive and at work, within the living present: all it says, if it can be thought to speak, is that the living present

is scarcely as self-sufficient as it claims to be; that we would do well not to count on its density and solidity, which might under exceptional circumstances betray us" (39). The system of hauntology described by Derrida and Jameson focuses on the strangeness of ghostly presences and the way they reveal a lack of "density and solidity" within the present. Because of the residual nature of fragments and the way they continually bring forth the past, the form provides evidence of how "the living present is scarcely as self-sufficient as it claims to be." Despite the vociferous claims for a self-evident early national unity in the late eighteenth century, the fragment form magnifies seams of division and makes them visible in new ways.

In addition to calling up a haunting past into the present, fragments also delineate an unspeakable terrain because they present an unfinished text. The physical and linguistic instability of the fragment thus creates a space of open form that extends outward from the marginalized figure—fragments preserve, rather than alter, an unspeakable terrain, and thereby entrench a strong counterpoint to the "self-sufficient" political truths within late eighteenth-century rhetoric. Because of their lingering connection to an entire textual whole, they point towards that which cannot be fully expressed. Building on this abstract condition of the fragment, Pratt and Carey remediate its absent power by representing it not through words, but through elements of printing. In their work, the haunting identities constructed by the partial form of the fragment emphasize the possible creation of communities outside of present-based norms. Their use of the printed page constructs alternatives to the nation through more broadly constructed communities of sympathy and religion, and humanity.

Precisely through a *failure* to connect to the national, fragmented identities revealed their participation in unconventional networks of affiliation that did not focus entirely on unification, but rather signified in more local, personal ways that acceded to partial forms of existence.[17] In

these instances, national identification takes a backseat. Most importantly though, the fragment form provided a means of constructing a new kind of haunting subjectivity that at once referenced the whole, but also retained a distance from it.[18] In this almost ironic operation, in which a fragment functions in two opposing discourses, the marginalized figure cannot be located; or rather, it can *only* be located as between at least two kinds of existence. Because of the potentiality inherent in a fragment (its attachment to another possible whole or its continuing existence as a fragment), the lack within the form actually creates a kind of plenitude, a surplus of possibilities for the identity or the consciousness of an individual. With this excess of identity, the fragment form finds its most extensive exploration of an aesthetics that generates a political impersonality—a partial, detached individual who projects into any number of possible political existences (thus disturbing the present).

The first section of the chapter presents the political significance of fragments and fragmentation in the years before the Revolutionary War. Critiquing these broad national divisions, Samuel Jackson Pratt's novel, *Emma Corbett; or The Miseries of Civil War* (1780), examines the figure of the veteran to show how fragmented bodies function to protest violent politics. Pratt presents the creation of a sympathetic community in contrast to the national affiliations that lead to civil war. This transatlantic, revolutionary text folds neatly in the work of the Irish immigrant, Mathew Carey, who penned a number of periodical fragments in which he emphasized the significance of religious ties, and universal human connection. References to nation appear, but in an attenuated manner. Collectively, the works of these two printers and writers display how representations of the fragment form in print helped envision a politics outside the nation, one oddly founded on the surplus inherent in partial identities.

Breaking the Colonial Union

Even before the debates surrounding the ratification of the Constitution, the fragment form evoked a powerful political resonance in the soon-to-be nation. While the introduction described the political usage of the fragment in the moment of Constitutional ratification, issues of unification and division in American politics reached back into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with projects of colonial association like the United Colonies of New England (established in the mid-seventeenth century to support the Puritan establishment and defend against the Dutch and Native Americans), the Dominion of New England (a short-lived organization imposed on the colonists by British authority from 1686-1689) and the Albany Congress (a meeting of the colonies to discuss defensive measures at the opening of the French and Indian war in 1754). In each of these examples the colonies banded together in a collective manner in response to an external threat or an outside pressure. The situation became more extreme in the years leading up to the Revolutionary War, when breaking off from the mother country finally became a distinct likelihood, rather than a theoretical possibility that most colonists preferred not to entertain. Fragments simultaneously embodied the frightening reality of disconnection from colonial roots and the prospect of future independence as a single nation. The politics of national separation complicated the lives of rebelling colonials, and Anglo-American writers analyzed the traumatic new political existence created by the divisions of the civil war.

Before the American Revolution grew into a full-scale conflict, an anonymous author in England published *The History of The Old Fring'd Petticoat: A Fragment: Translated from the Original MS. Greek of Democritus. With an Epistle and Dedication to Lord N——* (1775). Addressed to the Prime Minister of England, Lord North, the short pamphlet mentions the

current "bustle in the fore-castle, and outcries of breakers and shipwrecks" (i) that plague the relationship between England and its American colonies. After the dedicatory preface to Lord North, the narrative begins with a row of asterisks and the Latin phrase, "*Ingens hiatus ceu dilaceratio* In *Exordium M.S.*" (1), or, there are huge tearing gaps in the beginning of the manuscript (the use of Latin in what is supposedly an "*Original MS. Greek of Democritus*" offers a parodic translational disjuncture).[19] This statement implies the existence of prior struggles between the two political groups, but sidelines them in favor of the present disturbance. The text consists of a thinly veiled parable about a strong working mother (England) who raises several daughters and eventually gives them a set of farms across a river (America). Beset by attacking gypsies (Native Americans), the daughters request the help of their mother, who strides over to their farms and beats away the irritating visitors with her favorite oak stick. In the process, she tears her most beloved petticoat—a prized possession. She asks her daughters to help her sew it back together since she tore it in their defense (England taxing America for expenditures in the French and Indian War), but the daughters rebelliously refuse.

The pamphlet comes to an abrupt ending as the daughters sit in council and realize that "the old woman herself had taken boat, and was actually coming among them with her crutch stick new rubbed up and very bright" (23). Right when the daughters react to this news the text ends with several lines of asterisks and the author writes "*parva lacuna in MSS*." (23), or, a small lacuna in the manuscript. The author then follows this up with another few lines of asterisks, and concludes the pamphlet with the phrase "*desunt caetera*" (24), or, the rest is wanting. Lacking a clear sense of how the American colonies might react to the explicit retribution of England, the writer of the pamphlet leaves the reader hanging off the precipice of the historical moment. The ending anticipates a serious conflict between political bodies (physicalized here by the mother

and her daughters), but elides the specific occurrences of the forthcoming war with the erasures implied by the asterisks. This short allegorical tale compounds three significant meanings of fragment all at the same time: it is at once textual (the unfinished asterisks at the end of the story); material (the petticoat that the mother wears and which starts all the drama is torn to shreds in a conflict); and national/familial (the conflict between the two generations).[20]

A few years later and on the other side of the Atlantic, *The United States Magazine* published an article entitled "View of the early inroad, and the progress of the Tyranny of Britain. A Fragment" (1779). The article begins with an extended em-dash that gives the essay the feeling of beginning *in medias res*: "———EMIGRANTS from Britain, either by conquest or discovery, had an equal claim with those who had remained upon the island, and by occupancy, a more indubitable title" (331). Throughout the article the anonymous author continues to produce evidence in favor of the emigrants, and recites the various injustices committed by King and Parliament. He claims that the "prince appointed governors, the representatives of majesty, as if the distance of the wide Atlantic did not render it impossible that those upon the continent, and those upon the island, could be connected with each other in any other manner than as an allied people" (331). After further listings of oppressive legal decision from England, the author concludes with an unfinished statement, asking "What shall we say of that law of the legislature of Great Britain" (332).

Immediately proceeding these words an editor (though most likely the author himself) writes "******** *The rest is wanting*" (332). The lack of a question mark turns the point about "Great Britain" into an assertive statement as much as a tentative inquiry. In these final lines the author implies that simply writing words of protest no longer suffices. Finishing the essay with "*The rest is wanting*" means that the article has nothing left to say, and the readers of the nationally-

oriented periodical should deliver their own words and actions against the tyranny of Britain. Equally significant, the writer ends the prose piece with the word "*wanting*," a word that indicates a lack that is accompanied by a desire—the response from the readers of the essay is both "wanting" and wanted by the author of the fragment. Thus, the completion of the "fragment" depends on the populace of the rebelling colonists, who can choose to follow the spirit of the piece through a vocal and complete rejection of unfair British rule. While the foregrounding of the concept of the fragment emphasizes the history of the ruptured ties between the colonies and England, the ending of the piece situates action within the hands of the readers. By looking into the future with the comment that "*The rest is wanting*," the piece also establishes the possibility of a new body politic created by American citizens who continue to work against British tyranny. The author begins the essay by calling the colonists "emigrants," and ends calling them "the people of America" (332), resituating their identities in terms of the American continent, rather than England.

Instead of deflecting the conflict through the creation of a literary allegory, the writer for *The United States Magazine* deals with the tensions between the two powers in an unveiled, stark light. Fiction takes a backseat to the pressing importance of political decisions for the colonists, an authorial choice that heightens the political specificity of the "fragment" and locates it within a geopolitical separation. While the first example engages with a three-part layering of the fragment in its representation of text/body/nation, the second pamphlet depicts the heightened political anxiety surrounding fragmentation. Pratt's novel combines both of these tactics, using the multi-layered definition of the fragment in an explicit way to critique the problems of national conflict (rather than routing it through allegory).

In addition, both of the political fragments presented an unfinished narrative to their readers. The aesthetic tone of the fragments resonated with the chaotic atmosphere of the 1770s, and called attention to the tense relationship between parts and whole that corresponded to the colonies and the mother country. The unpredictable, contingent atmosphere of events made unfinished texts ideal vehicles of representation because they could present multiple, branching political futures. Texts that began *in medias res*, lacked portions from the middle, and needed a conclusion provided a clear narrative analogy for the tumultuous state of affairs. In the political essays just mentioned, writers signaled these lacunae through the use of extended punctuation marks, which Anne Toner notes were largely used "to represent abrupt termination[s]" (91). Fragments relied on a typography of omission, rather than completion, and at the end of each essay the authors rely on distinct typographical markings in order to suggest different possibilities for the words and actions of two body politics. The italicized words, asterisks, and editorial phrases create a space for the readers of the texts to interject their own words and actions in support of a political cause.

But the political essays focus on abstract body politics to the detriment of an equally significant body—the injured bodies of individuals who suffered at the hands of violent national conflict. In Samuel Jackson Pratt's popular novel about the Revolutionary War, *Emma Corbett*, he makes use of these "signs of omission" (to borrow a phrase from Anne Toner) for vastly different ends. The novel argues against the hailing of a national body politic exemplified by the two essays; instead, through asterisks, ellipses, and dashes, he represents the bodies of disabled veterans from England's eighteenth-century wars.

A Typography of Exceptional Bodies

Near the end of Pratt's popular protest novel, he pivots from the events of the adventurous narrative and paints a portrait of unrequited love. Robert Raymond, an honorable middle-aged man, gives up his hope for Emma Corbett's hand and sadly accepts that she loves a dashing American revolutionary named Henry Hammond. But even though Raymond accepts a neutral, fatherly position of friendship toward Emma, he continues to love her. His rational attitude toward the difficult situation represents a micropolitical model for Pratt's pacifist tendencies—throughout the novel Pratt critiques the passion of nationalist fervor that incited the war. Raymond's love for Emma does have limits, though: "Ere a soul like mine can free itself from *such* captivity, the enchanting powers of its object must change; its beauty become deformity, and its virtue vice" (198).[21] Only if Emma undergoes a complete transformation will Raymond cease to love her. In his confession of enduring love, Raymond contrasts Emma's current "beauty" and her "virtue" to the unpleasant potential of "deformity" and "vice." The degeneration of Emma would render her "enchanting powers" ineffective to Raymond and free him from "captivity" to her. While Raymond presents a model of masculinity that emphasizes an enlightened balance of neutrality, rationality, and compassion, his sympathy largely extends to figures of aesthetic beauty—the captivating Emma, the child that she bears, the stately General Washington, and the child of Edward Corbett (Emma's brother).

At the very end of the novel, the only two adult characters who remain are Raymond and Emma's ineffectual father (Charles Corbett), who are left to tend to the orphaned children left behind. As Trevor McMichael explains, "the ideal nursing father the novel champions, embodied by Robert Raymond, is significant for he exhibits a necessary balance of paternal governance and maternal nursing" (280).[22] But by circumscribing his affection to objects of "beauty," Raymond proves unable to cope with the "deformit[ies]" of war that Pratt suggests are an

unavoidable effect of violent conflict. This makes Raymond unable to deal fully with the inevitable trauma—both physical and emotional—attending powerful upheavals. Emma herself points out the inevitability of physical disfigurement in battle when she examines a set of prints that hang in a library and which illustrate devastating scenes of war. She emotionally observes that "into that wretch's quivering side, the ball has just entered!—Here lies a head severed from the body.—There are the mangled relics of an arm torn from the shoulder; and there the wounded horses are trampling upon their wounded masters!" (143). Her sympathy for the anonymous dead, the injured animals, and the suffering soldiers in the images extends beyond Raymond's aestheticized compassion and includes "deformit[ies]" and "mangled relics."

Emma's concerns also represent a broader trend. Lennard Davis argues that the category of "deformity" played a crucial role in eighteenth-century depictions of exceptional bodies, and it appeared even more commonly than "disability" as evidence of "a dramatic physical event or bodily configuration" (58). In the explosive revolutionary climate of the late eighteenth century, the effect of political transformations on the bodies of individuals made the category of "deformity" a central one. Unlike Raymond, Pratt shares Emma's perspective. Almost exactly in the middle of *Emma Corbett*, Pratt describes the lives of two wounded veterans who have lost multiple limbs in the service of the English army. In a lengthy interpolated narrative that Pratt titles "A Military Fragment: THE CARBINES," he describes the bodies of two retired British soldiers (Julius and Nestor Carbine) as "remnant[s]" (117) and "*ruins*" (119), and the soldiers themselves have a tendency to flourish their "stump[s]" (117) and "wounds" (124) as they speak. Pratt accentuates the statements of the wounded veterans with extended dashes, lines of asterisks, and editorial commentary that reinscribe their amputated limbs.

Like the "mangled relics of an arm torn from the shoulder," the bodies of the two brothers testify to the chaotic intensity of battle with their armless shoulders, torn legs, and wounded faces. Instead of attempting to establish a strong sense of pity for the soldiers through sentimental language and pithy maxims (the most conventional form of expressing sympathy in the late eighteenth century) Pratt resorts to an *un*conventional typography that blurs the lines between presence and absence in order to represent the Carbine brothers. Avoiding the denotative quality of language, Pratt uses lines of asterisks, ellipses, and dashes (as I will shortly show) to generate a discourse that reflects on the complicated bodily state of a person missing a limb. Anne Toner notes in her study of punctuation that in the eighteenth century lines of marks were largely used "to represent abrupt termination[s]," a usage that Pratt adapts in order to focus less on the termination of language and more on the physical outlines of disabled human bodies (91). Thus, his typography accords with Jennifer DeVere Brody's sense that "[p]unctuation appears in/as writing as a means of inscribing bodily affect and presence imagined to be lost" (7). The testament to that loss exists in the punctuation that threads through the story and creates a sense of narrative disintegration.

Rather than focus on a fractured body politic, the sentimental novel protests the violence of the revolution in America and urges both sides to lay down their weapons. By "inscribing bodily affect and presence imagined to be lost," Pratt's novel critiques the way nation-states construct their existences on the wounds of traumatized individuals. Via a typography that emphasizes torn bodies, broken subjects, and fragmented stories, Pratt focuses on the physical and emotional pain caused by the violence of the Revolution. He presents the readers of *Emma Corbett* with material representations of the distress generated by war, and the wounds on the bodies stretch across historical time and reverberate into the possible futures of the two nations.

The visible absences on the printed page typographically depict the effect of mental and bodily fragmentation in the lives of the veterans. And, by including areas of blank space on the printed page, filled only with punctuation, Pratt creates a non-referential textual space that attempts to represent inherently unrepresentable experiences.

In an important revision of the more typical eighteenth century usage of asterisks and ellipses, Pratt uses his punctuation not only to represent marginal or missing text, but also uses it *descriptively* to represent the bodies of soldiers.[23] This creates, as I argue, a physical presence on the page for the missing body parts of the veterans. Punctuation thus ceases to simply be a tool for syntactical organization, and becomes an interpretable element of the text. In a radical move, the intensely physical punctuation that Pratt uses "lifts itself from the page…[and] moves from the 'flat' two-dimensional surface to become a three dimensional frame" (Brody, 8). Literalizing Derrida's depiction of "paper as support or backing for…prosthesis" Pratt creates a "typographical prosthesis" by deploying punctuation that simultaneously represents the absence of lost limbs and their presence on the page (43).[24] Instead of casting punctuation out into a vague field of signification, Pratt constructs a particular sense of a wounded subjectivity in relation to his typography.

Pratt's establishment of a connection between language and limbs reaches back to the etymological origins of the word "prosthesis." Originally used to mean the "addition of a letter or syllable to the beginning of a word," in the eighteenth century the word *prosthesis* takes on its more familiar, modern meaning: "the replacement of defective or absent parts of the body by artificial substitutes" (*OED*). By using punctuation to represent an absent body part Pratt harkens back to the earlier concept of a prosthesis, a prefix that attaches to a word (with the important difference that in this case the punctuation adds a silence, rather than a vocalized syllable).

Unlike the two political essays that indicate the importance of further action and place the fate of the body politic decisively into the hands of the readers, the use of punctuation in *Emma Corbett* bridges the gap between language and the body of an individual. Prioritizing the experience of individuals hurt by the war, Pratt activates a movement between lack and plenitude in the punctuation. Implying a silence, but still visibly present on the page, his typography hovers between absences and materiality in a way that strongly parallels a prosthesis.

The typographical prosthesis conceived by Pratt builds on the specific double meaning of dashes, asterisks, and ellipses that proved important for eighteenth-century readers (throughout the entire century guides prescribing rules for grammar, punctuation, and printing abounded, making Pratt's intervention a particularly timely one). In *The History and Art of Printing. In Two Parts* (1771) by Philip Luckombe, Luckombe explains that asterisks serve two primary purposes in texts.[25] On the one hand, they act as a footnoting mechanism and "are used in matter which has either side or bottom Notes; and as serve to direct the Reader to observations which are made upon such passages of the Text as are distinguished by them, and demand a Reference of the same likeness to be put to the Notes by which the Matter is illustrated, or otherwise taken notice of" (257). On the other hand, Luckombe says that they are "sometimes used to supply a name of a person that chuse to pass anonymous. Asterisms [a variant of asterisk], again, denote an omission, or an hiatus, by loss of original Copy; in which case the number of Asterisms is multiplied according to the largeness of the chasm; and not only whole lines, but sometimes whole pages are left blank, and marked with some lines of Stars" (260).

Asterisks at once referred the reader to a space outside the main portion of the text—the "side or bottom"—and designated a space of "omission, or an hiatus." Along with asterisks, ellipses and dashes indicate a hiatus (a portion of the text that is missing) and simultaneously

point toward abundance (an addition that explains the main body of text—the part that, combined with the fragment, will create a whole). These punctuation marks thus create a missing text within the text that also constitutes a text beyond the text. This double practice extended from printer's manuals and grammars in the late eighteenth century and found usage in literary texts, essays, and verse. While guidelines like Luckombe's play an important role in understanding eighteenth-century printing and writing, the rules regarding punctuation prove notoriously slippery in usage, and Pratt creatively adapts the grammar of his period to model the bodies of the veterans.[26]

The reasoning behind Pratt's decision to use punctuation to represent lost limbs stems not only from the etymology of prosthesis or the contemporary usage of asterisks, dashes, and ellipses, but also from the increasing interest in the way typography could display physiological states of being for individuals. Luckombe describes the printer's page with a vocabulary of physical topography, mentioning the "side or bottom" of the page and "the largeness of the chasm" indicated by punctuation. This physicality becomes explicitly bodily in Joseph Robertson's *An Essay on Punctuation*, in which he describes punctuation in a chapter titled "CHARACTERS in *grammar, rhetoric, and poetry, explained*" (125): "An Asterisk or little star * directs the reader to some note in the margin, or at the bottom of the page. Two or three asterisks generally denote the omission of some letters in a word, or of some bold or indelicate expression, or some defect in the manuscript" (127). The association of the word "defect" with a "bold or indelicate expression" gives it a decidedly negative connotation, but more importantly, the use of "defect" to describe an imperfection in a "manuscript" provides a charged example of the way that the physicality of the page existed in an analogous way to human bodies in the eighteenth century. Even the emphasis on "manuscript," rather than print, places the roots of the

"defect" Robertson describes close to the functioning of the human hand tracing imperfect words and spaces on the page. The "defect" then moves to the printed page in a way that emphasizes an intertwining lexicon of text and body—the boundaries between the two thus exist in an unstable fashion.

Even the construction of books depended heavily on bodily discourses: equipment used by printers relied on terminology derived from the human body and the printing of paper depended on the labor of ink-stained, sweaty, smelly bodies. Most conspicuously, as Lisa Maruca notes, "a 'body of type' meant a complete run of letters of all one font and size, such as French Canon, Greatprimer, Pica, and so forth" (40).[27] Throughout her historical account of printing manuals, Maruca tracks the inextricable terminology of printing and human physiology throughout much of the eighteenth century. She also identifies the more literal "*coupling* of man and machine that produces the body of type" and notices how print "always bears traces of both bodies' labor" (43-4). The production of print is thus embedded in a bodily physicality that shapes how readers, authors, and printers understood the complex relationship between bodies and type.[28]

In the late eighteenth century, for instance, Francis Hopkinson produced an article for Mathew Carey's periodical *The American Museum* in which he makes the case that typography provides a clear means of communicating an author's feelings. Hopkinson lays out his plan clearly for his readers: "My present design, which I offer with great modesty, respects an improvement in the art of printing, so as to make it expressive not only of an authors narrative, opinions, or arguments, but also the peculiarities of his temper, and the vivacity of his feelings" (437). Hopkinson takes his readers through a variety of circumstances in which a printer might want to use different sizes of type. He recommends that "an author of cool and equable spirits

might take Brevier Roman, for his medium, and would probably never rise higher than Great Primer; whilst a passionate man, engaged in a warm controversy, would thunder vengeance in French Canon" (439-40). The essay advertises the typographical capabilities of *The American Museum* and also makes a serious point about the way that the art of printing tries to replicate the "spirits" of the author. As Laurence Wroth summarizes, "it is suggested [by Hopkinson] that in literary composition the several emotions of joy, earnestness, passion, and agitation be expressed by various sizes and faces of type. In setting this ingenious essay Carey made use of fourteen type sizes" (93). Typography thus plays host to a wide range of physiological metaphors and features that range from the body of a piece of type to the impressions on the page that show the "peculiarities of [an author's] temper." While the versatility of type opens it up to a diverse field of possible meanings, including "joy, earnestness, passion, and agitation," the tone of Pratt's punctuation focuses entirely on the poignant absence of body parts.

Maruca organizes her work around the functioning of healthy male bodies in the eighteenth century (though she does attend to the gendered discourse of printing) and Hopkinson's article describes the way typography represents a continuum of standard emotions. However, Pratt's novel makes evident a relationship between printing and exceptional bodies that proved central in the eighteenth century and deserves greater critical exploration. In addition, the quotation from Joseph Robertson's guide states that certain forms of punctuation indicate a "defect in the manuscript," using a vocabulary associated with disabled bodies and applying it to typography (and vice versa). As a printer, bookseller, and author, Pratt was specially suited to draw extended connections among the physical production of texts, their meaning, and their consumption by readers. The materiality of a text thus becomes a significant avenue to understanding the bodies that occupy its pages and consume the literature. Sensitive to

these interpretive relations, Pratt makes the doubling of "defect" visible in the typography of *Emma Corbett*; moreover, he demonstrates how the "defect[s]" symbolized by punctuation can expand the layers of signification for the disabled veterans. Representation of exceptional bodies in the eighteenth century did not stay limited to pure linguistic discourse—rather, the silences and gaps involved in the setting of type, and the punctuation in between words offers a clearer insight into the experiences of individuals with fragmented bodies.

By positioning punctuation in relation to statements about the bodies of the soldiers, Pratt demonstrates Johanna Drucker's point that "[n]o letter has a 'character' in a discrete sense but rather, it assumes a character according to its use (position, juxtaposition, and context)" ("Graphical Readings," 270).[29] The asterisks and dashes take on a special significance relative to their juxtaposition with the bodies of the veterans. Building on a capacity for representation in punctuation, Pratt locates a liminal space of physicality through his deployment of asterisks and dashes, and activates something close to David Wills's description of prosthesis. Wills calls it "a complex play of displacements; prosthesis being about nothing if not placement, displacement, replacement, standing, dislodging, substituting, setting, amputating, [and] supplementing" (9).[30] Rather than emphasize how prosthesis completes or furthers the body, Wills emphasizes how it calls attention to the relationships and tensions between the placement and displacement of limbs. To represent veterans who lost limbs in imperial wars, Pratt resorts to a typography of elision to show his readers not only the simultaneous presence and absence of bodily parts, but also the formation of *new* bodily configurations. Drawing on the intimate relationship between printing and bodily function, Pratt remediates discourses about national conflict, disability, sentimental connection, and narrative by making the bodies of injured soldiers visible on the page in an innovative fashion.

The "Remnant of a Noble Figure"

Pratt first printed *Emma Corbett* during his residence in Bath in 1780, a place where he enjoyed what Josephine Grieder calls a "provincial celebrity" (470). He built a strong literary presence in the town, even though his relationship with other intellectual figures like David Garrick and Sarah Siddons was rather heated and contentious. In that same year a printing of the novel appeared from Robert Baldwin in London, and *Emma Corbett* reached a further audience when it went through a number of British and Irish editions over the course of the next decade. The novel achieved Continental success with a French translation, and it found a transatlantic audience when it was republished in America at least three different times. First, the novel was printed in 1782 in Philadelphia by Robert Bell; another printing, also by Robert Bell, followed in 1783; and finally John Mycall printed Pratt's work in Boston in 1784.[31] Robert Bell published a large number of texts that ideologically defended the violent struggle for independence, so his decision to publish Pratt's *Emma Corbett* (written by a British subject living in England, no less) places the novel in a bookshop that sold distinctly pro-American texts. Similarly, John Mycall primarily published political tracts, revolutionary Jeremiad sermons, almanacks, hymnals, psalters, and elocution books. In fact, the only other British novel that Mycall printed was Oliver Goldsmith's hugely successful *The Vicar of Wakefield* in 1780. However, *Emma Corbett*'s plot tends toward political pacifism rather than revolutionary radicalism, a fact that creates a tension with the reception of the book in Philadelphia and Boston.

The publishing history of the novel in America moves in a year-by-year succession from the colonies in revolt (1782), to the year of peace (1783), and finally to the establishment of the new nation under the uncertain auspices of the Articles of Confederation (1784). Because of the quick progression of political events in the early 1780s, an American readership for *Emma*

Corbett in Philadelphia, Boston, and surrounding areas understood the politics of the novel in slightly different ways, first reading it as a revolutionary call to arms, then as a recognition of the need for peace, and finally as a reflection on the events of recent history. The novel pushes for an understanding of the American cause, even as it points out the importance of a more universal and sympathetic human connection. As Eve Tavor Bannet argues, *Emma Corbett* provides a prime example of a transatlantic success because it transcends political difference by reaching audiences on both sides of the Atlantic and dealing with political topics that mattered to rebelling colonials, loyalists, and British subjects alike. Since the novel "was presenting a position that was acceptable, on some level, to political players on both sides" (23), Pratt could make the book appealing to both American sympathizers and British loyalists alike. This politically neutral position bolstered Pratt's separation from the development of the two nation-states, and thereby emphasized his affiliation with the disabled, marginal figures created by the conflict.

Throughout the novel, Emma feels caught between her father, Charles Corbett, and her suitor, Henry Hammond. Her father vehemently supports the American Revolution, and loudly proclaims his allegiance to the colonies. Henry, on the other hand, decides to commit himself to the British war effort and goes to America as a commissioned officer to fight in the "Civil War." Charles views Henry's actions with severe disapprobation and withdraws his approval of Henry, forbidding Emma from continuing any kind of correspondence with the supporter of tyranny. Lovesick and anxious for Henry's safety, Emma falls ill while her father (ignorant of her true feelings) tries to encourage her to marry Robert Raymond. In the midst of these tragic events, a friend of Emma's named Caroline Arnold writes Emma a letter and encloses a transcription of a memoir in the envelope. "A Military Fragment: THE CARBINES" speaks to Emma's personal situation because Caroline wants to show her that Henry's humanity will not be lost in battle—he

will continue to be a sympathetic, virtuous individual capable of having a family. Caroline introduces the fragment by noting "that humanity and bravery are nearly allied, and that the tender husband and good soldier often form the same character, though they cannot always exert themselves in the same moment" (116). Even though Caroline wants to support Emma's love for Henry and encourage their union, Emma reacts to the text by exclaiming, "[o]h, what does your Caroline's fragment prove, but that WAR, at best, is *terrible* as glorious!" (127).

In Caroline Arnold's view, the interpolated tale, "A Military Fragment: THE CARBINES," purportedly shows the enduring relationship between patriotism, enlistment, and the maintenance of a strong family unit. But the content of the family relic goes against the reassuring, pedagogical moral that Caroline describes to Emma by emphasizing the broken nature of war-torn bodies. Caroline's story begins *in medeas res* when the narrator (ostensibly Caroline's father) sees a wound on the cheek of a veteran living in a military hospital. The narrator says that he sees "a tear upon the cheek of the person appointed to show me the hospital," a description that initiates an ambiguous correspondence between the bodily "tear" on a wounded person, the textual "tears" that make the tale a fragment, and the sentimental eye's "tear" that provides sympathy for the veteran (116). The focus on "tears" also anticipates Pratt's experimentation in the next few pages of the story with extended dashes that "tear" across the white space of the page. After the narrator sees the injury on the man's cheek, he immediately exclaims, "Oh for the history of that wound!" and then repeats the exact same phrase in the next breath (116). This desire for a narrative explanation of what went wrong fits closely with the concept of narrative prosthesis elaborated by David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, who broadly argue that the "very need for a story is called into being when something has gone amiss with the known world, and, thus, the language of a tale seeks to comprehend that which has stepped out

of line" (53). In a similar vein (though in a discussion of the work of Van Gogh), Georges Bataille expresses his belief that art "is born of a wound that does not heal," much like how "A Military Fragment: THE CARBINES" results from an old, visible wound on the surface of a man's face.

Pratt acknowledges the voices of the veterans by understanding the *impossibility* of representing their bodily experiences. The dialogue of the veterans exists in a multiply mediated format because Caroline Arnold writes a letter to Emma in which she places the memoir written by her father. Various levels of narrative and textual stratification exist between the reader of *Emma Corbett* and the subjectivities of the veterans (from a personal experience recorded in a manuscript memoir placed inside of a letter and then printed in a novel). Despite this fact, the violent pasts of the Carbine brothers emerge onto the space of the page when they describe their bodies, speaking across historical time and textual difference. Their typographical wounds reach across the page and represent their experiences through the materiality of the text itself. As such, their wounds continue to endure from the moment of past violence, haunting the present time of reading.

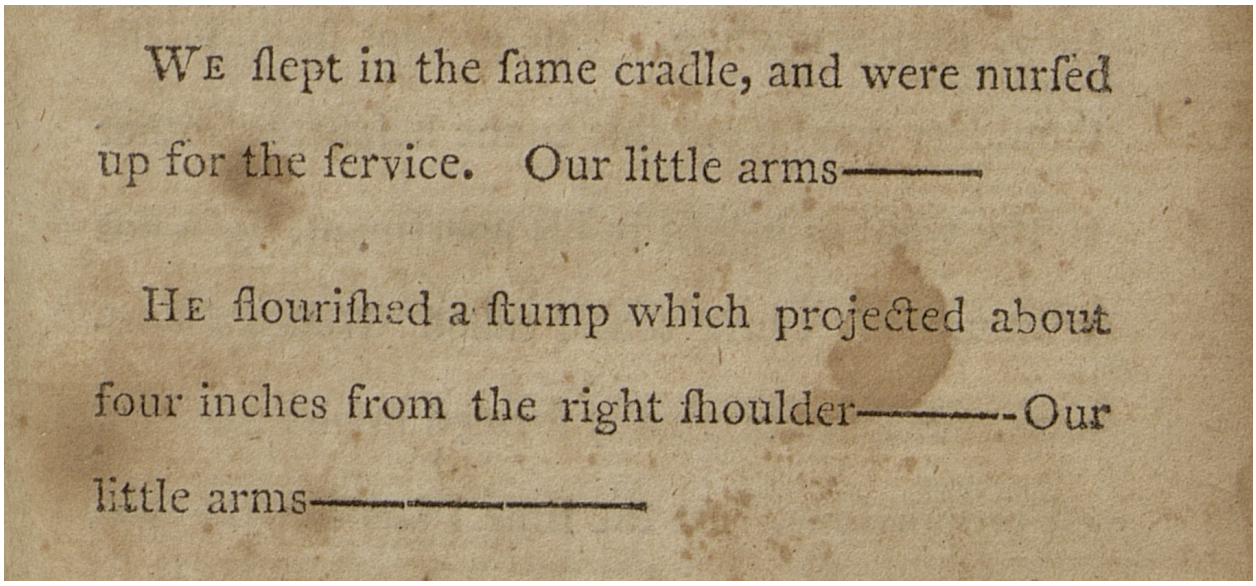
After the narrator of the fragment asks about the man's wounded cheek, the hospital guide flourishes the stump of his left thigh and presents it as "a more important subject of curiosity" (116), signaling the fact that his broken body contains a multitude of stories from his lengthy career as a soldier. He then introduces himself to the narrator as Julius Carbine and Julius takes him to a hospital room where he presents the narrator to Julius's nieces, nephews, and his elder brother, Nestor Carbine. Both brothers discuss the injuries and stumps on various parts of their bodies, describing the lost limbs as badges of honor that were acquired in service of the British Empire. The speaker sees more than just a similarity in appearance—he identifies a

resemblance "in the misfortunes which had happened to those invisible parts which lay scattered in different quarters of the globe" (117). The bodies of the two brothers are geographically and temporally distributed, existing in different countries and across a long history of military action. Their limbs are thus spread across time and place because of imperial wars, a condition that stymies any attempt to provide a clear account of their bodies. After the introductions, the two brothers go into more precise descriptions of their pasts, and Pratt relies on the typography of his novel to demonstrate the partial presence created by the former existence and present erasure of their arms and legs. Pratt's depiction of the veterans counters the imperial erasure created by the nation, which relegates the brothers to the forgotten space of the hospital.

When Julius describes his relationship with his brother, he comments on the history of their upbringing:

> We slept in the same cradle, and were nursed up for the service. Our little arms—
>
> He flourished a stump which projected about four inches from the right shoulder—Our little arms—
>
> But I have begun the matter prematurely, for before I relate the account which Carbine gave of himself, I should offer some description of his person, as well as that of his brother Nester. It is the stump of Julius which reminds me of this. (117)

These sentences contain vague interruptions and narrative redirections endemic to oral storytelling, and the dashes accentuate the shifts in voice. But Pratt's typography extends beyond the oral to the physical. In the Bath edition, the London edition, and the Dublin edition (the latter two followed the Bath edition closely in time and typesetting) the printers use extended dashes after "arms," "shoulder," and the second "arms." Pratt himself almost certainly oversaw the


We ſlept in the ſame cradle, and were nurſed up for the ſervice. Our little arms———

He flouriſhed a ſtump which projected about four inches from the right ſhoulder———Our little arms———

Figure 2, detail of a page from John Mycall's printing of the novel, Emma Corbett. In Two Volumes. Newbury-Port, Massachusetts: Printed by John Mycall for Ebenezer Battelle and William Green. Booksellers in Boston, 1784. (185)

printing of the first edition because from 1779-1780 he established himself as a bookseller and a printer on Melsom Street in Bath. Even if Pratt himself was not involved in the physical act of setting the type for the pages, he certainly oversaw and approved the layout of his book. John Mycall's American edition from 1784 takes the suggestion provided by Pratt's edition and extends the dashes even further, interrupting the space of the page and presenting the reader with a graphic representation that hangs off the end of the "arms." The typographical gestures of bodily prosthesis begin in the bourgeois literary atmosphere of Melsom Street in Bath, but the novel travels to revolutionary Boston and Philadelphia, where a consciousness of war reinscribed the typography with further impressions of the emotional pain of the wounded soldiers. *Emma Corbett*'s republication across the Atlantic elaborates the typography of the original edition, and turns an anti-war novel into an even more dramatic representation of political protest. The revolutionary climate on the eastern seaboard shaped the printing of the novel for both Robert

Bell and John Mycall, demonstrating the way that fragmented texts and bodies resonated with a populace in the midst of strife.

Pratt's prose clearly signals a physical epistemology of the body expressed in the printing. The specificity of the comment that the stump "projected about four inches from the right shoulder" provides a discrete sense of how the soldier's body presently occupies the space of the hospital room and the narrator's visual field. But rather than rely exclusively on a quantitative description of the body, Pratt moves toward a representational approximation. The mention of the "little arms" indicates a multitude of bodily states: the arms that the veterans had when they were children; the weapons that they used to fight in the wars of the British Empire (the *Carbines*); the arms that they lost in the service of the empire; and the "little arms" of their stumps. All of these references move across biographical time and political history. Adding to this proliferation of meaning, the "little arms" also signify the dashes, which extend outwards from the lines of text, reaching out into the white space of the page and are left hanging there. Positioned near each other and repeated three times, the final one with an even longer extension, Pratt and the later printers of *Emma Corbett* work out a typographical prosthesis for the bodies of the disabled veterans in this key moment in the text. The dashes roughly estimate the way human arms project into space and take up room, or the way that the veterans might remember the space of their arms as they "slept in the same cradle" before they lost them in combat. At the same time, the fragile slenderness of the lines hanging off into the white space creates a vulnerable physical presence prone to complete erasure. Replete with the simultaneity of presence and absence, the lines and pauses spoken by Julius Carbine as he "flourished a stump" indicate the tenuous physicality of his (printed) body.

The fact that Julius "flourished" his stump also endows the passage with a sense of physical movement as well, one that accords with the printing of the bodies. A printer's ornament (a design, border, or special illustration) might also be called a mark or a flourish, giving the usage of the word in Pratt's novel a specific definition in relation to printing. While printer's flourishes were typically more elaborate than an elongated dash and usually referred to elements of design, the representation of the bodily flourish through the typographical element of dashes connects their meaning. Rather than present Julius and his brother in a static bodily state that fixes the significations of their disability, Pratt opts for a kinetic, visual depiction that moves them outside of language and provides their bodies with a gestural component. In the same way that Lisa Mandell suggests that "new technologies can make people fantasize a whole new system of relations as a body," bodies can inspire the creation of new systems of relation with technologies (124-5).

Perhaps most significantly for Pratt and the printers that follow in his footsteps, the experience of reading the passage calls attention to the reader's own body. The arms mentioned by Julius also reflexively denote the body of the woman, man, or child reading the novel, who becomes conscious of the fact that he or she is sitting down, holding the book, and turning the pages. As an object of media technology, the book and its pages rely on the composition of the reader's body, the ability to turn pages, to see the writing on the pages, and to hold the book up. As Derrida reminds us, "[p]aper is utilized in an experience involving the body, beginning with hands, eyes, voice, ears; so it mobilizes both time and space. Despite or through the richness and multiplicity of these resources, this multimedia has always proclaimed its inadequacy and its finitude" (*Paper Machine* 44). The rich multimediality of the book crosses into the bodies of readers as the visual aspects of the text draw attention to the physical discrepancy between their

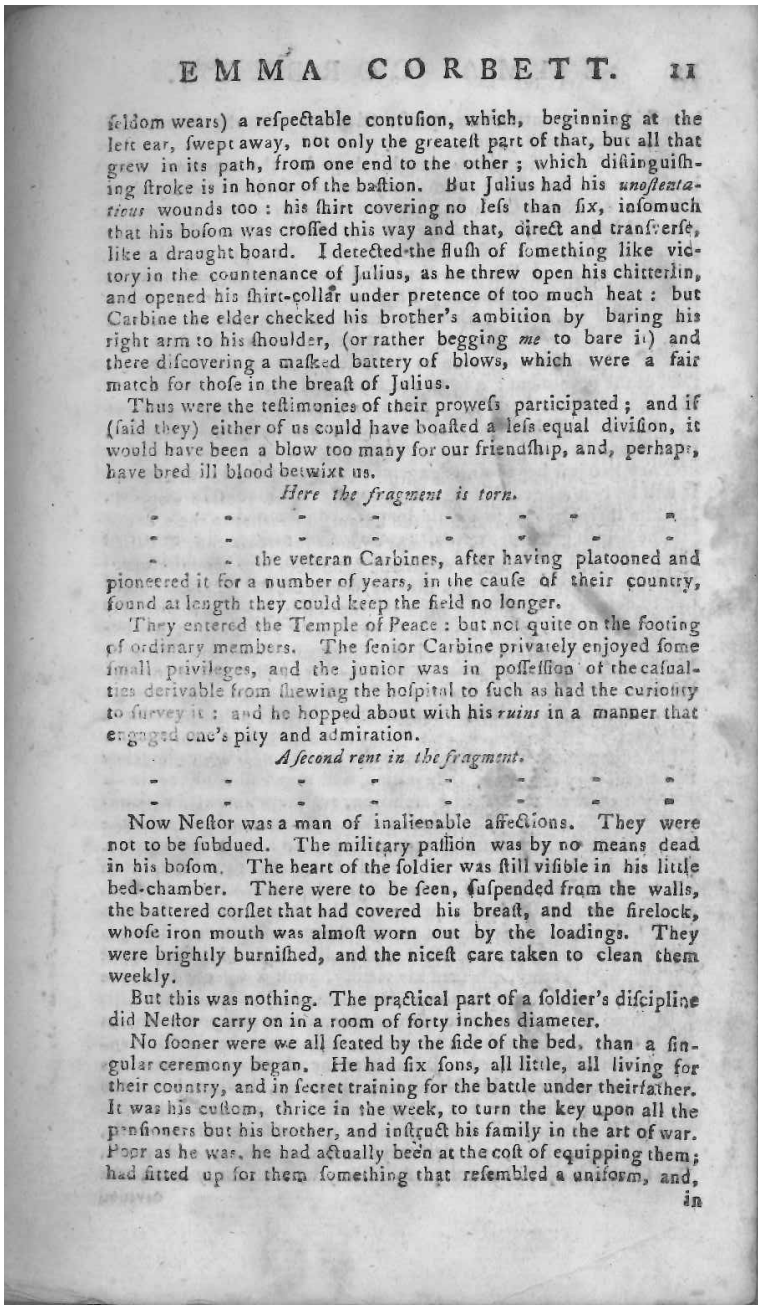
bodies and those of the veterans. In other words, Pratt establishes a sentimental relay extending from the content of the fragment (the bodily tears of the soldiers), to the presentation on the page (the typographical tears), and to the body of the reader (shedding sentimental tears). But Pratt purposefully makes the relay an imperfect one by bringing to the surface the incommensurability of the three focal points just mentioned. The readers might shed sentimental tears for the Carbines as a result of the moving textual representations, but a bodily discrepancy still exists—the Carbines miss multiple limbs while the reader presumably enjoys his or her health. A disjunction between them thus persists.

In a similar way, the typographical prosthetics move delicately between presence and absence in a way that shows how the ink on the page constructs the limbs at the same moment that they are irretrievably lost. Lisa Gitelman's description of the printing of blanks points out that print itself is "paradoxically what made most blanks blank" (23). Gitelman's point carries over to the dashes in *Emma Corbett*, an instance in which the process of imprinting paradoxically points toward an absence as well. Pratt's page thus captures a haunting, visible, and tenuous presence inflected by the relationship between print and the page. The typographical prosthetics end after a distance on the page, and Pratt and his printers simply place blank lines after the arm dashes. While the punctuation in the passage already signals verbal silence, the encroachment of the white page creates an even *more* durable space of silence. As Bonnie Mak notes, "the spaces between words, between lines, and around the text block can be understood as visual and cognitive breaks, employed by designers and readers as a way to moderate the pace of engagement with the page" (17). Whether or not the white space on the page "moderate[s] the pace of engagement with the page," these "breaks" provide a decrescendo from the barely visible physicality of the arm dashes into a blank space of non-representation. By winnowing down the

physicality of the narrative, Pratt and his printers restructure the syntax of the narrative around what Mak calls the "architecture of the page" (5).[32] The frame of the material page structures "A Military Fragment," and the whiteness from the extremities of the page move into the dialogue, a blankness that threatens to overtake the already fragmented, fragile text enclosed in the letter. Taking the veterans out of the hospital, Pratt moves them onto the reading page instead, creating an alternative architecture of physicality.

As Michel Foucault details in *The Birth of the Clinic*, the placement of individuals within state-sponsored hospitals assured their marginal status in society: "The sick man is no doubt incapable of working, but if he is placed in a hospital he becomes a double burden for society…[t]he hospital, which creates disease by means of the enclosed, pestilential domain that it constitutes, creates further disease in the social space in which it is placed" (20). By replacing the role of the family in the care of the sick, hospitals created an alternative system of care and sympathy based in a state-sponsored public. However, this space simultaneously formed a medicalized gaze that enforced senses of bodily normality through the adoption of clinical practices. The rise of a normalizing society in coordination with the medical gaze resulted in bodily categorization and established definitions of social disorder that placed individuals in a continuum from ill to healthy. Foucault explains that a hospital fulfilled a need "for the sick who have no family, but it is also needed in cases of contagion, and for difficult, complex, 'extraordinary' patients with whom medicine in its ordinary, everyday form cannot cope" (49). The Carbine brothers not only lack a family who will take care of them, but their "extraordinary" bodies place them outside the "ordinary, everyday form" of caretaking and force them into an institutional space. Because their wounds cannot be healed, the brothers exist in a perpetual state of physical "unhealthiness" and therefore must *continually* live in the space of the hospital.

The wounds on the bodies of the Carbine brothers extends to their narratives as well because the story that Julius and Nestor Carbine tell does not survive in a complete form in Caroline Arnold's letter. Thus, the broken bodies of the soldiers align with the missing parts of their stories, imbricating body and narrative even further. The breaks in the body formally and structurally imply the breaks in the text of the fragment. In the middle of Julius's narration an unnamed editor (most likely Caroline Arnold or her father, who she believes originally wrote out the story) writes the following: "Here the fragment is torn" (119). After that the story jumps and it continues describing the career of the two brothers, but only a few lines after the first interruption the unknown



EMMA CORBETT. 11

ſeldom wears) a reſpectable contuſion, which, beginning at the left ear, ſwept away, not only the greateſt part of that, but all that grew in its path, from one end to the other; which diſtinguiſhing ſtroke is in honor of the baſtion. But Julius had his *unoſtentatious* wounds too: his ſhirt covering no leſs than ſix, inſomuch that his boſom was croſſed this way and that, direct and tranſverſe, like a draught board. I detected the fluſh of ſomething like victory in the countenance of Julius, as he threw open his chitterlin, and opened his ſhirt-collar under pretence of too much heat: but Carbine the elder checked his brother's ambition by baring his right arm to his ſhoulder, (or rather begging *me* to bare it) and there diſcovering a maſked battery of blows, which were a fair match for thoſe in the breaſt of Julius.

Thus were the teſtimonies of their proweſs participated; and if (ſaid they) either of us could have boaſted a leſs equal diviſion, it would have been a blow too many for our friendſhip, and, perhaps, have bred ill blood betwixt us.

Here the fragment is torn.

\- - - - - - - -

\- - - - - - - -

\- - the veteran Carbines, after having platooned and pioneered it for a number of years, in the cauſe of their country, found at length they could keep the field no longer.

They entered the Temple of Peace: but not quite on the footing of ordinary members. The ſenior Carbine privately enjoyed ſome ſmall privileges, and the junior was in poſſeſſion of the caſualties derivable from ſhewing the hoſpital to ſuch as had the curioſity to ſurvey it: and he hopped about with his *ruins* in a manner that engaged one's pity and admiration.

A ſecond rent in the fragment.

\- - - - - - - -

\- - - - - - - -

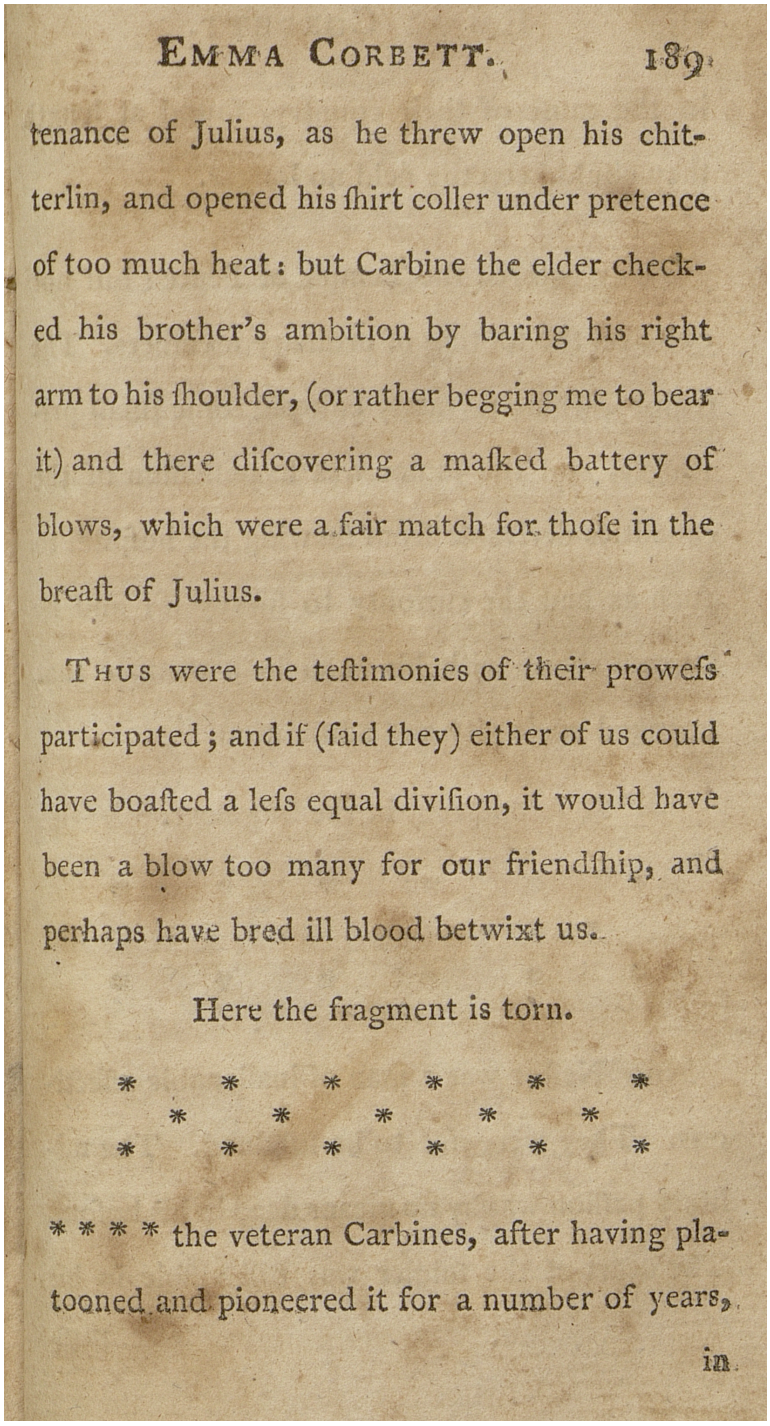
Now Neſtor was a man of inalienable affections. They were not to be ſubdued. The military paſſion was by no means dead in his boſom. The heart of the ſoldier was ſtill viſible in his little bed-chamber. There were to be ſeen, ſuſpended from the walls, the battered corſlet that had covered his breaſt, and the firelock, whoſe iron mouth was almoſt worn out by the loadings. They were brightly burniſhed, and the niceſt care taken to clean them weekly.

But this was nothing. The practical part of a ſoldier's diſcipline did Neſtor carry on in a room of forty inches diameter.

No ſooner were we all ſeated by the ſide of the bed, than a ſingular ceremony began. He had ſix ſons, all little, all living for their country, and in ſecret training for the battle under their father. It was his cuſtom, thrice in the week, to turn the key upon all the penſioners but his brother, and inſtruct his family in the art of war. Poor as he was, he had actually been at the coſt of equipping them; had fitted up for them ſomething that reſembled a uniform, and,

in

Figure 3, Emma Corbett: Exhibiting Henry and Emma, The Faithful Modern Lovers, as Delineated by Themselves, In Their Original Letters. Philadelphia: Printed and Sold by Robert Bell, 1782. (11)



EMMA CORBETT. 189

tenance of Julius, as he threw open his chitterlin, and opened his ſhirt coller under pretence of too much heat: but Carbine the elder checked his brother's ambition by baring his right arm to his ſhoulder, (or rather begging me to bear it) and there diſcovering a maſked battery of blows, which were a fair match for thoſe in the breaſt of Julius.

THUS were the teſtimonies of their proweſs participated; and if (ſaid they) either of us could have boaſted a leſs equal diviſion, it would have been a blow too many for our friendſhip, and perhaps have bred ill blood betwixt us.

Here the fragment is torn.

* * * * * * *
* * * * * *
* * * * * * *

* * * * the veteran Carbines, after having platooned and pioneered it for a number of years, in

Figure 4, Emma Corbett. In Two Volumes. Newbury-Port, Massachusetts: Printed by John Mycall for Ebenezer Battelle and William Green, Booksellers in Boston, 1784. (189)

editor again mentions a gap: "A second rent in the fragment" (119). The title of the story, "A Military Fragment" refers to the broken, missing body parts of the Carbine brothers, but also to the shape of the text itself, which breaks off from the narrative, begins *in medias res*, contains gaps in it that prevent the transmission of a full history, and makes liberal use of ellipses that indicate a trailing off in the story. Like the bodies of the soldiers, the body of the text needs its own prosthetic that memorializes lost passages.

The 1782 and 1783 printings of the novel, both by Robert Bell, depict these two breaks in the story with several lines of punctuation that visually attempt to represent a halt in the narration. And, in the 1784 edition,

John MyCall makes a similar attempt at creating a punctuated blank space that roughly gives it the appearance of a jagged piece of ripped paper.[33] In all of the editions of *Emma Corbett*, the printers use extended punctuation marks in order to provide a depiction of torn manuscript paper in print form. Eighteenth-century readers of the novel readily understood the difference in media between torn sheets of handwritten paper inserted into a letter and the complete, filled out, bound pages that they held in their hands. Pratt's novel brings manuscript and print technologies together on the page, but also indicates impossible recovery of absences or fractures. All of the printers of *Emma Corbett* try to visually emphasize the gaps in Caroline Arnold's story. By filling in the missing text—through the use of italicized words, blank space, dashes and asterisks—the printers simultaneously indicate the presence of language and its loss.

It is important to again emphasize that the deployment of punctuation to represent missing text is not exceptional in the eighteenth century, but Pratt builds on this typographical gesture with his unique representation of prosthesis. This latter fact makes *Emma Corbett* distinctive in Pratt's oeuvre as well—the printing of his other writings show his attention to the work of typography in a different, more conventional way. For instance, only a short time before the publication of *Emma Corbett*, Pratt wrote a send-up of Chesterfield's letters entitled *The Pupil of Pleasure: Or, The New System Illustrated. Inscribed to Mrs. Eugenia Stanhope, Editor of Lord Chesterfield's Letters* (1778). Written under the pseudonym Courtney Melmouth, *The Pupil of Pleasure* details (quite comically) the social foibles of a group of travelers in Bath. The novel was printed multiple times in England, and also saw two transatlantic editions, one by Robert Bell in 1778, and another by John D. M'Dougall in 1780. But the editions by the two American printers follow the British edition closely, instead of altering it for a new audience the way Bell and Mycall did for *Emma Corbett*. In *The Pupil of Pleasure*, Pratt and his printers rely

on extended dashes, exclamations, and italicized words to spice up the fast-paced, comic, sentimental language that inhabits the narrative. The typography follows eighteenth-century conventional guidelines by representing the particularities of speech. Pratt describes, in one especially telling scene, the staccato inflections of a group of women looking for a fashionable novel to read in a bookshop. Horace Homespun, a simple and plain man, describes the experience of watching his wife and her friends plunder the shop for novelties:

> Lord! (cried one of the damsels) here's DELICATE EMBARRASSMENTS—Oh! the very thing—worth all the Spectators that ever were *wrote*. Aye, take it, and let us go read it directly——It don't *end well*, I think, objected another; I had rather read EACH SEX IN THEIR HUMOUR.——Here is *Something New*, ladies, said the haberdasher—As old as the poles, said the fair ones.—What say you to ELOISA?——Oh! by all means—Have you got ELOISA?—reach it this moment—Oh, the dear book!——there are *three* letters in the first volume of that book, worth all the world.—— (29-30)

Throughout the passage, Pratt presents a great deal of rapid vocal interruption and symbolizes it with dashes, exclamations, and provides emphasis with italics. The typography in this passage captures quite dramatically the different vocal inflections used by the group of women, and tries to recreate the vivacity of in-person conversation. Indeed, the passage *improves* if it is read or acted out loud instead of read silently. Punctuation similar to this threads through much of the social comedy of *The Pupil of Pleasure*, but Pratt connects it to the body only insofar as it represents pauses and breaks in oral speech.

In contrast, the punctuation in *Emma Corbett* exists as a kind of tribute, or epitaph, to the lost limbs of the soldiers and the missing words of the story. Fragments point toward some

fundamental loss, and in this case the punctuation refers to *something*, but that referent has been lost. Readers of *Emma Corbett* experienced fragmentation on a visual, material level, not just a thematic one. By placing large pauses on the page, the printers of the novel ensured that language and narrative became only partially invisible, in the same way that the Carbine brothers lost limbs over the course of their lives. Pratt and his printers thus suggest that the only way to tell the story of ruined bodies is through ruptures, not just in plot, but through the visualization of language on the page.

The "Tear" of Sympathy and the Calculation of National Bodies

Caroline Arnold provides Emma with an incomplete text, one that advertises its own irresolution and lacks completion in a number of significant ways. Parts of it go missing, the beginning and ending seem almost nonexistent, and characters interrupt each other, thereby leaving a number of narrative threads hanging. The relationship between military service and the fragment form within the title of the piece implies that war engenders a scattering on multiple levels—of bodies, families, stories, and nations. While Pratt does point to violent conflict as the cause, he drains nationality of its overall significance by refusing to narrate the specific events that led to the injuries of the Carbine brothers. The descriptions provided by the Carbines emphasize the way wounds and injuries *occur* to them because they are the passive recipients of illness, enemy bullets, and the military orders sent to armies as a result of imperial offensives or defensives. Some of the accounts of their injuries mention geographic markers like a battle at Flanders, but the narration of the Carbines avoids mentioning a specific engagement or war, like the War of Spanish Succession or the French and Indian War.

In fact, after their "virgin engagement" (122) Julius proudly states that "we had no lazy periods of peace. Some part or another of Europe was continually beating the drum or sounding the trumpet in the ear of England. It was our duty to go forth in her defense" (123). Julius's description of the wars demonstrates the extended geopolitical agency over their battered bodies because Europe beats the drum of war or sounds the trumpet "in the ear of England" and England responds by sending out troops in defense. Linda Colley explains that the unrelenting recurrence of European wars (especially with France) was a key component in the construction of a collective British national identity in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: "Time and time again, war with France brought Britons, whether they hailed from Wales or Scotland or England into confrontation with an obviously hostile Other and encouraged them to define themselves collectively against it" (5). The British "came to define themselves as a single people not because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but rather in reaction to the Other beyond their shores" (6). Rather than partaking in the collective British identification against the French, the Carbine brothers experience the conflicts with "the Other beyond" domestic shores in a way that disperses their physical identities. Moreover, the Romance derivation of the family name—"Carbine" stems from French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese roots—associates the brothers with a wide range of European powers that Britain continually fought throughout the century. Pratt thereby aligns the Carbine brothers with a liminal identity that exists in distinction to the developing sense of British citizens as a "single people."

The larger political conflicts mutually dismember the bodies of the Carbine brothers, scattering their physical remains and placing them in a state of subjection, forgotten in a veteran's hospital. But without the specific details of the engagements, Pratt creates an elision that corresponds to the loss of information within the torn narrative, endowing the two soldiers

with an unreadable form of identity that exists beyond the power structures central to state formation. The tears and rents within the text obscure further knowledge about the two men and thereby refute any clear nationalistic reading of their bodies. No agent exists that can explain why the story lacks certain parts, and these breaks in the narrative serve to short-circuit the explanatory histories of war. Effacing precise knowledge about the particular conflicts, Pratt decenters the primacy of national conflict in the formation of identities.

Because of the unknown origin of the multiple tears on the bodies of the soldiers and in the pages of their narrative, the soldiers live in an indeterminate state. Their limbs exist across historical time and national geography, a fact that Pratt correlates with the way that the text of "A Military Fragment" lacks a definite provenance. Part of the national community, but also detached from it, the Carbine brothers live in the marginalized space of the hospital. On the other hand, Pratt makes the two brothers a locus of resistance by making their ruined bodies a residual effect of the process of imperial state formation—he notices that in the course of creating a British nation, the brothers become fragments who leave behind parts of their bodies in other countries, breaking apart the solidity of anything like the cohesive British identity that Colley identifies. The fragmented identities emerge at the *same* time that violent national births take place, and Pratt emphasizes the haunting that persists into the present. This lingering resistance resonates with Sari Altschuler's description of representations of disability from a later generation of American literature; in Pratt's novel "literature does not necessarily perform the corrosive flattening of extraordinary bodies we have come to expect" (264). The tense, contradictory tie to nation exhibited in the identities of the Carbine brothers actually gives them an excess, an opposite of a "corrosive flattening" (this sense of plenitude in partiality occurs throughout representations of fragmented individuals).[34]

Unlike other imported texts from England, *Emma Corbett* brings the body of the disabled soldier into the immediate context of the American Revolution, figuring the bodies of the Carbines in a way that protests the violent division between the colonies and the mother nation. Though the wounds of the Carbine brothers occur in a time before the American Revolution, the two battered and torn bodies haunt the futurity of England and America. Through the presence of the veterans in the hospital, Pratt implies that long after the details of the war and the specific battles have been forgotten, the injured bodies of veterans will remain. The individuals within the body politic retain scars that cannot be healed.

Because neither the British nation nor the emergent American nation can reclaim the lost limbs of the brothers or heal their wounds, Pratt instead turns toward a personal, sympathetic system of emotional reconstitution. Even this ameliorative ultimately falls short, though. The foregrounding of disintegrated bodies and partial texts generates a sense of pity that the narrator of "A Military Fragment" and the narrator's daughter feel. Ideally, this sense of pity further reaches out to evoke sympathy in the inset audience of the letter (Emma and anyone she shares the letter with), and the readers of *Emma Corbett*. For Pratt's late eighteenth-century readership, sympathy required an abject figure of suffering, and in this case the suffering is notable in the way that it is at once visible—on the surface of the body—and also highly elusive—lost to the vagaries of textual preservation. Rather than existing as fixed point or identity, the disabled bodies of the Carbine brothers take on a diverse set of meanings that proliferate through time, text, and audience.

While the first two gaps come at uneventful moments in the narrative, a third and final rent in the fragment does occur at a particularly telling moment. The Carbine brothers tell the narrator all about their families and, in fact, they demonstrate the military education of the

younger generation of Carbines by engaging in a mock-battle for the possession of a box (town) in the middle of the room. After the children have exhibited their youthful prowess, Julius goes into a description of Nestor's family history, explaining how he met his wife Frances and proceeded to have a family. Julius even recalls how Nestor formerly chided him by saying "thou art but half a loyal subject still—*thou* givest to thy country the services only of an individual, while *I* furnish it with the force of a whole family. As an *individual*, thou must soon die; but hadst thou taken care to *multiply* thyself as I have done, thou mightiest well expect to live and conquer these thousand years" (124). The supposed lack of familial patriotism on the part of Julius makes him into a half man—already wounded in service of the country, he fails to take up the opportunity to multiply his body (despite Nestor's morbid encouragement).

In an interesting form of patriotic, imaginative arithmetic, Nestor replenishes his own mangled body and blood by reproducing and adding to the stock of loyal, British citizens (supposedly this point might bring some kind of comfort to Emma by suggesting that a dedicated British soldier can also return home and take up the mantle of the domestic). But the Carbine brothers instruct the children in their future careers in the military by making them engage in war games, an indication that the young generation will follow in the footsteps of the old. In fact, since Pratt places "A Military Fragment" in the recent past, the Carbine children might be in the process of fighting in the American Revolution. Nestor imagines a healthier British political body through his familial contributions, but his children's desire to follow a military career suggests that in the future, their bodies, too, will become partial. The fight for national, military victories fractures the individuals who make up the nation, and Pratt indicates that the bodily sacrifice has no redemptive power.

In his depiction of the Carbine family, Pratt magnifies the physical cost of the war over the course of generations, and instead of focusing on national victories, he depicts the importance of sentimental, interpersonal relationships.[35] Julius describes how Nestor doted on his wife Frances throughout all of his campaigns, until Nestor returned from a battle with a wound, and while she tended to his injury, she fell ill herself and died. Julius continues to comment on the close emotional ties between the two of them, and he even reminisces about Frances's burial—during this emotional event, Julius mentions how Nestor actually began to shed tears and then threw himself atop the coffin in a desperate attempt to cling to Frances one moment longer.

Throughout this brief recollection in the hospital, Nestor periodically interrupts Julius with a forceful "*Go no farther*" (125) and a typographically differentiated "GO NO FARTHER" (126) because he can feel the rising tide of emotion incited by the memory of his deceased wife. Julius (in what is perhaps a typical fashion for a younger brother) refuses to stop telling the story of the death of Frances, and finally Nestor pleadingly asks, "Wilt *kill* me, Julius? Said Nestor; stop, I say!" (126). Again, Julius refuses to stop but the text abruptly cuts short Julius's dialogue with the following comment: "[The fragment is here defaced, and illegible for some pages]" (126). Unlike the first two tears in the fragment that appear seamlessly within the text, the unknown editor or writer offsets this statement by placing it in brackets, clearly separating it from the narration and indicating its unusual status. The clarity evoked by the typography of the statement and its matter-of-fact information contrasts the illegible nature of the fragment which "is here defaced, and illegible for some pages." Equally significant, this example differs because it presents full "pages" that cannot be transcribed—the text physically exists but cannot be read because of its thorough defacement.

The "defaced" text holds a deep connection to the soldiers, whose faces are scarred and wounded by a variety of injuries. The Carbine brothers mention earlier in the narrative how proud they both felt after their first campaign, and that in "every lineament there was seasoning. The sun had written hero in our countenances, and we rejoiced in the dignity of the tan" (122). Their tanned faces serve as a point of pride, as do the wounds that progressively accumulate on their countenances. But the "defaced" text not only telegraphs a physical spoiling, it comes at the height of an emotional climax, right when Nestor thinks he can simply no longer listen to Julius tell the story of Nestor's deceased wife. In narrative terms, the interruption in the story functions in the same way that narrators or characters mention the indescribable by saying, "I cannot tell how lovely she was because her beauty surpassed all description," or "The depths of his sorrow cannot be told in mere words." Ironically, these examples function to *show* the loveliness of the woman or the depths of sorrow by claiming an inability to represent them in words—they are beyond representation. The defaced text belongs to the same category as these commonplace sentimental devices because it indexes the extreme emotion felt by Nestor at the death of his wife. Rather than indicate an impossible task of description, Pratt shows how that description itself has been defaced and rendered illegible. Either the act of writing was impossible because of the extraordinary emotions, or someone came along later and felt that such private feelings should not be written down and made available to a reader.

Caroline Arnold believes that the story she sends to Emma shows "the best parent, the most loyal subject, and the most valuable citizen" (116), but the actual events and descriptions do not seem to fulfill this promise. Even when the narrator visits the two brothers with his daughter, human sympathy can only do so much for the veterans—there are no cures for a lost limb, or a destroyed psyche. The fragment ends with the narrator giving money to Nestor, who

feels so thankful that "a tear started from his eye" (126). The tear hangs in Nestor's eye until he bows to the narrator and his daughter:

> The tear had verged off, possibly while he was bowing. It had got upon *my* little girl's face; and there it hung like a dew-drop from a rose-bud. Good God, said I, how rapid an exchange! In saying this, I found it had vanished from the cheek of my daughter, in the time that I was making the exclamation! Alas, it is *quite* gone then! said I. No! upon lifting my hand to my face sometime after, I found the precious offering of sympathy had changed a *third* time its residence, and was trembling on my own cheek. I blessed it, and… (127)

Pratt demonstrates the infectiousness of sentiment by describing how the tear physiologically moves from Nestor, to the narrator's daughter, and finally to the narrator himself. In the ideal sentimental mode, the tear might then move to the face of the reader. Instead of perpetuating a legacy of generational conflict (as in *The History of The Old Fring'd Petticoat: A Fragment*) and proleptically envisioning future conflict, this tear passing from the veteran, to the narrator's daughter, and finally to the narrator creates an alternative inheritance. But the possibilities embedded in the exchange—which the narrator almost seems to *pay* for since the gift of charity creates Julius's tear—abruptly ends midsentence. The narrator "blessed it, and…" the line ends without a conclusion (127). Pratt decides to make the final scene of the fragment an unfinished one, missing a seemingly important part. Within the story he projects a failure of sentimental, narrative completion.

Indeed, the rest of *Emma Corbett* fulfills the prophecies implied by the bodies of the Carbine brothers. Emma feels driven to despair by her longing for Henry so she crosses the Atlantic to America in the disguise of a sailor, finds him, and after a brief marriage they both die.

Charles Corbett's only son, Edward Corbett, dies only weeks before Henry and Emma and Edward's wife, Louisa, also dies. This leaves an entire young, promising generation demolished, and it leaves Charles Corbett alone in his old age except for the legacy of two baby grandchildren. Even more so than the depredations experienced by the Carbine brothers, the violent birth of the nation takes a severe toll on the Corbett and Hammond families.

As an alternative, Pratt fashions spaces within his novel that attempt to represent broken bodies, emotions, and minds. These narrative spaces emphasize a preservational economy of fragments through narrative, rather than an additive one that seeks to remedy injuries. Instead of projecting an ideology of curative restoration, Pratt highlights the need to maintain marginal identities by repeating their stories.[36] Politically speaking, the memorial focus of the fragments in Pratt's novel pulls the text into a retrospective temporality that counteracts the prospective, future-oriented actions of the Revolutionary War.[37] This detachment from the forward march of the American colonies and the British Empire creates a temporally dislocated identity because the remnants of broken bodies from past conflicts exist within the national present. *Emma Corbett* indicates that this misalignment will always exist, even more so if the colonies successfully break off from the mother country. In this way, the very moment of American political genesis also propagates a ruined identity, one that emerges directly alongside the possibility of a national identity.

Not surprisingly, *Emma Corbett* appears repeatedly in the catalogs of American booksellers, libraries, and schools throughout the rest of the eighteenth century and into the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Important booksellers like Mathew Carey and Isaiah Thomas included Pratt's novel in their stock, and it circulated across the country through major arteries of literary dissemination: it appeared in Philadelphia, New York City, Boston,

Worcester, and also surfaced in more unexpected places like Charleston, Baltimore, and Providence.[38] The popularity of the novel indicates a widespread interest in the establishment of the nation, but also the intense anxiety surrounding the destruction and personal violence that occurred during the Revolution.

But the novel did not always circulate in a complete form. "A Military Fragment" provided editors with a portion of text that could be easily detached from the whole; in an early review of *Emma Corbett* from *The Critical Review*, the publication presents its readers with the fragment in order to exemplify the entire text. As Christopher Flynn points out in his study of the novel, the June 1780 review provides a "discussion of *Emma Corbett* [that] focuses almost entirely on this section of the text" (29).[39] More importantly, "A Military Fragment" appeared in *The Paternal Present: Being a Sequel to Pity's Gift. Chiefly Selected From the Writings of Mr. Pratt*, a book published in 1807 by Jacob Johnson in Philadelphia.[40] The book followed in the tradition of popular anthology genres and found a place on the bookshelf next to collections, repositories, books of beauties, selections, flowers of literature, and treasuries of poems.[41] The editorial decision to publish the fragment separately from the novel detached the fragment from its embedded, explanatory context and turned it into more of a freely circulating entity. In 1780 Pratt's fragment functioned in an anachronistic fashion since it was written in Caroline Arnold's youth and referenced earlier military battles in England's history; by extending this anachronism into the early nineteenth century, the repeated excerpting of "A Military Fragment" indicates an interest in the way that the consequences of national conflicts reverberated from the past into the future. For many late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century American readers, the violent establishment of the nation carried with it an unrelenting legacy of physical fragmentation that authors represented in texts.

Periodical Fragments and Editorial Work

The republication of "A Military Fragment" in *The Critical Review* and *The Paternal Present* indicates the way in which the shorter form of the fragment could be extracted and placed in compilations and anthologies. As indicated by the publishing history of Pratt's work, in the decades after the Revolutionary War the fragment form increased in popularity throughout the newly formed United States. Indeed, fragments appeared not just in novels, but also in the pages of newspapers, magazines, and in ephemeral printings like broadsides and pamphlets. In Pratt's "A Military Fragment," he pays close attention to the typographical presentation of fragmented bodies, texts, and nations. Similarly, the precise meaning of printed fragments on the architectural space of the page was not lost on other writers in the 1770s and 80s. In particular, the Irish-American writer and printer Mathew Carey was attuned to the importance underlying the visual representation of fragments in printing. Throughout the composition of his famous periodical, *The American Museum*, Carey presented fragments in a way that highlighted the political and social exclusions of the early Republic.

Carey focuses on a larger range of individuals than Pratt, though. The earlier discussion of Pratt's *Emma Corbett* examined his extended treatment of the marginalized veterans who live in the space of the hospital; unlike the narrator of "A Military Fragment," the Carbine brothers live in a physically static environment without the social, economic, and bodily mobility available to others. However, in the early Republic writers composed prose fragments that focused on a variety of different identities, not just veterans. Periodical fragments extend beyond the single category examined by Pratt and function to represent a diverse array of ostracized individuals in the early Republic—the fragment form provided writers with a means of

representing how certain individuals existed in a marginal relation to political structures of power that cultivated the identity of liberal, male subjects.

Even though the precise restrictions on the Carbine brothers differ from those that circumscribe a prostitute or a bound, African-American slave (to take two examples that will shortly be discussed), authors still used the fragment form to represent all three individuals. Throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the fragment form proves indefinitely extensible to widely different characters and circumstances. By connecting a variety of individuals in a partial way—partial because the shared term links the figures and simultaneously indicates a separation—the flexible aesthetics of the fragment brings into relief an otherwise obscure network of relations. Not linked by the particulars of gender, racial origin, economic class, geopolitical space, or party politics, the individuals represented within fragments nonetheless exist in a delicate relationship with one another. Linked through its collective term, the fragment form functions to bring a disparate group together in related political struggles. No early Republican medium reflects these qualities of the fragment more than the periodical, which at once brings multiple pieces of writing together and also contains parts that threaten to overtake the whole.

The placement of fragments within magazines raises important questions surrounding editorial agency. As demonstrated with the example of "A Military Fragment," the fragment form creates an ambiguity of provenance. While a fragment primarily posits a connection between a scrap of writing and a larger text, it also presents the contingency of the text-author relation by highlighting the *alienability* of a text from its original author. Separated from a definitive historical and compositional context by (among other possible causes) familial estrangements, the degradation of time, accidents of history, war, or politics, the fragment form

implies that external agencies have processed, disrupted, and partially destroyed a piece of paper. But the publication of a fragment within a periodical or newspaper implies that a further agency has rediscovered the piece of writing and resituated it in a curated miscellany, a process of gathering that emphasizes a heterogeneous compilation. In contrast to a novel that includes a fragment, the placement of a fragment within a periodical enters the prose piece into something like a contemporary *bricolage*, in which "a fragment can itself become a component and be used as a part of a completely different work, like the fragments of ancient walls used to build new walls or the fragments of antiquities inserted in the walls of Renaissance villas in Rome" (Lichtenstein, 121-23). Meaning accrues in the fragment form through the movement back and forth between dispersion and consolidation, a movement that a periodical structure intensifies.

The miscellany of articles in newspapers and periodicals provides a paratextual context for prose fragments; more specifically, the collection of writing within a single issue indicates cohesion among the wide variety of pieces due to the physical manipulation of articles into their corresponding places. The presence of prose fragments in periodicals indicated that fragments could be manipulated and recuperated, to a certain extent. This recuperation held political valence because the short prose pieces often focused on the plight of marginalized individuals. Via a clearly stated association between a prose fragment and an individual, the publication of prose pieces in a periodical insinuated a corresponding direction over a person who had similarly become splintered from his or her community as a result of social problems. By managing the form and the person into the space of the periodical, editors could imaginatively refashion a new contextual, communal space for displaced individuals. The use of prose rather than poetry gave the fragments a stronger sense of didactic reform, an important impulse for periodicals and

newspapers that wanted to present readers with a contemporary closeness to everyday happenings.

Rarely did a fragment run to more than a page or a portion of a page in late eighteenth-century periodicals—like many other scraps of writing in magazines, fragments provided editors with smaller portions of text that they could use to fill out an issue of a publication. Of course, the publication of fragments in between longer articles and stories was not just a practical consideration for the editor; the form gave readers a glance into the problems encountered by marginalized individuals, and stimulated the audience to correct social wrongs. In Andrew Piper's description of the related form of the miscellany in the Romantic period, he argues that the assortment of writing encouraged the participation of the audience: "[T]he miscellany was far more a document of the carnevalesque [sic] impulse to undo…rules, standards, or means. With the absence of any obvious organizing principle and the simultaneous presence of high, low, and outright weird texts, the romantic miscellany authorized the reader to create the linkages between such cultural strata" (122). Piper's carnival of reading surely leaves out the important role of the editor in periodicals, but he does capture the "simultaneous presence" of a variety of texts, and what he calls the "growing heterogeneity of writing within the larger literary market" (125).[42] The organization of magazine articles into a pastiche suited the concise, emotional fragments that ran over a wide range of topics; furthermore, the collation of materials by the editor functioned in a creative, authorial way by bringing "an assemblage of multiple discrete works into a larger structure whose formal interplay of textual and material parts makes available some version of…literary effects" (Bahr, 10). The placement of a fragment in a magazine thus exemplifies an instance of strong editorial control, but also provides a piece of writing that "authorized the reader" to act in a politically productive fashion.

Mathew Carey's Ideal Polity

The immigrant writer, printer, publisher, and bookseller Mathew Carey played a central role in the development of the periodical form in the early Republic. He also exemplified the cultural interest in fragments throughout much of his career in the 1780s and 1790s, and helped popularize the form by publishing and writing fragments. Crucially, Carey believed that "the ideal polity was where its citizens could work together to secure the interests of the wider community and thereby promote their own virtue as well as the happiness of the whole" (Bric, 417-8). This perspective contributed to his interest in individuals that were somehow misaligned with "the wider community." In fact, Carey's own biography demonstrates his relevance for thinking about the place of ostracized figures—even though he eventually found a secure place in the political life of the early United States, he grew up a disabled, politically radical Irish Catholic who left his native country because of persecution and sought asylum first in France and then in America. In Carey's infancy "his nurse dropped him, injuring a foot so that he limped all his life" (Green *Mathew Carey* 3), an impairment that physically distinguished Carey from his peers. Later in his life Carey's pro-Irish and pro-Catholic publications placed him in immediate danger, so his father moved Carey to the relative safety of Paris. After the threat subsided Carey returned to Ireland, where he again troubled the establishment and his enemies charged him with libel. In order to escape the accusations, Carey left Ireland for America in 1784 and "[l]egend has it that he was smuggled on board dressed as a woman" (Green *Mathew Carey* 4).

Carey's tumultuous life experiences make him an ideal figure for understanding alternate modes of political affiliation in the early national period. Despite the fact that he developed

important relationships with politicians in the early Republic, over the course of his life his identity aligned him with a number of different minorities (Irish, Catholic, and disabled). Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari rightly suggest that "if the writer is in the margins or completely outside his or her fragile community, this situation allows the writer all the more the possibility to express another possible community and to forge the means for another consciousness and another sensibility" (17). Throughout his fragment writings, Carey works hard to "forge the means for another consciousness and another sensibility" that reaches outside of the aspirations toward national identity so present in the early years of the country. Carey focuses on figures and literatures of minority, thereby creating communities related to, but not precisely part of the larger national whole that began to take shape in the late eighteenth century.

Carey's first major magazine series, *The American Museum*, took an approach that was "[n]either ethnic nor parochial, it was national and nationalistic. As the debate over ratification of the Constitution raged in 1787 and 1788, it printed many powerful arguments in favor…as well as a few opposed, as a token of non-partisan status. The pro-Constitution party was quick to see the *Museum's* potential as a propaganda medium and Carey on the whole was cooperative" (Green, *Mathew Carey* 25). Even though Carey's politics later shifted when Federalists more openly rejected republican France, in the 1780s and early 1790s he printed writing that tried to unify the nation under a single federal government, collecting a multitude of pieces into a single body.[43] At the same time that Carey went beyond the "ethnic" and the "parochial," I argue that he also went beyond the "national and nationalistic" in his writing and highlighted the importance of benevolence in the construction of sympathetic communities. Instead of looking exclusively to the authority of an incipient national consciousness (one that excluded a wide range of individuals), Carey published pieces that created extra-national affiliations, emphasizing

the importance of more expansive forms of identity. By sidestepping the significance of nationality in the construction of individuality, Carey used religious sympathy to humanize marginal figures and rehabilitate them into a community of fellow humans. Through his fragments, Carey extended the category of the human to marginalized figures.

Because a fragment inherently posits a relationship between a former, complete entity and the current dissevered piece, the form proved particularly suitable for Carey to consider how to incorporate lost members. More importantly though, the presentation of an individual as a fragment points toward a past moment in which the person was part of a unified whole—by constructing an individual as a fragment, Carey implied that the person was formerly part of a larger community. Through the fragment form, Carey imagines a previous, communal organic structure to which individuals belonged, making their relationship with other people an always already concept by reaching back to the past and looking forward to a moment in which the "happiness of the whole" can be recreated. Carey thereby provides a more temporally complex form of affiliation than the one suggested in Benedict Anderson's account of print nationality because Carey reaches back into an undefined past to imaginatively create a human collectivity—one that existed in anticipation of any official codification through public documents.

Moreover, the rehabilitation of marginalized individuals that Carey presents in his fragments "depends for its live existence on the capacity of a far-flung citizenry to feel both an acute grief and, in the grain of that grief, an attachment, an *intimacy* with unknown others" (Coviello, 166). The intimacy extends into the past moment of fracture and into the future moment of reunion—a "far-flung citizenry" must feel an "acute grief" for the marginalized, "unknown others" by reaching back into the past and extending a "live existence" into the

present. Ostracized individuals represented in prose fragments depended on a sympathetic communion with anonymous strangers (readers) who could help reunite them to the community based on an organic relation in the past. Through this sympathetic rebuilding, Carey emphasizes that the past fracture that separated the figure from the imagined collective must eventually be overlooked, repaired and forgotten, turning the separation into an anachronistic remnant—what Jerome Christensen calls "the potent icon of the past's incapacity to coincide with itself, to seal itself off as a period or epoch or episode" (3). The sense of human sympathy invoked by Carey's selective understanding of the past brings individuals back into the fold of humanity, but not without some evidence, some scar of that previous fracture which retains an "incapacity to coincide with itself" in a past.

In the very first issue of his influential periodical *The American Museum; or, Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces & c. Prose and Poetical*, published on January 1, 1787, Carey wrote and published a series of three short articles that focused on outcast figures: "The prostitute.—A fragment," "Negro trade.—A fragment," and "The Slave.—A fragment." In each prose piece a speaker encounters different marginalized individuals: a prostitute, a slave trader and his forlorn account of slavery, and a (newly) freed slave. The speaker describes the condition of the individual, and then implores the reader for understanding, charity, sympathy, and action in order to help raise the individual out of her or his circumstances. More broadly, the speaker also targets the wider societal wrongs that have created the conditions for suffering. All three fragments provide space for the degraded individual to speak for herself and himself, and then also include a portion in which the speaker moralizes on the abject suffering and moral problems created by systematic injuries. While the three pieces of writing (no more than half a page each)

could easily be classified as sketches, articles, columns, tales, or even dialogues, by naming each a "fragment" Carey emphasizes the disjointed elements of each person.

In a similar way, the very title of Carey's periodical—*The American Museum*—suggests his desire to bring forth artifacts from a disassembled past and organize them into an intelligible aesthetic and didactic presentation for his subscribers. Carey synchs these three figures to an archaic temporality, indicating a desire to make their problems a thing of the past. He wants to focus on the past state in which the individuals were part of a community, not on the fracture (originating in the past but continuing into the present) that first separated them from others. The fragments imply that the readers of *The American Museum* should endeavor to restore these individuals to their proper place in society. Thus, the series posits a tension between the current, fragmented status of the three outcasts (which also casts them into the past) and the hope that in the near future all three can reconnect to their local communities, placing the figures in a complex web of temporal moments. The logic functions similarly to how Yopie Prins describes the nineteenth-century reaction to Sappho: her "texts are made to exemplify the formal mechanism through which a body, person, subjectivity, and voice can be imagined as prior to, yet also produced by, a history of fragmentation," creating a "projected fantasy of a female body and a feminine voice" (4).

Through his position as editor, Carey resolves the complex temporal directions of the pieces, and even though the genre of the fragment serves to highlight the alienated, outsider status of the three individuals, the editorial act of placing all three together in a series indicates an associative consistency. In the hands of the writer and editor, the disjointed figures achieve a degree of coherence that shows a management of categories of identity that creates a "projected fantasy" of unity. By juxtaposing the three articles alongside one another, Carey implies a

continuity among them that elides the irresolvable differences among disparities like race, gender, and class, an elision that finds its way into much of the fragment writing published in periodicals and newspapers. This conglomeration of individuals does not at all display an accidental or haphazard mode of production on Carey's part. By collecting these individuals together on the pages of his magazine he already begins to alter their status as splintered from society because now the three can be brought together and collectively recognized as needing social assistance (even if their problems are unique). Together, the figures fit together in a miniature network. While the freed slave and the slave trader work together well as a thematic diptych, the prostitute proves to be the odd woman out, giving the series a certain imbalance. Racially though, the prostitute and the slave trader can be aligned (since the writer makes no mention of race in either case, the default would have been white), and because of their subservient and degraded positions the prostitute can be placed in company with the slave. This round robin of identification and mutual attachment already begins to establish ties that exemplify the kinds of manifold bonds that help constitute reconnections with larger communities. Simply by juxtaposing the three figures together on the pages of the periodical, Carey begins to create a print-based connection among marginalized figures.

The attempt to create a unity out of fragmentation is evidenced in the content of each piece. In each fragment the speaker points to a path of redemption in which the marginalized figure will successfully rejoin the ranks of humanity in the near future. For instance, Christian sympathy triumphs when the speaker of "The prostitute.—A fragment" tells the ruined woman, "I will take care of thee, Magdalen" (45)—all at once he becomes an adoptive father, models a virtuous deed for the readers of the periodical, and places a biblical emphasis on his actions. But before the speaker offers his comfort and help to the young woman, a "short conversation

discovered she was the daughter of an old friend" (45), pointing towards a moment earlier in time before her seduction when she lived a respectable, domestic existence. A nameless tragedy occurred in the woman's past that fragmented her from her stable, familial life; moreover, the coincidence that "she was the daughter of an old friend" implies that any anonymous, neglected person on the street might have a connection to a reader of *The American Museum*. Because of the possibility that an ostracized stranger could be a former acquaintance, Carey argues that help should be offered in every possible circumstance.

The focus on reestablishing former communities and creating personal relationships with marginalized figures continues in Carey's fragment about the slave. At the very beginning of the fragment the speaker frees one of his slaves from servitude, a man who "had a wife in Africa. Often did he speak of her—and as often would the uplifted eye seem to call heaven to witness the purity of his love" (46). The slave's strong emotional connection to "a wife in Africa" implies that he will attempt to rejoin her, or perhaps help her cross the Atlantic to visit him. As a result of the slave's release from bondage, Carey imagines the reconstitution of previous familial ties; moreover, Carey also represents the establishment of new connections based on a sympathetic humanity: the speaker announces that "The cry of fire echoed through the house—my daughter was in imminent danger. The slave, whom I had freed, impelled by gratitude, rushed through the flames—rescued her from danger—brought her safe to my arms—and disappeared" (46). By releasing the slave from chains, the speaker inadvertently saves his own daughter and helps to maintain the existence of his family unit. The speaker's actions at the beginning of the piece make the slave feel "gratitude" for his newfound liberty, which in turn leads the freed man to risk his life for his former master's daughter. Carey's fragment

demonstrates how sympathy multiplies itself and how charitable actions can provide a return on kind gestures, a view that encourages readers to act in a benevolent manner.

More so than the other two fragments, Carey's piece on the slave functions in critique of exclusions codified by the federal government. When the Constitution passed the Three-Fifths Compromise in 1787 the nation accounted slaves as "three fifths of all other Persons" in determining state population for purposes of legislative representation. While Carey could not have known that the Constitutional Congress would pass this specific resolution in the months after the publication of his article, similar proposals in which slaves comprised a fraction of an individual circulated in the years after the Revolutionary War. By transforming the fragmented slave into a freed man, Carey depicts the manner in which non-governmental forms of sympathetic affiliation can reconstitute an individual, and thereby create a change that echoes into the future.

"The Slave.—A fragment." addresses the systemic flaws of greed that lead to the perpetuation of slavery. At the end of the vignette, the speaker exclaims, "Ye proudly rich! let your hearts for once be softened: let compassion sit on your brow, and have mercy on your debtors!" (46). Rather than focus exclusively on the individual slave, Carey also depicts the importance of domestic life and critiques larger issues of greed and immorality that plague the young nation. He deploys a similar double interest in the final fragment on negro trade—a promotion of family life and a critical evaluation of the problems of greed. While the title proves puzzling at first glance (why would Carey, an anti-slavery advocate, be invested in the figure of a slaver?), it explicates a strain of morality that emphasizes the universal, inescapable sin of slavery.

The fragment begins by describing the physical dangers that a group of sailors experienced at sea. The "captain of a ship in the negro trade" relates how "the crew had been thirty—of whom only three returned" because of disease, onshore murders, the loss of an entire ship, and a slave mutiny (45). Friends, wives, daughters, and sons ask for their family members, but almost the entire crew has perished (along with many slaves). Carey laments the systemic tolls of the slave trade on both sides—he sees its corrupting influence on the enslaved and on the individuals who perpetuate bondage. But he points out that responsibility for the continuation of African slavery lies elsewhere. The end of the fragment turns attention to the actions of the reader—the speaker asks, "And why is this cruelty practiced? That we may have sugar to sweeten tea that debilitates us— Rum to make punch to intoxicate us— And indigo to dye our clothes. In short, thousands are made wretched—nations are dragged into slavery—to supply the luxuries of their fellow creatures!" (46). Carey's fragment examines the depredations that exist within all aspects of the slave trade, and seeks ameliorative action on the part of the reader.

In fact, all three of the fragments urge the readers of Carey's periodical to take personal action by aiding the prostitute, freeing the slave, and civilizing the slave trader. More importantly, the fragments also urge readers to take a position of reform that will correct the larger social ills in need of attention. By asking the readers to manipulate their own sympathetic states in order to align themselves with three figures, the fragments place the audience in a similar position to the editor who has brought the three figures into relation with one another and into the assemblage of the periodical. The further agency and sympathy of the readers is needed in order to help the three people and bring them out of their severed, immoral state. Thus, while the form of the fragment proves to be a useful vehicle for the depiction of social problems in *The American Museum*, the series also definitively points towards the elimination of the very genre

that it uses by proposing certain modes of individual and social reform. In Carey's idealized future, the prostitute, slave trader, and slave will no longer be fragments but will take on a new, intact identity.

Examples of this sort abound in early national periodicals and newspapers, with titles that highlight forsaken figures in sore need of compassion: "The Unfeeling Father.: A Fragment" (1789); "The beggar. A Fragment" (1790); "Peter Pennyless.—A fragment" (1790); "The Condemned Prisoner. A Fragment" (1791); "The Poor Old Man.—A Fragment" (1791); "Slavery. A Fragment" (1792); "The Mad Girl of St. Joseph's. A Fragment." (1793); and "The Soliloquies of a Highwayman. A Fragment" (1795). These texts presented readers of magazines with brief, sympathetic insights into the events surrounding broken families, seduced women, poor beggars, and criminal exploits, and almost always ended with an appeal to the audience for tolerance and charity. As the list of titles demonstrates, writers of prose fragments in the early national period often focused on a single neglected person, and used his or her problems to exemplify the need for social reform. Unlike an editorial column that discusses the *general* importance of maintaining principles like charity, altruism, or honesty, these fragments show how the entire life of a single person can become defined by words like "poor," "mad," or "condemned" (by certain, specific events in the past).

In addition to the series of three fragments already discussed, Carey's magazine published a large number of fragment pieces that focused on a variety of different figures. Carey himself also wrote a number of fragments outside of the pages of *The American Museum*. Before he started *The American Museum* he worked on *The Columbian Magazine* and for its first issue in 1786 he wrote "Hard Times. A Fragment," a short prose piece on the problems of lavish expenditure during a difficult economic period. He encourages the readers of the fragment to

save, rather than spend in order to prevent widespread poverty. Carey also published a longer prose fragment when he wrote and commissioned the printing of a pamphlet entitled *Fragment. Addressed to the Sons and Daughters of Humanity, By a Citizen of the World* (1796).[44] Written in the same vein as the shorter pieces published in his magazines, the seven-page work focuses on a poor family that has just lost the father (the sole money-earner in the family). The narrator pleads with the reader, asking for understanding and sympathy—as in his other fragments, Carey implies that the direct actions of the audience can aid individuals in dire circumstances. On the one hand, Carey's pamphlet publication experimented with a longer form and tried to target a different reading audience less dependent on the circulation of *The American Museum*; however, the work also appeared that same year with the much more succinct title of "A Fragment" in *The New York Magazine*. The dual publication of Carey's piece shows how prose fragments could theoretically stand on their own, without the contextual background created by the eclectic, miscellaneous magazine offerings.

More importantly, the title of the fragment indicates Carey's interest in moving beyond the nation toward a more universal kind of affiliation—as if the pamphlet were a letter, Carey addresses it to "*the Sons and Daughters of Humanity*," making his audience as broad as possible. He extends beyond the nationality implied by *The American Museum* and the regionality signified by *The New York Magazine* and instead hails a larger audience. In conjunction with his imagined expansion of readership, Carey also aligns his authorship not with the nation, but with the world, presenting a cosmopolitan reach that moves beyond the confines of the United States. His use of the phrase "*Citizen of the World*" creates a tension between his national membership in the young nation and his wider attachment to humanity at large, an attachment evidenced by his own movement from Ireland, to France, back to Ireland, and then to the United States. In his

use of the fragment form, Carey applied himself to the construction of sympathetic communities that existed outside of nationally codified forms of identity. Rather than focus intensely on a single identity, as Samuel Jackson Pratt does with the figure of the veterans in *Emma Corbett*, Carey take advantage of the brief article format and heterogeneity of periodicals to present a multiplicity of ostracized figures. By presenting a slave, slave trader, prostitute, and an impoverished family, Carey indicates that marginalized individuals in the early American Republic are *not* the exception. And, he acknowledges the way that their particular forms of exclusion are unique, but also overlap in politically productive ways—collectively, they constitute an important portion of the population that needs to be accounted for in some way. By projecting their inclusion into humanity, Carey imaginatively heals their previous fracture and places them within a sympathetic circle, a non-national community of sympathy.

Religious Roots

Without a doubt, the fragment form played an essential role in Mathew Carey's writings and his editorial work in magazines (especially in *The American Museum*). Carey's interest in the writing and printing of fragments drew on the popularity of eighteenth-century fragments (described in the introduction) and also exemplified another important influence. The connection in his work between fragments, marginalized figures, and the need for sympathetic compassion stretches back to the Christian roots of late eighteenth-century society. Carey's own Catholic background placed him at odds with the predominant Protestant culture, but his emphasis on the fragment underlined a sense of religious economy that circulated widely throughout the early United States. Instead of attempting to enforce national affiliations, Carey makes recourse to the moral actions underlying a more universal, Christian community.

The clipped and didactic style of Carey's three periodical fragments draws its inspiration from the only miracle recorded by all four Gospels, when Christ feeds five thousand hungry followers after saying a blessing over five loaves of bread and two fish. After the blessing, he divides up the food and the loaves and fish miraculously satisfy everyone—he then asks his twelve disciples to go amongst the people and "[g]ather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost" (157 NT).[45] Once the disciples assemble the leftovers, they find (much to their astonishment) that the crumbs from the meal fill twelve baskets to the brim, providing a surplus of food that will help nourish Christ's large group of hungry followers. The parable focuses on the importance of economy because Christ asks his followers to save even the tiniest crumbs that have been dropped. In terms of physical economy, the passage indicates the importance of dividing material goods equally within a community in order to make sure that each person receives his or her fair share—no one should be left out, and necessities like food and spiritual comfort should always be shared. From a spiritual perspective, it also allegorizes the way in which faith multiplies itself exponentially, generating a surplus even when a person only begins with a small amount that seems deficient.

The impulse to collect fragments together "so that nothing may be lost" fits perfectly with the sequence of pieces published in Carey's periodical, and also corresponds to their overt, didactic critique of social ills and their plea for justice. Carey's magazine explicitly makes an allegiance with the spirit of the parable by publishing an advice article in 1791 for suffering individuals entitled, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost." The piece of writing offers a parable-like story of a father who practices husbandry and focuses on increasing the gifts heaven has provided for his family; he also tries to convince his poorer neighbors that they should follow in the path he has laid out so that they can be included in his success. As the publication of this

essay proves, Carey was aware of the biblical emphasis that his readers might give to a piece of writing called a "fragment"—an individual identified as a "fragment" needed to be regenerated and put back together by the very kind of agency exemplified by the arrangement and collation of periodical articles. Following this concept, the series of three fragments published in the first issue of *The American Museum* brings three marginalized individuals together on the page, and then demonstrates how they can be reintegrated into larger sympathetic communities. After the initial publication of "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost," the article was republished in at least three other periodicals—*The Universal Asylum and Columbian Magazine* in 1791, *Philadelphia Repository and Weekly Register* in 1801, and *The Medical and Agricultural Register* in 1807. In addition, over the course of the first few decades of the nineteenth century, a wide variety of Christian and literary magazines published articles with the phrase in the title, giving it a cultural currency and visibility that made it known to a wide reading public.[46]

Because of the parable's omnipresence in printed media (not to mention in sermons), it was one of the most popularly recognized Biblical sayings in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America. The repetition of the phrase over and over again in periodical writing gave it an aphoristic quality that aligns it with Gary Saul Morson's definition of a "wise saying." In his book-length study of short genres, Morson argues that the "wise saying" presents an invocation to the reader and "carr[ies] the sense of orality: they are *sayings*, what is said and what has been said, now and before the time of writing" (122). Indeed, Christ's "[p]roverbs seem to step out of the historical present, out of history altogether, to speak the eternal, the principles upon which the world was made….they carry the aura of endless time and universality of place" (Morson 122).[47] Because Carey and other writers quote directly from Christ's statement to his followers, the phrase contains both an oral *and* an oracular sense, making it seem as if the

periodical speaks directly to the readers of the periodical with wisdom that has an "aura of endless time and universality of place." By gathering the fragmented individuals together and helping them rejoin society, the readers of magazines like *The American Museum* fulfilled the "universality" of religious exhortations and also contributed to the more specific goal of consolidating local religious communities.

The push for reform so clearly present in his three fragments and in similar pieces only *grew* in scale in America in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and reformers started a more organized effort to "[g]ather up the fragments left over" with the establishment on October 19, 1812 of the Fragment Society of Boston. The establishment of the society shows how Carey's concept of reform extended beyond his periodical and had a strong hold in the cultural consciousness of concerned citizens. Like many of the organizations that were part of the United Evangelical Front—a coalition of groups that focused on improving social ills through Christian benevolence—the Fragment Society tried to reach out to the poor and the marginalized in order to improve their position. Not surprisingly, this reform-minded association took its name from the biblical parable, and primarily consisted of a sewing circle committed to collecting scraps of rags and stitching them together to make clothing for the poor (The Fragment Society was established in Boston in 1812 and incorporated in 1816. Over the course of the nineteenth century it grew and expanded geographically, and the society is still in existence today.).

In the same way that Carey's triptych and the biblical parable promote aid to ostracized individuals and economy, the Fragment Society tried to assist a group of dispossessed people by fixing their material condition and changing their appearance and identity. As with the fragment essays published in periodicals, the Society took a broad-scale approach to reform, claiming in their act of incorporation that "[t]he widow, the orphan, the infirm, the sick, the idiot, are to be

found among us, and look to the Fragment Society for relief" (11), a statement that elides the different conditions exemplified by each figure. Reformers like Carey and those who joined the Fragment Society considered the reintegration of an individual into a religious community society as an uncontested good; consolidating communities helped build the localities that took the place of the nation and could heal the wounds that individuals had recently experienced. For the writers of the periodical pieces the fragment form presented an opportunity to promote a heterogeneous *and* unified society—much like the assemblage of the periodical, the fragment functioned as a synechdocal genre, one that rarely stood unattached to an entire set of other writings.

Pratt and Carey composed their fragments before the wave of reform that defined grassroots political action throughout much of the nineteenth century. In this way, they anticipated a concern with the broken lives of individuals that felt misaligned from the national community at large. While Pratt presents a narrative that identifies the limits of sympathy and Carey more optimistically attempts to view the ways in which sympathy can create non-national affiliations for a fragmented person, both begin by turning their gaze toward the ruins of the past. Recognizing the persisting resonance of individuals left behind, Pratt and Carey choose *not* to ignore the "wretched Fragments of Empire" feared by Washington or the "fragments of Roman and Gothic barbarism" critiqued by Carwin; instead, they attempt to represent the unrepresentable in their depictions of individuals who lived outside of the nation's progressive evolution.

Chapter 2

Aposiopesis and Missing Letters in *Charlotte Temple* and *The Coquette*

Charlotte's Letters and "The Care of Neptune"

Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* was first published in England in 1791 and shortly afterward in the United States in 1794. It proved to be one of the most popular novels published in America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The story of seduction, partially inspired by the success of novels like Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, tells the story of a dashing British soldier named John Montraville, who convinces the young and impressionable Charlotte Temple to leave her boarding school with him. Charlotte's libertine (and French) guardian, Mademoiselle La Rue, supports Montraville in his encouragements; eventually Charlotte agrees to accompany Montraville to his post at a scene of colonial conflict (the American Revolutionary war). Played out against the divisive struggle between colony and motherland, the events of the novel turn away from the large-scale political fractures, and instead focus on Charlotte's life, her day-to-day emotions, and the tragedies that befall her. Much like Samuel Jackson Pratt's *Emma Corbett*, the plot of *Charlotte Temple* depicts the cruel displacements of war, but resists taking a particular side in the conflict.

Throughout the novel, the narrator makes it clear that despite Charlotte's severe transgression against her loving parents and her familial responsibilities, she never loses her faith in her family and persists in her belief that Montraville will marry her. In fact, after Charlotte leaves her boarding school with Montraville, and before she fully submits to his seduction in the transatlantic journey, she pens a letter to her parents informing them of her destination and her hopes of marriage. She gives the letter to Montraville to mail to her family, but he "knew too well the consequences that must unavoidably ensue, should this letter reach Mr. Temple: he

therefore wisely resolved to walk on the deck, tear it in pieces, and commit the fragments to the care of Neptune, who might or might not, as it suited his convenience, convey them on shore" (57-8). By tearing up her letter, Montraville destroys her words and further severs the connection between Charlotte and her family—the Atlantic swallows up the "fragments" of Charlotte's writing and makes any reconnection with her family nearly impossible.

Montraville's first destruction of Charlotte's writing is by no means his last. He continues to deceive Charlotte throughout the novel and he prevents her attempts to communicate with her family. After they arrive on the American continent he sets her up in a dwelling near New York City, where his battalion is stationed. He visits Charlotte periodically and every time he visits she gives him letters to send to her family; Montraville promises to mail them for her but, unsurprisingly, he destroys all of them. Because neither her father nor her mother replies to any of her letters, Charlotte begins to believe that her family no longer holds any affection for her and considers her outside of their domestic circle. Montraville's destruction of Charlotte's letters represents a violation of her personal identity and a deviation of an epistolary circuit—Charlotte's letters contain private information addressed not to Montraville, but to her family in England. As Mark Seltzer explains, the media technology of letters at once creates a privacy and identity which can then be undermined and thwarted:

> [O]nce it becomes possible to write on sheets of paper that can be folded back on themselves (rather than, say, rolled into a scroll), once it becomes possible for the handwritten and folded sheet of paper to be inserted in an envelope, sealed, and posted on schedule, the technical conditions of interiority and privacy are in place. That is, interiority and privacy are in place. At this point, it becomes possible for

> the writing of letters to get in the way of letters, for the technical conditions of intimacy to get in the way of intimacy. (*True Crime*, 81-2)

Charlotte can communicate her innermost feelings and thoughts to her family in a letter, but the "technical conditions" of that interiority (the need for her feelings to be communicated within a *letter*) can be managed and controlled by someone like Montraville (who receives the letter). The self-reflexive depiction of tattered manuscripts, torn and missing letters, ripped newspapers, and broken sentences populated the pages of late eighteenth-century novels—as Christina Lupton comments, "[p]ieces of abandoned writing are among the objects represented most commonly in the sentimental literature of the 1750s, '60s, and '70s" (125). If writing was indeed an important way of representing and constructing selfhood and identity throughout the eighteenth century, then the abandonment and destruction of personal writing like letters, diaries, and journals depicted how easily this process could be cut short by insidious figures like Montraville.

The fragments of Charlotte's letters never make it back to her family, and Montraville ensures that "the care of Neptune" erases them from existence. Later in the novel Charlotte does find another avenue for her epistolary communications—she tells the story of her woes to a kindly neighbor named Mrs. Beauchamp. Mrs. Beauchamp immediately recognizes Montraville's deception and helps Charlotte to reconstitute her familial epistolary network. By acting as her agent and delivering her letters to the packet ship sailing for England, Mrs. Beauchamp puts Charlotte back in touch with her mother and father. But the help from Mrs. Beauchamp is too little and too late. She leaves Charlotte to go on a trip and meanwhile Montraville's even more insidious companion Belcour sets his sights on Charlotte—Belcour defames her in Montraville's eyes by implying her faithlessness. At the same time, Belcour tries

to convince Charlotte that Montraville no longer loves her and that only he (Belcour) should be entitled to Charlotte's trust. But when Charlotte gives Belcour letters to Montraville that ask for money and succor, Belcour decides to make Charlotte completely dependent on him. Rather than deliver her pleading letters to her lover, he "never suffered [them] to reach the hands of Montraville" (103). He repeats the actions of Montraville, and the final rupture of Charlotte's epistolary networks seals her fate; the destruction of her writings directly leads to her tragic death.

Even Charlotte's final moments show how her voice becomes fractured and increasingly absent. Near the end of the novel Charlotte gives birth to Montraville's illegitimate child, and she gives the baby to her (now reconciled) father: " 'Protect her,' said she, 'and bless your dying—' Unable to finish the sentence, she sunk back on her pillow" (127). Charlotte's death scene fixes her marginal status because her death writes her out of future political communities in England and in America. Because of her untimely death she can neither return with her father to England, nor can she stay in America and establish a family there. Equally important, in Charlotte's death scene Rowson deploys a rhetorical trope called "aposiopesis," a device in which a statement breaks off and cannot be finished by the speaker. While aposiopesis occurs regularly in eighteenth-century sentimental novels (examples occur in Samuel Jackson Pratt's *Emma Corbett*, for instance, or in the writings of Laurence Sterne), Rowson uses it for an especially dramatic effect at the end of *Charlotte Temple*. Collectively, Montraville and Belcour prevent Charlotte's written words from reaching their destination, a set of actions that precipitate her death and lead to her unfinished statement.

Rowson's depiction of Charlotte and her predicaments offer a marked turn from the fragments discussed in the previous chapter. Both Samuel Jackson Pratt and Mathew Carey write

fragments that contain content, rather than pure absence, and thereby try to offer a narrative of a person's life. "A Military Fragment" contains typographical breaks in the story that Pratt accentuates with dashes, asterisks, and ellipsis; in his printing of the fragment he attempts to represent the violent past of the Carbine brothers and their current, marginalized placement in the veteran's hospital. The play of typographical prosthetics that invokes the simultaneity of absence and presence provides a partial depiction of the veterans. Similarly, the periodical fragments written by Carey depict the struggles of a prostitute, a slave, a slave trader, a beggar, and a host of other figures. Carey juxtaposes these figures and attempts to bind them together into a religious, sentimental community through the space of the periodical page. In both cases, the printers emphasize the presentation of fragments on the architectural space of the page, recognizing that fragments can be represented in a physical dimension that the reader can see and hold in their hands. Providing a material presence for fragments allows both Pratt and Carey to represent marginalized figures in a way that creates affiliations through non-national communities.

In stark contrast, Susanna Rowson and (as I will show) Hannah Webster Foster both focus on the way in which fragments register the *absence* of content in their novels. Instead of considering how fragments can be represented on the page, these two authors interrogate the lacunae and erasure signified by a written fragment. Charlotte Temple's letters do not appear anywhere in the text—they are only referenced before they disappear into the watery depths of the ocean. Charlotte provides a brief summary of their contents, but the narrator does not record their exact words for the reader, Montraville does not appear to read them, and Charlotte's family never receives them. Her written communications—her authored words—lack representation in the very novel that takes her name. The lost words of her epistolary letters take

on an immediate and bodily exemplification in her final sentence, which is cut off by her death. Susanna Rowson and Hannah Webster Foster do not consider how fragments can be depicted on the page, but rather how they represent a space completely void of language. For both authors, the silent underside of "fragments" takes center stage in their depictions of seduced women.

While seduced women played a central role in the construction of gender categories in the early American republic, Rowson and Foster consider instead how seduced women take on a marginal relationship to the existence of future communities in the new nation. In particular, both authors closely consider the process by which seduced women become splintered from their families, friends, and male suitors. Rowson and Foster examine the pressures of social life, the irrational codes of female decorum, the inhibiting force of delicacy, and the disregard for the sexual agency of women. These dynamics collectively pressure the women in *Charlotte Temple* and *The Coquette*, breaking down their ability to communicate themselves clearly. As a result, the libertines, friends, family members, and concerned men distort the language and writing of the seduced women.

Unlike the previous chapter in which the figures examined were the subject of fragments, the women in *Charlotte Temple* and *The Coquette* are authors who *create* fragments. Their fragmentary writing attests to their own illegibility within a community based in certain norms of female bodily conduct. And, the suppression of their writings within each novel indicates the ways in which the community surrounding them attempts to regulate and control their expressions of interior privacy. By focusing on the impregnable writing of fragments, Rowson and Foster articulate a politics of absence rather than presence, and turn illegible fragments into symbols of creative expressions outside communal prescriptions. In this turning away, Rowson

and Foster advocate a gender politics of refusal rather than admission, and resistance rather than reform.

Reading Eliza Wharton

"THIS HUMBLE STONE,
IN MEMORY OF
ELIZA WHARTON,
IS INSCRIBED BY HER WEEPING FRIENDS,
TO WHOM SHE ENDEARED HERSELF BY UNCOMMON
TENDERNESS AND AFFECTION.
ENDOWED WITH SUPERIOR ACQUIREMENTS,
SHE WAS STILL MORE DISTINGUISHED BY
HUMILITY AND BENEVOLENCE.
LET CANDOR THROW A VEIL OVER HER FRAILTIES,
FOR GREAT WAS HER CHARITY TO OTHERS.
SHE SUSTAINED THE LAST
PAINFUL SCENE, FAR FROM EVERY FRIEND;
AND EXHIBITED AN EXAMPLE
OF CALM RESIGNATION.
HER DEPARTURE WAS ON THE 25TH DAY OF
JULY, A.D.——,
IN THE 37TH YEAR OF HER AGE,
AND THE TEARS OF STRANGERS WATERED HER
GRAVE"

The engraved tombstone of Eliza Wharton offers readers of *The Coquette* a brief moral for her tale of gaiety and seduction. Reproduced in the last letter of Hannah Webster Foster's 1797 epistolary novel, the tombstone closes the narrative with a heavy-handed attempt by Eliza's friends to communicate a final lesson. This record of Eliza's life and death provides narrative,

emotional, and instructive closure for one of the most affectively provocative records of seduction in the late eighteenth century. Eliza's friends emphasize her honorable character, the "superior acquirements," and "uncommon tenderness" that distinguish her; the inscription provides a well-intentioned perspective, but the commemoration also makes Eliza's life legible according to commonplace didactic and sentimental conventions (169).[48] In contrast, near the end of her life Eliza moves herself out of the spotlight and communicates using fragments of writing the include partial letters, abbreviated messages, and "miscellaneous reflections" (162). After Reverend Boyer rejects Eliza's offer of love and Major Sanford successfully seduces her (a seduction concealed from Eliza's correspondents), she further conceals herself via her silence, her self-imposed social alienation, and her retreat from day-to-day interactions. Eliza's subsequent fragmented writings diverge from the sentimental discourse—exemplified by the description on the tombstone—that constructs her experiences as open and comprehensible. Throughout *The Coquette*, Foster explores how Eliza absents herself from a legible epistolary network as a result of her community's relentless persecution. Even though I begin the essay by presenting the inscription of Eliza's friends, I will attempt to give Eliza a "literary burial" that conforms to her own hidden and fragmented self-representations.

It is not only Eliza's friends who injure her memory. By disregarding Foster's criticism of the totalizing perspective of the tombstone, literary critics continue to *reenact* the community's problematic interpretive methods in their scholarship. Two main trajectories govern criticism on *The Coquette*; one argues for the novel's insistence on female autonomy, while the other approach argues for Foster's codification of conservative gender relations. Both of these approaches share the mistake of historical anachronism, since they seek to locate Eliza at the opening of a long, later history of gender relations and feminism. The former approach—

taken by critics like Sharon M. Harris, Claire C. Pettengill, and C. Leiren Mower—lauds female "self-mastery" as the primary lesson of Eliza's downfall (Mower, 336).[49] According to these critics, Eliza's withdrawal from social relations at the end of the novel functions as an emancipatory escape that transcendently looks from late eighteenth-century history to the larger ideology of feminism in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Ironically, this approach to the novel threatens to replicate the constrictive gender ideologies that initially lead to Eliza's effacement as the plot progresses; by reading "self-mastery" into Eliza's absence, self-negation, and fragmentation, these critics affirm and impose their own version of the history of women's rights without looking at the way Foster depicts Eliza's response to the traumatic events of her life. Taking Eliza's withdrawal from the gaiety of her social and family life as a radical feminist claim, particularly without looking at the *form* of Eliza's protest, this sort of reading fails to take her story at face value. This approach distorts Eliza's death just as much as critics who believe the novel argues for a political agenda that condones the oppressive, sentimental ideology of Eliza's friends and family.[50]

Siding with this pessimistic perspective, critics like Cathy Davidson, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Elizabeth Barnes, Bruce Burgett, and Julia Stern, all argue that Eliza—though she may be a proto-liberal, individualistic woman—falls prey to the pressures of her republican, communal society.[51] These critics collectively agree that Eliza's "desire for freedom devolves into sexual acquiescence" (Davidson, 149), that she "colludes with a majority that has denied her both freedom and expression by offering at last what it wants to hear" (Stern, 147), and that the novel actually participates in the construction of oppressive gender roles because it "does little to disrupt the hegemony of middle-class gender norms" (Burgett, 100). Incorporating Eliza's transgressive politics back into the sentimental ideology of her female community reaffirms the

dualistic opposition of the two views, and neglects the strong evidence the ending of the plot gives for a third approach. While the two approaches to Foster's novel differ in their assumptions about Eliza's fate, they both share a practice of symptomatic reading, or what Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus call "an interpretive method that argues that the most interesting aspect of a text is what it represses,"[52] rather than what is manifest in it (3). Best and Marcus critique the paranoid approach to literature that seeks to uncover the latent ideological content of a text by reading against the grain, an interpretive method that works through the premise that a text knows more than it says, and what it knows is more important, politically and critically, than what it says openly. Building on the critique presented by Best and Marcus, my interpretation shows how Eliza struggles to work outside of the binaries of liberal and republican female roles by presenting herself through an elusive, unreadable language of identity.[53]

The problems of Eliza's suspicious, didactic community and the dualistic critical history of *The Coquette* are one and the same, but surface reading helps to mend these interpretive injuries because it provides grounds a way to analyze the novel according to the novel's own instructions.[54] Looking at the explicit events and descriptions in *The Coquette* helps to sidestep the ideological entrenchment so central to the hermeneutics of suspicion, and instead focuses on "what insists on being looked *at* rather than what we must train ourselves to see *through*" (Best and Marcus, 9).[55] In the spirit of descriptive readings looking "*at*" and not "*through*," I intend to describe how Eliza withdraws from society and leaves behind remains of writing—fragments which, ironically, are repressed from the text, withheld by her friends. Critics have neglected these pieces of writing found at Eliza's death. She leaves half-formed communications, letters that fail in their informative and phatic purposes by representing her as unnamable, unreadable,

and thereby outside of developing forms of gender ideology.[56] Through these communications, she adopts what one critic calls, "self-defensive strategies of self-effacement" (Bennet, 66).[57]

Eliza's fragmented writings push against two interrelated concepts in the early American republic: the generic conventions of epistolarity (which tend toward personal revelation and disclosure), and the sentimental emphasis on an empathetic community. Foster short-circuits the sentimental connectivity formed by an epistolary communication when Eliza refuses to write to her friends: "Writing is not so agreeable to me as it used to be. I love my friends as well as ever; but I think they must be weary of the gloom and dullness which pervades my present correspondence. When my pen shall have regained its original fluency and alertness, I will resume and prolong the pleasing task" (127). Descriptions like this become fairly common in the second half of the novel, and Eliza's preference for silence transforms into an even more poignant rejoinder via the fragmented writing that presents an unorthodox method of communicating her experiences—one that asks not for understanding, but for a recognition of what remains.[58]

Eliza's "self-effacement" diminishes her presence in an epistolary network, even as her fragmented writings remain an object of focus and interest for her friends and family. In Foster's presentation of the community's harassment and Eliza's fragmented response, Foster keys in to a feminine version of what Russ Castronovo has recently described as an obscuring of personal identity and agency in epistolary correspondence. Discussing the Hutchinson affair, Castronovo describes how Ben Franklin positions himself as "[just] one link in an extended chain of correspondence… In a perhaps uncharacteristic move, Franklin refuses to occupy the center, instead preferring to sit back in the shadows" (445). While Franklin contracts his identity to make himself into a node for important revolutionary communications, Foster reduces Eliza's

epistolary presence to display how the interpretive domain of her community constructs her as a problematic figure (without her voice, only their perspective stands). In both cases, withdrawing a central identity heightens the visibility of a communication circuit, effectively bringing that network to the surface; furthermore, this process makes the *circuit* the agent of history, not any member, individual, or node in that circuit. Comprehending Eliza's position necessitates an understanding that no distinguishable and identifiable agency exists because the cause of her seduction "spread[s] out across the background…in which no single actor seems distinguishable" (Castronovo, 444). The fragments of writing—written by Eliza, acquired by her friends, sent to her family, sought by Sanford, and discussed by her friends and family—contest an entire "chain of correspondence" by presenting Eliza as unreadable.

Foster portrays Eliza as a figure of recessive action, a characteristic that Anne-Lise François calls, "an ethos of attending to unobserved, not-for-profit experience rather than results entered on the public record…and of measuring difference not by what an action materially produces but by the imaginative possibilities revelation may either open or eclipse" (21). These "imaginative possibilities" play an important role at the end of the novel, when all that remains of Eliza are bits of reporting from newspapers, her tombstone, her fragmented writings, and her body (and these latter two disappear because one goes unpublicized and the other is lost under the tombstone). Focusing on Eliza's fragmentation and her remains endows her tragedy with its own significance, and emphasizes the importance of her traumatic emotional and physical experience. It helps clarify and give prominence to her comment to Lucy Sumner that she feels completely broken down and "shipwrecked on the shoals of despair!" (105). For Foster, Eliza's sense of being fragmented and stranded serves as an indication that the culture of epistolary

sentiment—so dominant during this period—cannot fully account for Eliza's harrowing emotional life.

The remainder of this chapter will first look carefully at the ways in which Eliza attempts to escape social protocols by imitating the discourse and behavior of men. However, this method of stepping outside of her prescribed gender role ultimately proves ineffective in extricating her from the control of her friends and family because they still recognize her as a "coquette." Therefore, I turn to a closer analysis of the fragmented forms to which Eliza resorts as a result of her constant disagreements with her friends and family. These forms contradict Revered Boyer's assertion that "the disappointments of human life" are "legibly written on every page of our existence"; rather, Eliza's experience explores the paradoxical expressiveness of silence and fragmentation (15).

Eliza's Dissipation

The moment at the end of the novel when Eliza, approaching death, reduces herself to unreadable fragments obtains its logical structure from the traditionally held inscrutability of a coquette. In the view of Eliza's community, the distinguishing feature of a coquette is her reluctance to hold fast to any particular decision; this description clearly evokes the way Eliza holds the door open to a number of possible suitors early in the novel, without yielding to any of them. As a result of the indecisive element of this character type, the very act of Eliza denying her coquettish characteristics to the community only confirms her as a coquette because she denies having a settled role. Elizabeth Barnes explains that in seduction novels, "a woman might present herself as virtually 'unreadable'—a *coquette* who personifies the indeterminate because overdetermined subject of both sexual and narrative possibility" (68). While the coquette

functions as a type that tries to *exceed* types by holding a variety of different decisions in suspension with one another, the female community observing Eliza never ceases to label her a coquette. She might be "virtually 'unreadable' " in her own mind, but not in the minds of Lucy Freeman, Julia Granby, and Mrs. Richman. Because the typology of the coquette functions according to binary models of surface/depth, superficial/meaningful, exterior/interior, unstable/fixed, the textuality of the coquette as "virtually 'unreadable' " makes her position an inherently paradoxical one—on the one hand easy to read; on the other, impossible.

For Foster, an important part of Eliza's coquettish personality involves Eliza's attempt to adopt various masculine roles, movements that demonstrate how her struggle to resist readability plays out in the early parts of the novel. Eliza constantly emphasizes her desire to "not confine myself in any way," an assertion of male freedom and also an attempt to baffle the expectations of her circle of friends; but even though Eliza actively tries to re-gender herself by employing masculine behavior and language, nothing escapes the critical eyes of the female chorus (51).[59] Their interpretive method is one of linguistic critique, and by the end of the novel their repeated confrontations dissipate Eliza's sense of herself until she responds by evacuating herself of a communicable self, leaving only traces behind. The deathbed remains of Eliza show the extent to which Foster positions her against (with a kind of abstention of agency) both the independent, masculinized role of the coquette Eliza initially created for herself and the impositions of her friends and family. Indeed, these remains provide evidence of how Eliza surpasses the legible illegibility of a coquette, and resists the community through her withdrawal from the epistolary circuit.

While the female chorus constantly insists on the necessarily dependent situation of all women, and therefore urges Eliza to conform to their class-based expectations of her future,

Eliza tries to extricate herself from any relationship that places demands on her. As Ivy Schweitzer has pointed out, Eliza focuses her efforts on establishing friendships, relationships which allow her to "be simultaneously independent and attached, admiring spectator and enthusiastic participant, aware of the center but not…centered or fixed" (114-115). Schweitzer's sense of Eliza's desire to be "aware of the center but not…centered or fixed" dovetails well with the argument that Eliza progressively diminishes contact with her correspondents and moves out of the spotlight. Despite this point, the importance of this retreat is not Eliza's desire for both independence and social connection, as Schweitzer argues; rather, Eliza's withdrawal and turn to illegible fragmentation makes visible the community's censorious ideological preoccupations. Before Eliza withdraws completely, Foster depicts how Eliza's hesitancy to commit to any permanent social relationship works in strong tension with her placement in life, which carries with it the expectation that her engagements with friends and neighbors will be for the purpose of marriage. Vying against Lucy Freeman, Mrs. Richman, and her mother, Eliza resists dependency by holding her suitors at bay, playing them off of one another in order to maintain an independent situation as much as possible (a very masculine desire in this historical moment). Her "wish for no other connection than that of friendship" begins after the death of Reverend Haly—who would have been a husband but also, because of the large age difference, a father figure—and continues until Reverend Boyer rejects her (6).

As a result, Eliza's character develops asymmetrically. She avoids the various social dependencies others attempt to force upon her, and transforms her social interactions through the gaiety, dissipation, and performativity of a fashionable lifestyle. Eliza fights a war of attrition to shore up against incursions from her conservative community and maintain her masculine-inflected independence. As she builds her life independently and relies on a model of friendship

in her social relations, she also appropriates various discourses associated with men. For example, Eliza displays in her letters knowledge of the law (the "justice of your conduct"), literature ("Pope very justly observes, 'that every year is a critic on the last' "), religion ("I frankly confess [my faults]…have cost me the deepest repentance") (101), and economics ("merit has always a share in that bank; and I know of none, who has a larger claim on that score, than Mr. Boyer") (25). But because this assumption of masculine discourse remains recognizable to the patriarchal female chorus, they are able to keep Eliza in view as an object of critique. Foster depicts how Eliza tries to fit together various discourses in an attempt to work herself out of her prescribed, female role, but so long as the chorus *recognizes* Eliza's pseudo-masculine characteristics, they have something to latch onto. This only changes when Eliza makes herself visibly unavailable via her fragmented writings.

By selecting and combining different gender discourses in an attempt to fashion a new identity, Eliza only succeeds in making herself available for the criticism that she does not fulfill her female duties. Her manipulation of language makes visible her inappropriate seizure of masculinity, and she thereby becomes readable to the female chorus, a lead-up to her tombstone when, as Elizabeth Barnes describes, "in effect, [she] becomes pure text, bound from first to last by a title instead of a name and, on the final page, by the reproduction of a headstone that recapitulates both her history and her character" (71). Even though Eliza attempts to occupy a role of masculine authority, her effort reveals her differences with the ideologies of the female chorus, and these differences, in turn, lead to Eliza to withdraw from social life (and ultimately to her final fragmentation). Foster establishes a tension between Eliza and the chorus to show how Eliza's fragmented writings emerge out of a joint struggle over self-definition and language. After Eliza fails to regain Reverend Boyer's affections, she deems herself fully inappropriate for

socializing. Because all of her attempts to re-create herself through language have failed, she responds to the social pressure by stepping outside of language: she goes silent and avoids social contact. The female chorus then reverses its position and suggests that Eliza go out of the house to socialize. The tension between Eliza and her community is found in the arena of language, so Eliza's growing silence represents a way *out* of this battle—especially since her correspondents demand that she communicate with them so that they can critique her. In fact, the community's linguistic oppression proves to be more insidious than the visual surveillance so many critics have identified.[60] Language proves to be a domain Eliza *cannot* control. She can control neither the social determination of the term "coquette," nor the effects of its application to her.

From the start of the novel, the female chorus (along with Boyer) expresses concern that Eliza's social life interferes with her otherwise moral constitution. In particular, they refer to her "dissipation." They comment on how "the fashionable round of dissipation is dangerous" (13) saying that women "seem naturally prone to gaiety, to pleasure, and…to dissipation" (53) and they warn "against the dangerous tendency of so dissipated a life"—not to mention the various warnings against Major Sanford's dissipation (83).[61] Correspondingly, before Eliza fades from her social life, her circle of acquaintances provides her an antidote in the form of centering and circumscribing her life. Mrs. Richman tries to convince Eliza to marry prudently and quickly:

> It is the glory of the marriage state, she rejoined, to refine, by circumscribing our enjoyments. Here we can repose in safety…the little community which we superintend is quite as important an object; and certainly renders us more beneficial to the public. True benevolence, though it may change its objects, is not limited by time or place. Its effects are the same, and aided by a second self, are rendered more diffusive and salutary. (25)

Dissipation carries multiple senses in the novel: a "wasteful expenditure or consumption of money, means, powers, faculties," a "distraction of the mental faculties or energies from concentration on serious subjects," and a "waste of the moral and physical powers by undue or vicious indulgence" (OED). These accusations against Eliza turn into her main problem in dealing with her friends and with Boyer because her community emphasizes a domestic way of living that would have Eliza (largely) limit her interactions to her family, and cancel out the wider network of friends she has established. This emphasis on a practical, day-to-day manner of living also critiques the various worldly discourses Eliza employs, discourses that indicate her presence in a potentially dangerous, masculine place, as opposed to "repos[ing] in safety" in a domestic, heterosexual union.

In an odd turn, the community of female friends performs a complete about-face when Eliza decides to stay exclusively in her home. Eliza declares, "I am extremely depressed, my dear Lucy! The agitating scenes, through which I have lately passed, have broken my spirits, and rendered me unfit for society" (98). The rhetoric of sociality shifts, and her friends encourage her strongly *toward* dissipation in order to lift her dejected spirits. Rather than let Eliza maintain her solitude, her friends continue to work against her desires. In an attempt to get her out of her depressed state, her friends tell her to put the past behind her and reenter the social life she once enjoyed: "If the conviction of any misconduct on your part, give you pain, dissipate it by the reflection, that unerring rectitude is not the lot of mortals" (97). Julia Granby hopes to "dissipate, not to collect, ideas; and I must regulate myself accordingly" (111), and Lucy concurs by saying, "your own happiness and honor, require you to dissipate the cloud which hangs over your imagination" (112). In fact, Julia Granby visits Eliza solely in an attempt to entertain Eliza and distract her from her depressed mental state. Foster shifts to the rhetoric of "dissipation" in order

to demonstrate the community's lack of sympathy for "the agitating scenes" Eliza has experienced; her friends resist her effort to internalize her experience, seeking instead to dissipate Eliza's emotions by persuading her to appear socially, as she formerly enjoyed. Even when Eliza attempts to recede from prescribed gender roles via a closeted solitude, the female community demands she reintegrate into the social world. They want her to stay visible (and readable) through a social dissipation that they can recognize and understand. Instead, Eliza's dissipation takes an internal turn and she describes how her seduction "harrows up my very soul," conveying her sense of being completely broken apart by the experience (142).

Foster organizes the conflict of the novel so that whichever position Eliza takes fails to elude the criticism and commentary of the chorus, and no place exists in which Eliza can escape their schemes (hence the pessimistic tone so many critics have attributed to the novel). The *modus operandi* of the chorus is pure critique, and an inescapable and constant imposition of domestic ideology (consistency does not seem to matter) onto Eliza. Their focus on the importance of Eliza's dissipation works in contradistinction to her serious acceptance of death after Sanford seduces her—the seduction helps speed along Eliza's eventual death, even though the chorus tries to deny Eliza her preferred form of self-destruction. In reaction to Julia and Lucy's efforts to prevent Eliza from having the kind of death she desires, Eliza drops further and further into a self-oriented process of dying, cutting herself off from social communication and ceasing to write to her friends. The paranoia and anxiety the chorus demonstrates only elicits further reticence from Eliza, who eventually becomes so adroit at hiding from the community's eye that she retires to Salem, the paranoid center of American history, and even there successfully avoids unwanted gazes until her death. Pitching these two positions against each other, Foster shows how the community acts on Eliza's mental state, dissipating it and forcing

Eliza out of normal forms of communication. Because the chorus demands explanations and descriptions of her whereabouts, Eliza capitulates and in her dying state tries to make this information available to them, trying to show them her mental and physical state. Rather than revealing Eliza's submission, these fragments prove to be unreadable, resistant to interpretation, and even located beyond discourse. The pieces of herself Eliza leaves function as the antithesis of the aggregated, multi-faceted self she earlier formed *and* the coherent, tombstone-version of Eliza her friends wish to create. Reacting to her clear legibility throughout the first half of the novel, Eliza shrouds herself by using fragmentation to represent herself in a roundabout, non-normative fashion.

The Politics of Eliza's Fragments

Although literary critics routinely cite the newspaper account of what was left over at Elizabeth Whitman's death (the historical model for Eliza), no scholar has yet examined Eliza Wharton's remains. In fact, the recent Norton Critical Edition of the novel reproduces an entire page detailing Whitman's belongings at her death; this context certainly deepens a historical understanding of the text, but equally important is the description of what Eliza leaves behind.[62] After Whitman's death, print outlets immediately published articles describing her life and her death, and even printed (and reprinted) a poem written by Whitman. The attention to the historical record—available to researchers as an object for study—overshadows a focus on Eliza's fragmented remains, which are understated in the novel and difficult to locate. A similar awareness of this problem arises in the work of Page duBois, who analyzes the poetic fragments of Sappho:

> The art of reading is problematized in the encounter with these fragments, as the reader is made to confront her desire, her desires for wholeness, for more, for coherence, for linear, narrative familiarity…Reading the explicitly fragmentary lines of these poems reveals the premises of our interpretive practices based on the desire for a whole always out of reach, denying the fragmentary nature of all cultural artifacts. (53)

While the study of Whitman's death offers the potential for a satisfying "wholeness," Eliza's writings short-circuit this desire. Even if the contemporary readers of *The Coquette* came to the novel with the recent event of Elizabeth Whitman's death in their mind, this fact did not change Foster's emphasis on Eliza's unreadable fragmentation. Instead of connecting Eliza's remains to the remains of Whitman (who did leave scraps of writing behind, including the poem posthumously published), Foster makes clear that Eliza's family suppresses the fragments, thus forcing her readers to consider Eliza's writing as a unique, fictional event.

Writing in a different context, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari argue for the disruptive status of the fragment in a way that resonates with Foster's own sense of schism, disjunction, and disintegration:

> We no longer believe in the myth of the existence of fragments that, like pieces of an antique statue, are merely waiting for the last one to be turned up, so that they may all be glued back together to create a unity that is precisely the same as the original unity. We no longer believe in a primordial totality that once existed, or in a final totality that awaits us at some given date. (42)

From their perspective, the fragment provides evidence of a chaotic and disruptive reality, and serves as a formal model that denies any overarching context by asserting its own

irrefragable incompleteness. While bringing the full import of Deleuze and Guattari's analysis to bear on Eliza's story would be just as ideologically imposing and historically anachronistic as claims for Eliza's full rebellious agency prove to be, their emphasis on the incompleteness of a "unity" provides a significant entryway into understanding the negative space Foster generates with Eliza's fragments. This denial of "original unity" works especially well for Foster's depiction of Eliza, a character who never has any sense of coherent selfhood to begin with (forming her character is one of Boyer's intentions, along with marrying her) and always shifts and changes in a chameleon-like fashion. Eliza's aggregated identity earlier in the novel can only be accurately described as various fragments strung together, because descriptions of self-incoherence like "my reason and judgment entirely coincide with your opinion; but my fancy claims some share in the decision" (28) and "my heart did not approve his sentiments, but my ear was charmed with his rhetoric" (36) abound before her seduction.

Deleuze and Guattari's model functions more accurately as a description of Eliza's textual condition than a historical one offered by Marjorie Levinson in her study of the Romantic fragment poem in England. Levinson suggests that, "the visible or advertised irresolution of these poems apparently signified to the Romantic reader not the absence, distortion, or transcendence of form but its presence and determinate identity" (24). She argues further that the fragment is a genre with a constructed unity and a synecdochical form; it has a "determinate identity" generated by a context. Turning the fragment into a signifier emphasizes how the signified background contextualizes and gives meaning to it, thereby replacing the individual meaning it offers—however, Eliza's fragments do not exist in the same way as Romantic fragments since her opacity does not indicate a plenitude that resists history, it indicates an absence. In *The Coquette*, Foster insists on the importance of fragments in order to make sense of

a traumatic experience, so an accurate representation of Eliza's life must therefore take into equal consideration the unreadable written pieces. A novel like *Clarissa* (which works well with Levinson's model) differs from *The Coquette* because Samuel Richardson physically displays Clarissa's fragmented letters on the page, an iteration of Boyer's comment that "the disappointments of human life" are "legibly written on every page of our existence" (15). On the other hand, Foster prevents the appearance of Eliza's letters because doing so would make them legible and in communication with the other letters present in the novel. By isolating them and keeping them unreported, Foster ensures that the letters maintain the unrepresentable status of Eliza's experience.

Eliza's written fragments only refer to her own position as a silenced, fragmented female. Left with unrecorded traces of written texts and Eliza's dead body, the appropriate relationship is not synecdoche, but one in which the absences mutually implicate and constitute one another. The fragmented texts offer evidence of Eliza's death, just as her silence and death make evident the significance of the fragmented remains of her writing. Indeed, Foster demonstrates the close relationship between fragments and silence in Eliza's relationship with Sanford. As Eliza nears her impending death (but before she writes out her scraps of letters), she tells Sanford that he should give up his libertine ways, and she imagines that her "unhappy story [might] serve as a beacon to warn the American fair of the dangerous tendency and destructive consequences of associating with men of your character, of destroying their time, and risking their reputation by the practice of coquetry and its attendant follies!" (159). In this final moment of dialogue, Eliza seems to surrender to the viewpoint of the female chorus, condemning her own behavior and urging a didactic reading of her experiences. Unlike the longevity of the tombstone, however, this ephemeral, vocalized lesson quickly fades away into a silence. Foster then depicts the

powerful effect of the speech on Eliza and Sanford, an effect that anticipates the textual fragmentation in Eliza's near future:

> I [Sanford] begged leave to visit her retirement next week, not in continuation of our amour, but as a friend, solicitous to know her situation and welfare. Unable to speak, she only bowed assent. The stage being now ready, I whispered some tender things in her ear, and kissing her cheek, which was all she would permit, suffered her to depart. My body remains behind; but my soul, if I have any, went with her!...I hope, when she recovers, she will resume her former cheerfulness, and become as kind and agreeable as ever. (160)

Sanford, much like Eliza's community of friends, wants Eliza to "resume her former cheerfulness," eliding the tragedy and suffering she has endured, and erasing it from any record of her life. Although well intentioned (just like the desires of her friends), Sanford only hopes to recover or give completion to that which has been indelibly altered, and therefore cannot return to a former state of happiness. Eliza marks her own inability to return to her previous mood when she turns from her didactic lesson to stand silently and "[bow] assent," performing a minimal physical gesture indicative less of an active agency than of a "self-defensive…self-effacement" (Bennet, 66). This minimal gesture, an emblem of her linguistic absence, ruptures Sanford's mind and body.

As if in sympathy, Sanford reacts to Eliza's lecture and to her departure by breaking apart his own constitution. His "body remains behind" but his "soul" takes off and follows Eliza on her painful journey. The small moments of lingering—the bow of assent, the whisper of "some tender things in her ear," the kiss on her cheek—all constitute a premonitory recognition of Eliza's imminent departure. The affectionate rituals of leave-taking function through silence (the

bow, the kiss) and unreported, inaudible speech (the whisper); absences struggle to hold onto a previously constituted relationship or reconstitute it in some fashion. Inevitably these lingering goodbyes break apart in the moments when Eliza leaves, showing a direct transition from Eliza's non-vocalized silence/absence to Sanford's fragmented self. Of course, one could not exist without the other—the silent leave-taking only occurs because Sanford's self-rupture is already in view.

The result of the didactic lesson Eliza gives is most definitely not one of piecing together, but of falling apart, a logic that contradicts the traditional approach to the sentimental novel. To be sure, the sentimental didacticism so thoroughly emphasized by Eliza's circle of friends detracts from her plight as a silenced, repressed female because there is no way of de-fragmenting Eliza or her writing. After all, a sentimental reading demands that readers fill in the cracks, making whole the pieces (similar to the way Levinson reads the fragment). Elizabeth Wanning Harries explains the reading of fragments in sentimental novels that clarifies this particular approach to the remains in *The Coquette*: "[T]he sentimental novelist creates a partial, fragmentary framework for the 'imaginative expansion' of the text. The novelist must leave room for the activity of the readers; sentiment thrives on the indeterminate, the suggestive rather than the complete, the open rather than the closed" (101). Harries's explanation works through the sentimental imagination as theorized by Adam Smith, in which a feeling subject imagines him or herself in the position of a suffering object. The reader then feels empathy in order to complete the moral circuit necessary to sentimentalism. On the one hand, this reading suggests a completion derived from the reader's experience of the text, but on the other, it denies any kind of completion because the framework must be reconstructed in different ways in the mind of every reader.

Stylistically, authors of sentimental works must leave some kind of absence or fragment in the text in order for readers to reconstruct the affective experience of the suffering object and feel empathy and pity, thus teaching readers how to feel correctly. But just as Eliza's friends re-author her life at the end of the novel, this reconstruction has the distinct possibility of giving a background for a fragment that denies its dependence on any context. Even the writings of Elizabeth Whitman cannot fully account for the suppressed, fragmented writings Eliza leaves behind because Foster clearly tries to evade this kind of definitive interpretation. While Foster draws an analogue to Whitman, the fragments break away from the historical record because they stay unpublished and suppressed—knowledge about them cuts against an ignorance of what they say. Readers and critics who have tried again and again to fasten a particular ideological sense to Eliza provide a context for the fragments. If sentimentalism is to function as a framework for understanding the novel, then that framework should depend less on the completion of the moral circuit via understanding and more on the general affective sense that Eliza's experiences *can't* be fully empathized with because she places herself outside of legibility.

After Eliza disappears from her house, Sanford reports on one of the last pieces of her writing, telling Charles Deighton, "She chose to go where she was totally unknown. She would leave the stage, she said, before it reached Boston, and take passage in a more private carriage to Salem, or its vicinity, where she would fix her abode; chalking the initials of my name over the door, as a signal to me of her residence" (157). Because Eliza focuses on her privacy and tries to travel incognito, she writes in a medium that can easily be erased. No longer writing in ink letters that can be preserved, copied, typeset and published, Eliza's medium of writing lasts only long enough to send its message (which is, her presence hidden behind a closed door). This resistance

to permanence in view of her death works in conjunction with a move away from discourse, away from the readable and the lasting. In a novel so focused on the epistolary, the initials Eliza writes on the doorframe—P.S.—not only indicate Peter Sanford, her libertine seducer, but also postscript, the afterthought or fragment of information that comes at the end of a letter. The afterthought to a letter—ostensibly trivial, unimportant, and tacked on at the end after the important content has already been discussed—can contain the most valuable information in any given letter (one might think here of Kierkegaard's 1846 work *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, a work about 500 pages longer than the 1844 *Philosophical Fragments*).

A postscript provides a fragmentary note at the end of a letter; however, a letter also exists as a fragment of a sort, one piece in a chain of correspondence, one side of a multi-perspective circuit. Furthermore, because an individual letter can only partially represent the interior workings of an individual mind, Eliza's description of the end of her life as a postscript signifies an even greater detachment from her earlier self. And in an epistolary novel that contains no postscripts, Eliza's self-representation as one shows how she places herself *outside* of what is locatable, recognizable, and legible. That Eliza signals her physical location by a P.S. shows how she occupies the same position as a momentarily forgotten or extraneous piece of information. Her friends and family inaccurately reproduce this process of forgetting by collectively covering over Eliza's self-effacement on her tombstone: "LET CANDOR THROW A VEIL OVER HER FRAILTIES" (169). This move goes against Eliza's earlier efforts to be honest and open with Reverend Boyer: she tells him, "Casting off the veil of dissimulation, I shall write with frankness" (101). Foster shows how Eliza's community has taken up what it sees as the important didactic elements of her life without recognizing the end of Eliza's life as

unrecognizable, or reading her as unreadable. This collective forgetting also takes the form of active suppression after Eliza has died:

> Eliza's brother has been to visit her last retreat; and to learn the particulars of her melancholy exit. He relates, that she was well accommodated, and had every attention and assistance, which her situation required…Mr. Wharton has brought back several scraps of her writing, containing miscellaneous reflections on her situation, the death of her babe, and the absence of her friends. Some of these were written before, some after her confinement. These valuable testimonies of the affecting sense, and calm expectation she entertained of her approaching dissolution, are calculated to sooth and comfort the minds of mourning connections. They greatly alleviate the regret occasioned by her absence, at this awful period. (162-163)

It is striking that the novel provides every letter Eliza wrote to her community except the ones written at her death, the letters "calculated to sooth and comfort the minds of mourning connections." If anything, it might be assumed that Eliza's friends, so heavily invested in the didactic project of turning her life into an exemplary one, would want to reveal to the world Eliza's graceful exit from her life with her "affecting sense" and the "calm expectation" she showed when faced with death.

Julia Granby repeats this formulaic description at the very end of the novel, describing how, after Eliza's death, "we went accordingly [to Danvers], and were much pleased with the apparent sincerity of the people, in their assurances that every thing in their power had been done to render her situation comfortable. The minutest circumstances were faithfully related; and from the state of her mind, in her last hours, I think much comfort may be derived to her afflicted

friends" (168). Again, in this instance (in the last letter of the work), Foster describes how Eliza's friends make little effort to faithfully communicate the state of Eliza's mind when she approached her death—the last word is, instead, Julia's. The "comfort" derived from "the state of her mind" should also work to console or improve the readers of the letter (including Eliza's mother, to whom Julia writes the letter), an omission which leaves the description of the end of Eliza's life to the discretion of her friends. Coupled with the suppression of her letters, these examples work to constitute the kind of silence the community creates around what constitutes the ending moments of Eliza's life.

The description of the concealed writing as "several scraps…containing miscellaneous reflections" indicates the unfinished, incomplete state of Eliza's mind at her death. Perhaps, like the postscript, the "scraps" of writing and "miscellaneous reflections" puncture the clean, formal construction of Eliza's story and bring into it a formal representation of her death broken off from the coherent, sentimental ideology represented by her tombstone. This would counter the goal of her community to make her an exemplar—after all, to be exemplary one has to be legible as a figure, a type reproducible by others. The fragmentary and illegible nature of Eliza eludes this kind of accessibility and locates itself in the unrecognizable.

Postscript: The Gender of Fragmentation

In delineating a difference between "fracture" and "fragmentation," the critic Alexander Regier describes the former as "a break that is located on a structural level. It is not a process, and does not encompass a temporal element in that sense…it is a rupture of a structural and logical kind, a break that acts as an unbridgeable division between two spheres," while the latter is "a process. Even though it can be final, it is defined by a series of changes. It is the unfolding

of a break that happens either once or over and over again" (7). Because Foster does not present Eliza's written fragments in the novel, the absence of her writing forms a temporal process of fragmenting "over and over again." Sanford's fracture takes place on a material level—his estate falls into shambles and creditors harass him at every turn. His fractures seem reactive and a bit artless; Eliza's, on the other hand, reach for something entirely different, something that cannot be located. As she comments in her final letter, "I cannot write all my full mind suggests on this subject" (156).

While Eliza's writings may not prove to be a clearly articulated form of political resistance, they do ensure that she cannot be fully interpreted and, paradoxically, this might be the strongest way in which Foster creates a resistant political identity. Eliza's fragmentary resistance presents an unexpected form of resistance with the early Republic—Eliza's gradual distancing from her community displays an avenue of response for women who could not openly rebel. Because individualism was the professed domain of men, aggressive figures of female individuality might not include the alternative identities represented by Eliza's model of fragmentation (rather than fracture). Just as a half-century later, Bartleby's insistent refusal to act puzzles any attempt to impose a recognizable identity—perhaps because he is a man employing a female mode of passive resistance—Foster's presentation of Eliza's final writings evade a strict closure.

The tombstone epitaph composed by Eliza's friends and family give the sense that Eliza's life and actions come to a clear, definite conclusion; however, Foster's references to the suppressed writings indicate that Eliza's story and her life remain open because undefined. Even at the end of the novel, Eliza Wharton's life remains an unfinished, fragmented story.

Chapter 3

The *Edgar Huntly* Series and the Textual Identities of Charles Brockden Brown

Printing Edgar Huntly

After the initial publication of *Edgar Huntly; or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* in three volumes in 1799, Charles Brockden Brown and his associates reprinted just the third volume in 1800. Rather than reprint the third volume without alteration, they decided to append a prose piece to the end of the novel called "Death of Cicero, A Fragment." The full title of the third volume thus reads, *Edgar Huntly; or, Memoirs of a Sleepwalker. To Which is Annexed, The Death of Cicero, A Fragment*. The decision to reprint only the third volume of the novel most likely stemmed from material reasons of supply: the third volume could have sold out faster than the other two, or the printer, H. Maxwell, might have made fewer initial copies of that volume. Philip Barnard and Stephen Shapiro suggest that "[t]he simplest explanation for the decision to include it along with a new printing of that novel…is that it was intended to fill out the third volume, which otherwise was far shorter than the other two" (206-7). In the critical editions of Brown's writing that Barnard and Shapiro prepared, they detach "Death of Cicero, A Fragment" from *Edgar Huntly* and place it in the "Related Texts" section of their edition of *Wieland*.

The editorial repositioning on the part of Barnard and Shapiro asserts a primary focus on thematic continuities in Brown's work, since several of the characters in *Wieland* hold Cicero in high regard. By pairing "Death of Cicero, A Fragment" with *Wieland*, their editions unfortunately refashion the interesting material history of the final volume of *Edgar Huntly*.[63] The "simplest explanation" cannot in fact account for the realities of early national book publication, Brown's often-complex writing process, and his acute awareness that the material form of a published text influenced the meaning of the content. By neglecting the material record

of the novel, Barnard and Shapiro skirt over the intriguing fact that Brown and his publishers use a prose fragment to complete the final volume of *Edgar Huntly* and fill out the necessary pages.

The tension between completion and partiality even occurs on the title page of the third volume. The use of the verb "annexed" brings the third volume of *Edgar Huntly* together with "Death of Cicero, A Fragment" in a very physical way because the etymology of the word reaches back to mean "to tie to" or "to tie, bind" (OED). In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the tying and binding of pages carried a literal meaning for the production of books—after a printer composed the type and printed the sheets for a novel, they were then sent to a binder who folded the sheets, placed them into gatherings, and stitched them together. The manual process of folding, arranging, and binding abruptly contrasts the partiality and ragged edges denoted by a fragment. Rather than supplementing and completing the book—a typical way in which a story or essay would be "annexed" to eighteenth-century novels—"Death of Cicero, A Fragment" elicits a number of questions regarding the unfinished qualities of *Edgar Huntly*.

Why did Brown choose to pair the third volume with something designated as a "fragment" instead of a story, anecdote, essay, or short article? Why did he not simply leave the third volume slightly shorter than the first two, as in the first printing of the novel? And, most importantly, what interpretive difference might the publication of "Death of Cicero, A Fragment" make for understanding the content of *Edgar Huntly*? The publication of the final volume of *Edgar Huntly* with "Death of Cicero, A Fragment," indicates that the novel can be manipulated and placed in dialogue with another piece of Brown's writing. Even though Brown brings the plot events of *Edgar Huntly* to a conclusion with the apparent drowning of the Irish immigrant Clithero Edny, the annexing of the fragment on Cicero denies *Edgar Huntly* a self-enclosed

finality by pushing the novel into conversation with another piece of his writing (even Clithero's death can be questioned, since Edgar escapes a similar situation earlier in the novel by going underwater and making his pursuers think he has drowned).

More precisely, this supplementation of *Edgar Huntly* indicates an impulse toward an open-ended style, an aesthetic suggested by the novel's principal character and correspondent, Edgar. Edgar begins the intricate convolutions of the narrative by complaining to his fiancée Mary Waldegrave that "[a]t length the drama is brought to an imperfect close" (5). He further emphasizes the "imperfect close" of the events when he observes that "the incidents and motives which it [the drama] is designed to exhibit will be imperfectly revived and obscurely portrayed" (5). Edgar's statements indicate that the events of the drama "will be imperfectly revived," a comment that reveals that Edgar himself (the principal actor in the drama) cannot fully account for the mysterious sequence of events. Brown further complicates this epistemological problem by appending the prose piece on Cicero to the end of the novel. Placing the fragment at the end of the volume reaffirms Edgar's sense of "imperfect[ion]" by extending the incomplete status of the novel from Edgar's explanation of events to the published structure of *Edgar Huntly* itself. Repeated invocations of the imperfect weave throughout Brown's novel (and much of his work), a thematic focus that anticipates the imperfect, partial prose piece attached to the end of the third volume. The emphasis on the imperfect also confirms what Edward Cahill calls "the multiple aesthetic registers in Brown's fiction" (165) that paradoxically push toward closure and liberation. For Cahill, these various registers display the "wide and often contradictory range of its [the imagination's] sources and effects" (165), and the seemingly unrelated publication of "The Death of Cicero, A Fragment" capitalizes on this "contradictory" and unexpected range.[64]

Aside from *Edgar Huntly*, Brown's entire career displays his interest in writing and publishing prose fragments. Like Mathew Carey, Brown experimented with the form in two of his periodicals, *The Monthly Magazine, and American Review* and *The Literary Magazine, and American Register*. Brown edited both magazines and also contributed a large quantity of his own writing to their pages—like most periodical editors in the early Republic, Brown himself was responsible for filling in any leftover space on the page. Over a span of ten years he published and (most likely) wrote a number of short fragments: "The Punishment of Ridicule: A Fragment" (July 1799), "The Household. A Fragment" (August 1800), "New Year's Day. A Fragment" (January 1805), "Pressing. A fragment." (July 1806), "The Value of General Rules. A Fragment" (August 1806), and "Insanity: A Fragment" (February 1809). While literary historians remain unsure that Brown authored every single one of these pieces, he certainly oversaw the publication of each article, organizing the fragments and placing them in the pages of his magazines.[65] Brown's repeated publishing of fragments over the years indicates not only his awareness of the aesthetic form, but his interest in arranging fragments within the pages of his periodicals. Collectively, the periodical fragments range over a number of themes relevant to Brown's larger corpus—poverty, dispossession, familial betrayal, hidden sins, violent retribution, and general human depravity. Equally significant, his editorial selection of the pieces testifies to a career-long curiosity in prose that deliberately foregrounds a broken, unfinished state.

Following in the same vein as Carey's publications, the prose fragments presented in Brown's magazines focus on marginalized figures like impressed soldiers, beggars, and mentally unstable individuals. Through the representation of ostracized individuals in his editorial and authorial work, Mathew Carey focused on creating a non-national network of sympathetic

affiliation for marginalized individuals. In contrast, the second chapter examined how Susanna Rowson and Hannah Webster Foster presented the illegible strength of maintaining the fragmentary identity of seduced women. In *The Coquette*, Eliza Wharton's unreadable fragments place her outside of her community, but also endow her with an indiscernible kind of political agency. Like these three authors, Brown clearly invests his work with representations of ostracized characters who exist in the margins of society, but Brown also deploys the fragment form in a different way, as the example of "Death of Cicero, A Fragment" indicates. Brown enfolds fragments within his aesthetic of composition and publication, in which essays, stories, and novels all exist in an imbricated relationship with one another, rather than existing separately. The fragment form offers a model for understanding the way in which almost all of Brown's texts seem suggestive of closure rather than definitively conclusive, and often leave the reader with more questions about the narrative than answers. A structural tension between part and whole allows for a constant overlap between different texts; by presenting unfinished prose pieces, Brown creates a space for the intersection of other texts, yet also implies that no text can achieve completion through another. Brown's publication of the *Edgar Huntly* texts both models Edgar's marginalized state of consciousness and also follows a strategy of fragmentary (un)completion.[66]

Assemblages, Webs, Networks, and Series

This chapter examines how the fragment form plays a significant role in *Edgar Huntly* in two ways. First, Brown illustrates how fragments relate to the medically marginalized identity of a sleepwalker. On a thematic level, much of *Edgar Huntly* deals with how Edgar struggles to comprehend violent, emotionally painful experiences from his recent past. His past repeatedly

breaks through into his present, forcing him to relive his trauma over and over again throughout the story. Edgar feels haunted by the recent death of his close friend, Waldegrave, and the death of his parents and their infant child during former wars with Native Americans. In his attempt to find those responsible for Waldegrave's death, Edgar realizes that he cannot reconcile different facets of his identity—largely as a result of his undiscovered sleepwalking, Edgar does things his conscious mind cannot recognize. At different points throughout the novel, Edgar acts strikingly similar to Clithero Edny (an immigrant Irish servant), Sarsefield (his former British mentor), Waldegrave (his bosom friend), and even like one of the Native Americans he holds responsible for the death of his parents. His crossings back and forth into other identities make for an abrupt reading process because Edgar constantly changes, a fact that Brown registers through narrative interruptions, discontinuities, and irregularities. Edgar's personality and narration exhibit a high degree of fragmentation, which in *Edgar Huntly* functions as the affective or experiential correlative of the fragment form. In *Edgar Huntly*, Brown zeroes in a particular identity—he focuses on the physiological state of sleepwalking (which was analyzed and pathologized by eighteenth-century thinkers), and attempts to represent the blurry transitions of consciousness through the structure of his writing. The fragment form, at once part of another work and separate from it, provides a forceful analogue for the in-between state of sleepwalking.

Second, and relatedly, tracking the publishing history of *Edgar Huntly* reveals how Brown creates an innovative aesthetic structure by combining a number of different fragments. These two projects relate to one another insofar as the internal structure of Edgar's consciousness speaks to the larger structure of publication, and vice-versa. The thematic focus on the fragmented and disjointed nature of Edgar's identity complements Brown's mode of composition in a definitive way. In addition to *Edgar Huntly*, Brown published a series of related variants that

collectively present his belief in the partial, unstable nature of novelistic prose. He published two fragments in direct anticipation of *Edgar Huntly*, appended one to the third volume of the novel, and also released one several years after *Edgar Huntly* had been published: the most interconnected texts in Brown's network of writing include "Extract from the 'SKY-WALK.' "; "Edgar Huntly: A Fragment."; "The Death of Cicero, A Fragment."; and "Somnambulism. A Fragment."

All of these texts present possible origin points for Brown's development of *Edgar Huntly*'s depiction of sleepwalking, could have been included as a part of *Edgar Huntly*, or even collectively demonstrate the significance of Brown's interest in non-novelistic writing. A typical interpretation of these shorter pieces places the fragments in a genetic or evolutionary relationship to *Edgar Huntly* in an attempt to explain Brown's developing authorship by identifying earlier, failed, and more immature versions of the larger, mature novel; in stark contrast, I use the publications to decenter the place of the novel and emphasize Brown's interest in a horizontal, associative model of writing.

In Brown's construction of Edgar's identity and in the publication of the *Edgar Huntly* texts, Brown creates what Deleuze and Guattari call an "assemblage," a construction based on a variety of interconnected portions that lack any precise ending or beginning. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the two authors explain what they mean by a writing style fashioned through assemblages: "a book composed of chapters has culmination and termination points. What takes place in a book composed instead of plateaus that communicate with one another across microfissures, as in the brain? We call a 'plateau' any multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems in such a way as to form or extend a rhizome" (22).[67] In an assemblage, the rhizomatic structure of linked texts creates an attenuated network,

but one that lacks a central focus, thereby creating a system in which words, texts, and ideas overlap and connect without a single node emerging more predominantly than others.

More recently than Deleuze and Guattari, Wai Chee Dimock retreats from a definitive categorization of genres and instead presents the case for what she calls "weak theory." For Dimock, the phrase "weak theory" functions as a starting place for understanding the tenuous relationships that often bridge disparate characters, events, and literary texts. She emphasizes "the chaotic, far-flung, but also fairly reliable input of otherwise weak players, the off-center and off-focus energy of meandering threads" ("Weak Theory" 745). Her position argues for the (non-) central importance of scattered texts because "dispersed, episodic webs of association, not supervised and not formalizable, make it an open question what is primary, what is determinative, what counts as the center and what counts as the margins" ("Weak Theory" 737). The lack of formal organization that Dimock describes and the "dispersed, episodic webs of association" that create a network of fragile, leaky relations fit well with Edgar's unstable identity and Brown's decision to publish a set of fragments that collectively contest "what counts as the center and what counts as the margins." Rather than recenter any single one of the fragments Brown published, my reading moves among and through them in order to show the overlapping textual equivalence that Brown envisioned over the course of much of his career. Even *Edgar Huntly*, a major novel for Brown and for early American literature, proves significant because of the continuities and discontinuities with the set of texts that Brown brings into association.

Finally, most recently Caroline Levine described the importance of analyzing all of the positions within a network: "to capture a moment, one must struggle to grasp the multiple systems of interconnection—constantly unfolding and expanding and overlapping—that

constitute local instantiations" (130). While the models provided by Deleuze and Guattari, Dimock, and Levine shed light on the networked contours of Brown's work, they represent applications of twentieth and twenty-first century approaches. Complementing the ideas of contemporary theorists with a term from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries provides another, more historical version of assemblages, "dispersed, episodic webs," and networks. In his prose writings, Brown relies heavily on the concept of a "series," a term similar in meaning to the periodical structure of a "serial," but more loosely organized, and less tied to the rhythms of magazine, newspaper, or part publication.[68] The idea of a series helps clarify the relationship among the group of fragmented and thematically connected texts that cross genres, interweave into one another, and incompletely constitute each other (like Edgar's identity). While Brown's recurrent use of the word "fragment" to describe many of his prose pieces exemplifies his acute awareness of the relation between part and whole, and the way in which works accidentally break off and then tangentially reach towards one another, the idea of a "series" offers a broader means of capturing the way the collection of texts exists in relation to one another and also as discrete units.

The word "series" comes from Brown's own advertisement to his first published novel, *Wieland* (1798), in which he comments that the "following Work is delivered to the world as the first of a series of performances, which the favorable reception of this will induce the Writer to publish" (3). At the start of his short but prolific career as a novelist, Brown envisions an interrelated set of publications that form a connected "series of performances" for his audience. Instead of considering his novels as completely separate entities, Brown envisioned them linked; a novel or prose piece written in parts continues the chain of events from the previous installment in the same way that his novels revolve around related sets of issues. Only one year after the

release of *Wieland*, Brown takes his description of a "series of performances" and uses it to describe the interior plot elements of *Edgar Huntly*. In the preface to *Edgar Huntly* he states that the work "exhibit[s] a series of adventures, growing out of the condition of our country, and connected with one of the most common and wonderful diseases or affections of the human frame" (3). Brown's comment on the "series of adventures" isolates an important point about the construction of the text because a "series" includes a variety of loosely related, disparate events. By using the word "series" to describe the publication of works over the course of his career, and also to designate the "adventures" that take place throughout *Edgar Huntly*, Brown draws a strong analogy between the exterior, publishing circumstances of his career and the interior plot events of *Edgar Huntly*. Or, to put it more precisely, he abolishes the distinction between them.

Because of the word's flexible application to internal plot and external publication, "series" provides a stable basis for the comparison of identity and publication history that this chapter takes as one of its principal claims. The concepts of assemblage, web, network, and series provide a topography of the articulations of Edgar's identity and the relations among the published texts. This correspondence occurs most prominently with "series," because Brown uses the word to describe the occurrences within his novels and the relations among his published texts, creating an analogical relationship. Recently, scholars like Russ Castronovo and Todd Carmody have argued for a revitalization of analogical criticism that can "help us to compare ostensibly different forms and search for the ways in which they might in fact be equivalent, corresponding, and even in harmony with one another" (Castronovo 264). Carmody advocates "a practice of reading that listens for the hiss and crackle of resemblance rather than the digital on/off, either/or of sameness" (433). While Castronovo and Carmody focus on the possibilities of analogic comparisons for categories of political affiliation, they both emphasize

the importance of analogies for literary studies more broadly. The danger of analogic comparisons lies in a tendency to elide differences, but in the case of Brown's writing he invites the comparison between textual content and publishing history by explicitly linking them together through the word "series" in his prefatory writings for *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly*.

The series within and without *Edgar Huntly* synch up in a fashion that emphasizes Brown's interest in the way the publication of a text can meaningfully inflect the meaning of the events that take place within it (and vice versa). His aesthetic project of publication filters into the events of *Edgar Huntly*. Brown even describes in the preface to *Edgar Huntly* how the novel rises out of "[t]he flattering reception that has been given, by the public, to Arthur Mervyn" and he "solicit[s] a continuance of the same favour" (3). In part, then, *Edgar Huntly* continues the novelistic project he began with *Arthur Mervyn*, but not in the clean, chronological fashion that the preface might suggest. When Brown published the first volume of *Edgar Huntly* in May 1799, only the first part of *Arthur Mervyn* had been published (the second came out in the summer of 1800), meaning that *Arthur Mervyn* was itself a work-in-progress that was then incomplete. The publication of *Edgar Huntly* thus divides the sequential volumes of *Arthur Mervyn* with its own series of novelistic events and its own chain of related texts. For Brown, the publication of *Edgar Huntly* and its related texts serve as an opportunity for him to consider the relation between part and whole in a way that makes him devalue the single novel with a beginning, middle, and end. Instead, he promotes a novelistic model focusing on fragmented prose texts (sometimes fragmented accidentally) that exist in a related but suspended series.

Brown's composition and publication of the *Edgar Huntly* texts offer a complex portrayal of early republican authorship highlighted by the approaches just outlined: the assemblages of Deleuze and Guattari highlight the "multiplicity connected to other multiplicities by superficial

underground[s]"; Dimock's concept of "weak theory" draws attention to the marginal chaos that lurks undetected in the leaky connections among genres and texts; and Brown himself thinks of his plots and publications in terms of an interlinked series. None of these models quite captures the way Brown combines the imaginative, plot elements of his texts with the physical realities of publication. But each approach provides a way of understanding how Brown considered the tensions between deficiency, absence, and fragments, and plenitude, completion, and integrity. It is through the constant interplay among these themes that Brown derives the force of his characters, the energy of his writing, and constitutes the momentum of his publication.

This chapter will first examine the historical background of the 1790s and the literature of Brown's friend and contemporary, Elihu Hubbard Smith, in order to show the important influence of the fragment form and its place in a decade rife with political turmoil. After this, I examine the scholarship surrounding Edgar's complex marginal identity and present a case for why a methodology based in the history of material texts helps make evident the underlying reasons why Brown makes Edgar's identity so inconsistent. I then turn to a closer examination of Brown's interest in the contingencies of publication, and analyze the specific construction of the various extracts and fragments used to create the assemblage. Finally, I examine how Brown allegorizes the movement of texts with the interchangeability of identity in an episode from *Edgar Huntly* that extends into his periodical work and resonates with the entire chain of texts.

Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith and the Turmoil of the 1790s

An important insight into Brown's understanding of fragmentary identity and publication comes from the writing of one of Brown's close correspondents and friends, Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith, a physician and literary man associated with the Connecticut Wits and the New York

Friendly Club (Cronin 471). The Friendly Club consisted of a group of men who met regularly and discussed topics ranging from politics and literature to the state of medical science and natural history. In the words of Bryan Waterman, the topics discussed by the informal association of men "reveal the contours of a late-Enlightenment intellectual culture that set the terms by which the earliest U.S. literature came into existence" (4). Waterman carefully examines the conversation, writing, and socialization that took place over the years that the group met and shows how Smith proved to be a prolific center for the club. He composed a wide variety of verse, prose essays, and even dramatic pieces that he shared with the other members; moreover, he experimented with the fragment form in a number of his poems throughout the 1790s.

Not coincidentally, the 1790s proved to be an especially tumultuous decade for Smith and his cohort. Across the Atlantic, Irish nationalists took up arms against the Anglican minority in an attempt to gain independence. And, from 1789-99 the French Revolution generated a sense of perpetual fear throughout all of Europe and America because citizens thought that the rising impulse toward radical change might result in outbreaks of mob violence in their own countries. Much closer to American shores, the French Revolution did indeed help spark the start of the long Haitian Revolution, a bloody conflict that terrified American slaveholders and inspired later slave revolts all along the Atlantic coast. On the domestic front the nation struggled with border skirmishes with Native Americans, the financial panics of 1792 and 1797, the Whiskey Rebellion, the divisive Alien and Sedition Acts that sought to exclude many new French and Irish immigrants, and the development of a two-party system that led to the so-called "Revolution of 1800" and the election of Thomas Jefferson. More pertinent to the day-to-day lived experiences of the members of the Friendly Club, the devastation of multiple outbreaks of

yellow fever across the Eastern seaboard contributed to the sense that radical instabilities undergirded the entire decade. Two of Brown's novels, *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800) and *Ormond* (1800), confront the difficulties surrounding the two outbreaks of yellow fever in Philadelphia, and Smith himself died from the disease after spending time attending to infected patients.

Stacey Margolis describes how Brown captured the feeling of the post-Revolutionary moment by identifying subterranean connections: "Americans learned the hard way that they were connected in a manner few people had anticipated and no one understood….[Brown] recognizes how little anyone understood the hidden ties that made a decision in one place wreak havoc in another" (344). In a definitive sense that follows lines of cause and effect, none of the historical upheavals of the 1780s or 90s precisely corresponds to the way Smith, Brown, and other writers display an emerging interest in the fragment form. The verse and prose fragments written by Smith and Brown do not explicitly point to any particular historical event that might provide an explanatory context. But the very omission of an illuminating historical background on the part of the writers reveals a crucial vagueness surrounding the fragments—since no precise event exists to explain the rupture that created the fragments, their broken state indefinitely point to a wide range of possible causes that created "hidden ties."

Since Smith and Brown do not provide their fragments with a clear provenance for their creation that explains their partial existence (neither of them writes a preface or a headnote explaining what happened to the imaginary whole of the text), the presentation of the fragments implies a history embedded in in any number of different violent contexts. The visual connotations associated with a fragment of writing generate the image of a ragged, torn, or dirty piece of writing from the past, and the examples examined earlier in the work of Laurence Sterne, Samuel Jackson Pratt, and Hannah Webster Foster focus on the illegibility of the piece of

prose. Fragments of paper provide physical evidence that point toward a history deterioration and destruction, but Smith and Brown hold back the precise means by which the corrosion occurred. By invoking the word fragment, Smith and Brown not only indicate an aesthetic form that establishes the partiality of the text; they also generate a sense of the physical tatters surrounding the printed piece of writing. Through the implication of a degraded material state, Smith and Brown indicate that their fragments are ambiguously dependent on a variety of possible historical fractures and exist because it has passed through any number of hands. A clear agency for the creation of the fragments dissipates, even as it remains decisive and strong in the striking rupture from a previous state.

Smith's corpus of writing largely evidences an engagement with the historical tribulations of the 1790s and a desire to improve conditions, but he also admits a sense of hopelessness for the future. Writing under the pseudonym "Ella," Smith wrote "A Fragment. In Imitation of Spenser," a short poem that was published in *The Gazette of the United States* in 1791.[69] The somewhat gloomy poem tracks a speaker's shifting mood while he views the picturesque landscape around New Lebanon, New York, a destination for tourists during the summer months because of its famous medicinal springs. During the late eighteenth century New Lebanon was also the location of a large Shaker community, and by the end of the poem the speaker feels an oppressive sense of despair after he observes the Shakers and contemplates their celibate refusal of human reproduction. Even though the speaker feels enlivened by the natural surroundings and the throngs of visitors to New Lebanon, the Shaker village gives him the sense that "In antic vesture robed Religion walks, / Her face in sorrows drest, all hearts doth freeze, / And with a frigid hand creation balks." The speaker fears the "frigid" virtue espoused by the Shakers and expresses alarm at their refusal of natural procreation, a belief that the speaker

thinks serves "but to spread destruction on mankind" and "seal damnation on the mind." Without a doubt, the explicit pessimism regarding the "destruction of mankind" also resonates broadly with the political and military debacles of the 1790s. After the speaker's lament, Smith's complex fragment poem ends on a rhetorical question to his audience that goes against Shaker thinking; the speaker of the poem ask if humanity should be described as individuals "*Whose* very soul is love with adoration join'd?"

Smith does not write an answer to the question, a decision that gives his poem an unfinished aesthetic that potentially looks forward to a future moment in which the query about humanity can be answered. But he also conveys an antiquated sense of temporality by subtitling the poem, "In Imitation of Spenser," a designation that reaches back two centuries to the Renaissance and takes his audience completely out of their contemporary, eighteenth-century American context. Furthermore, by choosing Spenser as the figure to imitate, Smith doubles the temporal antiquity of his poem because even in the sixteenth century Spenser wrote poetry with an eye glancing backwards to obsolete words, genres, and poetic devices. Associating the fragment poem with multiple distant pasts syncs Smith's work with the stalled out futurity suggested by the celibacy of the Shakers, a society that rejects "reproductive futurism" in a way that resonates with Lee Edelman's description of queerness as a future-negating sexuality. Smith's speaker feels interested in these alternate temporalities and their anti-progressivist mentality, but also describes his fear of a Shaker philosophy that "all hearts doth freeze / And with a frigid hand creation balks."

In leaving the end of the poem unanswered, the speaker cannot definitively say where, or rather when, he stands, and implicitly aligns himself with a lack of prospect for the future. The uncertainties surrounding alternate modes of conceiving temporality translates in an important

way to Smith's understanding of his written work, which he considered as always in process. He wrote extensively in his diary and often brought the book to meetings of the Friendly Club in order to share his philosophical reflections with the other members of the group. In August 1796 and then in August and September 1797 (Kaplan 297), he wrote a short dissertation on his ideal utopia in his private diary, explaining various aspects of the society in short, essayistic pieces; in a chapter titled "Of the Society" he mentions that the "present chapters are only hints, or fragments of a whole hereafter to be reunited on paper, as now in imagination" ("The Utopia" 321). Smith never finished composing the plan for a utopia that attempted to replace social chaos and corruption with harmony and peace; as Catherine Kaplan writes in her introduction to the document, for "all its detail and length, Smith's utopia is a fragment of his planned project, and it is unclear what would have become of it had he lived" (303). The 1798 yellow fever swept across the Eastern seaboard and Smith died in the epidemic, leaving "The Utopia" in unfinished "fragments of a whole." Whether or not those fragments were ever to be "reunited on paper" remains unknown, since "he never mentioned plans to publish the utopia. Nor, even more strikingly, does he seem to have shared it with the Friendly Club" (Kaplan 303).

Smith's "A Fragment. In Imitation of Spenser" presents a stalled out futurity that fears the degeneration of humanity in the celibate chilliness of the Shakers, and the "fragments of a whole" of "The Utopia" reveal a potentially complete piece of writing disrupted by historical forces completely out of Smith's control. In the first case, Smith deliberately constructs a fragment in order to convey aesthetically the unanswered nature of the questions underlying the poem and displace his audience from their immediate present. And, in the second case, Smith composes parts of a text that "are only hints, or fragments of a whole hereafter to be reunited on paper," a promised completion that never occurs except in his own imagination. The thwarted

futures underlying these two fragmentary texts differ, but they each show a version of the fragment form different from the politically charged fragments examined in the last two chapters. Edgar's fragmentary identity certainly plays into Brown's novel, but Brown also pays attention to the way in which unpredictable and uncontrollable historical forces lend themselves to an unfinished, or imperfect, aesthetic form (a likely occurrence during the turbulent decade).

Disassembling the Early American Novel

Brown's interest in sleepwalking and Edgar Huntly's convoluted identity provides a counterpoint to a tradition of Americanist criticism that studies the formation of the individual subject (most often in relation to the history of the novel). Texts like Sacvan Bercovitch's *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (1975), and critics like Cathy Davidson, Wai Chee Dimock (in *Empire for Liberty*), Gillian Brown, Stacey Margolis, and James Albrecht focus on a teleological movement toward individuality (a movement that grows in tandem with the development of increasingly complex and subtle novels). But the strength of this position can be contested by focusing on atypical constructions of individuality in novels that function in a dispersive way to deny the consistency of plot and perspective. Building on the work of the previously mentioned critics, my analysis of *Edgar Huntly* indicates additional versions and components of individuality. Edgar Huntly presents an alternative option for the construction of self because of his sleepwalking and the way he unconsciously mimics other characters—Brown's depiction of Edgar focuses on a fraught intersubjectivity more than a definitive individuality.

An overreliance on the individual subject elides the version of identity seen in *Edgar Huntly* and its related texts—a non-normative identity that exists in a contradictory, undefined

state partially dependent on others. For the scholars cited above, the careful development of a character's subjectivity analogically folds into the increasing sophistication of novels that can hone in on a particular individual or narrative point of view. Consistency of subjectivity accords to the careful unified construction of novels. In an inversion of this understanding of the early American novel, Edgar displays a marked disaggregation of subjectivity, and *Edgar Huntly* exceeds itself with a surplus of published parts that extend into one another without completing each other. This practice of publication was not limited to Brown's idiosyncracies because other works published around the same time as *Edgar Huntly* similarly move toward an *excessive* text. The numerous instances of texts that dissolve perspective and disperse into an assemblage, web, network, or series (rather than cohering into a single unified novel) indicate an unconventional form of prose writing in the early republic—one that emphasized a tradition of partial amalgamation over a clear, coherent perspective.

Even major, canonical authors wrote literary works that emphasized a method based in the production of parts. While Judith Sargent Murray is primarily known for her ideologically precise prose essays on gender inequality, she also wrote *The Gleaner*, a series of periodical essays, novelistic plots, and journalistic sketches she published in the *Massachusetts Magazine* over the course of several years. Murray wrote *The Gleaner* from the perspective of a masculine persona, and the text presents an adept handling of multiple genres, narrative perspectives, and aesthetic styles; her primary canonization as an essayist occludes this heterogeneous construction of prose that proves difficult to fit into more familiar nineteenth-century genres. Another major writer, Susanna Rowson, figures as one of the most important novelists in the 1790s even though she also wrote an extended prose work, *The Inquisitor*, which does not deploy a single unified narrative and instead mingles fiction with nonfiction in a series of essayistic productions. Like

The Gleaner, *The Inquisitor* also deployed a male speaker, a rambler who observes a wide variety of social interactions from the implausible security of pure invisibility (secured by a magic ring). Under the veil of invisible anonymity, he describes and reports local goings-on with impunity.

Texts like *The Gleaner* and *The Inquisitor* provide a means of decentering the primary status of the novel in late eighteenth-century America and instead foregrounding an innovative prose tradition that developed out of periodical sketches, essays, and novelistic histories.[70] A decentered, partial style did necessarily not fall neatly into volumes or between two boards. Following along these lines, the textual history of *Edgar Huntly* demonstrates its alliance with non-novelistic forms of production that depended less on completion and aesthetic coherence, and more on assemblage, partiality, and coincidence (a mode of composition that syncs up with Brown's views on identity, as well).

In the scholarship of recent decades not enough work has been done with the publishing history of Brown's fascinating texts (even though anecdotes about Brown's hurried production of his four major novels hold a place in most discussions of his complex plots). The relationship between his novels and his editorial positions similarly calls for a renewed approach to understanding his methods of composition, one that neither prioritizes the periodical nor the novel, but understands Brown's work as equally engaged and influenced by each particular form of publishing. Recent criticism of *Edgar Huntly* follows along two main interpretive tracks which closely follow Richard Chase's proleptic statement in *The American Novel and its Tradition* that Brown's writings, along with those of other major American writers, "tend to ideology and psychology; they are adept at depicting the largest public abstractions and the smallest and most elusive turn of the inner mind" (41). Psychological interpretations of *Edgar*

Huntly began primarily with Leslie Fiedler's classic account in *Love and Death in the American Novel*, and since then critics like Beverly Voloshin and George Toles have followed Fiedler in analyzing the inward problems of identity and morality that plague Edgar. In response to this inward focus, critics in the eighties and nineties turned their gaze outward by politicizing Brown's novel and bringing it into conversation with the "ideology" of the early republic, particularly with reference to the Delaware Indians, the British empire, and the emergent American empire. Beginning with Jared Gardner and Sydney Krause, critics like John Carlos Rowe, Andrew Newman, and Eric Goldman (whose work follows New Americanist historical interpretive practices to some degree) took Brown's investigation of political ideology seriously and either lauded him for critiquing American colonialism or condemned him for his complicity with oppressive state regimes. This historical, politically-oriented writing has largely governed studies of *Edgar Huntly* since the nineties.[71]

By and large the two major traditions of scholarship have segregated interior and exterior, form and politics, mind and body, and philosophy and ideology, a practice that presents Brown as single-minded (as if he never thought the two domains could be interrelated).[72] A crucial component of this separation involves presenting *Edgar Huntly* as a single, completed work with a clearly identifiable and delineated argument (whether that be psychological or ideological)—the self-enclosed text generates for these critics a firm basis for the solidity of argumentation. Indeed, the critics just listed tend to *mention* the fact that Brown wrote a lost book called *Sky-Walk*, placed an extract from *Edgar Huntly* in his magazine, and later published "Somnambulism. A Fragment," but these facts do not change the novel for them. In books and articles written on Brown in the last few decades, the historical information surrounding the publication of *Edgar Huntly* functions as a piece of trivia that fills out the background of

Brown's career, instead of working as a determining element that adds to a critical understanding of the novel and Brown's compositional methods.

Because I take the ancillary publications seriously as an important part of *Edgar Huntly*, I strongly argue against the division of the novel from these related texts, a division exemplified by Jared Gardner's debatable statement in *The Rise and Fall of Early American Magazine Culture* that Brown helped bring to life "the novel of the autonomous individual, the story told through one voice, one psychology, and bound by the expectations of chronology, unity, and the totalizing conclusion" (6). I disagree with many of the statements in Gardner's claim—while Brown writes *Edgar Huntly* primarily from Edgar's perspective (with the important exception of the letters from Sarsefield that conclude the text), the "psychology" and "chronology" of the story offer anything *but* "unity," and the "totalizing conclusion" that Gardner refers to simply does not exist, either in the content of the novel or its publication history. Rather, those four elements bewilder the readers of the novel with a stunning array of complexity and nuance and make for an intentionally difficult and fragmented reading experience. To say that Brown writes in a way "bound by the expectations" of "unity" violates both the internal logic of his characters and the long, disordered publishing history of *Edgar Huntly*, a history that fully represents what Andrew Piper calls the Romantic "engagement with the fragmentary, secondary, and collective nature of books…. [a view which] also foregrounded the relational structure of books, that there was a bibliographic elsewhere, before, and after with which books and their texts were increasingly engaged" (14).[73] Brown's understandings of personal and textual identity *complement* one another—the model of identity portrayed by Edgar's interactions with the other characters in the novel analogically corresponds to the way Brown interweaves textual identities.[74]

The "bibliographic elsewhere" described by Piper, in which a text like *Edgar Huntly* refers to its previous iterations and even to future transformations, looks a great deal like the way Edgar half-knows his past and future and unconsciously takes on the attributes of other characters. This interpretive position opens up the interior elements of Brown's character development with external realities significant to Brown, but in a very different way from the ideologically-based political criticisms described above; the relationship of identity to textual publishing demonstrates how Brown conceived the plot of his novel as opening up into a chronologically disparate series of works. He thus *minimizes* the distinction between the inside of *Edgar Huntly* and its outside, just as he shows how unstable the borders are between Edgar and other characters in the novel, a point made more emphatic by the form of the fragment. Because the novel folds into other texts published in other genres, modes, and formats, Brown never indicates the singular importance of the first book edition of *Edgar Huntly*. Instead, he signals the significance of the book alongside its supplementary, fragmented texts. For Brown, a novel that describes character instability necessarily results in alternate, fragmented versions of itself, a textual version of the "reproductive disorders" that Dana Luciano observes in the logic of sensibility in *Edgar Huntly*. To call the various textual relatives of *Edgar Huntly* "disorders" misses the point though—the publication of minor genres like fragments, excerpts, essays, reflections, and anecdotes constituted the vast majority of day-to-day reading material in the early republic, making the heterogeneous publication of *Edgar Huntly* more typical than it first appears.

Brown's association of fragments with *Edgar Huntly* expresses the intentionally referential, open-ended nature of his novelistic form, and also thoroughly emphasizes the fragmentary construction of narrative, at once suggesting and denying the existence of a unified

whole. In the same way that Edgar Huntly goes on "pedestrian excursions" around the countryside even though his "knowledge [of the area] was extremely imperfect" (67) and Old Deb goes on "periodical rambles" (139) that weave through border, frontier, and boundary, Brown's novelistic style and publishing record pushes towards the margins of *Edgar Huntly* so far that the he blends and blurs the distinctions among texts. If walking is indeed one of the central metaphors of the text as Chad Luck convincingly argues, then Deb's "periodical rambles" should be taken seriously not just as the physical movements of characters within the text, but also as the peripatetic style that Brown develops around the novel periodically across time and also within magazines. The cycle of texts around *Edgar Huntly* works to contradict George Toles's point that "openness is invari[a]bly associated with vacancy, flatness, and diminution, and secrecy connotes fullness, depth, and limitless potency" (142); in stark contrast to Toles's argument, "openness" transforms texts into alternate versions of themselves, recognizable and similar, yet different.

Scholars have thoroughly commented on the way in which Brown presents the mutability of identity with Edgar Huntly and Clithero Edny—he clearly establishes the two as doppelgängers with strikingly correspondent psychosexual desires, geopolitical wanderings, and violent proclivities. As Fiedler writes, in *Edgar Huntly* "the boundaries between person and person are abrogated; people are always turning into each other" (158), making an individual a lot less like an individual and more like a copy or a version of another person. But the New Americanist critics mentioned earlier naturalize Edgar's individual self in the name of critiquing an Anglo-American empire, assuming *a priori* that Edgar exists as a fully realized subject with agency and responsibility. In fact, Edgar and Clithero mirror one another throughout the text and their wanderings interweave across mental and physical frontiers, even as they encounter

antagonists like Delaware Indians, Old Deb, and Sarsefield, a crossing that diminishes Edgar's agency and shows his identity as alienated from himself (not to mention his shadowing of various other characters). As Sharon Cameron puts it in her study of impersonality, there are "moments when characters seem weirdly permeable to each other" and alternately distant (183). Brown explores this repetition with a difference on the level of individual identity (ratifying his point that a man can be unknown to himself, influenced by another's character and even his own unconscious) on a larger scale with the repetition of *Edgar Huntly* in different lengths, genres, and modes of production. For Brown, the identity of a text extends beyond a discrete event and exists as a fluid form that overruns a single production; he thereby proposes an extensive mode of reading that joins fragmented texts together, but never indicates that one section completes or finishes the others. While the novel *Edgar Huntly* might be a principal node in Brown's extended network of texts, he writes around it enough that its central position can be viewed as contingent. He creates a series of variegated textual identities that stand in tension with one another, brought together under a common theme yet differentiated by their distinct modes.

Publishing the Imperfect Series

In addition to supplementing the printing of the third volume of *Edgar Huntly* with "Death of Cicero, A Fragment," Brown preceded his publication of the novel with a periodical excerpt entitled "Edgar Huntly, A Fragment" (April 1799), and also followed up on the novel with the publication of "Somnambulism. A fragment." (May 1805) in his *Literary Magazine*. The readerly absorption that Brown's bodily, gothic narrative generates oscillates to the opposite extreme through these publications, pushing audiences *outside* of the text in a thematically continuous but disruptive and imperfect manner. And, perhaps most importantly and lurking in

the background of these related fragments is Brown's missing first attempt at a novel, *Sky-Walk, or, The Man Unknown to Himself*, which was denied publication by executors who retained the copyright after they acquired the manuscript following the death of James Watters, the owner of *The Weekly Magazine*. The "executors set the price of the finished sheets so high that Brown's friends could not repurchase them" (Barnard and Shapiro, 216) and the only remains of the work are references in letters between Brown and his friends, and a published extract that served as an advertisement for the novel. All of the surviving evidence suggests that *Sky-Walk*, like *Edgar Huntly*, focused on the somnambulistic ramblings of a young man in Pennsylvania, and scholars speculate that "Somnambulism. A fragment" might be taken from or inspired by that lost work. The events surrounding *Sky-Walk* taught Brown early in his career about the contingencies of publication, and the rapid manner in which intentions can be skewed by accident even in the case of an already written novel; moreover, complications created by random chance occur quite regularly, as any reader knows, throughout the plots of all of his novels.[75]

While Brown himself obviously played a central role in the process of composing and publishing the *Edgar Huntly* series, he also deemphasizes his own authorial agency by bringing to the foreground the intrusive function of accident and coincidence in the publication of texts. Themes of contingency bleed over into the content of his writing, and can be clearly observed in *Edgar Huntly*; for instance, the titular character constantly feels disoriented because forces out of his control influence his behavior and coincidentally make him act a little bit like Clithero, a Delaware Indian, and even sometimes like his colonialist mentor, Sarsefield. Accidental agency determines the course of plot events most evidently when Edgar wakes up in a cave without any knowledge of how he got there or when he got there, a narrative jump that emphasizes that things often happen *to* him without his knowledge. This event begins Edgar's exhausting traversal of

the landscape of Norwalk and also his constant killing of Indians in his attempt to return home—all as a result of accidental circumstances.

A similar distortion of self-control and agency took place in Brown's attempted publication of *Sky-Walk* in 1798, a failed attempt that then led to his composition of *Edgar Huntly.* The only extant portion of *Sky-Walk* exists in an extract published in *The Weekly Magazine*, and the editorial introduction written by Brown explains that "unable to fix on any *part* capable of conveying a perfect idea of the *whole*, we trust the following may serve as a specimen of the work" (228). Although Brown chooses the portion that he thinks provides the best glimpse of the entirety of the work, he also recognizes that an exact correspondence, "a perfect idea of the *whole*" cannot be created by any "*part*"; such an attempt would be fruitless and pointless, especially with the impending publication of the entire work. Brown understands that a part of a novel can never fully capture the entirety of the work, a view that argues against the aesthetic and political philosophy of the organic whole theorized by Samuel Taylor Coleridge two decades later in *Biographia Literaria*. In his late life, Coleridge believed in "the principle that all the parts of an organized whole must be assimilated to the more important and essential parts" (II, 72), focusing teleologically on totalities rather than pieces.[76]

More an advertisement than anything else, the selection from *Sky-Walk* offered readers of *The Weekly Magazine* a glimpse of Brown's prose style, and also acquainted them with the kinds of happenstance plot movements for which Brown would become so famous throughout his career. As Norman Grabo comments, "[c]oincidence, then, may sometimes strike us as a trivial annoyance, but it may also function as the foundation of the stories themselves…[t]he overwhelming fact about the coincidences in Brown's fiction is that there are simply too many for them to be coincidental. Or, to put it another way, Brown's coincidence is necessary" (x). Or,

as Edgar describes the state of affairs when he considers Weymouth's claim on Mary Waldegrave's inheritance, "[s]o many coincidences could not have happened by chance" (105).

In the passage from *Sky-Walk* that Brown selects for *The Weekly Magazine*, the unnamed narrator explains how the problems of debt have overcome a young Irish merchant of his acquaintance named Annesley (Annesley's moral virtue makes his position even more pitiable). After the narrator describes the lamentable situation to his well-off travel companion, Ormond Courtney, she decides to provide all of the necessary money to pay Annesley's creditors. The goodness of the heart thus prevails and functions to redeem Annesley from prison and liberate him from the difficulties created by his avaricious creditor, who tricked Annesley into returning to his native country by erroneously suggesting that the debt had been repaid. Brown represents the entirety of *Sky-Walk* by focusing on the reversals of fortune—in this case, a positive reversal—a decision that emphasizes his interest in the contingent, happenstance nature of human failures and accomplishments. For Brown, the novel was the ideal genre for the discussion of these themes, and in his essay "Walstein's School of History. From the German of Krants of Gotha" he claims that accidents play a significant role in the external affairs of humans:

> Men hold external goods, the pleasures of the senses, of health, liberty, reputation, competence, friendship, and life, partly by virtue of their own wisdom and activity. This, however, is not the only source of their possession. It is likewise dependent on physical accidents, which human foresight cannot anticipate, or human power prevent. It is also influenced by the conduct and opinions of others. (410)

In his aesthetic criticism Brown describes how the novel as a form is particularly suited to descriptions of contingency and probability because it is a non-historical genre that can *speculate* regarding human motivations, especially with relation to cause and effect. But the place of the "accidental" extends beyond the content of the extract of *Sky-Walk*. A variety of "physical accidents" interceded in the publication of the novel; after the death of James Watters during the yellow fever epidemic Watters's executors priced the manuscript of *Sky-Walk* so high that Brown could not afford to repurchase it and retain it in his possession, resulting in the subsequent loss of the sheets. The entirety of *Sky-Walk* disappeared almost without a trace because of the epidemic and the high price of the manuscript pages, leaving only the part published in *The Weekly Magazine* to stand-in for the novel. Without the entire completed novel, the published portion from *The Weekly Magazine* remains an extract (after all, Brown did carefully select it as a representative piece for the whole novel), but it also takes on another, more fragmentary quality because it exists as a trace, a remainder of the combined effects of the plague, financial insolvency, and economic demands. It bears evidence not only of Brown's editorial decision-making, but also the historical contingencies "which human foresight cannot anticipate, or human power prevent" that raise and sink the fortunes of man's "external goods." Brown's editorial statements in the introduction to the excerpt/fragment anticipate the publication of the novel and make references to its imminent appearance, statements that look toward a deviated future that never occurred.

Sky-Walk represents a non-intentional fragment and serves as a test case for Rodrigo Lazo's description of how "[a]rchival fragments sometimes speak to a socioeconomic condition rather than a literary text" (182-183). In the case of *Sky-Walk*, the yellow fever epidemic and the "socioeconomic condition[s]" in place restrict the publication and circulation of Brown's early

novel on sleepwalking. Lazo's discussion of textual remnants also recognizes that archival fragments raise more questions than answers because they offer an incomplete view of their own production—the original text can never be recovered as a result of the limiting conditions, making a complete analysis impossible. Indeed, the absent manuscript of *Sky-Walk* generates a plenitude of questions: How similar was it to *Edgar Huntly*? Was "Somnambulism. A fragment." drawn from it? Did the manuscript deal with questions of border, boundary and nationality in similar terms to *Edgar Huntly*? Why couldn't Brown raise money to repurchase the manuscript? Why did the executors of the estate set the price of the novel so high? These questions do not necessarily have clear answers, as Lazo suggests, but Brown's reactions to the circumstances *can* be identified. As a result of the failed publication of his first novel, Brown learned about a set of problems that underlie authorship and developed an understanding that the act of publication can potentially infringe on agency just as much as it can assert it. *Sky-Walk*, as we know it today, exists as a combined result of Brown's creative efforts, the biological movements of the yellow fever, legal conditions governing the transfer of estates, and economic demands.

And, as Sean Braune argues, these archival limitations do not have to constrict the possibilities of interpretive work: "the fragment offers a conceptual writing of plenitude in that it is a textuality that has been authored by destructive forces, offering seemingly infinite possible texts that may theoretically ascribe 'completion' to any fragment" (253). The "destructive forces" work against Brown's intention to publish *Sky-Walk* in the form of a three-volume novel; but at the same time Brown recognizes the potential involved in the "infinite possible texts" created by the deviated publication. His repetition of *Sky-Walk*'s themes into various different texts and media in the five years after the failed publication indicate his interest in exploring at least some of the infinite "completions" that could be attached to the fragment—without

denoting a particular one as definitive. No single edition or account of the *Edgar Huntly* series thus exists, and to read it "correctly, in other words, means to abandon the category of a 'correct text,' together with the archival amnesia it fosters, in favor of a radical vision of textual plurality" (Gurd 83). In Brown's next published extract he engages with and indexes the problem of the accidental by taking it into consideration and trying to anticipate the unforeseeable, or at least take it into account. He begins the process of creating multiple completions of *Sky-Walk*, within which exist new possibilities for "a radical vision of textual plurality."

In April 1799 he published "Edgar Huntly: A Fragment" in his *Monthly Magazine* as an advertisement that could entice potential readers. In the title of the work he describes the portion of the novel as "A Fragment," but in a prefatory note addressed to the editor he says that "[t]he following narrative is extracted from the memoirs of a young man." He posits a clear and unquestionable contradiction in terms in the description of the passage, on the one hand calling it an extract, and on the other calling it a fragment. Extracts served as the most common form of newspaper and periodical advertising in the early republic; they offered readers a glimpse of the longer text in order to attract attention and lure readers into purchasing the entire work. More to the point, the concept of an extract foregrounds the role of human agency, implying that an editor or an author does the work of trimming the larger text and selecting a shortened version that will exemplify important features of the entire work. Brown admitted that a part could never fully represent the whole in his introduction to the extract from *Sky-Walk*, but he did *choose* to publish the portion that he selected. In an extract, selection, choice, and quotation all function together in order to represent, embody, typify, and illustrate all of the important elements of a longer work.

In complete contrast, fragments almost categorically exclude the possibility of careful, rational selection because their existence largely depends on accidental contingencies. While an

extract intentionally uses the part to represent the whole, a fragment posits a connection between the two that is purely incidental, and that lacks any deliberate decision. By placing the passage from *Edgar Huntly* in both camps, Brown blends intention with accident in a way that valorizes his own position as editor and author, and also undermines his own efforts to organize articles into a sensible arrangement—he leaves no room for an organic whole like that defined by Coleridge because he recognizes that such a thing could never possibly exist. If anything, organic developments lead to fragments, decay, ruin, and accident as much as unification, ideality, and poetic perfection. In a way, Brown uses the form of the fragment in order to account for any of the textual disruptions that might occur before the publication of the novel, meaning that, if *Edgar Huntly* gets published at all, it is almost equally accidental.

The piece of narrative that Brown chooses speaks thematically to these ideas because the passage selected by Brown focuses on Edgar's confusion after he awakens in a cave after his first experience sleepwalking. Edgar has no idea what he is doing there, mimicking the readerly experience of being thrown into the middle of a novel without any explanation of characters, setting, or previous plot events. And, in an interesting twist, Edgar's disoriented, fearful state also seems fragmentary in the complete version of the novel because the reader still has no explanation of how Edgar arrived in the cave. The passage feels as if it has been splintered off from the rest of the text (there are some hints that Edgar might have sleepwalked, but they are not definite until much later). And if, as Dana Luciano comments, "*Edgar Huntly* is in some ways a novel about how storytelling feels, even as it is framed by Edgar's telling of his own story" (4), then the interruption and obscurity created by Edgar's sleepwalking allies the text with the sense of unpredictable contingency evoked by the form of the fragment.

Brown's decision to call the passage from *Edgar Huntly* both an extract and a fragment shows his awareness of the role of contingency and accident, showing that he learned a lesson from the attempted publication of *Sky-Walk*—authorial agency, especially in the tumultuous periodical world of the early Republic, could be thwarted at almost every turn. The tension elaborated by the use of both terms shows how Brown straddles the difference, acknowledging the role of his own selective powers and also admitting the unpredictabilities created in the process of paring down a long text into a shortened piece and preparing the complete work for publication. Brown argues that fragmentation can never be eliminated from writing because it always potentially exists in the form of intervening historical accidents, even when the text involved demonstrates the height of authorial control and selection.

Caving Texts

At first glance, the extract/fragment that Brown publishes in the *Monthly Magazine* fits neatly into Gerard Genette's classification of the epitext, a "paratextual element not materially appended to the text within the same volume, but circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually limitless physical and social space" (344). Genette acknowledges that nothing necessarily precludes an epitext from becoming part of the paratext or the text itself, and the project underlying the *Edgar Huntly* texts makes more and more evident the decay of boundaries in Genette's carefully constructed categories. While Genette concedes the instability and occasional inaccuracy of the groupings he creates, Brown's writing and the writing of other early American authors pushes hard on any distinction between the inside of a text and its outside, between the text and its epitext. In the case of the extract/fragment that Brown publishes in anticipation of *Edgar Huntly*, Brown migrates the periodical piece from an exterior location, to an interior one

(when the novel comes out), marking again the way in which *Edgar Huntly* depends on texts published outside of its three-volume editions.

Even more interesting, Brown thematizes this textual movement in the portion of *Edgar Huntly* that he selects for the *Monthly Magazine*. He presents a geographical site that complicates any clean separation of inside and outside, and he places Edgar in this transitional space: the cave in which Edgar awakens after he (unknowingly) sleepwalks across the countryside. Throughout the novel, Edgar's description of the landscape around Norwalk focuses on the rifts, cavities, chasms, and jagged peaks that make traversing the landscape difficult and dangerous while he goes on his various walking expeditions. Ezra Tawil explains the centrality of landscape for Brown's novel:

> Brown was particularly adept at making his mode of narration mirror the themes of the plot. One of his primary strategies for doing so is to invite an analogy between the topographical features of the region and the surface of the narrative itself…Brown thus gave his own prose bumps and irregularities, as if attempting to endow the surface of the writing with the same textural effects as he gives his regional topography. (120-1)

Tawil thus acutely accounts for the irregularities in Brown's writing style by corresponding it to the "topographical features of the region." The "bumps and irregularities" of Norwalk simultaneously enchant and plague Edgar throughout the course of his narrative. He often provides accounts of the geology of the area by describing his past experiences and his current observations:

> The basis of all this region is *limestone*; a substance that eminently abounds in rifts and cavities. These, by the gradual decay of their cementing parts, frequently

> make their appearance in spots where they might have been least expected. My attention has often been excited by the hollow sound which was produced by my casual footsteps, and which showed me that I trod upon the roof of caverns. A mountain-cave and the rumbling of an unseen torrent are appendages of this scene, dear to my youthful imagination. Many of romantic structure were found within the precincts of Norwalk. (17)

During Edgar's youthful walks around Norwalk he recalls "the hollow sound" that indicated a deep cavern beneath his very feet, experiencing how the "romantic structure[s]" created feelings of sublime awe in his "imagination." The "gradual decay" of the natural formations of limestone captures Edgar's mind, and gives the entire area an inspiring, romantic feeling. Without a doubt, the terrain surrounding Edgar and the other characters of the novel ultimately proves unstable and shifting, and presents a clear threat when he moves across a difficult landscape in his pursuit of Clithero. The "rifts and cavities" that stimulate his imaginative memories also constitute the caverns that lurk beneath his footsteps, reminding him with every step that they could break open and swallow him entirely.

The decayed romantic structure was an important feature of Romantic writing. An increasing appetite for gothic tales in America led to the publication and reprinting of works that emphasized the harrowing threats and supernatural occurences in isolated landscapes. Caves, caverns, and hollows proved particularly useful for writers to convey a sense of solitude, danger, and natural claustrophobia (if you think about it, it's kind of natural version of an old, haunted castle). Tales like *The Cavern of Death, A Moral Tale* (1795) and John Palmer's *The Haunted Cavern: A Caledonian Tale* (1796) were widely printed and read in the early U.S. and had a major influence on American writers. Think, for instance of Washington Irving, who picks up on

the popularity of caves in his tale "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," which is not about a cave but evokes that organization with the space of the hollow. In his analysis of Romantic bibliography, Andrew Piper examines Washington Irving's story and comments that the structure of the hollow is aligned with different hollows on the space of the page—moments of unconsciousness, dashes, excessive punctuation, and blank spaces on the margins of the text (140-1). What Piper recognizes is that this geologic feature is not only a popular one in printed and reprinted texts, but that authors actively recognized how it influenced the architecture of the page. I argue here that Brown takes this one step further with the cave by allowing it to structure the organization of his series of publications. Brown uses the geological formation of the cave as a way to layer the relationship between sleepwalking and his network of various publications—caves form a conduit, a passageway, between texts that fall into each other.

Extending Tawil's claim, the "topographical features of the region" translate not just to the contours of Brown's prose, but also to the unexpected textual "caves" that simultaneously exist as part of the novel and outside of it. Like "The Death of Cicero, A Fragment," a story that Brown "annexed" to the third volume of *Edgar Huntly*, the "mountain-cave and the rumbling of an unseen torrent are appendages" to the areas where Edgar walks, structurally connected but lurking in a way that emphasizes a threatening presence.

The caves become a clear metaphor for multiplying texts in the advertisement for *Edgar Huntly* published in the *Monthly Magazine*, "Edgar Huntly: A Fragment." The worst-case scenario finally befalls Edgar when he wakes up to find himself trapped in one of the caves of Norwalk, uncertain of how he arrived and already feeling powerful pangs of hunger and thirst. With an extraordinary amount of difficulty, Edgar crawls out of a declivity in the cave, encounters, kills, and consumes a menacing panther, and then finds a group of hostile Delaware

Indians sleeping in front of the only exit out of the cave. Just underneath the surface of Norwalk, the geological space of the cave places Edgar simultaneously indoors and outdoors. He is at once in a space of natural protection from the elements—the panther lives in the cave and the group of Delaware Indians takes shelter there—and also intense, life-threatening danger—Edgar almost succumbs to exhaustion, dehydration, an attack from the panther, and attacks from the Delaware warriors. Brown emphasizes the liminality of the cave and its position as a transitional space in the excerpt/fragment for the *Monthly Magazine*.

When Edgar first wakes up in the cave, he finds himself in a space of pure darkness where "the murkiest and most impenetrable gloom" (107) fills every crevice. After he pulls himself out of a depression in the earth with great difficulty, he does recognize a kind of glint in the darkness, a light that belongs to the panther, whose eyes "[t]hough lustrous themselves…created no illumination around them" (111). Right after Edgar kills the panther with a tomahawk and feasts on its vital fluids he falls violently ill and wakes up to darkness again. Brown begins the selection from the *Monthly Magazine* at this particular moment, right when Edgar emerges from a complete darkness to see "a gleam infinitely faint" (*Monthly Magazine* 21). The readers of the extract/fragment enter the narrative in a moment of confusion because Edgar has no idea how he got into the cave; this bewilderment moves into a hesitant enlightenment when Edgar realizes he has found a possible way out of the cave. Thus, the publication of "Edgar Huntly: A Fragment" in the *Monthly Magazine*—a piece of prose that Brown jarringly designates with two conflicting forms—presents an important moment in Edgar's return home, when he realizes that he can find a way out of the cave and thinks he might be able to live through his extraordinary imprisonment. The periodical piece comes at a moment of movement from one space to the next, from utter darkness to a gleam of light and the

anticipation of leaving the dangerous cave. Crucially, this movement between interior and exterior, between dark cave and external light, models the textual movement between the space of the periodical and the novel. The piece published in the *Monthly Magazine* ends up in the completed, published version of *Edgar Huntly*.

These textual caves that Edgar inhabits and moves between create a sense of contingency, the feeling that the ground might fall under his feet, and this sense continues even after Edgar escapes from the cave in the periodical piece. This view holds even after Edgar frees the captive girl and escapes from the cave; he notices that the landscape around them "was nearly covered with sharp fragments of stone. Between these sprung brambles and oak-bushes, whose twigs, crossing and intertwining with each other, added to the roughness below, made the passage infinitely toilsome. Scattered over this space were single cedars and copses of dwarf oaks, which were only new emblems of sterility" (*MM* 28). The passage emphasizes the broken, unkempt, hostile "roughness" of the natural world—even the trees cannot grow past a certain height and stand apart from one another or in small "copses" (a word that sounds and looks a lot like corpses). Nature proves threatening not just to humans but even to itself in Edgar's account, since it only provides "new emblems of sterility" that will not procreate into the future but languish in the present and eventually die.

Most importantly, Brown writes that the soil surrounding Edgar and the young woman "was covered with sharp fragments of stone," borrowing a term he uses for the piece of prose published in the magazine and applying it to Edgar's setting. This description of the soil strikes an especially important tone because the audience encountered the word "fragment" on every single page as they read Brown's writing: at the very top of each sheet ran a running header with the title in italics, *Edgar Huntly: A Fragment*. The visual juxtaposition of the two meanings of

"fragment" creates an interesting resonance that emphasizes the degree to which Brown imbricates the form of the story with the geography of Norwalk. A strong analogical relation exists between the material form of the landscape—a landscape in which Edgar feels dislocated and initially unable to find his home—and the material presentation of the piece in the *Monthly Magazine*, which makes little sense out of the context of the whole novel, and only marginally more within the three-volume publication of *Edgar Huntly*. Two forms of material presence combine with one another to make Edgar's progress and the reader's progress jarring and difficult.

The placement of the fragment within the entirety of the novel makes the process only somewhat less disjointed. After Edgar reunites with his former mentor, Sarsefield, Edgar decides to tell Clithero that his former patron, Mrs. Lorimer, arrived in America. Clithero immediately betrays Edgar's trust by reacting emotionally and travelling to Philadelphia in order to hunt Mrs. Lorimer down. After the one long letter that comprises almost the entirety of the narrative, Brown offers three, final abrupt letters between Sarsefield and Edgar, in which Edgar explains his mistake to his former mentor and Sarsefield chastises his impetuous nature. Sarsefield informs the authorities, who apprehend Clithero on his way to New York, but Clithero jumps into the water in attempt to reach the shore, and never surfaces again. By the end of the novel, Clithero's death appears likely because Sarsefield tied up the loose threads; however, he does express a doubtful hope that "this be the last arrow in the quiver of adversity!" (194).

The narrative does not end there, though. By annexing "The Death of Cicero, A Fragment," Brown provides his readers with an entirely new tragedy—the story of the virtuous Roman senator who will willingly die to maintain the democratic Republic of Rome. The fragment ends with a eulogistic comment by Tiro, Cicero's former slave and devoted follower:

"The termination of thy course was coeval with the ruin of thy country. Thy hand had upheld the fabric of its freedom and its happiness, as long as human force was adequate to that end. It fell, because the seeds of dissolution had arrived at maturity, and the basis and structure were alike dissolved. It fell, and thou wast crushed in its ruins" (223). *Edgar Huntly* ends on a note of uncertain hopefulness because the dangerous threat posed by Clithero's violent tendencies no longer exists—Edgar and Sarsefield work together to end his murderous journey to find Mrs. Lorimer. But the book itself ends on a note of catastrophe, with the "ruin of [Cicero's] country" and the full maturation of "seeds of dissolution." Rather than demonstrating the success of Sarsefield's imperialist suppressions of Clithero and the Delaware Indians, the ending of the book looks backward to the failures of Rome and insists that "the basis and structure" of ideal political societies will be "dissolved." Through the form of the fragment, Brown at once revises the structure of novels and also indicates the inevitable ruination of political idealism.

The "shreds and fragments" of Charles Brockden Brown

Only about ten months after Brown annexed "The Death of Cicero, A Fragment" to the third volume of *Edgar Huntly*, he printed a short article in the *Monthly Magazine* that defended the composition and publication of fragments. The article, written by a "LOOKER-ON" (264) and titled "*Thoughts on American Newspapers. To the Editor of the Monthly Magazine*" (259), describes a conversation between "a splenetic" (259) individual who disdains the media technology of the newspaper and a man who stalwartly defends it. The critic of newspapers claims that newspapers simply consist of "shreds and fragments, trifling, contradictory, and vague" (260) that fill the minds of the audience with useless information about political squabbles, the comings and goings of merchant ships, and literary musings. He rails against this

severe misuse of the glorious press and contends that "[o]ur understandings are misled by sophistry, and our passions are irritated and depraved by invective and by slander, or a silly curiosity is tantalized (not gratified) by the shreds and patches, void of connection, authenticity and order, of events in which we have no concern, and attention to which usurps the place of every salutary study" (262). The "shreds and patches" of the newspaper produce a physiological effect for the critic, distorting the "understanding," irritating the passions, and tantalizing the curiosity. He believes that a newspaper alters the bodily state of its readers in a distinctly negative way. Equally significant, he makes a moral argument about how the lack of authentic narrative mars the value of newspapers—the disjointed collage of the printed page defies "order" and distracts the "attention" of the readers. As a result, "every salutary study" escapes the "concern" of people engrossed with the "shreds and patches," which only provide a succession of useless information.

The critique of newspapers derives its force from a desire for the unity of effect on the body and mind of the reader. Without a doubt, this attack might also be directed at one of Brown's many convoluted, unorganized novels. Almost all of his longer prose writings tantalize curiosity, raise the passions of his readers, and pay only a passing recognition to the "authenticity and order" of the events. Thus, it makes perfect sense that in "*Thoughts on American Newspapers. To the Editor of the Monthly Magazine*," the defender of the newspaper provides an eloquent rebuttal to the splenetic man, turning his argument on its head by observing that "[i]t is easy to see that there was much error and extravagance" (262) in the critiques. The "error and extravagance" exists not in print media, but in the words of the splenetic individual. In contrast to the cynic, the correspondent to the *Monthly Magazine* valorizes the multiplicity of the newspaper and its broad appeal, noticing that "in proposing the gratification or advantage of all,

each one must be contented with a little" (262). From this perspective reading a newspaper becomes an exercise in being satisfied with "the scantiness of each portion" (262) by understanding that the publication caters to a wide variety of interests and tastes. In praising the partiality of specific articles and at the same time emphasizing the importance of "careful selection, and the judicious management of our topics" (263), the writer of the article emphasizes a tension between the lack of order and careful attention to detail within the newspaper. He praises the movement back and forth between these two poles, and revels in the variety of topics printed by editors. Ultimately, he addresses the content of the article to the editor of the *Monthly Magazine* and encourages him to continue publishing in this fruitful manner: "Your efforts, Mr. Editor, to attain these useful ends, will gain you the approbation of every lover of his country, and, among the rest, of a LOOKER-ON" (264).

Not surprisingly, the writer of "*Thoughts on American Newspapers. To the Editor of the Monthly Magazine*" is Brown himself.[77] Under the guise of an objective, external observer, he condemns the opinion that newspapers present a disorganized miscellany of useless information, and tries to convince his audience that the pastiche-like elements of the publication constitute its greatest advantage. This logic also functions to justify Brown's decisions to weave prose pieces in and out of periodicals and novels. By moving "Edgar Huntly: A Fragment" from a magazine to the inside of *Edgar Huntly*, he not only engages in a common practice of advertisement, but he also demonstrates the weak boundaries between the two different kinds of publications. Throughout his entire career, magazine writing looks novelistic, and novels can follow quite closely the principles set out by the "LOOKER-ON."

Brown published the final piece of the *Edgar Huntly* series in his *Literary Magazine* in an 1805 story, "Somnambulism. A fragment." The publication of the fragment fits with the

movements back and forth between novel and periodical already examined: critics today compare the fragment to *Edgar Huntly* and also suggest a possible but as of yet unproven relation to the lost, unpublished novel, *Sky-Walk*. "Somnambulism. A fragment" revives the assemblage of texts that Brown writes by standing in a loose relationship to all of them. This functions not only on the level of publication and theme, but on the level of character, as well. Brown takes Edgar and Clithero, who have a metaphorical (and perhaps physiological) overlap in *Edgar Huntly*, and combines their character qualities into a single person in "Somnambulism. A fragment." The first-person narrator of the tale, a man surnamed Althorpe, begins the fragment by describing his passion for a woman named Miss Davis. He describes his desire to wed her despite the fact that he despairs of his chances because she comes from a much more respectable social class than he does. While Miss Davis and her father visit the house of Althorpe's uncle, a messenger arrives with a letter informing Mr. Davis of pressing business with a friend, and the two of them decide to leave immediately (even though the hour is quite late). In his desire to continue conversing with Miss Davis and eventually acquire her affection, Althorpe suggests that he escort the daughter and father through the unknown countryside. Althorpe contrives a variety of chimerical dangers that lie in wait on the road but that have little foundation in reality, so the two travelers refuse his request and decide to head out on their own.

Along the way they see a figure following their carriage at a distance, and while the appearance of a man at so late an hour surprises them, they conclude that Althorpe decided to guide them to their destination from a respectable distance. The shadowy figure eerily moves in and out of their view, so when they see a farmhouse along the way they decide to stop and ask about the potential dangers along the way. The friendly farmer informs the two travelers that a man named Nick Handyside haunts the woods around the area, a person who "merited the name

of monster, if a projecting breast, a mis-shapen head, features horrid and distorted, and a voice that resembled nothing that was ever before heard, could entitle him to that appellation" (255). More explicitly than in *Edgar Huntly*, Brown ties the representation of a monstrous figure to the fragment form. The descriptions of Nick Handyside focus on his uneven, rough body—"a mis-shapen head" and "distorted" features that turn him into a quasi-human roaming the landscape. In "*Thoughts on American Newspapers. To the Editor of the Monthly Monthly Magazine*," the splenetic man claimed that reading newspapers distorted the understanding and altered the passions; Nick Handyside functions as the human equivalent of the newspaper in the grotesque descriptions of his body.

As in the dismissal of the criticisms against newspapers, the fragment pushes against the idea that Nick Handyside poses any actual danger. Using "the natural deformity of his frame" (255), the farmer explains, Nick Handyside likes to scare travelers—especially female travelers—by playing harmless jokes, and "a thousand anecdotes could have been detailed respecting the tricks which Nick Handyside had played upon way-farers" (255). Nick Handyside seems more like a harmless figure of local color, than anything else. Reassured by the farmer, Miss Davis and her father continue on their way. Not too much later, the travellers decide to alight from the carriage in order to revivify their spirits, and a shriek from nearby pierces the stillness of the night, terrifying the horse and sending the carriage charging down the path. Mr. Davis throws his daughter out of the path and leaps out of the way and "in a few seconds the carriage was shocked against the trunk, overturned, and dashed into a thousand fragments" (257). After they recover from the fall, Mr. Davis sets out in search of the horse and their guide, but only moments after he leaves his daughter he regrets his decision, turns around, and sees the flash of a gun. He runs back only to find her unconscious, and takes her to a nearby house that

luckily belongs to a physician—but the "ball had lodged in her brain and to extract it was impossible" (258). After Miss Davis dies, Brown ends the narrative abruptly with an extended em dash ".———" (258) that creates a break in the space of the words, suggesting the unfinished nature of the short prose text. The ending of the fragment coincides with the death of a beloved female, a plot element that indicates some kind of planning and authorial selection. Despite this careful construction, the apparent cause behind Miss Davis's death lies shrouded in ambiguity.

In the fragment, the narrator provides no evidence that he killed Miss Davis and terrorized her father. According to Althorpe he spends the entire night dreaming and sleeping at home, and when he wakes up early he hears of her death from a messenger whose "tale was meager and imperfect" (251). He rushes to Dr. Inglefield's house to find Miss Davis lingering in the final moments of life, and after she dies Althorpe mentions how he "was able to collect [the circumstances of the event] at different times, from the witnesses" (251). The fragment thus consists of a multiplicity of different perspectives all woven together by the narrator. And, as far as the first-person narrative presents the events, Althorpe seems to have had nothing to do with the events that took place on the road, and the murder of Miss Davis appears to be caused by someone like Nick Handyside, or perhaps an outlaw along the way.

Brown does, however, implicate Althorpe in the murder of Miss Davis before the narrative begins, in an editorial preface that proposes to explain the events of the text: "The following fragment will require no other preface or commentary than an extract from the Vienna Gazette of June 14, 1784" (246).[78] The extract from the newspaper describes the medical case of a young man in Silesia (in Poland) who sleepwalks and does fairly ordinary things during his nighttime perambulations. On one particular night, though, someone shoots a young lady in the neighborhood and investigators determine that the young man (who was in love with the lady)

probably killed her; however, the young man did not even know that he committed the murder because he was sleepwalking through the entire ghastly incident.

Althorpe cannot explain his own tale—he needs an editor to step in and provide additional information that makes the events of the night clearer. By providing an "extract" that explains the events surrounding Miss Davis's strange death, Brown shows how a carefully chosen anecdote relaying the medical causes underlying a crime—just one short paragraph from a newspaper—can indirectly shed light on the "following fragment," the broken piece of writing that does not contain its own explanation (246). The disorganized array of the newspaper, with its details about politics, economics, trade, literary messages, and local happenings, provides information relevant to an audience across the Atlantic twenty years later. The two prose pieces shed light on each other, but also seem disjointed by geography (the United States and Europe), time (1784 and 1805), and genre (newspaper article and fiction story). They are related and overlap in a significant way, but in no way do they complete each other or even fully explain the unfolding of events. By juxtaposing the terms extract and fragment, Brown reignites the same tension that existed in the publication of "Edgar Huntly: A Fragment," and questions the extent to which the carefully chosen extract completes the unfinished quality of the fragment. Through the maneuver of editorial selection, he points an accusatory finger at Althorpe, but one that remains unsubstantiated by the content of the fragment. A number of possible murderers exist in the story—any of whom might be caught in a somnambulistic trance.

The efficacy of editorial selection thus remains uncertain in the final text of the *Edgar Huntly* series. What does remain clear, however, is Brown's insistence on the intermingling of genre (newspaper, periodical, novel), and the accompanying instabilities of identity. Althorpe, bears a number of similarities to Edgar and Clithero: He falls in love with a woman outside of his

social class (just as Clithero fell in love with Clarice); he seems unaware of his own possible sleepwalking (like Edgar); he lives on his uncle's farm (like Edgar); and he ends up killing his beloved (echoing how Clithero tried to murder his patroness in her sleep and Clarice turned out to be in the bed instead). Althorpe presents a combined version of Brown's two earlier characters, making up a pastiche-like composite *suggested* by their similarities in *Edgar Huntly*, but never fully articulated. Disentangling the two characters from the novel becomes impossible in "Somnambulism. A Fragment," just as the texts themselves inextricably rely on one another.

Chapter 4

The Antebellum Imagination in Pieces:

Posthumous Papers and Nathaniel Hawthorne's Fragments

Around the same time that Charles Brockden Brown published the *Edgar Huntly* series in the early 1800s, literary fragments exploded in popularity across the Atlantic. In England, writers like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, and Lord Byron published well-liked verse fragments in their collections of poetry. Audiences had already encountered the fragment form in the prose writing of authors like Lawrence Sterne, Frances Sheridan, Samuel Jackson Pratt, and Henry Mackenzie, but the publications of the British poets in the early nineteenth century raised the profile of fragments and made them even more visible to reading audiences throughout Anglo-America. Instead of labelling a portion of a novel a fragment (the way authors like Sterne and Mackenzie did), the Romantic British poets titled entire compositions a "fragment," as in Wordsworth's "The Danish Boy. A Fragment" (1800) or Byron's *The Giaour: A Fragment of a Turkish Tale* (1813). By extending the descriptor of "fragment" to the entire piece of writing, writers (literally and metaphorically) elevated the form and thereby gave it greater aesthetic significance. Authors migrated fragments from an (ostensibly) supplementary role in the interior portion of texts and transformed them into a defining element overarching their writing.

But the interest in fragments was not just limited to an elite group of taste-making Romantic poets in nineteenth-century England—writers of all stripes and backgrounds started to to publish works of fragments. Andrew Allport observes that "the fragment form was a very popular one: there are hundreds of fragment poems in the newspapers of the mid-nineteenth century, though very few are as compelling as 'Kubla Khan' " (414). Allport further mentions

that the overwhelming number of fragments "are both public and products of a process of replication, repeating the same themes and imagery but without the freshness of the original" (415). His comment identifies a widespread fascination with verse fragments that was at least partially initiated by the interest in the writings of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Byron. While the significance of the fragment form reaches back throughout much of the eighteenth century (as previous chapters have thoroughly demonstrated), Allport does makes a valuable point in his discussion by commenting on the *increasing* visibility and the constant "process of replication" evident in England in the early nineteenth century, though he overemphasizes the homogeneity of the newspaper productions by fetishizing the "freshness of the original," an idea that surely that borrows from M.H. Abrams's concept of the "freshness of sensation" (indeed, my previous three chapters have attempted to show the complex political and aesthetic *hetero*geneity of this form).

The fragment form became an increasingly prominent aspect of literary culture in Anglo-America in the first few decades of the nineteenth century. Equally significant, in the same years that a cadre of famous British poets and a larger number of lesser-known writers composed fragments, German authors such as Georg Philipp Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg (Novalis), Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, and Friedrich Schiller experimented with the fragment form in writing that straddled literature and philosophy. Ernst Behler argues that the fragment not only defined the structure of German Romantic writing, but represented the entire historical moment: "Most important in these reflections on possible forms of literary expression and communication is, or course, the fragment, which not only constituted a prominent genre for Novalis, but also a manner of writing indicative of the particular era in which he lived" (209). For Behler, the

fragment extends beyond the writing of individual authors like Novalis and functions as a synecdoche for the entire "era" in German Romanticism.

Using even stronger terms than Behler, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy explain that German romantics (especially the so-called Jena romantics) became "inevitably associated" with the fragment: "To an even greater extent than the 'genre' of theoretical romanticism, the fragment is considered its [German Romanticism's] incarnation, the most distinctive mark of its originality, or the sign of its radical modernity. This, in fact, is precisely the claim made by Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis, each in their own manner. Indeed, the fragment is the romantic genre *par excellence*" (39-40). Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy emphasize the "originality" and the "radical modernity" of the fragment in the early nineteenth century, but they also place it within a lineage of moral writings and reflections by past European writers such as Nicolas Chamfort, the Earl of Shaftesbury, La Rochefoucauld, and Michel de Montaigne, through whom a "paradigm is established for all of modern history" (40). Simultaneously embedded within the past and also part of a "radical modernity," the fragment in the nineteenth century exists inside of a tradition and also pushes at the edge of conventions.[79]

To be sure, in first half of the nineteenth century fragments took on a more significant place in literary culture. The way in which Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy situate the fragment in a place between the past and a "radical modernity" orients it within an innovative literary *tradition*—writers of fragments built on previous work and looked toward the future. And, while Allport identifies the significance of what he calls the "fragment form" (the phrase that I have predominantly used in the past three chapters), Behler, Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy all emphasize the fragment as a *genre*, a term that makes sense for discussions of the fragment in the nineteenth century. The first three chapters of this dissertation focus on the "fragment form," a

phrase that provides a sense of the spatial dynamics of fragments—the way they evoke the physical space of the human body and the shape of a torn piece of paper. The resonances surrounding the physicality evoked by the fragment form do not entirely disappear in the nineteenth century, but the prominence of popular British and German fragments translate the form into a genre. Through the widespread publication of fragments, authors established generic conventions and styles.

Twentieth and twenty-first century literary criticism focuses primarily on nineteenth-century genres like the gothic, the sentimental, the picaresque, and the bildungsroman because they persist into the present (in some form or other). The fragment, on the other hand, reaches a high water mark in the early and middle parts of the nineteenth century, and then becomes less identifiable as a particular kind of of writing. In the historically specific moment of the early and middle nineteenth century, editors, publishers, writers, and readers actively recognized and described the conventions accorded to the fragment. The distinction between a form and a genre does not merely provide a pedantic point of scholarly intervention. It actually provides a significant lens for examining the work of a writer like Nathaniel Hawthorne, who throughout his career read and studied the writing of British (and likely German) Romantics, and responded to their writings in many of his short stories. Marion Kesselring reports that in Hawthorne's record of borrowings from the Salem Athenaeum, the "poets Dryden, Prior, Gay, Blackmore, Crabbe, Burns, Hogg, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Byron have their places in the record" (12).

Hawthorne's interest in British Romantic poets should come as no surprise to the majority of his readers; more unexpectedly, a number of nineteenth-century critics described Hawthorne's work in relation to the German Romantics. In his review of *Twice-Told Tales*,

Henry Longfellow comments that "[s]ometimes, though not often, it glares wildly at you, with a strange and painful expression, as, in the German romance, the bronze knocker of Achivarius Lindhorst makes up faces at the Student Anselmus" (62). Longfellow references a story by Ludwig Tieck, a prolific German Romantic author who, like his contemporaries, wrote a large number of fragments.[80] In a similar vein (though launching a critique rather than a compliment), Edgar Allan Poe observed that "the German Tieck, whose manner, in *some* of his works, is absolutely identical with that *habitual* to Hawthorne….These points properly understood, it will be seen that the critic (unacquainted with Tieck) who reads a single tale or essay by Hawthorne, may be justified in thinking him [Hawthorne] original" (252-53). Throughout the nineteenth century, Hawthorne's peers compared him not only to British writers of fragments, but German ones as well. Even late twentieth-century scholars like G.R. Thompson concur with the assessments by Hawthorne's contemporaries; Thompson argues in *The Art of Authorial Presence* that Hawthorne's interest in the flexibility of genres places him in "a tradition that includes romantic and preromantic writers, notably Sterne, Jean Paul, Tieck, Schlegel, Hoffman, Poe, and Melville" (42).[81]

By treating the fragment as a genre rather than a form in the early and middle parts of the nineteenth century, we can more clearly delineate how Hawthorne's tales interact in productive ways with other literary traditions. As I will show, the publication of several of his works—most notably two of his early periodical stories—respond to and alter the conventions of fragments developed by British and German Romantics.

Hawthorne's Story Teller

At the same time that fragments were becoming a fundamental part of literary culture, authorship was becoming a more economically viable career path in America. In his classic study of nineteenth-century American authorship, *Literary Publishing in America: 1790-1850*, William Charvat identifies writers like James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as the first generation of American professional authors—the publication of Irving's *Sketch Book* and Cooper's *The Spy* initiated the "first era of successful professional authorship in America" (38). While various challenges to Charvat's scholarship have revised this narrative of professionalization, most critics agree that the possible avenues to authorship increased dramatically in the first few decades of the nineteenth century. But the vision of authorship presented by Charvat does not go far enough into the difficult, unpredictable atmosphere of publication that many authors experienced. Just as Brown used the complications surrounding publication to launch into a complex description of the questions surrounding chance, identity, and agency in the *Edgar Huntly* texts, Hawthorne explicitly brought the complications of his early career into his short stories. While he eventually gained prominence as a major writer in the 1840s and 50s (particularly through his novels), Hawthorne's self-description of his early years indicates that he felt an extreme critical neglect that led to a number of aborted pieces of writing.[82]

At the start of his career in the 1820s and 1830s, Hawthorne worked on three projects that never saw completion. The previous chapter describes how Charles Brockden Brown's lost novel, *Sky Walk: Or, the Man Unknown to Himself*, only saw publication through an excerpted advertisement in a periodical and a possible, partial reincarnation in "Somnambulism. A Fragment." *Sky Walk* never existed in a completed, bound and published form that could be distributed to an audience with an appetite for novels. In a more pronounced version of Brown's

authorial predicaments and his partial publications, Hawthorne worked on three story cycles that never attained completion and distribution in that way that he originally envisioned: "Seven Tales of My Native Land," "Provincial Tales," and "The Story Teller." While no definitive histories exist regarding these different bodies of writing, Hawthorne's biographers speculate that due to a poor response from publishers Hawthorne burned the manuscripts of "Seven Tales of My Native Land" and destroyed portions of "Provincial Tales." Charles Brockden Brown's lost novel reflects the combined effect of a yellow fever epidemic, the entangled estate of James Watters, and Brown's own inability to repurchase the sheets of *Sky-Walk*; however, Hawthorne's situation provides a marked difference because he himself sets fire to a large portion of his early writings. He proactively destroys his writing, an act than simultaneously involves an assertion of agency and a denial of a portion of his authorial past. I take Hawthorne's destructive acts and his fictionalization of them in various tales as a way of envisioning new forms of authorship and publication in the antebellum period (new forms that depend on the particularity of "fragments" of paper).

Despite the fiery loss of "Seven Tales of My Native Land" and much of "Provincial Tales," Hawthorne decided to pursue publication of "The Story Teller" and he worked on the manuscript throughout the 1830s. "The Story Teller" begins with a frame tale that relates how the young, eponymous story teller leaves his New England home and thereby rebels against his stern, Puritanical guardian, Parson Thumpcushion (a caricature of a zealous, bible-thumping New Englander). The storyteller's escape from his guardian and from the fervent religiosity of the New England setting symbolizes a minor mutiny against moral piety. Rather than devote himself to religious pursuits, the story teller wants to travel the countryside and tell (what Parson Thumpcushion would call) frivolous tales to audiences in small villages. The decisions of the

story teller mirror the anxieties of "The Custom-House" narrator years later, who imagines that the "stern and black-browed Puritans" from his ancestry would be appalled by the life of a writer: "No aim, that I have ever cherished, would they recognize as laudable; no success of mine—if my life, beyond its domestic scope, had ever been brightened by success—would they deem otherwise than worthless, if not positively disgraceful" (10). All of the anxieties about ancestry demonstrated by the narrator of *The Scarlet Letter* were present in Hawthorne's literary repertoire as early as the 1830s.

Hawthorne envisioned "The Story Teller" as a tale with two major components. First, it consisted of a series of frame tales detailing the history of the story teller, including both his departure from his New England home and his travels around the countryside. Second, "The Story Teller" contained inset tales that the young man recited to audiences gathered at wayside inns, town meeting halls, local taverns, and theaters. As the story teller explains in the introductory tale, "[t]he following pages will contain a picture of my vagrant life, intermixed with specimens, generally brief and slight, of that great mass of fiction to which I gave existence, and which have vanished like cloud-shapes" (408).[83] The description of the "following pages" evokes a heterogeneous set of stories that result from a "vagrant life" on the road and a mixture of "specimens" that represent various portions of the "great mass of fiction." In its opening sketch, "The Story Teller" promises to present examples of the young narrator's narrative oratory—thereby showing the reader a variety of different scenes of circulation.

Like the "cloud-shapes" that the story teller momentarily creates and the "air-drawn pictures" (408) that dissipate as soon as they are told to an audience, Hawthorne's imagined story cycle vanished almost as soon as it was conceived. The "great mass of fiction" that Hawthorne composed never saw print in a unified publication. In his biography of Hawthorne, Arlin Turner

summarizes Elizabeth Peabody's memories of those years: "[W]hen the two-volume manuscript was finished, he [Hawthorne] sent it to [Samuel] Goodrich, who declined to undertake publication but offered to buy some of the stories for the *Token* and to pass others along to be published in the *New-England Magazine*" (72). Turner goes on to explain that Goodrich printed two stories in the *New-England Magazine*, the first frame tale that explains the story teller's departure from his town and the first inset story, "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe." Goodrich printed both stories under the title "The Story Teller" in the November and December 1834 issues of the magazine, and gave each prose piece a subtitle: "No. I. At Home" (which eventually became "Passages From a Relinquished Work" in the second, 1854 edition of *Mosses from an Old Manse*) and "No. II. The Village Theater" (which became "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" in *Twice-Told Tales*).

The use of "The Story Teller" to title both of Hawthorne's compositions indicates a narrative continuity, and the sequential numbering of the two sections creates a serial logic that looks forward to the printing of "No. III" and "No. IV" in later issues of the magazine. Readers of the periodical could reasonably expect that the author of "No. I" and "No. II" would continue the thread of the story in succeeding months (serial magazine literature was becoming increasingly popular in early decades of the nineteenth century). But the progression into the story teller's vagabond journey ends *in medias res* at the end of No. II and lacks any clear resolution. After he relates the story of Mr. Higginbotham to the village (to raucous laughter), he receives a letter from Parson Thumpcushion in "stiff old hand-writing." The story teller debates whether or not to he should read the letter and he ultimately decides to put the "letter in the flame of the candle, and beheld it consume, unread" (420-1). To be sure, the fire completely burns up the letter and the story teller has no actual knowledge of its contents. While he leaves the letter

"unread," the lack of reading does not prevent the anxious narrator from "consum[ing]" the letter other ways.

Lacking knowledge of its precise content, the burnt epistle begins to haunt the story teller almost immediately, since he imagines that the letter *might* have held a peace offering: "The thought still haunts me, that then I made my irrevocable choice between good and evil fate" (421). Thus, in a certain way the story teller still consumes the letter, providing his own kind of "unreading" in which his feelings about the epistle stay "fixed in my mind" (421). Hawthorne translates this paradoxical form of unreading into a symbolic register as well; despite the story teller's attempt to avoid puritanic remonstrance by burning the letter, the final lines of the story describe how his pious travelling companion Eliakim Abbot "groaned in spirit, and labored, with tears, to convince me of the guilt and madness of my life" (421). From the very beginning of "The Story Teller," Hawthorne proposed a project that would depict different scenes of readerly consumption and circulation, even those involving a strange lack of reading.

Portions of the "The Story Teller" continued to appear sporadically over the next few years. Not too long after the publication of the first two tales, the ownership of the *New-England Magazine* turned over to John O. Sargent and Samuel G. Horne; Park Benjamin assumed the editorship in 1835, and according to Arlin Turner selections "from 'The Story-Teller' continued to appear, but separately and without mention of the collection to which they had belonged" (72). These published writings maintained some thematic continuity with "The Story Teller," but the editors (and perhaps Hawthorne) excised headnotes that placed the stories in relation to the storyteller and his larger opus. The remainder of the stories exist in a tenuous relationship with the two parts of "The Story Teller" published in the *New England Magazine*—the editors and

Hawthorne at once separated the tales from the larger project but also tied them together thematically.

In its planned form, Hawthorne's story cycle appears to be modeled on something like Washington Irving's *The Sketch-Book* (1819-20) or *Bracebridge Hall* (1822), two prose works in which an itinerant writer/raconteur named Geoffrey Crayon travels to England in search of picturesque experiences and literary stories. Hawthorne's version of Irving's transatlantic journey stays closer to home, and perhaps tries to do for New England what Irving did for the English landscape—portray it in short sketches overlaid with an ironic narrative voice. Irving's immense popularity spawned countless imitators both in American and in England, and helped make the bachelor narrator a stock character that would be reused by a multitude of authors. But rather than follow in Irving's path, Hawthorne and Park Benjamin cut up Hawthorne's interconnected story cycle and decided to publish the tales individually and without the frame tale—despite this fact, scholars have tried hard to roughly reconstruct a frame tale about the storyteller's departure and return, and the group of different stories that he tells over the course of his journey.

Nina Baym, Nelson Adkins, Charles Swann, and Michael Dunne have all forwarded different versions of the sequence of tales that exclude particular stories or include others.[84] In disagreement with these hypothetical reconstructions, Michael Cohen has convincingly argued that the content of at least one of the tales from "The Story Teller" ("Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe") focuses on "itineracy, circulation, storytelling, and authorial failure, as a part within a part of an imagined series that failed to come together and control the movements of its wandering pieces" (384). In Cohen's view, the elaboration of different hypothetical sequences for "The Story Teller" (particularly by the critics just mentioned) "creates an imaginative unity to

replace the material heterogeneity and diffusion of these pieces, thereby making real the fictions of authorship and textuality so elaborately sent up in the tales and sketches" (384-85). Through both the content of "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" and through the piecemeal publication of "The Story Teller," Cohen argues that Hawthorne pushes toward a definition of authorship in which celebrity (and thus *author-ity*) paradoxically depends on an uncontrolled circulation. Or, as Maurice Blanchot describes the process of writing, by "producing a work, I renounce the idea of my producing and formulating myself" (7). What is crucial in the statements by Cohen and Blanchot is their emphasis on the *willing* and also *necessary* separation between an author and his or her work—these two conditions enable the circulation and reprinting of stories in periodicals and other form of antebellum print media. Rather than view the piecemeal publication of "The Story Teller" as an authorial failure, as so many critics do, my approach focuses on Hawthorne's engagement and consideration of publication that falls into fragments.

Building on Cohen's insightful observation regarding the centrality of authorial withdrawal for Hawthorne (especially within the "imagined series that failed to come together" because Hawthorne and Park Benjamin published the parts individually), I argue that Hawthorne also considers how circulation has no particular ontology in relation to the text. Rather than present a singular form of print distribution, Hawthorne points toward imaginative forms of circulation that play with media and, crucially, complement the content of the text. Instead of separating narrative plot from physical circulation, Hawthorne presents stories that bind the two together in unique fashions, creating a radical plurality of circulation based in the specific plot of a story (and unbound by material processes). Texts circulate not just through the careful work of editors, booksellers, and publishers, but also through supernatural forces, hauntings, consuming fires, atmospheres, and editorial damage. The fragment proves particularly useful for Hawthorne

because the genre inherently involves an act of circulation—it designates a separation of a text from its former condition of production and distribution and places it within a new one (though still containing a trace of the previous condition). Hawthorne's version of the fragment relies on its material status, and also moves toward an understanding of the fragment in motion, or in process—as something that happens.

While the British Romantic poets described earlier largely present gothic themes of solitude and death in the fragment, and the German Romantics employ it as a philosophical literature (aphoristic in nature), Hawthorne latches onto the fragment as a physical genre that evokes particular material conditions of movement. Through the reformulation of the "author," Hawthorne allows his writings to go through processes of fragmentation that function to publish his ideas in innovative ways. Specifically, in "The Devil in Manuscript" (a story considered a strong candidate for inclusion in "The Storyteller") he envisions how the literal destruction of his writing paradoxically spreads it in a sublime form of publication. In a similar way to how Charles Brockden Brown envisioned "caving texts," Hawthorne created a fragmentation of text through the mediation of destruction.

Hawthorne's interest in fragmented publication and uncontrolled circulation takes an even clearer turn in another story (also viewed as a potential component of "The Story Teller"), "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man." In "Fragments," Hawthorne critiques the mediation of editing—he considers how the editing of writing (a more agential form of destruction) leads simultaneously to its mutilation and its spread. These two nuanced forms of authorial publication indicate a dispossession similar to the one articulated by Cohen, but emphasize Hawthorne's engagement with the fragment as a central concept within circulation. Hawthorne believes that *any* act of distribution involves the fragmentation of texts, a process that

occurs more efficiently with the least mediation imaginable. After all, the history of publishing, collecting, and reading is premised on the mutilation of texts as they transverse publics, editions, editorial corrections, and shift into different forms of media. These (sometimes) minor and (sometimes) major alterations in the inflection of meaning through the physical alteration and placement of a piece of literature underwrites Hawthorne's presentation of fragmentation, in which each text undergoes specific processes of modification. The fragment, for Hawthorne, presents a symbolic method of comprehending the complex and unique histories underlying the circulation of material texts in the antebellum period.

Hawthorne understands the necessary importance of alienating a text from its author in the creation of a reading public, but also emphasizes that each literary text takes on a precise, specific mode of alienation. Recent critical histories of printing and publication focus on the degree to which individual histories of transmission define literary texts, in a large part thanks to the rising interest in book history and the history of material texts. These histories emphasize the differences even between individual copies of the same printing. The traces of textual movement and the medial conditions of production significantly inform the particular historical meaning of literature in these studies. What emerges from a close analysis of "The Story Teller" and its non-publication is not just that Hawthorne placed an importance on "itineracy, circulation, storytelling" that separated the author from a story, but that for Hawthorne the composition of *each* individual literary work entailed a different form of dissemination. He theorizes what literary critics today have discovered in the historical record that details the movement of texts in nineteenth-century America—that each piece of writing asks for a unique mode of circulation that in some way severs and fragments the text from the author.

Hawthorne's interest in a fragmenting network of texts begins with his consideration of unstable, uncontrollable circulation in two of the tales related to "The Story Teller." Although this chapter begins with the early portion of Hawthorne's career in the 1830s by examining first "The Devil in Manuscript" and then "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man," it moves on to consider how fragmentary information and the uncontrolled circulation of words becomes a significant theme in key moments in two of his novels: *The Blithedale Romance* and *The Marble Faun*. In these novels he considers how the spread of speech takes on a fragmentary quality in the way it gets passed on—like material texts, our words circulate in unstable atmospheres.

Materiality and Diffusive Publication

In all of the stories that critics place within "The Story Teller" sequence, Hawthorne creates distinctive narrative voice. His story teller is at once a wry, playful, and a little bit naïve (characteristics which carry over to the majority of his first-person writings). When the story teller leaves his native village in the first installment of his tale he confesses that, "[i]n truth, I had never felt such a delicious excitement nor known what freedom was till that moment when I gave up my home and took the whole world in exchange, fluttering the wings of my spirit as if I would have flown from one star to another through the universe" (410). The beginning of the story indicates the movement of the storyteller within a specific, local geography, one that correlates to the distribution of the *New England Magazine* on a regional scale. Even though the story teller desires "wings" that take him "from one star to another through the universe," his movements throughout the story stay more grounded and local as he wends his way throughout the countryside.[85] Narrator and periodical move through the same distributive network of roads,

villages, paths, and highways. And, in his first moment on the road the storyteller anticipates a "delicious" life on the move filled with personal and aesthetic freedom.

The optimistic tone of the story teller does not extend to all of Hawthorne's depictions of authors in the 1830s, however. The enthusiastic and carefree attitude expressed by the narrator contrasts the deep regrets expressed by a key, reappearing character in "The Story Teller" pieces—Oberon, a writer and a friend of the story teller who follows along a similar path of authorial wandering after he leaves his provincial village. Oberon appears in two key stories by Hawthorne—first in "The Devil in Manuscript" (1835) as a struggling author who also works as a law clerk in an office, and also in "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" (1837), a story that focuses on the biographical recollections in Oberon's personal journal.

In the latter tale, Oberon's retrospective writings mention that in his youth he too (like the story teller) left home to go out into the world, explore it, and make his fame telling imaginative stories on the road. But his remorse becomes evident on every page. Oberon's appearance in the two sketches published by Hawthorne prove pivotal because, as Arlin Turner's biography of Hawthorne notes, the name Oberon "is one Hawthorne had signed in writing Horatio Bridge after they left Bowdoin" (51).[86] The autobiographical resonances prove tempting: Like Hawthorne, Oberon feels he has been neglected by public opinion and thus commits many of his writings to the flames in the story "The Devil in Manuscript." Oberon's decision parallels Hawthorne's decision to burn countless (and unknown) pages of his early writings, especially "Seven Tales of My Native Land" and "Provincial Tales." In a letter to Sophia Peabody written on 4 October 1840, Hawthorne describes his old chamber in Salem and reflects that "[h]ere I have written many tales—many that have been burned to ashes—many that doubtless deserved the same fate. This deserves to be called a haunted chamber; for thousands upon thousands of

visions have appeared to me in it; and some few of them have become visible to the world" (*Letters* 494). Like Hawthorne, Oberon destroys a large quantity of writing because of a reading public's critical neglect. But the sense of haunting that Hawthorne evokes in his reminiscence indicates that even though he completely destroyed much of his writing, a ghostly, lingering presence still remains in the physical space of the chamber. Writing can never *quite* be destroyed despite its material erasure from the world.

Through the authorial projection of Oberon, an intriguing correspondence exists between Hawthorne's literary life and the content of his literary narratives. Despite the allure of an autobiographical interpretation of Oberon, Millicent Bell rightly warns that "Oberon is merely the first of Hawthorne's significant masks, the 'I'-character who is only another of the writer's creations" (137), much like the Custom House narrator from *The Scarlet Letter*, the narrator from "The Old Manse," and Miles Coverdale, the bachelor narrator of *The Blithedale Romance*. Oberon's "mask" might not prove relevant to a biographical understanding of Hawthorne's personal reflections on his early work, but it does shed light on Hawthorne's imaginative understanding of a fragmentary literary publication. In stark contrast to the cheery, upbeat accent of the storyteller, Oberon's pessimistic tone emphasizes a bitterness toward literary culture and its frustrating routes to publication. Rather than follow a traditional route to publication, Oberon angrily burns his manuscripts in "The Devil in Manuscript," and at the end of his life in "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" he asks his friend to destroy all of his remaining papers. These alternate forms of literary "publication" present Hawthorne's interest in recreating the forms of mediation available to nineteenth-century American authors.

Because books require cumbersome modes of production and dissemination, Oberon eventually turns toward the dematerialization of papers, a fact that highlights Hawthorne's

insistence on fantastical methods of distribution. But before Oberon burns his papers, "The Devil in Manuscript" actually begins by emphasizing the solidity of writing and its material existence in the world. At the beginning of the tale, the story teller enters Oberon's chambers (Oberon works as a student at law but also writes poetry and belles lettres) and sees evidence of a rich literary life:

> The usual furniture of a lawyer's office was around us—rows of volumes in sheepskin, and a multitude of writs, summonses, and other legal papers, scattered over the desks and tables. But there were certain objects which seemed to intimate that we had little dread of the intrusion of clients, or of the learned counsellor himself, who, indeed, was attending court in a distant town. A tall, decanter-shaped bottle stood on the table, between two tumblers, and beside a pile of blotted manuscripts, altogether dissimilar to any law documents recognized in our courts. (170-1)

From the very beginning of the story, Hawthorne pays close attention to the accoutrements of writing, and distinguishes between the "usual furniture of a lawyer's office" and the *unusual* appearance of "certain objects" that also take up space on the table. The office displays two different kinds of material writing: legal texts and the scribbles of a struggling writer. In contrast to the scholarly heft of the expensive, bound, sheepskin volumes, the "certain objects" belonging to Oberon present a scene of disarray. The poetry and belles lettres sit in "a pile" of "blotted manuscripts," blemishes that reinforce a sense of manual, untidy production. In addition to presenting the material objects associated with two different kinds of writing, the description of the office intimates two publics, as well. The lawyerly writings fit into an administrative, legal, and public culture in which the volumes, "writs, summonses, and other

legal papers" circulate among counselors, clients, and judges in courts. Adding to this, the story teller notes that the "learned counsellor" was "attending court in a distant town," a fact that indicates the lawyer's circulation within a larger regional judiciary network. When the story teller arrives in the office he observes in contrast that "we had little dread of the intrusion of clients, or of the learned counsellor himself," creating a more intimate space for his conversation with Oberon, a conversation in which they discuss writings that are "altogether dissimilar to any law documents recognized in our courts." In their current form, Oberon's writings only circulate within the micro-public convening in the office.

After the story teller describes the setting of the law office, Oberon begins to discuss the "pile of blotted manuscripts" that he composed, and he thinks specifically about the materiality of his own writing. He focuses on the physical pages in front of him, criticizes the quality of his creative productions, and in an interesting turn he associates his writing with an inherent conceptual negativity. Oberon reflects that, "I have a horror of what was created in my own brain, and shudder at the manuscripts in which I gave that dark idea a sort of material existence" (171). The abstract "dark idea" takes on "a sort of material existence" in the writings of the bitter author; moreover, in line with gothic tropes the ghastly physical presence of the pages fills Oberon with "horror of what was created in my own brain" and causes him to "shudder" when he looks at them.

His feelings toward the "dark idea" in his manuscripts takes on a more literal level when he displays an odd paternal care for his productions. All of the scattered, blemished, and rejected manuscripts take on an intensely bodily significance when the story teller notices that Oberon "drew the tales towards him, with a mixture of natural affection and natural disgust, like a father taking a deformed infant into his arms" (173). According to the both of the writers, Oberon's

manuscripts contain some essential defect derived from a "dark idea" and visibly present in a "deformed" body. The contrast between the ideality of a "dark idea" and the fleshliness of a "deformed" physical body centers Hawthorne's provocation in the story, which brings together the content of stories in relation to their mode of distribution (the ideas of the story match their physical instantiations). He imaginatively discovers that no *particular* means of circulation is appropriate for a given text—the text's content must form its own conditions of production. While realistically unfeasible, Hawthorne envisions a situation in which the dissemination of texts flows from the precise subject of tales. "The Devil in Manuscript" thus works against its publication in *The New-England Magazine* not just because Hawthorne originally planned to place it in the two volumes of *The Storyteller*, but because the tale itself proposes imaginative forms of publication that stem from Oberon's destructive writing.

To be sure, Oberon tries typical modes of publication, but none of them work out. Throughout the story Oberon tells the storyteller how difficult it has been to publish his works: " 'They have been offered, by letter,' continued Oberon, reddening with vexation, 'to some seventeen booksellers. It would make you stare to read their answers; and read them you should, only that I burnt them as fast as they arrived. One man publishes nothing but school-books; another has five novels already under examination" (172). Oberon mentions other excuses that publishers have made to avoid taking on his work: one decides to leave his business to avoid publishing Oberon's writing, several ask Oberon for a 50% advance on the cost of production, and another proposes the idea of publication by subscription.

All of these forms of publication played a significant role in nineteenth-century literary publication in America, but none of them precisely suit the "dark idea[s]" contained in Oberon's writing. In these versions of publication, the bookseller always mediates between Oberon and his

larger public, creating obstacles and preventing a wide distribution. Bitter, tired, and angry, Oberon proclaims that " 'If the whole 'trade' had one common nose, there would be some satisfaction in pulling it' " (173). He envisions the entire book trade within a single body, suggesting a physical symmetry in all the forms of publication previously described (especially since those forms of publications would likely bring his writing into a single volume, or perhaps two). The "whole 'trade' " and the "common" body that contains stands apart from the "deformed infant" that symbolizes Oberon's writing, creating a disjunction on a physical, bodily level, just as Hawthorne differentiates Oberon's "blotted manuscripts" from the "volumes in sheepskin" lining the office. The material creations and distributions of the "trade" do not correspond to Oberon's writings.

Oberon's pyromaniac tendencies do not disappear in the story—he burns more than just the answers he receives from the booksellers. Continuing his impassioned complaints to the story teller, Oberon decides that he will burn all of his remaining writing. He exclaims, "I anticipate a wild enjoyment in seeing them in the blaze; such as I should feel in taking vengeance on an enemy, or destroying something noxious" (173). When he makes the final decision to burn his writing, the flames that consume the pages reflect the "features of a villain," the "holy men," and the "angelic women" contained within the stories (176). The content of the stories creates different textures of flame, a trope that Hawthorne repeats in his later story "Earth's Holocaust," in which works of literature and various objects create different kinds of flame according to their specific qualities (emphasizing his interest in the particularity of works). The ghastly reflections within Oberon's fire culminate in the final eruption of the blaze when the two writers see a supernatural apparition within the flames. The storyteller describes how the "tales were almost consumed, but just then threw forth a broad sheet of fire, which flickered as with laughter,

making the whole room dance in its brightness, and then roared portentously up the chimney" (176). While this explosion of fire gives the story its name—both the story teller and Oberon believe that a devil appears in the final consumption of the manuscripts—the passage also engages with an additional method of publication not mentioned in Oberon's earlier list. In his attempt to publish his manuscripts Oberon focuses on releasing and distributing an "edition" (172) of his works, and his submission to the booksellers emphasize his desire for the format of a book with bound pages between boards.

The devil in the manuscripts has a different idea though—it throws a "broad sheet" that lights up the room, a detail that not only describes the largeness of the fire but also denotes the large paper postings and printings that populated the nineteenth-century American and British literary landscape. As Michael Cohen remarks, broadsides "were usually published as proclamations to be read aloud and posted or passed along to the next set of eyes, ears, and hands for further exchange through singing, recitation, and silent reading…A broadside was cheap and easy to carry around, making it an ideal format for itinerant preachers, peddlers, and poets" (27).[87] Broadsides (or broadsheets) typically consisted of sensational material and provided a sense of immediacy because of their cheap cost, rapid production, and wide dissemination. Leslie Shepard observes that they "were single sheets of paper with no pretensions to permanence" and that a broadside "was essentially printed for the day, as ephemeral as yesterday's newspaper or a handbill given in the streets" (23). Rather than focus on the publication of volumes of tales through booksellers that neglect Oberon, recommend subscription, or ask for a partial advance on the cost, Hawthorne presents the distribution of Oberon's writings through a highly ephemeral media, one that simply could *not* include Oberon's complete manuscripts. Because of their specific format, broadsheets by definition did not apply to a bound volume of tales (the original

goal of Oberon's literary aspirations) since they consisted of a single large sheet printed on both sides. But Hawthorne embraces the popular, ephemeral genre in this final moment of burning.

And, as Cohen points out, the physical format of the broadside makes it compatible with the work of "itinerant preachers, peddlers, and poets," making it plausible that someone like the story teller might carry them in his travels across the New England countryside. The story teller does not provide the main conduit of circulation in "The Devil in Manuscript" though—like Oberon, he can only stand amazed as the stories blow out of the chimney and towards the city. Instead, a mediating figure for the "broad sheet" emerges not from the itineracy of traveling booksellers, nor even from a publishing house, but from the lower echelons of a printing office. In the context of a story so highly sensitized to the work of nineteenth-century printing and publication, the "devil" that the two writers see in the fire surely also refers to the young boys called "printer's devils" who worked in print shops. Printer's devils functioned as a factotum in the shop, but their primary responsibility was to run errands for the more skilled laborers like compositors, journeymen, and printers (a subaltern position famously described, for instance, by Benjamin Franklin in his popular memoirs that were widely reprinted in the nineteenth century). As with the format of the broadsheet, the person of the printer's devil makes evident Hawthorne's insistence on a circulation based on a rapid spread instead of a carefully produced volume of tales. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries writers represented the printer's devil as a kind of "Robin Goodfellow" of the printer's office, causing supernatural (but harmless) mischief and moving more like a spirit than a human. An article titled "The Printer's Devil" (published just a few years after "The Devil in Manuscript") summarizes these light-hearted views:

> [T]he conscientious, pains-taking Printer's Devil, on an errand for copy, is expected to emulate the indefinite action of the father-fiend. The vulgar errand-boy may saunter on the road; but the intelligent Devil—he who fetches and carries precious thoughts—he, the light porter to the brain—the go-between of author and the press—he may not lounge and tarry like a common messenger: but, insensibly impressed by the consequence of his calling, by the wealth of which he is the depository, he, in his motion to and fro, must approach as near to flying as is permitted to the human anatomy. (580)

The sooty speed of the "intelligent Devil" who acts as "light porter to the brain" provides Hawthorne with "the go-between of author and the press" for the publication of the scattered manuscripts. Combined with the broad sheet and the speed of the printer's devil in the fire, the manuscript writing of Oberon achieves a rapid distribution that comes "as near to flying as" possible. However, even the loose material limits of a broadsheet prove too much for Hawthorne's conceptualization of Oberon's writings, and the printer's devil cannot circulate the stories fast enough for Hawthorne's liking. Like any printed matter, a broadsheet must still be typeset, printed, perhaps illustrated, and distributed through tangible human effort, and a printer's devil (though a fast messenger) can only come "as near to flying as is permitted to the human anatomy." Instead of allowing the publication of Oberon's writing to be bound by these physical limitations, Hawthorne turns to a dispersed form of circulation at the ending of the story that inscribes a new concept of distribution.

In defiance of the traditional methods of publication that depend on slower physical states (the editors, booksellers, magazines, newspapers, and even the broadsides and printer's devils just described) Oberon decides to destroy his stories by burning them. Paradoxically, after the

tales burn "the extinguished embers arose and settled down and arose again, and finally flew up the chimney, like a demon with sable wings," taking on an agency *separate* from Oberon (177). The leftover embers rise through the chimney and spread throughout the town, setting the roofs of all the buildings on fire despite the bitter cold of the night. Always observant, the story teller describes Oberon's reaction to this event:

> At once, the truth flashed upon my friend. His frenzy took the hue of joy, and, with a wild gesture of exultation, he leaped almost to the ceiling of the chamber. 'My tales!' cried Oberon. 'The chimney! The roof! The Fiend has gone forth by night, and startled thousands in fear and wonder from their beds! Here I stand—a triumphant author! Huzza! Huzza! My brain has set the town on fire! Huzza!' " (178)

Oberon's physical state resonates with the movement of the manuscript embers because he "leaped almost to the ceiling of the chamber" while the embers travel up and out of the chimney. The correlation suggests a bodily mimicry that places the body of the author in symmetry with the dematerialized body of the text, thereby sending Oberon and his emotional frenzy out to the town. Body, text, and emotional state mingle in a way that imprints Oberon onto the writing (despite his distance from the moving embers). And, corresponding to the dark themes that populate his collection of writings, Oberon alternately feels "frenzy," "joy," and makes "wild gesture[s]," reactions of destructive exultation that stem from the mingling of "truth" with "frenzy" in a moment of extreme, sublime epiphany. His claim that he stands "a triumphant author" because his "brain has set the town on fire" surely walks a fine line between truth and frenzy.

Despite Oberon's outlandish reactions, his writings *have* indeed altered the lives of everyone in the town. The readers/victims of Oberon's burnt stories did not read any of his writings in the conventional sense of nineteenth-century reading; however, as scholars of the history of readership (like Andrew Piper, Leon Jackson, and Michael Cohen) have recently demonstrated, there was no "conventional" form of reading in nineteenth-century America. Nineteenth-century reading practices were historically specific and do not overlap with 21st century versions of reading in most ways. Among other things, audiences shared, traded, exchanged, gifted, skimmed, annotated, and excerpted literature—all of these practices fell under the umbrella of "reading," but they almost never implied a word-by-word comprehension of texts. Building off of these myriad ways of consuming literature, Hawthorne "publishes" Oberon's writing for the inhabitants of the town by creating a sense of "fear and wonder" that "startle[s] thousands" out of their sleep.

In this final moment of "The Devil in Manuscript," Hawthorne posits an experiential form of communication that exceeds the variety of different reading techniques available to nineteenth-century readers. Through the rapid spread of the destructive fire, Hawthorne communicates more clearly the meaning behind Oberon's tales, "in which I [Oberon] endeavored to embody the character of the fiend, as represented in our traditions and the written records of witchcraft. Oh! I have a horror of what was created in my own brain" (171). The sublime *experience* of "fear and wonder" forms an alternative version of readerly consumption that immediately affects the "thousands" of inhabitants and represents "our traditions and the written records of witchcraft." What better way to represent supernatural myths than through a seemingly supernatural form of publication? By abolishing all forms of printed or written mediation and relying exclusively on dematerialized matter, Hawthorne privileges an

understanding based on the fantasy of immediate emotion. The spread of Oberon's stories presents a mode of viral dissemination in which the burning manuscripts extend themselves in a destructive system. Instead of a movement based in different types of human agency, the "publication" of the stories exists through the local climate—the tales are transferred by the caprices of the wind, the proximity of roofs, and the material construction of the houses. Oberon's authorship is unacknowledged and unknown by the consumers of the experience.

The Character of Circulation

Hawthorne's choice of the name "Oberon" is particularly telling for the natural distribution of the embers at the end of the tale. Much more than just an alias for Hawthorne at Bowdoin, the name "Oberon" carries a long literary tradition and animates a multitude of texts. Most notably, he appears in a Burgundian poem (famously adapted by Richard Wagner) called *Nibelungenlied* and a French heroic poem named *Le Prouesses et faitz du noble Huon de Bordeaux*. In both of these texts, Oberon is a powerful fairy or a king of the fairies who usually gets tangled in the complicated affairs of humans. Hawthorne's interest in the name Oberon was probably not derived from these medieval sources, though. Most relevant to Hawthorne's personal reading was William Shakespeare's depiction of Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare was probably familiar with the earlier French poem through an English translation by John Bourchier in 1540), in which the king of the fairies feuds with his wife Titania, the queen of the fairies. Without a doubt, a large portion of Hawthorne's audience knew about this episode within the famous play. Nineteenth-century readers of "The Devil in Manuscript" lived in a culture that demonstrated a constant appetite for editions of Shakespeare and performances of his plays. In *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, Lawrence Levine amply documented the

significant place of Shakespearean performances in nineteenth-century American popular culture. The Bard's work appealed to a wide cross-section of society—literate, elite members of society enjoyed the productions of his work, as did members of the lower classes and those between the two extremes.

In addition, Shakespeare's influence on Hawthorne's stories has been well established by a number of literary historians.[88] But the reference to Shakespeare's work in "The Devil in Manuscript" exceeds any symbolic relation between the two authors that merely relies on mood, a set of echoes, or a loose sense of correspondence—Hawthorne directly alludes to Shakespeare's Oberon and embodies a version of the character in his story. Clear allusions like the one in "The Devil in Manuscript" might have helped prompt one of the most famous pieces of criticism on Hawthorne's writing—Herman Melville's 1850 review of *Mosses from an Old Manse* in which Melville directly compares the work of the two writers. In "Hawthorne and His Mosses," Melville discusses how both authors examine the darkness within humanity, and he argues that they present comparable aesthetic achievements: "Now, I do not say that Nathaniel of Salem is a greater than William of Avon, or as great. But the difference between the two men is by no means immeasurable. Not a very great deal more, and Nathaniel were verily William" (246). Rather than placing Shakespeare on an unapproachable pedestal, Melville boldly suggests that Hawthorne's works prove equal to or better than the immortal writings of Shakespeare.

But while Melville thinks that only a slight difference and "Nathaniel were verily William," Hawthorne's own self-assessment differs. Instead of thinking of himself as a potential William Shakespeare, Hawthorne preferred to project himself as Oberon, a character of fantastical proportions who exceeds the boundaries of humanity and holds agency over supernatural forces. Oberon presents a figure of wondrous, unearthly authorship drawn from

myth rather than a historical individual (this despite the fact that Shakespeare might be one of the most "mythical" of authors, looming large as an influential presence on literary history rather than a person). The reference to Oberon displays more than an interest in mythology and a desire to appear learned; by calling the author-figure in "The Devil in Manuscript" Oberon, Hawthorne also plays into the modes of distribution analyzed in Hawthorne's tale. Just as Shakespeare's Oberon relies on Puck to run mystical errands to Titantia, deliver news, and correct the romantic relationships of the humans wandering the forest, the Oberon in Hawthorne's tale relies on the devil in the manuscript to enact his desires (spreading the stories).

Equally important, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the arguments between Oberon and Titania create disastrous consequences for the natural world around them. Titania lays her complaint before Oberon and tells him how their clashes disturb the careful balance of nature:

> Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
> As in revenge, have sucked up from the sea
> Contagious fogs which, falling in the land,
> Hath every pelting river made so proud
> That they have overborne their continents. (2.1.88-92)

The fight between the two potentates generates a natural disorder that effects the balance of the land and also results in difficulties for farmers who work the fields. Like the fairies from Shakespeare's play who alter the "winds" and cause "Contagious fogs" to rise from the see, the actions of Hawthorne's Oberon have a severely adverse effect on the environment of the surrounding inhabitants of the town. Shakespeare's Oberon employs Puck to help fix the problems created by his argument with Titiana, but the ending of Hawthorne's story provides no

such comedic ending. The devil in the fire only turns into burning embers that swirl in the wind and land on rooftops.

Oberon's stories find a natural conduit to publication based on the local environment and physical context, a distribution that suits the particular content of the tales and which anonymously communicates the meanings behind Oberon's destructive and supernatural "brain." This form of hidden, shadowy authorship that depends on the content of the stories offers a new understanding of Hawthorne's authorial presence. He insists on a unique form of circulation for particular pieces of writing, a version of authorship that productively contrasts a more familiar version of his relation to his audience. Scholars have spent countless pages interpreting the tantalizing lines at the end of "The Old Manse" in which the narrator claims that "[s]o far as I am a man of really individual attributes, I veil my face; nor am I, nor have ever been, one of those supremely hospitable people, who serve up their own hearts delicately fried, with brain-sauce, as a tidbit for their beloved public" (33). The Hawthorne-like narrator of "The Old Manse" veils his "individual attributes" and denies his "supremely hospitable" nature, even though he has just taken the reader on a virtual tour of his house and its environs. Simultaneously "veil[ing]" and "supremely hospitable," the narrator holds the reader away from a corporeal consumption that indicates a close physical understanding.

The alternative version of authorship presented in "The Devil in Manuscript" reverses the trope of an audience eagerly consuming the interior thoughts and emotions of the writer. Instead, Hawthorne's fantastical tale demonstrates how an author's work expands and consumes the minds of readers with shock, horror, and fear. In "The Old Manse," the reader quietly enters the abode of a famous author and inhabits his space, learning personal information and getting a feel for Hawthorne's intimate life. Taking an inverse approach, in "The Devil in Manuscript" the

author and his works force entry into private abodes. The story focuses on a non-bodily consumption that instead immerses the physical space of the "readers," burning their own personal "manses." By invading the intimate, domestic space of the audience in his periodical story, Hawthorne presents a model of disruptive, contagious authorship that spreads into the lives of readers.

While the passage from "The Old Manse" garners a great deal of attention from critics, the corresponding one from "The Devil in Manuscript" attracts almost no notice even though it offers a fascinating version of authorship and distribution. Like the narrator of "The Old Manse," Oberon provides a vision of creation that forms a unique connection between his "brain" and the experiences of his audience. Adapted to the content of the story (just as Hawthorne adapts "The Old Manse" to the content of the collection), the imaginative distribution in "The Devil in Manuscript" provides a non-mediated form of distribution that symbolizes an ideal distribution for Hawthorne (despite the complete destruction of the manuscript).

The Manuscript Plucked From the Fire

The "heap of black cinders" (177) represent the remains of Oberon's writings in "The Devil in Manuscript." While not precisely fragments, the fiery cinders represent an irrecoverable mass of writing that Oberon willingly destroys with fire. As a result of this un-authorizing act, the manuscript takes on a life of its own—the story teller even personifies the "sparks" from the fire by saying that they were "hurrying confusedly among" the "heap of black cinders" (177). Rather than showing how Oberon maintains agency over his work, through the burning of the papers Hawthorne emphasizes the separation between Oberon and his writing. Paradoxically though, this estrangement functions less as tragedy than an exultant divorce; the fiery

manuscripts successfully communicate the bitterness of Oberon's interior life. His manner of conveying his personal life to a community of consumers rests on a viral spread of experiential knowledge mediated by the natural elements. The human conduits of printers, binders, agents, publishers, booksellers, and editors are extinguished and replaced by a self-reproducing, spreading, and fractalizing distribution. Like Brown's "caving texts," the houses adjacent to Oberon's inevitably cave in as pieces of burnt manuscript catch the roofs on fire. The previous sections of the chapter detailed how Hawthorne invested Oberon's writings with an unmediated circulation—through natural conduits, Oberon's writing creates a shock of experience. Turning away from the immediate distribution of experience, this section provides Hawthorne's corresponding critique. In "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man," Hawthorne examines how mediation—particularly editing—can in fact twist and turn writing, altering it from its original form and creating a literary product based in market expectations.

In the same way that "The Story Teller" cycle never saw completion, Oberon's writings cannot exist in an entire, published form (the fire took care of that). As mentioned earlier, despite the absence of any description of the projected work, scholars have tried to roughly reconstruct a frame tale about Oberon's departure and return and tried to organize the series of different stories that the story teller tells over the course of his journey. Hawthorne's original, loose organization of "The Story Teller" project and his subsequent publication of the stories in magazines over the course of a decade presents a comparative case similar to Brown's creation of the *Edgar Huntly* series. Though the stories were originally part of an organized plan (albeit loosely structured), difficulties in publication resulted in the scattered magazine stories in which Oberon's vagabond career hangs together in a recognizable form—but just barely. As if *anticipating* the desire for future scholars to offer a narrative of completion for "The Story Teller," Hawthorne self-

reflexively acknowledges the desire to complete, collate, organize, and make sense out of unfinished narratives. In contrast to the dispersive potential of destruction afforded by the circulation of fiery remains in "The Devil in Manuscript," Hawthorne depicts the way that posthumous fragments can be collected together (or, in the words of John Keats's *Endymion*, individuals can "fragment up" pieces) to create an imaginative whole. In depicting the ending of Oberon's life, Hawthorne censures how the story teller decides to exert his agency over broken pieces of writing left over after Oberon's death.

Hawthorne's depiction of posthumous writing in "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" engages with (and condemns) publishing and editorial trends in the early nineteenth century. During the first few decades of the century, the concept of posthumous publication emerged and writers became increasingly aware that their unfinished writing might end up in a collected edition after their death. German Romantic writers like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schlegel, and Novalis, took the posthumous publication and archivization of their "nachlass" quite seriously. The "nachlass," or leftovers, of famous authors took on a commercial value in the Romantic marketplace because they could be added to collections, providing additional content that gave publishers the opportunity to remarket literary products. By adding unfinished writing to a collected edition of work, publishers could claim a fuller, richer portrait of an artist's entire life, including the moments leading up to death.

Pieces of unfinished writing by popular authors existed first in manuscript form (since writing would be typeset and printed only when ready for circulation), a media that supposedly gave readers a more "direct" access to the creative thinking of authorial geniuses. Drawing on the sacralized form of "relics" and "remains" familiar to Catholic (and even Protestant) Christian readers, the marketing of manuscript-to-print nachlass gave audiences the sense that they could

connect with the life and death of an author through their word. The fetishization of the leftover manuscript writings of authors created an ironic twist—the practice of publishing posthumous papers recursively influenced authors who identified this trend and decide to imitate it, preparing their writing for posthumous publication and creating literature in the style of nachlass. The conventionalization of nachlass into a genre thus detracts from the potential for posthumous writings to create any kind "authentic" or "direct" relation to the mind of the author. Attentive to the deep structuring power of archival processes, Derrida observes how "the technical structure of the *archiving* archive also determines the structure of the *archivable* content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future" (17). The creation of editions that contained nachlass and the formation of libraries that stored them animated the quality of writing that created itself as "*archivable* content." This recursive effect from the "technical structure" took place both biographically—Goethe, for instance, prepared his scattered papers, unfinished works, and diary writing for cataloging in libraries—and also made its way into fiction.

When he was just twenty-four years old Charles Dickens published his wildly successful serialized novel, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (1836). The serial begins with an explanation of the rare value of the pages that follow: "the editor of these papers feels the highest pleasure in laying before his readers [the first entry], as a proof of the careful attention, indefatigable assiduity, and nice discrimination, with which his search among the multifarious documents confided to him has been conducted" (15). Dickens privileges the editorial labor of putting together the posthumous papers and implies that the editor creates a rational aesthetic structure based in "careful attention, indefatigable assiduity, and nice discrimination." Careful editorial labor and aesthetic choice function collectively to produce the assemblage of papers. Like Goethe, who even enlisted the help of an assistant versed in cataloging techniques, the

version of nachlass presented by Dickens focuses on the organizational power of the editor and the "pleasure" created for "his readers."

While the projects of Goethe and Dickens emphasize the harmonious aesthetic arrangement of posthumous papers, Hawthorne considers the potential violence that such "indefatigable assiduity, and nice discrimination" can generate. According to Hawthorne, the "technical structure" of publishing nachlass can function to distort and wrongly editorialize literature. Hawthorne relates the end of Oberon's life in a story published in *The American Monthly Magazine*, "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" (1837). Throughout the tale the story teller collects pieces of Oberon's journal that reflect on Oberon's past life as a raconteur and his return to his native town. In an interesting switch, Hawthorne decides to forego the supernatural power suggested by the name "Oberon," and instead chooses to describe Oberon using the more prosaic phrase "Solitary Man." Oberon's appearance in the story titled "The Devil in Manuscript" implies the bizarre and mystical qualities surrounding his work; however, the straightforward designation of "journal" detracts from the enigmatic characteristics of the former work. By focusing on his individual separation from society, Hawthorne paints a picture (even just in the title) that refocuses attention on the human elements of Oberon's isolation. Oberon shifts positions in this later story: he is no longer drinking into the night with the story teller and imagining a destructive form of print circulation, but relating his final wishes on his deathbed.

Suffering from a pulmonary disease (perhaps a physical disease that metaphorically represents the lack of "inspiration" in his creative life), Oberon instructs the story teller regarding the disposal of his final writings: "Burn my papers—all that you can find in yonder escritoire; for I fear there are some there which you may be betrayed into publishing. I have published enough;

as for the old disconnected journal in your possession———" (487). Oberon dies as he gives his final instruction, so it remains uncertain what his intentions might have been for the "old disconnected journal"; Hawthorne's extended dash emphasizes the unfinished, silenced quality of Oberon's final important statement (as described earlier, this device was also used to dramatic effect in Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* and *Lucy Temple*, and in Brown's "Somnambulism. A Fragment"). Oberon's last wishes remain unknown because Hawthorne begins the tale with this dramatic aposiopesis. The narrator of the story loyally burns the papers from the escritoire, but after looking over Oberon's journal he decides to publish some (but not all) of it since Oberon did not *explicitly* ask him to destroy that writing. He confesses that "in strict conscience I ought also to have burned that [journal]; but, casting my eye over some half-torn leaves the other day, I could not resist an impulse to give some fragments of it to the public. To do this satisfactorily, I am obliged to twist this thread, so as to string together into a semblance of order my Oberon's 'random pearls' " (487). The self-reproaching narrator claims that he must alter the fragments from the journal so as to give them "a semblance of order," in the same way that someone might string pearls together in order to fashion jewelry, combining an organic, natural structure with his own rational, human discretion.

In addition to reflecting on the increasingly popular practice of publishing nachlass, Hawthorne's story (in particular, the "random pearls" that the narrator organizes) also engages with a larger culture of selection and editing prevalent throughout the middle of nineteenth-century America. By 1837 Hawthorne was already very familiar with the practice of publishing stories in gift book annuals produced with elegant paper and ornamental bindings. As James Green explains, "[i]n the 1820s annual anthologies of verse and short prose with engraved illustrations and fancy edition bindings began to appear as gift books at the Christmas season.

This genre originated in France and Germany and was quickly imitated in England; the first American example was *The Atlantic Souvenir*, published by Carey & Lea from 1825 on" (117). While Green observes that the trend of Christmas gift books died down by the 1850s, throughout the 1820s and 30s the writings of popular authors like Sarah Josepha Hale, Nathaniel Parker Willis, Lydia Maria Child, Frances Sargent Osgood, and Edgar Allan Poe all appeared in annual gift books. Starting in 1828 with "The Adventures of a Raindrop," Hawthorne's stories appeared in Samuel Goodrich's collection, *The Token: A Christmas and New Year's Present* (later renamed *The Token and Atlantic Souvenir: A Christmas and New Year's Present*). Through the selective work of the editor, gift books provided readers with a volume that contained a wide selection of quality literature—fittingly, it was Goodrich himself who helped Hawthorne break down "The Story Teller" tales and publish them individually in periodicals. From an editorial perspective, Goodrich invested in Hawthorne's piecemeal publication of his shorter tales, rather than longer prose projects (of the kind Hawthorne took up in later years).

Goodrich published *The Token* out of Boston, and around the same time, Thomas T. Ash published a gift book entitled *The Pearl; or Affection's Gift: A Christmas and New Year's Present* in Philadelphia. The title of the Philadelphia publication aligns with the narrator's description of the leftover journal writings of Oberon since he calls them "random pearls." Gift book anthologies shared space on nineteenth-century bookshelves with volumes whose titles included terms like "repository," "compilation," "miscellany," and more poetic descriptors including "beauties," "flowers," "treasures," "pearls," and "gems." Besides emphasizing the compositional processes of selecting and excerpting, these titles attempted to stress the rarity of their materials—thereby emphasizing the aesthetic and economic value of the quoted texts. Like *The Token*, *The Pearl* excerpted from the writing of authors, cutting away longer pieces in order

to create a series of shorter, elegantly packaged extracts that readers could purchase, share, and consume.

Hawthorne personally made use of the genre of gift books as a venue for his writing, and the publication of his work in *The Token* provided him with economic recompense and authorial celebrity (this, despite the fact that the stories in *The Token* were published anonymously, and it was not until later that the stories were attributed to Hawthorne).[89] But Hawthorne also cuts against the increasingly common practice of publishing ornate anthologies with the intention of selling them as gifts for friends and family members. Annual gift books contained literature that emphasized sentimental morals for the coming new year, and also selections that emphasized the value of domestic life. Since the books were intended to be given as gifts to family members or close friends during the celebratory seasons of Christmas and the New Year, the content of the anthologies emphasized the principles of home, hearth, and Christian piety. Hawthorne's writings always play with sentimental themes, and his narrators often explicitly comment on the importance of domestic values. But his adaptation of the genre of edited anthologies takes a different turn in his story about Oberon. Hawthorne combines the haunting qualities of posthumous papers with the sentimentality of gift book selections, and in doing so arrives at the conclusion that both bibliographic forms emphasize an editorial position that fragments, alters, and refashions the writing of authors.

The Epistemology of Editing: Selection and Erasure

Instead of displaying the careful editorial arrangement of pieces of writing, the word "fragments" from the title of the story contrasts with the natural beauty of the "pearls." In addition, by naturalizing the pieces of the journal and indicating that pure chance dictated their

organization into "random pearls," the narrator positions himself in the role of Oberon's editor and makes clear that his agency in twisting the thread of narrative creates the story. The narrator begins the presentation of Oberon's journal by randomly opening up the volume to a "passage which affords a signal instance of the morbid fancies to which Oberon frequently yielded himself" (317). Oberon's "morbid fancies" focus on a dream in which he wanders on Broadway and people run away from him, frightened because he wears his death shroud. The passage that represents Oberon's death dream contrasts the remainder of the tale, in which the story teller offers portions of Oberon's journal that focus on Oberon's increasing desire to return home and establish a domestic life. But the morbid tone recurs throughout the journal—the story teller simply states that he refuses to include the gloomy portions in the fragments that he publishes. He comments that "I should be doing injustice to my friend's memory, were I to publish other extracts even nearer to insanity than this, from the scarcely legible papers before me" (318). Like the friends of Eliza Wharton, who withhold Eliza's final writings at her death in order to create a more sentimental moral for the readers of the letters, the story teller chooses to present a particular version of Oberon's life that represents the solitary man's turn back to society.

The papers that the story teller withholds demonstrate a mind "nearer to insanity" that exist in a "scarcely legible" form—these two descriptions indicate the unstable and fragmentary mental state of Oberon. Rather than accurately portray Oberon's sadness—a feeling so strong for him that it translates into the physical conditions of illegible manuscript writing—the story teller selects passages that emphasize an ethics of redemption and a return to the importance of domestic virtue. In doing so, the narrator denies the audience the full representation of Oberon's writing; more significantly, the story teller *classifies* Oberon's writing by declaring its "insanity." The application of a derogatory, clinical term to Oberon's mind turns the writer into a kind of

patient, a person who suffers from a mental illness that the story teller diagnoses in his writing. Oberon's mental "disease" and his lack of domestic sentiment anticipates the bosom-serpent living in Roderick Elliston's unsociable chest in "Egotism; or, the Bosom Serpent" and the coldness felt by Gervayse Hastings in "The Christmas Banquet" (although Hastings' alienation might be considered more extreme). But unlike those two characters, who describe their "illness" to a captive audience, the story teller skips over Oberon's self-descriptions and instead presents a different selection of posthumous fragments that align with his vision of Oberon's death. Like the sentimental stories in so many gift book annuals (since they were typically given as end-of-year presents the writing contained encouraging prospects for the start of the new year), the story teller gives his readers a reassuring, sympathetic moral:

> "I cannot better conclude these fragments than with poor Oberon's description of his return to his native village after his slow recovery from his illness. How beautifully does he express his penitential emotions! A beautiful moral may be indeed drawn from the early death of a sensitive recluse, who had shunned the ordinary avenues to distinction, and with splendid abilities sank into an early grave, almost unknown to mankind, and without any record save what my pen hastily leaves upon these tear-blotted pages." (322)

The narrator of Hawthorne's story tries to separate the wheat from the chaff in order to make the writing fit for public consumption. In doing so, he makes the fragments from Oberon's journal speak a didactic purpose by chronicling Oberon's regrets regarding a youthful commitment to a life of lonely, fanciful storytelling. The story teller's description serves to show readers how an embittered man eventually "breathes the gentleness of a spirit newly restored to communion with its kind" (314). The narrator chooses fragments that focus almost exclusively

on Oberon's sentimental repentances and his regret that he sacrificed a life of quiet, domestic pleasures. But because Oberon's journal comes second-hand after the narrator decides to "string together into a semblance of order" the various reflections left behind, Hawthorne introduces an irreducible doubt into the moral clarity of the narrator's vision. All of the fragments from the journal exist in an arrangement created by the narrator in a way that generates a didactic narrative of learning and serves as an example of how *not* to live a life—the negative image of a nineteenth-century bildungsroman.

The record left by "what my pen hastily leaves upon these tear-blotted pages" offers a sense of immediacy and closeness to Oberon because the story teller copies the journal entries down in handwriting. Foregrounding the place of manuscript copying in the story and borrowing from the sentimental trope of "tear-blotted pages," Hawthorne nonetheless mentions important details that chronicle an interest in alternate modes of distribution. Oberon sets out from his home to become an author (much like the story teller), a process that involves movement on local circuits of peddling, much like the historical Mason Locke Weems. When he finally returns home from his journey, he notices changes that clarify his initial decision to leave home. "Among other novelties, I noticed that the tavern was now designated as a Temperance House, in letters extending across the whole front, with a smaller sign promising Hot Coffee at all hours, and Spruce Beer to lodgers gratis. There were few new buildings, except a Methodist chapel and a printing office, with a book store in the lower story" (325). Other changes to the town include "signs [that] introduced me to strangers, whose predecessors had failed, or emigrated to the West, or removed merely to the other end of the village" (325). The passage of temporal dislocation references a similar moment in Washington Irving's story of solitude, "Rip Van Winkle." At the beginning of the story, Rip leaves his tyrannical wife to go for a walk in the hills

nearby—he falls asleep when he meets magical denizens of Dutch folklore, and when he returns to his village he finds it wholly changed. He comes home to find that he slept through the entire American Revolution; a whole generation passed while Rip lay slumbering in the hills.

While Oberon observes that "Death and Vicissitude" had done very little to the local village, the small changes nevertheless indicate significant alterations to the local landscape (325). The transformation of the tavern into "a Temperance House" places the historical moment around the 1820s, when the American Temperance Society reached national prominence. But more significantly, the new presence of "a printing office, with a book store in the lower story," indicates that certain local dynamics of publication and distribution have significantly changed. Oberon left his home village to become an author, a decision that makes perfect sense if his village lacked a mode of converting manuscript to print. Replacing the circulation of physical books, Oberon takes to the road and travels in person in an attempt to distribute his ideas and his aesthetic creations. When he returns home and realizes that a printing office has reached his small local village, Oberon also realizes that his previous mode of ambulatory life no longer holds traction the new dynamics of print movement. Local economies of print thus replace local economies of movement, a fact emphasized by the publication of the "manuscript fragments" in print form for the readers of "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man."

Oberon's life straddles two epistemes of nineteeth-century print culture—the movement of the author through the landscape (like the story teller) and the publication of his work through the medium of print. The spread of printing throughout the early American republic made genres like posthumous fragments and books of beauties more widely available, but Hawthorne notes that with this change, or perhaps because of it, the rise of editorial work necessarily provided partial visions of authorial work. Larger readers, communities or reception, and modes of

distribution functioned to expand the movement of texts while simultaneously altering their core ideas. The immediacy of circulation demonstrated in "The Devil in Manuscript" presents the fragmentation and disintegration of writing as a naturalistic form of circulation—an organic spread. "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" emphasizes a similar tendency toward fragmentation, but one that requires human mediation and thus alteration.

Desire and the Condition of Doubt

The epistemological uncertainty that comes hand-in-hand with the questionable editorial procedure of the story teller arises as a repeated theme in Hawthorne's work, especially in two of his major novels. In *The Blithedale Romance*, Miles Coverdale retreats to his hermitage in the trees—the place that he calls his only personal possession during his time with the socialists—and from there he commands a full view of the entire community. On one occasion, he observes Zenobia and Westervelt approach his tree (they fail to see him perched up there) and tries hard to listen to their conversation; however, he mentions that "even while they passed beneath the tree, Zenobia's utterance was so hasty and broken, and Westervelt's so cool and low, that I hardly could make out an intelligible sentence on either side. What I seem to remember, I yet suspect, may have been patched together by my fancy, in brooding over the matter afterwards" (104). The conversation that Coverdale then reports pertains to the Priscilla's relationship to Zenobia, and Westervelt's apparent interest in controlling Priscilla for himself, but Coverdale's admission of inaccuracy makes this crucial moment in the plot open to doubt (it is one of the few moments that reveals anything about Westervelt and his relationship to the two women). Just as Coverdale gently manipulates the individuals of the community through his passive yet obtrusive presence, his narration of the events surrounding the three characters takes on an explicitly unreliable

shade. Narrative becomes the most significant arena of Coverdale's manipulation. What does it mean for an unreliable narrator to advertise his own lack of authority and his explicit alteration of situations? Coverdale claims that "real life never arranges itself exactly like a romance" (104), and his accompanying distortion of the events indicates a self-implication in the alteration of events.

A case even more similar to "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" occurs in Hawthorne's much later novel, *The Marble Faun*, in a chapter that the narrator calls "Fragmentary Sentences." In this chapter Miriam finally finds herself alone with a mysterious stranger, the Model, a person who alternately interests and repels her and follows her almost everywhere she goes. The narrator's construction of the scene is worth quoting at length:

> [T]here have come to us but a few vague whisperings of what passed in Miriam's interview, that afternoon, with the sinister personage who had dogged her footsteps ever since the visit to the catacomb. In weaving these mystic utterances into a continuous scene, we undertake a task resembling, in its perplexity, that of gathering up and piecing together the fragments of a letter, which has been torn and scattered to the winds. Many words of deep significance—many entire sentences, and those possibly the most important ones—have flown too far, on the winged breeze, to be recovered. If we insert our own conjectural amendments, we perhaps give a purport utterly at variance with the true one. Yet, unless we attempt something in this way, there must remain an unsightly gap, and a lack of continuousness and dependence in our narrative; so that it would arrive at certain inevitable catastrophes without due warning of their imminence. (92-3)

By introducing the chapter with so much hesitation, the entire conversion between Miriam and the Model contains more than the shadow of doubt that the scene is "utterly at variance with the true one." Hawthorne enfolds fictionality within an already fictive romance, layering the novel through a sleight of hand in which his narrator makes other events more plausible and credible by acknowledging his limitations in another instance.

As in *The Blithedale Romance,* the deepest doubts in *The Marble Faun* surround a male and female pair who appears to have some past association, an intimate (though perhaps not physical) connection that remains vague and undetermined throughout the entire novel. Coverdale pruriently wonders whether Westervelt and Zenobia ever had sex, and the same uncertain hypothesis exists with relation to Miriam and the Model, though the narrator offers another theory at the end of the novel. In both novels, the narrator emphasizes that the male and female pair interact with each other based on a previous mysterious association; the space of the past exists in speculations and irretrievable knowledge, much like a letter once read that has since been torn up and lost. The past events exist in the form of emotional flashpoints within both of these novels (and, indeed, a novel like *The Scarlet Letter* in which the past loves of Hester, Dimmesdale, and Chillingworth are inextricably bound up), but inaccessible ones that filter through into the present only partially. Psychosexual interpretive possibilities abound for the way the narrators decide to fill in the fragmentary knowledge of the past with embedded, vaguely libidinous overtones. They exhibit a *desire* for narrative wholeness, and the "fragment of a text becomes a fetish object that motivates desire, or a 'filling in' of missing information" (Braune 248).[90]

The narrators in both of these novels prove adept at filling in gaps in the fictional narrative, usually by implying the existence of mysterious, and possibly salacious backstories.

The form of the fragment and the empty space it creates gives Hawthorne the opportunity to reveal something about his narrators, by displaying their narrative desires in the way they fill that gap in. By taking a strong position on what occurred with Zenobia and Westervelt, Miriam and the Model, and in Oberon's life, the narrators reveal their embedded interests in the characters of the story. Fragments thus become a way of marking not only the contours of the narrative, but the construction of the prose by the narrator/editors. Editorial fabrication becomes an unstable enterprise—far from the centralizing power Mathew Carey's composed periodicals, Hawthorne demonstrates a severe skepticism of any authority that maneuvers a composite whole out of irregular, unstable lives.

Notes

[1] On the references to *Andromeda* in ancient Greek drama, see Gilbert, who examines "the record of the reception of *Andromeda* in antiquity" (76) and draws attention to the way in which the play influenced love plots.

[2] For a set of four examples that Dane describes, see pages 156-164. For more on cultures of waste and wasted paper in the eighteenth century, see Gee and Lupton.

[3] For two of the strongest overviews of the relationship between British literature and the fragment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Harries and Levinson. Further discussion of British Romanticism's significance for American writing will be presented in chapter four.

[4] A wide range of scholarly arguments exist surrounding the eighteenth-century interest in recovery, classification, and collection. For a starting place on these topics, see Silver, Bold, and Sweet. For a version of this argument that considers eighteenth-century collection in relation to current scholarly pursuits, see Vismann.

[5] For background on Macpherson's reception and the historical consciousness of his work, see Haugen and Stafford.

[6] Chapter four deals closely with this kind of fragment and its rise not only in England, but in continental Europe.

[7] The fetishization of an author's last moments extends into the present day with the purchasing of papers before an author's death. Edward Said theorized the significance of creative finality in his book *On Late Style* (itself left unfinished at his death)—his capacious definition of late style focused on a certain untimeliness in late artistic works, although for Said this untimeliness can exist at any stage in an author's career. Said's acute formal analysis (which focuses on a certain contradictoriness and complexity in late authorial works) can be supplemented by understanding market conditions that drove the production of such works. This appetite for posthumous intimacy with authors begins in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and creates an aesthetics that surrounds the time of authorship.

[8] The cartoon discussed here forms part of an illustrated series published by *The Massachusetts Centinel* over the course of several months.

[9] The relationship between the fragment and the category of doubt will be further explicated in chapter four. During this period (and indeed into the present) fragments indicated a skeptical mood and conveyed a certain hesitancy about any conclusive statements. This played out both politically and (especially in Nathaniel Hawthorne's works) epistemologically.

[10] As I will show in chapter three, Brown does not necessarily share Carwin's rejection of fragments and embrace of the unfinished.

[11] A "complete state of subjectivity" cannot exist, of course—I only mention it here to highlight the distance between fragmented individuals and white male citizens within the early Republic.

[12] I use the word form here because it usefully describes the particular physical contours of the texts described in my project. Samuel Otter explains that "In its historical usage as recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'form' (from the Latin for 'shape' or 'configuration') describes arrangement of parts, outward shape and appearance, the essential determinant principle of a thing, and the particular character of a thing. 'Form' refers to disposition, contour, structure, and specificity. It opens, rather than closes, questions about the relations of parts to wholes and inside to outside" (119-20).

[13] This point will be developed further throughout chapter one, which looks at the work of two printer/writers, Samuel Jackson Pratt and Mathew Carey.

[14] Also relevant is the establishment of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1791 (the first historical society established in the United States and thus the creation of an institutional historical consciousness), the New-York

Historical Society in 1804, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1824, and the Connecticut Historical Society in 1825.

[15] The alliance created between the fragment form and marginalized, socially constructed identities threads through a larger, disciplinary question of aesthetic and political causality. Do attempts to represent a marginalized identity create the fragment form, or does the fragment form refine and make visible in a new way these ostracized identities (and only subsequently classify them and opening them to institutionalized scrutiny)? Without a doubt, neither position can offer a full explanation—instead, focusing on the interrelation between the two builds on the way in which Christopher Looby and Cindy Weinstein have taken up ideas like "style, form, beauty, pleasure, [and] imagination, in order to demonstrate the ways in which aesthetics and politics are dialectically engaged" (9). Rather than view these domains as exclusive, the work of Looby and Weinstein and other scholars stays at the intersection of politics and aesthetics, trying to understand how the two categories inform one another or, alternately, create restrictions and tensions. Writers deployed the fragment form, genre, or style to complement a communitarian politics, or alternatively work outside this ideology by resisting a full completion or whole (in a way that carries over into identities), making the fragment a clear example of what Edward Cahill calls, "a persistent exposition not only of individuality, autonomy, and agency but also their necessary limits" (5).

[16] For much of the twentieth century scholars have followed Walter Benjamin in theorizing the "empty, homogeneous time" of the progressive nation. Most significantly, Benedict Anderson adopts Benjamin's concept to consider the experience of "simultaneity" within the reading communities in the creation of national identity. Recently, however, literary critics and social historians have begun to explore the heterogeneous elements within an early national temporality. Thomas Allen, for instance critiques how "Anderson and [J.G.A.] Pocock [in *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*] argue that modern nationalism requires the invention of a stable and, crucially, empty temporal container within which national affiliation can express itself. For both theorists, time must therefore be homogeneous; that is, it must not be filled with competing cultural imperatives pulling individuals away from their national affiliations" (7). Allen instead considers how the national existed in multiple temporal states: "Temporal heterogeneity thus becomes central to the experience of modern collective belonging. The crucial point that must be made…is that these heterogeneous temporalities are not marginal or resistant to the nation, nor do they represent forms of collective affiliation that will emerge after the demise of the nation. Rather, they are themselves the threads out of which the fabric of national belonging has long been woven" (11). Allen's point partially holds for the fragment—broadly speaking, the form examined maintains a consciousness of the nation without considering it as the only option for "collective affiliation." The fragment provides a heterogeneous temporality different from the heterogeneous temporality of the nation.

[17] The following chapter on Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* will show the opposite trend in motion; the movement toward a fragmentation that resists *any* network of connection. From creation of affiliation (chapter one) to non-affiliation (chapter two).

[18] The mechanisms of the fragmented individual track alongside Alex Woloch's understanding of minor characters: "The minor character rests in the shadow-space between narrative position and human personality: an implied human being who gets constricted into a delimited role, but who has enough resonance *with* a human being to make us aware of this constricted position *as* delimited" (40). Just as minor characters create "an implied human being" with a "resonance" outside the story, fragments point outside of themselves and recognize their own delimitation.

[19] The paraphrases of the Latin are provided by me.

[20] The triplet alignment of fragmented text/body/nation gets replayed, more complexly, as I will show, in Pratt's novel. For an example of an anti-war pamphlet that similarly contains a thinly veiled allegory, see Charles Polhill's *The Chronicle of the Kingdom of the Cassiterides, Under the Reign of the House of Lunen. A Fragment. Translated from an Ancient Manuscript* (1783). The pamphlet comments on the need for two ancient civilizations ("Amer" and the "Cassiterides" to reconcile). Under the pretense of having discovered an old manuscript, Polhill asks his readers to "Rouse then from your slumbers, and behold your real friends in your brethren the Cassiterides. How many have mourned for the distresses brought upon you! how many have done their utmost to prevent them; and failing in that,

how many have tried to heal the wounds of both countries!" (35). At the end of the pamphlet Polhill presents a scene of treaty and encourages both sides to unify against the internal fragments that have divided them: "oh! ye great, ye leaders of the people, unite the whole for your own and their preservation; unite them for the Salvation of your country; and reflect, (with deep concern reflect) that all united may prove unequal to the task!" (37). Like *The History of The Old Fring'd Petticoat: A Fragment*, *The Chronicle* ends on an unfinished note signified by asterisks; Polhill ends the pamphlet right when the citizens of the two nations wait to see the outcome of an important treaty meeting.

[21] Page references are to Samuel Jackson Pratt, *Emma Corbett, Or The Miseries of Civil War* ed. Eve Tavor Bannet (Buffalo: Broadview Press, 2011). For the eighteenth-century editions referred to later, see *Emma Corbett: Exhibiting Henry and Emma, The Faithful Modern Lovers, as Delineated by Themselves, In Their Original Letters* (Philadelphia: Printed and Sold by Robert Bell, 1782), *Emma Corbett…* (Philadelphia: Printed and Sold by Robert Bell, 1783), and *Emma Corbett. In Two Volumes* (Newbury-Port, Massachusetts: Printed by John Mycall for Ebenezer Battelle and William Green, Booksellers in Boston, 1784).

[22] For more on Pratt's pacifist tendencies and his celebration of rational sentiment, see Grieder and Brissenden.

[23] For other examples of the literary meaning of typography in the eighteenth century see Toner, 54-86 and Flint, 105-153. Flint argues that the printer's ornaments in Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* "multiply points of view rather than resolve them dialectically. That is, print, as a medium tends to subsume rather than establish authority" (114). Both Toner and Flint emphasize the multiplying viewpoints created by punctuation—I argue that Pratt pivots away from these less clearly defined meanings and toward a very specific sense of how to represent bodies on the printed page.

[24] Derrida's description of the supplement in *Of Grammatology* applies here as well. The supplement "intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of*; if it fills, it is as if one fills a void. If it represents and makes an image, it is by the anterior default of a presence. Compensatory [*suppl*éant] and vicarious, the supplement is an adjunt, a subaltern instance which *takes-(the)-place* [*tient-lieu*]" (145). Despite the applicability of the supplement for prosthesis, Colleen Glenney Boggs notes that "[w]hile the supplement can account for a connection that posits the mass by infinite interchangeability, it remains theoretically empty in terms of explaining the processes by which interchangeability is generated and the unevenness that substitutive relations grow from and accrue" (48).

[25] Toner notes the elision among "dots, dashes, series of hyphens and asterisks," which all represent an interruption or break within the text (1). The clearest precedent for Pratt is Laurence Sterne's typographical experiments in *Tristram Shandy* (see Toner, 60-61), and Pratt builds on Stern's use of punctuation to make a specific, political point about certain types of bodies.

[26] On the mutable significations of punctuation, see Cecelia Watson, "Points of Contention" and Theodor Adorno, "Punctuation Marks." This view was current in the eighteenth century as well. In Robert Lowth's *A Short Introduction to English Grammar,* he mentions that "the doctrine of Punctuation must needs be very imperfect: few precise rules can be given, which will hold without exception in all cases" (169). James Burrows seconds this observation and cites Lowth in *A Few Thoughts Upon Pointings* (1768).

[27] Maruca tracks how throughout the eighteenth century the body progressively disappears from descriptions of printing, and is replaced with an abstract notion of authorial persona. While this holds from one perspective, the typography studied here emphasizes the continuing importance of human physiology in printing.

[28] The relay between the mechanisms of typesetting, the body of the compositor, and the reading of the printed page aligns closely with Mark Seltzer's understanding of the "body-machine complex." He argues that "a becoming visible of the technology of writing in machine culture risks making visible the links between the materiality of writing and the making of persons, and thus the internal relations between persons and machines" (79). In making the typography of his book especially resonant, Pratt makes visible a relation "between persons and machines" that exceeds the space of the veterans' hospital.

[29] She also Drucker's *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production*, in which she presents the argument for a "visual epistemology," which focuses on the interpretive potential of graphic images, rather than their function as conveying mere information (8).

[30] Pratt's use of a "prosthesis" does not, as in so many accounts of the word, reinforce a normalizing sense of the body. Rather, because his typography is still non-representative of the body (while still maintaining a material presence), it emphasizes a physical loss that does not necessarily create an absence. The printed bodies he creates stand in tension with the formations of normative bodies established in the eighteenth century, especially in spaces like hospitals. Jody Greene presents a comparable approach when she considers how for tradesmen print "has the capacity to produce change, and it is in this sense that I want to think about the press as a prosthesis…a 'technology of emotion' " (127). My emphasis, in contrast to Greene's, is on typography, not just print.

[31] Robert Bell's decision to print *Emma Corbett* not once, but twice, during the Revolution provides an important publication context that gives insight into the novel's American reception. After Bell crossed the Atlantic from Scotland (where he was already practiced in piratical publishing), he quickly made himself central to the literary scene in Philadelphia through his vigorous advertising and enterprising publishing practices. He played a crucial role in the publication of pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary documents that "were vigorous, even defiant statements of American independence. They were key texts for those intellectuals who had protested the Stamp Act and organized the nonimportation agreements" (Green 287). Most famously perhaps, Bell published the first edition of *Common Sense*, and continued to print unauthorized editions of the pamphlet even after Thomas Paine felt cheated by Bell and decided to publish the second edition with William Bradford. For further background on the publishing history of *Emma Corbett*, see Bannet's introduction to the Broadview edition of the novel, and for more information on Bell's publishing, see Green, 283-298.

[32] The architecture of the page also reconstructs what James Krasner calls (building off of the work of Gaston Bachelard and Maurice Merleau-Ponty) "the practices of material daily life" (23) that encompass how "grief becomes a series of slight physical adjustments based on the fact that a body that was always here, in a certain relation to our own, is now gone" (22). The dashes on the page, especially in their repetition, reinforce the minor and major "physical adjustments" made by wounded individuals.

[33] The Broadview edition of the novel neglects to reprint these interesting features of the text. Both the Dublin and Bath editions from 1780 present the same kind of gaps (using asterisks) as Mycall's edition. The Bath edition (printed by Pratt himself) actually separates the fragment with a title page of its own, making it a truly inset, almost self-sufficient story.

[34] Despite the favorable representation of disabled figures in Pratt's novel, Altschuler argues that impaired characters only enter into American literature after 1815, and works hard to "theorize why the seemingly ubiquitous trope of disability is so absent from the first US novels" (254). While her point stands correctly for the handful of texts that she presents, the vigorous international book trade in the early Republican period shows the immense appetite for British texts that prominently figured disability—novels like *Tristram Shandy*, *Humphry Clinker*, and *Millenium Hall*. All of these works play an important role in histories of disability in eighteenth-century England, and they, along with many other narratives of infirmity, were widely read in America. For background on the transatlantic book trade, see McGill, Winship, and Raven. Thus, while Altschuler's claim might stand for books authored by Americans (which itself is a difficult category to establish during a period when prominent authors like Susanna Rowson and Charlotte Lennox moved transatlantically), readers in the early United States were exposed to a wide variety of ill or disabled figures.

[35] See Fliegelman's *Prodigals and Pilgrims* for a fuller account of the familial symbolisms of the revolution.

[36] Disability studies distinguish between two models—the "medical model" and the "social model." The former emphasizes the need for medical intervention in the lives of the disabled, striving to find cures for illnesses and impairments. The latter (with which I associate Pratt) reverses the tendency and argues broadly that social discourses and environment need to be altered to fit non-normative bodies.

[37] Poetically speaking, the difference here might be that between an "elegy" and a "prospect poem."

[38] See the following catalogs for representative examples. While this list ends in 1807, *Emma Corbett* continued to appear in the catalogs of circulating libraries in the United States up until at least 1817: *Just imported from London, And to be Sold by John Carter, At the Printing-Office, at Shakespeare's Head, an Assortment of Books and Stationary, among which are the following Articles, viz.* Providence, RI, 1783; *Catalogue of Books to be Sold by Isaiah Thomas, at his Bookstore in Worchester, Massachusetts.* Worchester, MA, 1787; *Mathew Carey, No. 118 Market-Street, Philadelphia, Has Imported from London, Dublin, and Glasgow, an Extensive Assortment of Books*. Philadelphia, PA, 1792; *Catalogue of Books, to be sold by Samuel Hall, At No. 53, Cornhill, Boston.* Boston, MA, 1792; *The Charter, Bye-Laws, and Names of the Members of the New-York Society Library: With a Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the said Library*. New-York: Printed by T. & J. Swords, 1793; *A Catalogue of Books Belonging to the Charleston Library Society*. Charleston: Printed by W.P. Young, May 1806; *A Catalogue of the Baltimore Circulating Library; Kept by William Munday.* Baltimore: Printed by John W. Butler, 1807.

[39] See Flynn, 29-35 for an analysis of the fragment's significance.

[40] See pages 124-135 in *The Paternal Present*.

[41] For an understanding of how the anthology functions as "a genre in its own right rather than a container for others," see Leah Price's excellent study.

[42] The pastiche-like organization of articles in a magazine suited the concise, emotional fragments. Jared Gardner describes how magazines in the early national period were "defined by miscellany, unattributed borrowings, fragmentary sketches, correspondences, transcripts, and opinions on everything from the French Revolution to the ethics of snuff" (*The Rise and Fall* 3).

[43] For a further discussion of how Carey's political sympathies shifted throughout his life from Federalist, to Republican, and finally to apolitical civic concern, see the essay by Green, as well as Remer, 24-38. Also, see Rowe and Clarkin for more information on Carey's publishing career.

[44] Clarkin's bibliography of Carey's publications also shows the publication in 1814 of "La Fayette—a fragment" and in 1823 of "Julian; a dramatic fragment" by J.W. Simmons.

[45] All of the other Gospels call them "broken pieces."

[46] The phrase also plays an important role in relation to gender in Lydia Maria Child's *The American Frugal Housewife* and the poetry of Lydia Sigourney.

[47] For a more extended discussion of oratory in the context of the early republic, see Fliegelman, Looby, and Gustafson. These three studies focus on the emotional and physical states of American citizens, and stand as correctives to narratives of the period that focus exclusive on abstract, textual constructions of nationality (as in Warner's *Letters of the Republic*). In printing an appeal to a broad, abstract readership that borrows from well-known, rhetorical proverbs in an effort to generate sympathy, Carey finds the intersection of these two important forms of constructing identity.

[48] The in-text citations to the novel will be to Cathy N. Davidson's Oxford UP edition, not the Norton edition.

[49] Mower goes on to argue that Eliza obtains a "self-mastery that visibly registers her increased (body) proprietorship while at the same time exiting the public sphere that brought about the crisis of self-management. In its simultaneous negation and embodiment, Eliza's wasting body suggests an antidote to the [community's regulatory] dispossession of her body in the market" (336). All of the critics cited similarly argue for Eliza's eventual "self-mastery."

[50] For helpful definitions of "sentimental ideology," refer to Barker-Benfield, Mullan, and Eagleton. Both of these terms being notoriously tricky to pin down, I would like to refrain from giving any overly narrow sense of what I

mean by this phrase. Generally speaking "sentimental ideology" can be loosely described as the imposition and enforced regulation (though not always institutionally) of an affective construction of human relationships, often in service of some larger political goal.

[51] The clash between protoliberal and republican forms of community involves autonomous individuality (the solitary citizen) in the former and an emphasis on communality and conformity for the good of the state in the latter.

[52] For more on the reading technique that has been called surface, reparative, and descriptive, refer to Sedgwick, Latour, and Love, "Close but not Deep." Each of these critics has their particular way of thinking of this non-critical type of reading—I use the Best and Marcus version here because their epistemology of physical topography dovetails well with my reading of the physical remains of Eliza's life.

[53] Throughout her analysis, Julia Stern emphasizes the "double-voiced" quality of Eliza's writing, commenting on its ironic and highly self-conscious style, a style her correspondents either refuse to engage with or fail to recognize. For some reason though, Stern sees Eliza's final letters (received in the text *only* by the refractory eye of the female chorus) as indelible evidence of Eliza's conversion to a martyrdom for republican communal values. More likely, I argue, Eliza's "double-voiced" "play about words" continues in an attenuated, less obvious form.

[54] There is a strong similarity between sentimental ideology and paranoid reading because both are concerned with a determination of an interior state based on (or expressed by) characteristics of the external. Sentiment works towards a conjunction between the bodily state and the mental state in which the corporal (should) faithfully represents the mind, while a paranoid reading works contrapuntally against the obvious to find the hidden emerge. Reading through a "text" to something hidden functions as the central element of both practices.

[55] While at times overly impressionistic in their descriptions of surface reading, Best and Marcus manage their phrasing in such a way that keeps the door open for new reading techniques—this approach lacks specificity, perhaps, but they make up for that in their commitment to renovative practices.

[56] Of course the very nature of ideology is such that one cannot fully separate oneself from it. For instance, the very diagnosis the descriptive turns in reading give of the hermeneutics of suspicion reveals the performance of a kind of paranoia—a staking out and critiquing of a latent but regnant ideology. What is so captivating about a fictive text though, is that it can *imagine* the possibility of standing outside ideology despite the illusory, utopian, and idealistic qualities of such a goal.

[57] Bennet works out the logic of female poets in the British Romantic period who adopt "a concerted privileging of the moment, of the momentary, of ephemeral and transient experience" in reaction to a masculine culture of longevity and attention to fame in posterity (68). This description corresponds to my sense of how Eliza turns away from her community to create a fragmentary, negative space, an idea that also borrows from two other critical works concerned with understanding dissent. In addition to Bennet's work, my approach has been informed by Elizabeth Wanning Harries, who describes how eighteenth-century thinkers associated the fragmentary with the irregular and the feminine, sparking a desire to control and contain this aberrant form; see especially pages 98-121 in *The Unfinished Manner*. Finally, Heather Love's recent work *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* offers a model of approaching figures who "choose isolation, turn towards the past, or choose to live in a present disconnected from any larger historical continuum" (8). These are "texts that resist our advances. Texts or figures that refuse to be redeemed" (8). Her sense of negative emotions comes into play particularly strongly in my analysis of *The Coquette*, as she describes thinking about "a range of negative affects as indexes of social trauma" (12) and how an "image of character as stamped or branded by its early experience of shame captures a sense of the indelible nature of ideology's effects" (19). This last quotation, in particular, harmonizes with Eliza's shameful seduction, her turning away from the community's ideological force, and the fragments "that resist our advances" through their unreadability.

[58] At the end of the novel, Lucy Sumner comments that she and her friends visit the "remains" of Eliza, referring only to the body of Eliza Wharton. This specific definition of the word neglects the play on words: the literary

remains was an eighteenth- and nineteenth- century genre, which blended posthumous or unpublished writings, biography, and the corpse of the dead person.

[59] My sense of the patriarchal background and oppressive stance of Eliza's female correspondents comes straight from Julia Stern's analysis of the novel. Stern calls them the "female chorus" and describes them as a stand-in for an oppressive patriarchy; as stated earlier though, I do ultimately disagree with her conclusion about Eliza's eventual capitulation to the female chorus. I have decided to use the word chorus as well as community because the former evokes the importance of observation and commentary for Eliza's friends, as well as their (nearly) complete interchangeability.

[60] Many critics have identified how closely the other characters watch Eliza, noting how much the world of the novel resembles a panopticon-like system in which people anxiously observe one another. Indeed, Boyer, Mrs. Richman, Lucy Freeman, and Sanford all pay close attention to Eliza's behavior, commenting on the particulars of her interactions, and pass along their conclusions to their various correspondents. For more on this topic refer to Shuffleton, Waldstreicher, and Harris.

[61] It is important to mention that dissipation is only a part of the vocabulary used by the chorus to represent Eliza's questionable (to them) behavior. As Laura Korobkin points out, "At least six times in the first half of *The Coquette*, Eliza describes herself as volatile or is described by others (Lucy Freeman and Major Sanford) as being so" (84). As we will see with dissipation, this volatility disappears in the second half of the novel.

[62] See pages 300-301 in the Norton edition of *The Coquette*.

[63] Despite this refashioning of *Edgar Huntly*'s textual history, the editions prepared by Barnard and Shapiro do provide significant pedagogical and contextual material for Brown's novels. Overall, the editors do an excellent job of providing relevant texts and taking into account the textual histories of Brown's work.

[64] Dana Luciano similarly focuses on the tense positioning of closure and liberation when she argues that "Brown's novel vigorously resists closure in the absorbing effects of its structure, its narrative, and its rhetoric," and she points to the three letters "appended to the memoir without explanation, letters that throw the very possibility of termination into doubt" as evidence of this resistance (19). The formal irresolution of the ending structurally corroborates Brown's interest in the unfinished and the fragmentary, and Norman Grabo similarly views the letters at the end of *Edgar Huntly*, commenting that Brown's "recourse to the exchange of letters at the end may not be the happiest of devices, but we can see why he may have chosen this way of concluding the story. The letters give the sense of immediacy, urgency, and inconclusiveness that the memoir by its nature cannot…Brown's theme of sons and lovers is never concluded" (82-3). Just as the loose end of the plot and the addition of three letters to Edgar's epistle bring the conclusion of the novel "into doubt," Brown's decision to surround the publication of *Edgar Huntly* with "Death of Cicero, A Fragment" furthers this doubt, and also points toward a mode of print publication that stands in strong tension with the "absorbing effects" of the novel that Luciano identifies.

[65] For further discussion of the attribution of these periodical texts see *The Charles Brockden Brown Electronic Archive and Scholarly Edition*. The site lists almost all of the fragments as probable, but not definitive attributions to Brown. Only "Insanity: A Fragment" falls conclusively into Brown's authorship. See also Alfred Weber's edited collection of Brown's prose stories, *Somnambulism and Other Stories*, for the attribution of other fragments discussed later in this chapter.

[66] Throughout the chapter I use the following phrases in complementary ways: Brown's compositional methods, the publishing history of his novels, and the textual history of *Edgar Huntly*. My goal is to capture both Brown's consciousness of publication in his writing process, and his understanding that his texts exist in incomplete states even after they have been released to the public. The two stages of writing mutually inform one another, in this case.

[67] See also their description at the beginning of *A Thousand Plateaus*, which mentions how in "a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movement deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative

slowness and viscosity, or, on contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an assemblage" (3-4).

[68] Brown pairs the use of assemblage and series in a line from *Ormond; or the Secret Witness*. In describing Ormond's worldview, Sophia says that the "universe was to him, a series of events, connected by an undesigning and inscrutable necessity, and an assemblage of forms, to which no begining [sic] or end can be conceived" (133). Though the usage in *Ormond* obviously differs from the meaning indicated by Deleuze and Guattari, Brown's parallel use of "assemblage" and "series" indicates his interest in using a variety of terms to understand the relationship among events and forms.

[69] For the attribution of the poem to Elihu Hubbard Smith (who wrote under the pseudonym "Ella") see Bennett, 284. In addition, for background on the Federalist leanings of the *Gazette*, see Pasley. He claims that the paper presents an early example of the partisan newspapers that dominated political culture in the nineteenth century; before the clear development of political parties "the partisan newspaper editor became his party's chief spokesmen and manager in the area where his paper circulated" (52). Of course, political newspapers included belletristic writings, but Smith's writing proves interesting because it focuses on deviated or frustrated futures of humanity more than the benefits or disadvantages of particular political parties.

[70] These two texts largely elude any clear generic classification handed down from the British tradition and elaborated in Cathy Davidson's classic study, *Revolution and the Word*. Davidson labels the sentimental, the gothic, and the picaresque as the three principal novelistic genres in the early republic, an account that places too much emphasis on three categories that cannot fully explain the diverse forms of writing during the period.

[71] In a middle point between the two approaches just outlined, Dana Luciano and Emily Ogden have identified varying levels of "sensibility" as a key component in *Edgar Huntly*, an eighteenth-century bodily faculty that arguably functioned as a barometer between the interior and the exterior.

[72] The most notable exception to this is Chad Luck's work, which brings Lockean and Humean notions of property into dialogue with Edgar's rambles through a politically fraught frontier country.

[73] Gardner's emphasis on the unity of voice, character, and plot stems partially from the tradition in Americanist criticism described earlier that focuses on the development of the individual. Interestingly enough, Leslie Fiedler's 1950s account of Brown's career strikes a much more modern tone than Gardner's analysis, especially when Fiedler describes the complex entanglement of identities and texts throughout Brown's corpus, an entanglement that highlights the "bibliographic elsewhere" and "relational structure" of Brown's books: "Since he [Brown] wrote four of his novels (plus the fragments of others) at the same time, he sometimes switches incidents or characters or simply names back and forth among them in a bewildering way. Often he will detach an episode for independent expansion or use elsewhere, leaving quite inexplicable vestiges in the original book. He is especially fond of attaching almost identical incidents to different characters in the same book, or of suggesting confusing resemblances between unrelated people without ever troubling to justify or exploit those deliberately planted resemblances" (155). Fiedler's sense of Brown's "bewildering way" rings true, but he unfortunately takes Brown's disorganized methods of composition as evidence of a lesser artistry, a position that Gardner attempts to strike down in his claim for the unity of Brown's writing. While Gardner's intentions might be admirable (the defense of an extremely good writer), and Fiedler's analysis more accurate, both miss the fact that Brown's disorganized aesthetic, or imperfect form, constitutes his adept handling of identity and text. Fiedler goes on to focus on the problem of the "confusing resemblances between unrelated people" and the psychological complications of Brown's characters, showing very clearly how Brown's novels *do not* rely on concepts like unity and individual autonomy.

[74] For an example of a literary analysis that also draws a comparison between character and publishing history, see Sari Edelstein's description of Capitola in *The Hidden Hand* as "a figure for the story-paper itself, as a hybridizing, roving force that complicates boundaries and blurs distinctions….Southworth suggests not only that Capitola is a newsboy, but that she is, in fact, a kind of newspaper, a miscellany, a variety sheet" (75-76).

[75] To a large degree, Brown's form of novelistic assemblage stems from events surrounding the disastrous yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia in 1798. During the 1790s the illness ravaged Philadelphia, creating an unstable environment of constant, unpredictable death—Brown's life was altered because of the epidemic, especially because of the death of his friend and correspondent, Elihu Hubbard Smith.

[76] See Lee Rust Brown's work *The Emerson Museum: Practical Romanticism and the Pursuit of the Whole* for an explanation of Coleridge's work in terms of nineteenth-century American thought, especially pages 21-58.

[77] See *The Charles Brockden Brown Electronic Archive and Scholarly Edition* for the definitive attribution to Brown.

[78] Scholars have been unable to verify whether or not the Vienna Gazette from June 14, 1784 contains the report quoted by Brown because of incomplete archival records for the newspaper. See the headnote to "Somnambulism. A fragment" written by Barnard and Shapiro, 244-245.

[79] Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy consider the literary fragment as a philosophical form of writing that helps the German Romantics resolve the problems of subjective criticism investigated by Kant. According to Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, though aesthetic displays the German Romantics sought to work toward a horizon of "reconquering the possibility of effective speculation, the possibility, in other words, of the auto-recognition of the Ideal as the subject's own form"—that "effective speculation," however, can never be *entirely* reached because the subject can never reach the Ideal, even through self-representation in art (33).

[80] For Tieck's relationship to German philosophical Romanticism, see Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, 8-12

[81] For more on Hawthorne's relationship to German literature, see Marks, "German Romantic Irony in Hawthorne's Tales" and "Hawthorne, Tieck, and Hoffman." In his influential study of Hawthorne's relationship to the past, Michael J. Colacurcio brilliantly excavates the significance of Hawthorne's status as a moral and intellectual historian. Colacurcio clearly depicts Hawthorne's relationship and reinterpretation of 17th and 18th century American literary culture—in contrast, my approach examines Hawthorne's adoption of a transatlantic genre from a few decades before for a (more) private purpose. Turning from public to private with Hawthorne always edges near the psychological (against which Colacurcio cautions), and I borrow from Hawthorne's biography without using it as definitive evidence (only suggestive). The fragment provides Hawthorne with an apt genre through which he can explicate a theory of personal history that proves dependent on the *partial*. In contrast to what Colacurcio suggests, his early writing might *not* reach toward a "fully organic collection of tales" (496), but rather display the impossibility of acquiring such a status. The organic ideal is just that—an ideal, and Hawthorne seems to embrace that fact that the "part never will quite stand for the whole" (496).

[82] Of course, as Meredith McGill rightly argues, Hawthorne carefully deploys a narrative of early authorial obscurity in order to help him elevate the prestige of his later, more "mature" writings. By denigrating his early works in the 1840s and 50s, he inversely indicates the aesthetic excellence of his longer novels like *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of Seven Gables* (1851). Hawthorne's early career not only exhibits his interest in obscurity and critical neglect (whether actual, imagined, or intended), it also reveals a parallel interest in constructing and deconstructing large-scale authorial projects.

[83] The differences between the periodical publications of the tales discussed in this chapter and the Centenary editions are negligible—for convenience, the Centenary edition page numbers are used throughout. "Passages from a Relinquished Work" appears in *Mosses from an Old Manse*, "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe" in *Twice-told Tales*, and "The Devil in Manuscript" and "Fragments from the Journal of a Solitary Man" in *The Snow-Image and Uncollected Tales*.

[84] See, for example, Baym, 39-50.

[85] The metaphors of flight and rapid movement become especially pronounced in "The Devil in Manuscript," as I'll show.

[86] Hawthorne later dedicated *The Snow-Image, and Other Twice-Told Tales* to Horatio Bridge, and addressed his college friend in the preface to the collection (he also dedicated the collection to his friend): "If anybody is responsible for my being at this day an author, it is yourself. I know not when your faith came; but, while we were lads together at a country college…it was your prognostic of your friend's destiny, that he was to be a writer of fiction" (4-5).

[87] For more background on ephemeral broadsheet printings, see Shepard, Newman, and McDowell.

[88] See Jacobs, Grant, Kehler, Rees, and Bercovitch for examples of comparative studies that discuss Shakespeare's clear influence on Hawthorne's writing throughout his life.

[89] See Brenda Wineapple's biography, especially pages 73-86 for this period of Hawthorne's life.

[90] For more on the libidinous desires behind fragments and wholeness, see the way Barthes describes the pleasure in the way "narrativity is dismantled yet the story is still readable: never have the two edges of the seam been clearer and more tenuous, never has pleasure been better offered to the reader—if at least he appreciates controlled discontinuities, faked conformities, and indirect destructions" (9). He goes on to compare these "controlled discontinuities" to flashes and glimpses of skin beneath a garment, turning the process of reading into sexual provocation. Similarly, I would argue, writing satisfies an erotics of imagined desire. See also the work of Page duBois (referenced in chapter two) who argues that critical acts of interpretation depend on "filling in" the historical context, reflecting the desire of the writer more so than the actuality underlying a text.

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