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THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY FICTION

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By
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This project investigates how nineteenth-century writers portrayed the American Revolution in fiction. Nationalism is typically described as a homogenizing social force, one that crafts a sense of unity among a civic body – but also one that excludes minority populations. I argue that U.S. nationalism was constructed around eighteenth-century conceptions of the liberal citizen, characterized by the ability to enter the political discussion found in the public sphere by assuming the mantle of “virtuous disinterest,” a commitment to rationalism, and above all the belief in the ability to act without restraint. These traits are coincident with the rise of middle-class political power in the Age of Revolution. As U.S. society moved towards industrial modes of production over the nineteenth century, writers retold the story of the Revolution in order to affiliate new political positions with the ideals and values of the nation. Proponents of both class and abolitionist politics took up this work with the aim of changing (or revolutionizing) society. For proponents of working-class interests, this meant challenging the liberal beliefs that equated being American with economic success – and that relegated economic interests to the apolitical order of the private sphere. For abolitionists, it meant challenging the belief that people of African descent had a political destiny separate from the nation. For both, it meant understanding that the body was as important in constructing identity as the mind and that the ability to act was always conditioned by social limitations. My dissertation shows how the Revolution was culturally imagined first as the outgrowth of liberal values as demonstrated in the fiction of Charles Brockden Brown and Washington Irving, and then was challenged by writers with working-class and abolitionist politics such as George Lippard, Herman Melville, William Wells Brown and Lydia Maria Child.
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Introduction

“There is nothing more common than to confound the terms of American Revolution with those of the late American War. The American war is over: but this is far from being the case with the American revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed.” – Benjamin Rush, 1787.

The story of the American Revolution has been told many times. One of my favorite versions is a bit apocryphal, but it captures the basic thesis of this study. It just so happens that it is also a commercial. A British soldier (a spy, a messenger?) runs through a copse of pine. His clothes are disheveled, and his flight is accompanied by a mournful dirge played on a fiddle. He reaches a unit of British troops, and relates his news to the commanding officer. They form rank, leveling their muskets towards the distant woods. The video is cinematic and beautiful, equal to and evocative of the best recent films set during the period. There is a lengthy shot that captures the British soldiers’ determination to stand their ground. And then three Dodge Challengers (the modern equivalent of a muscle car) roar into the frame, one affixed with an American flag. They charge over the rough terrain, engines growling powerfully. As the British soldiers break rank and flee, we see a close-up of General George Washington at the wheel. Chaos ensues, soldiers fall, one officer is de-horsed; all signs of death, but no one is “really” killed on screen. No shots are fired; there is no blood. A male voice says: “Here’s a couple of things America got right: cars and freedom.” His seriousness transcends the historical rupture we have just enjoyed with a wry smile. Cars and freedom. Which is selling which?

This study investigates how people during the nineteenth century retold the story of the American Revolution in fiction, translating living memory into text. In the process, they both reiterated the stories that help define U.S. nationalism and also changed those narratives to suit the needs of their own time. Studying novels and short stories that do this work captures (if fleetingly) a form of cultural memory that is constantly undergoing revision. It suggests that people had the power to determine the meaning of nationalism in ways that eluded both the control and the license of the nation-state, and that consequently the stories they told held a
revolutionary potential in their own right.

What follows is an investigation into moments when narratives of the Revolution were invoked in an attempt to change society in ways intended to bring it more in line with the core values of U.S. nationalism. In other words, the works discussed invoked the “discourse” of the Revolution, with its associations of freedom and liberty. The chant, the refrain, the backbeat of this discourse is the Declaration of Independence’s basic premise: “WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness....” Those seeking to claim a measure of equality in society usually stop there, but the sentence goes on to claim “that to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on Such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.” The protection of these fundamental rights is the foundation of government as well as, in turn, revolution.

To be sure, when writers (of fiction) in the nineteenth century conjure these ideas, their own understanding of these terms typically falls much more in line with the school of jurisprudence that treats the law as a “living document” rather than an artifact to be considered as a record of an authorial “original intent.” The rigor of the juridical order (the legal existence of the state) is not the dominant paradigm guiding this study. Each chapter focuses on a different historical moment in which the invocation of the Revolution is part of a constellation uniting narrative, culture, and political activity. Together, these factors culminate in what is simultaneously marginal and powerful: stories that craft the meaning of the nation told by and read by people who would otherwise have very little influence over the doings of the state.

Investigating fiction that retells the story of the Revolution allows for a focused analysis of U.S. nationalism. Each chapter considers a particular nexus of fiction in order to draw out the contested social relationships that are reflected in the narratives that grew from and in turn shaped the cultural life of U.S. nationalism. Charles Brockden Brown’s “The Man at Home” and Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” show how the legacy of the Revolution was transformed by the influence of liberalism and speculative capital, creating silences around the questions of race and class that jarred with the Declaration’s ideals of freedom and narratives.
of American prosperity. Writing for the cheap fiction marketplace of the 1840s, George Lippard reinvested the Revolutionary past with working-class politics. Herman Melville revised the account of Israel Potter, a Revolutionary War veteran, whose pension application had been rejected, leaving him in abject poverty. Abolitionist texts such as William Wells Brown’s *Clotel: Or, The President’s Daughter* and Lydia Maria Child’s *The Oasis* used the figure of the tragic mulatto to both lay claim to the Revolution’s inheritances of freedom and equality and to refute the anti-abolitionist fear of interracial marriage that had sparked mob violence throughout the 1830s. By invoking Thomas Jefferson’s biracial children, both works sought to heal the distinction between races that Jefferson himself had articulated in his draft of the Declaration. Each group of texts becomes the occasion for reflection on the discourse of the American Revolution and U.S. nationalism, a consideration of the way that narratives contested the power relations of society by appropriating its foundational myths for their own ends.

Nationalism is a vexed category in both theory and literary criticism. Often, the notion that nations are “imagined communities” put forth by Benedict Anderson is accepted without interrogation. But while Anderson represents the idea that a nation is constructed culturally in the minds of people (giving, of course, special emphasis to a reading audience as a political body), his work does not tackle nationalism per se, where, in Tom Nairn’s phrase “the patient is a roaring drunk into the bargain.” By this Nairn means that nationalism is not merely a term that equates to the body politic of a given nation-state, but is rather a culture that is powerfully influenced by both intellectuals and the “low” portion of society. Speaking of Germany’s intellectual history, Karl Marx also said as much when he criticized the “high-falutin and haughty hucksters of ideas, who imagine themselves infinitely exalted above all national prejudices, [and] are […] in practice far more national than the beer-quaffing philistines who dream of a united Germany.” In our contemporary moment nationalism is complex, but it is often linked with the far-right, anti-immigrant politics, and, at its worst, violence. Similarly, in its overt form, nationalism is often attributed in the nineteenth-century (in the United States) to nativists who were powerful enough to organize into a national political party (the Know-Nothing party). At the extreme end of the spectrum, nationalism is associated with histories of violent exclusion, racism, totalitarianism, and genocide, and indeed it does figure in this aspect as part of the anti-abolitionist mob violence considered in the final chapter of this study. However, while nationalism can play out in very negative ways, it is a mistake to characterize it
as a social ill. It is a contested cultural formation with distinct content in different nations and periods. For the nineteenth-century writers studied in the chapters that follow it offered a discourse of freedom and equality that could be used to promote social progress.

Anthony D. Smith has established an essential question concerning the nature of nationalism: is a nation constructed, or is it based on ancient ethnic, geographic, cultural groups (which are based in turn on religion, origin myth, historical memory, language, customs, etc), what Smith calls *ethnies*? While examples of various nations from around the world show that nationalism can emerge from many different combinations of these factors, the association of ethnicity and territory are singularly important in fueling nationalist rhetoric of the most violent and totalitarian type. However, even in cases where an ethnic or racial homogeneity appears as a strong foundation of a modern nation-state, Smith ultimately collapses the distinction between the constructivist and “primordialist” approaches, concluding that it is a *sense* of ethnicity, rather than biological demography, that transforms complex histories of invasion and domination (and their attendant transformations of population) into the basis of contemporary nation-states where such conditions exist. Etienne Balibar suggests that the transformation of history in this way is part of the ideological function of the nation-state, where history appears “to us in the form of a narrative which attributes to these entities [nations] the continuity of a subject… the fulfillment of a ‘project’ stretching over centuries…. It is the characteristic feature of states of all types to represent the order they institute as eternal, though practice shows that more or less the opposite is the case.”

Balibar, too, focuses on the role of ethnicity and language in the construction of the idea of the nation-state, suggesting that the nationalization of society “made it possible (at least for an entire historical period) for struggles between heterogeneous classes to be controlled and for not only a ‘capitalist class’ but the *bourgeoisies* proper to emerge from these.” The role of the nation-state is seen here as one of control, where the nation-state becomes the “condition of communication between individuals (the ‘citizens’) and between social groups – not by suppressing all differences, but by relativizign them and subordinating them to itself in such a way that it is the symbolic difference between ‘ourselves’ and ‘foreigners’ which wins out and which is lived as irreducible.” For Balibar, the racial-ethnic function of nationalism forestalled internal, and hence international, class struggle. In the case of the United States, whose existence is recent and non-primordial, a similar function can be attributed to traditions which emphasize (say) the Puritans as a common social origin or more broadly to the codes of race and
racial exclusion that rigidified during the nineteenth century.

In literary studies, trans-national approaches have sought to de-emphasize the nation-state as a hermeneutical category in order to reveal the role played by extra-national commerce in shaping society. The nation-state, meanwhile, has come under renewed scrutiny regarding the effects of state power over individuals. In *Who Sings the Nation-State?*, Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak investigate the nation-state in order to consider the theoretical existence of people held outside of national inclusion, refugees and other populations who are “effectively stateless,” those who are under the force of law without its protection (8). They conclude that “the category of the stateless is reproduced not simply by the nation-state but by a certain operation of power that seeks to forcibly align nation with state, one that takes the hyphen, as it were, as chain” (12). In order to define, or bind, a unified population, the nation-state is said to work through exclusion at its margins via military power, barriers, and carceral institutions such as prisons and detention camps. This has been explored by Giorgio Agamben as a function of sovereign power, the ability of the state to suspend the rights of individuals. Butler’s critique of Agamben rests on the fact that the state alone is insufficient for understanding the relationship between a subject and power, but because her definition of the nation, and nationalism, is, like the aforementioned theorists, one based on the production of a homogenized population through the expulsion of minorities, this conclusion leads her to the desire for “post-national forms of political opposition that might begin to address the problem with some efficacy” (41). Spivak agrees, claiming that we “might seek to reinvent the state as an abstract structure with a persistent effort to keep it clean of nationalisms and fascisms” (77). “[The state’s] structures are legal. They cannot adjudicate justice but they serve justice and we must protect them” (101).

This, finally, is a rather contradictory conclusion, for by banishing the nation from the “nation-state,” suddenly the bare (juridical) institutions of state power are figured as producing basic services (such as drivers licenses), regulating capital, and providing justice. The institutions of domination are forgotten, and the state, however unlikely, is transformed into a utopia of the post-national. Statelessness is strikingly figured as a problem of nationalism rather than the state.

I argue that the chain linking nation and state can be interpreted quite differently. If the state represents the institutional-legal aspect of the nation-state, then the nation represents the cultural domain of its existence. However, understanding nationalism as a control mechanism
whose main action is to produce social cohesion through racial / ethnic homogeneity is to very narrowly read its function through a negative effect. Nationalism can produce this effect, but when investigated more broadly, nationalism is more aptly viewed as a cultural battleground where people without any standing in the institutional-legal existence of the nation-state can assert ownership and control of its cultural existence. In the United States, although its nationalism has occluded internal class conflicts and promulgated increasingly strict standards of racial categorization, the nation has tended against homogenization, towards the proliferation of civil rights often through the invocation of the Revolution’s ideals of freedom and liberty.

To recognize the role played by the ideal of national-ethnic homogenization in crafting the idea of the nation-state is not to accept this as a “truth,” but rather to mark it as a phenomena deserving of further investigation. This project investigates nationalism by examining scenarios when writers invoke the American Revolution in order to contest its meaning, deploying historical narratives and patriotism in service of radical political positions in their own time. By focusing on tales and tropes that retell the story of the American Revolution, this study attempts to understand how the ideals of the Revolution functioned as a discourse for social change during the nineteenth century. In each case, nationalism figures first as a normalizing social force, a set of assumptions, an ideology which functions as a baseline for understanding the terms and conditions of the text. Within this field, writers invoked, enunciated, and signified in an attempt to lay claim to the nation-state in an effort to reorder society’s social structure. In their specificity, these texts recover moments of discord in nationalism’s homogenization of the past; they operate as the antithesis of erasure by capturing an unexpectedly complex history of the discourse of the American Revolution.

In Chapter 1, “‘We Hold These Truths To Be Self-Evident’: Ideology and the Nation-State,” I consider two texts that imagine the censorship of Revolutionary history: Charles Brockden Brown’s “The Man At Home” and Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.” Brown’s novella tells the story of a man hiding from debtors’ prison who, while in isolation, finds a manuscript telling the secret history of the American Revolution. Instead of sharing it, however, the man decides to keep it hidden. Set in Philadelphia during the 1790s, “The Man at Home” links this obscure manuscript with the early economic and political structures of the nation – including the contemporaneous example of the French and Haitian Revolutions. Consequently, the text helps triangulate the process of the strategic revision of the
Revolutionary past and shows the symbolic beginning of the erasure of class and race from U.S. nationalism. While Brown’s text remains obscure, Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is a well-known tale that is often remembered for Ichabod Crane’s wild flight from the Headless Horseman. However, it is also a tale of Ichabod’s threat to the rural order of Sleepy Hollow; his desire to marry Katrina Van Tassel is driven by his desire to inherit and liquidate her family’s wealth – which is in part the product of slavery. Importantly, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is three types of story at once: it is a ghost story, it is (which is typically forgotten) a legend of the Revolution (the Headless Horseman is a Hessian troop), and it tells the tale of a small-town’s economic threat and salvation. Together, Brown and Irving set the terms for a transformation of the Revolution in fiction that is fundamentally connected to society’s economic structure, creating silences around the questions of race and class that jarred with the Declaration’s ideals of freedom and narratives of American prosperity.

This dissertation subsequently investigates the class and racial struggles elaborated in fictional revisions of the Revolutionary origin during the nineteenth century. Chapter 2, “Class Apprehensions: George Lippard, Mass Culture, and the Public Sphere,” documents Philadelphia’s cheap fiction marketplace, which boasted massive circulation numbers for the city’s story papers. During the 1840s, George Lippard reigned as this market’s star writer, writing profusely in both the city-crime and legends of the American Revolution genres. By tracing the publication history of his novel The Rose of Wissahikon in the story papers and then as a pamphlet novel, I recover the economic interdependence of the city’s top publishers of cheap fiction. After establishing the material history of Lippard’s writing career, I explore his effort to refashion the legacy of the American Revolution to include the possibility of labor politics – most notably by challenging the foundation of the eighteenth-century’s public sphere discourse. In separating the public, political order from the private, economic interests of citizens, public sphere theory structurally relegates class politics to an a-political category. In The Rose of Wissahikon, Lippard refashions the circumstances surrounding the drafting of the Declaration of Independence, using fiction to reinvest the origin of the nation-state with narratives of personal interest.

Continuing the effort to compare the historical existence of class in the United States and the recovery work needed to reincorporate such experiences in the codes of nationalism, Chapter 3, “Suspect Nationalism: Israel Potter, Herman Melville, and the Recovery of Working-Class
Interests in Nationalism,” considers the relationship between Israel Potter’s biographical account of his participation in the Revolution and Herman Melville’s revision of the text into a novel during the 1850s. Enduring a life of hard labor, capture by the British, and years of poverty in London, Potter returned to the United States at a time when the beliefs of the Revolutionary era were giving way to a new cultural memory of the past typified by a rising nationalist reverence for patriots of the War, increasing state bureaucracy, and military expansionism. His application for a pension was denied, and his foray into the literary marketplace as a means of seeking subsistence also seemingly failed. I consider how Potter’s biography has been positioned as an object of suspicion in these registers, as well as by historians, suggesting that the text’s combination of nationalism and the record of poverty has been read as an attempt to defraud the reading public. Melville’s Israel Potter in turn employs Potter’s biography as a record of working-class interests during the Revolution, using the text to critique the nation-state’s equivocation to liberal values. The novel inverts the suspicions directed toward Potter’s text, transforming suspicion into an aesthetic device that reveals the power of both the nation-state and the economy in determining subjectivity. I argue ultimately that the novel’s combination of early nationalism and class interests has contributed to its legacy as one of Melville’s least-studied works, showing how the novel was problematic for landmark leftist criticism from the early twentieth century.

In the fourth and final chapter, “Domestic Revolution: The Tragic Mulatto’s Revolutionary Heritage,” I address the rise of abolitionism in the United States during the 1830s through an investigation of the tragic mulatto character. The rise of the tragic mulatto character in U.S. literature has long been attributed to the intertextuality between Lydia Maria Child’s short story “The Quadroons” (1842) and William Wells Brown’s novel Clotel: Or, The President’s Daughter (1853), which incorporated large parts of its predecessor verbatim. Clotel is based on the widely rumored relationship between Thomas Jefferson and his slave, Sally Hemings, and offers an important symbolic resolution to the exclusion of people of African descent from American society that had been inaugurated by Jefferson himself in his draft of the Declaration of Independence. However, while Clotel itself recovers a genealogy of shared black and American revolutionary inheritances and is an important touchstone for my argument, the object of this chapter is the recovery of the literary precedents and the social conditions that identified interracial domesticity as a threat to the political stability of the nation-state. In the
first part of this chapter, I show how the rise of abolitionism as an interracial political alliance itself revolutionized anti-slavery activity, challenging the dominance of the American Colonization Society, whose efforts focused on the return of free black people to Africa. Anti-abolitionists (often led by colonizationists) rioted throughout the decade in response to the abolitionists’ attempts to organize, fueled by accusations that abolitionists sought the dissolution of the Union (via encroachment on State’s rights) and advocated interracial marriages. As a result, anti-abolitionists themselves identified the kinds of consensual interracial domesticity that challenged their innate prejudices as a revolutionary threat – one that subverted social hierarchies in the home. The second part of this chapter analyzes the literary response to the particularly violent New York City riot of 1843. I locate, among other narratives, Lydia Maria Child’s abolitionist gift-book, The Oasis, showing how its content began the process of reuniting black and American revolutionary inheritances.
Notes to the Introduction:

1 Benjamin Rush, “The Defects of the Confederation,” 147.
2 The video is currently available on the Dodge youtube channel. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vY6voU02kSw
3 The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America, 9.
4 Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities.
7 See Ira M. Leonardi and Robert D. Parmet’s American Nativism, 1830-1860 and Tyler Anbinder’s Nativism & Slavery.
8 Anthony D. Smith, “The Origins of Nations.”
9 Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, Race Nation, Class, 86-8.
10 Ibid., 90.
11 Ibid., 94.
12 Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Who Sings the Nation-State?
13 Giorgio Agamben, Homo Sacer. See also Donald Pease, The New American Exceptionalism. Butler also shares my critique of Arendt’s articulation of public participation in politics as the basis of freedom, which I develop at length in chapter 2.
14 Butler states, via a critique of Hannah Arendt, “that the nation-state, as a form, that is, as a state formation, is bound up, as if structurally, with the recurrent expulsion of national minorities. In other words, the nation-state assumes that the nation expresses a certain national identity, is founded through the concerted consensus of a nation, and that a certain correspondence exists between the state and the nation. The nation, in this view, is singular and homogeneous, or, at least, it becomes so in order to comply with the requirements of the state” (30). “[T]o produce the nation that serves as the basis for the nation-state, that nation must be purified of its heterogeneity except in those cases where a certain pluralism allows for the reproduction of homogeneity on another basis. This is, needless to say, not a reason to favor pluralism, but, rather, a reason to be suspicious of any and all forms of national homogeneity, however internally qualified they may be (this would stand as a rebuke as well to efforts to reanimate patriotism on the right and the left)” 32.
Let me begin with a confession. One of the enduring difficulties of this project has been the issue of scale. On the one hand, as I outlined in the introduction, the crafting of nationalism takes place at such a large scale and over such a length of time that it is difficult to define in its totality. It eludes specificity, leaving this or that individual artifact lodged in the circumstances of a discrete period. At the same time that nationalism has existed as a series of historical configurations, it also appears in a form that suggests an enduring and stable concept - a normalizing force, a set of assumptions, an ideology that functions as a baseline for understanding the terms and conditions of the texts that operate within its field. When trying to compare a specific text to the idea of nationalism in its generality, something remains elusive. Nationalism is like a story with millions of authors, written in the assumptions of the ever-occurring present. Because of its diffuse nature, spread among so many participants, nationalism almost suggests an authorial agency in and of itself beyond that of the individuals who espouse its beliefs. It is like a text in its dependence on figures, stories, language, symbolism, and history, but it is precisely not a text because it transcends the specificity of a concrete, or singular, existence.

With these difficulties in mind, this chapter addresses two works that set the stage for the nineteenth-century writers who subsequently invoked the Revolution as a tool for negotiating their relationship to a nation-state steadily growing in size, complexity, and power: Charles Brockden Brown’s “The Man at Home” and Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.” Each contains within itself the story of storytelling, figuring the act of authorship in a manner that presents the impulses driving the revision of the American Revolution’s legacy as part of the tale itself. More precisely, each narrates the circumstances by which the facts of the past are suppressed in order to produce a unified version of nationalism, a Revolutionary mythos
that supports the dominant values of society, values that are in turn deeply related to the very structure of the nation-state. In Brown’s text, a hidden manuscript account of the Revolution is uncovered, but its contents are never shared. In Irving’s, the Headless Horseman (a nameless Hessian soldier from the Revolution) haunts the area as a representation of its less-than-ideal past, a ghost of a memory from when the area fell between Continental Army and British lines. Both Brown and Irving suggest that the liberal conception of government, dependent on capital (contract, private property, and expansion), was central to the formulation of nationalism in the wake of the Revolution. Both, however, also capture the circumstances of how stories of the Revolutionary past were used to create a sense of a unified American character, leaving traces of the alternative legacies of the Revolution (including the politics of class and race) that motivate the remaining chapters of this study.

To this end, I consider how both Brown and Irving incorporate the act of storytelling – and suppression – in their treatment of the Revolution’s legacy in fiction. In Brown’s “The Man at Home,” a ruined investor, Bedloe, hides from the law in an attempt to evade debtors’ prison. While in hiding, he discovers a manuscript with details of an important historical event from the Revolution that has otherwise been “imperfectly” understood (68). However, instead of sharing the tantalizing tale, Bedloe suppresses the alternative legacy of the Revolution and provides no further insight into the manuscript’s contents, substituting in its stead a tale of French and Haitian Revolutions (an episode that is revised again in Brown’s novel, Ormond) – a substitution that externalizes class and race revolutionary impulses from the American tradition. Bedloe’s character is representative of the liberal subject, but in his evasion of the law his motivations are revealed as the outgrowth of a speculative capital unchecked by the bounds of polite society. By way of the economic and narrative speculations embarked upon by Bedloe, his substitution of a French-West Indian revolutionary heritage in lieu of the manuscript’s content, and other evidence, I argue that the suppressed manuscript figures strongly as a symbol of the class and race legacies of the American Revolution that were more generally displaced from U.S. nationalism in favor of the values of liberalism.

The final section treats Washington Irving’s well-known story, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” whose protagonist (Ichabod Crane) shares many similarities to Bedloe. Although typically remembered as a ghost story, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is comprised of many different modes of storytelling. Irving’s legend juxtaposes folk stories and Crane’s own
“devouring mind’s eye” as different modes of storytelling that in turn represent competing economic structures (agrarian and speculative capital). When Crane flees from the Headless Horseman at the end of the tale, Irving suggests that the rural Dutch community has been saved from the economic motivations he represents. (Crane wishes to marry Katrina Van Tassel for her family’s wealth.) Like Bedloe, Crane uses his imagination to speculate economically via his very perception of the world. Unlike Bedloe, his encounter with the legacy of the American Revolution transpires beyond the realm of the written text. The Headless Horseman, after all, is the ghost of a Hessian soldier from the Revolutionary War. Along with the ghost stories that have given the region its reputation, the farmers of sleepy hollow tell self-aggrandizing tales of their participation in the struggle. Oddly, the region’s most notable historical episode from the Revolution, the capture of Major John André, is barely mentioned. I suggest that the Horseman operates as both Sleepy Hollow’s protector and as a symbol for the region’s difficult relationship to nationalism resulting from its folk traditions and economic desires. Together, these texts show the role played by economics in shaping the legacy of the Revolution. Driven by ideological assumptions, their suppressions (Bedloe’s manuscript and the Horseman’s past) help clarify some of the conceptual problems facing later writers’ attempts to revise the meaning of the Revolution to support nineteenth-century political movements for economic and racial justice.

Make Yourself at Home

Set in the year of its publication (1798), Charles Brockden Brown’s “The Man at Home” begins in a secluded room in Philadelphia’s suburbs, at that time the fledgling nation’s capital. The story follows the trials of Mr. Bedloe, who has fled the police in order to avoid turning over the majority of his wealth to cover a note of assurance he had signed for an ex-business partner. With nothing else to occupy his time, Bedloe takes up the pen, recording his minute observations of his surroundings, the business of his neighbors, and reflections on the political order of the state, the law, and the nature of debt. In the midst of his fourteen-day evasion of the law, Bedloe uncovers a hidden manuscript containing an account of the Revolutionary War that he believes is essential for understanding its true nature – but ultimately does not share its contents. Brown’s
“The Man at Home” exhibits the process at the heart of this study: how the story of the Revolution was transformed from a lived experience into a set of expected patterns and associations reflective of the values of liberal society.

Bedloe is a man of the late eighteenth century; he exhibits the virtues of a rational mind, business acumen that is governed by a sense of modesty defined by the scale of his own comfort, and, in spite of his declaration that he never sat down to the “writer’s desk” until the age of sixty, the capacity for writing that attests to a broad application in learning beyond the confines of his trade. These civic virtues, however, have not prevented Bedloe’s financial catastrophe. Long since retired in ease and prosperity, after his friend’s default Bedloe has been left the choice of financial ruin or criminal evasion of the law – and chosen the latter. Alone at last in an inexpensive room, stripped from their endorsement as national virtues by an act of lawlessness, Bedloe’s virtues spring forth in isolation as the products of capital, the traits of an individual whose entire character rests in a system poised to bring about his destruction through no fault of his own. From his self-imposed isolation, Bedloe’s rational mind, sense of class standing, and capacity for public engagement through letters all manifest in decidedly uncivil ways.

Bedloe’s situation has led him to call upon Kate, a landlady and washerwoman whom he had once helped, to find an anonymous room near the city, rather than fleeing the region itself. Her history is not an anomaly among Philadelphia’s working-class population; when a girl, she had fled from her abusive parents in rural Ireland, joined the McFarlane family as nurse and domestic servant, and emigrated with them to Philadelphia. She had faithfully served them until their deaths during a Yellow Fever outbreak, and after her own recovery from the disease was thrown by necessity into the marketplace, of which, in Bedloe’s estimation, “she was as ignorant as [Sir Isaac] Newton of the art of trafficking for eggs and butter, and committed mistakes no less egregious when accident assigned her this duty. To stipulate for the possession of an habitation, or the transfer of an handkerchief, was too much for her ignorance” (38). Kate fared better in the market than she does in Bedloe’s opinion, however; she had negotiated for space and the equipment necessary for starting a laundry service, but lacked either the necessary “stock” or “credit” required for the undertaking. Bedloe, overhearing her conversing with his own servant, decided to extend her the required capital: “The expense was trivial, and the efforts slight; yet they conferred upon this being the highest benefit which her constitution of mind capacitated her for receiving. They have filled her honest bosom with the utmost fervour of
gratitude, and insured to me all the services which she is able to perform” (39). In spite of Kate’s economic spirit and subsequent hospitality in providing Bedloe a clandestine room in which to hide from his creditors, her behavior in other regards marks her as Bedloe’s social inferior. He calls her “inquisitiveness” amusing, declaring her desire to understand his situation “impossible” because “she is as illiterate as the majority of mankind, and as all the members of her class are….” Her education disqualifies her from comprehending a sentence of any degree of abstractedness” (33). (This is his excuse for not being able to satisfactorily account for his lawlessness.) Bedloe’s slight on Kate’s intelligence presupposes their unequal standings as subjects based on language, and consequently, capacity to understand the nuances of society which redoubles their differing class standing: Bedloe even states, “I have often prolonged the conversation merely with a view to mark the scantiness of her vocabulary” (35). Kate’s meager wealth, immigrant past, rustic language, and implied unintelligence define her as the margin of Bedloe’s own virtuous citizenship.

Bedloe’s narrative voice works hard to maintain his superiority over his benefactress, uncivilly characterizing her class inferiority in a series of negative terms. His motivation for doing so, however, exceeds the bounds attributable to class chauvinism as his own virtuous characteristics begin to reflect the imperative of the marketplace (accumulation) without the restraint of polite society. It begins at first by way of Brown’s belief that attentive observation can, with logical deduction, yield uncommon insight from common objects. Bedloe sets forth to examine the contents of his room; his observations on the state of a small pine table quickly extend to speculation regarding its history: “it is old and feeble; part of the scanty household of some wretch, which the pressure of necessity, or claim of a landlord has wrested from him. – What a pity it cannot tell tales!” (41). This imagined material history quickly gives way to further speculations regarding ownership: “Kate, no doubt, purchased it with my money, at some constable’s sale,” reflects Bedloe, “It follows then that the table is my property. I gave the money with which she purchased this, and perhaps all the rest of the furniture of this apartment” (41). Bedloe’s understanding of ownership becomes garbled, confusing the law of private property by an extension of false reason; perception is instructed by reason, but isolated reason itself leads to a transgression of basic social tenets. Within the context of the story, this rapid progression takes on more import. Bedloe had previously rationalized his decision to co-sign his friend’s note by comparing its risk to those experienced walking down the street on the way to
market, validating his trust in his friend’s “cautiousness and probity” by comparing it to the chance of being killed by a brick falling from a construction site (30). That Bedloe’s decision was made by imagining a hierarchy of economic activity, placing investment capital over the (supposedly careless) mechanical efforts of the mason, demonstrates an unrecognized, underlying class-bias in his “objective” rationality that parallels and supports his conscious disdain for people of Kate’s status. Ultimately, which of these is causal (his underlying or overt biases) is less important than appreciating the circularity of ideology’s effects in ratifying Bedloe’s illegal actions. This ideological effect is, essentially, the subject of Brown’s story by way of its all-encompassing capacity to produce meaning and coherence in the text. The man at home is not, after all, at home, but has rather taken possession of Kate’s property through a tenuous extension of logic that at once flows from yet invalidates the idea of private property, exceeding the system that gives rise to its power and bringing Kate (and her wealth) under his own domain.

In “The Man at Home,” rationalism is not devoted to empiricism as a method for deducing evidence, but rather promotes speculation. Speculation in turn surrounds an object of interpretation with meaning, using the force of assumption to achieve this effect. Bedloe’s rationalism consequentially achieves the contradiction of making the tool of scientific reasoning into the mechanism that produces mysticism and the censorship of reality. In this, it mirrors the function of speculative capital, an inherently risky investment whose factors are not or cannot be understood or guaranteed to promise the safety of the principle as well as a return. The risk of financial speculation is offset by two factors: the potential for a large return as well as (I would stress) exoneration of the requirement for understanding and promoting the real existence of the investment – it is, in essence, an abstraction of economics from the productive forces of the material world that facilitates the accumulation of wealth by an individual beyond its restrictive limitations. (One can speculate in trade, for example, without commanding the ship, or land without visiting it, or in housing without living there.) Speculation allows Bedloe to assert a claim of ownership through interpretation in the absence of certainty, but it is also speculation that has led him to financial ruin. Although he is reassured in the knowledge that his friend’s wealth rests “not in floating plans merely, but in houses and acres,” the circumstances of his friend’s financial collapse are not revealed – and it is also likely that they are unknown to Bedloe (29).
Speculation leads Bedloe’s imagination to produce meaning in his surroundings that in turn validate his actions. These impulses coalesce around a seemingly innocuous piece of furniture, a chest. Bedloe knows that the last occupant of the room left without paying his dues, and conjectures that Kate must have already attempted to recoup her loss with its contents (41). However, investigation first shows its lock to be intact, and after being unable to lift it, Bedloe speculates:

The circumstance is of some moment. What can its contents be? It cannot be empty and that which fills it must be of a most extraordinary and ponderous nature. Of all substances, the heaviest are the metallic. Some implement of brass or iron may be inclosed [sic] in it; but a chest is a singular depository for iron or brass, in the quantity which its weight demonstrates to exist here. But there are other metals. A sanguine temper would easily decide, that the metal it contained was silver or gold. And where is the extravagance of that supposition? Here is promise of an adventure! Nothing less than English guineas, or Mexican dollars, compose its treasures. (42)

The trunk, which Bedloe has already laid claim to by way of his rationalization of ownership of Kate’s property, becomes the vehicle for an imaginative resolution to his own criminal evasion of debtors’ law. Desire for verification leads Bedloe to an unfortunate discovery; the trunk is nailed to the floor, invalidating his previous line of reasoning based on its apparent weight. Instead of returning Bedloe’s attention to his own predicament, the chest in turn becomes imbued with possibility, rendered both “mysterious and meaning-full” (43): it may be filled with sand or empty, dashing Bedloe’s dreams of restored wealth and standing; it is the occasion for “endless conjectures” of the previous owner’s history; it occasions the memory of a story in which a carpenter at a hotel pretends to have magic powers by fixing a trunk to the floor; finally, it leads Bedloe (via Kate) to investigate the room’s history. (The trunk, it transpires has been there, unexamined, since she acquired the premises). After meeting the previous occupant (Miss De Moivre, a French-West Indian refugee, who presumably similarly denies knowledge or ownership of its contents), Bedloe finally opens it to discover – nothing. Intending to burn it as kindling, he borrows “black Will’s” axe, knocks it free from the floor, and discovers a manuscript hidden between it and the floor, written in English, containing the story of a participant in the Revolutionary War with “ample and incontestable evidence of his agency” (69). As Bedloe stresses: “the tale is precious: It is without a parallel: This heroism was of a
species so new, and so singular” (69).

The discovery of the manuscript brings Brown’s protagonist to his ultimate crisis. Hitherto, his crime had been mainly economic, and though Bedloe’s actions have put him at odds with the nation-state, his dangerous speculations have remained of a commercial nature. The appearance of the manuscript, however, seals Bedloe’s fate, for in its pages exists a truth of national importance. Bedloe’s effort as a writer is, from the beginning, intended only for private use: “I write to myself. The pen is not, in this instance, an instrument of communication” (31).  Nevertheless, his ability as a writer suggests, as stated above, a refinement of character that attests to Bedloe’s competency in areas beyond the requirements of business. (This is juxtaposed in the story with his friend’s lack of interests beyond accumulation, which have driven him ultimately to financial ruin.) The discovery of the manuscript brings Bedloe’s skill as a writer and propensity for imaginative speculation in direct contact with writing whose value arises precisely from its relationship to the public by way of its ability to more accurately determine the meaning of the nation’s origin:

I will make myself the benefactor of my country, and of mankind, by effecting [the manuscript’s] publication. [Its pages] cannot but be greedily and universally read. The tale has every claim to excite attention, and reward it. It will merit being ranked among historical monuments. Its authenticity cannot well be denied. It unfolds the causes, and exhibits the true agents in a transaction of high importance in the American [R]evolution. It has all the circumstantial and picturesque minuteness of a romance. With relation to the appendages of the scene, it is a sort of picture of the age at that period, and displays remarkable features in the condition of France, England, and America. (69 – 70)

Like a precipitous crash in the marketplace, however, Bedloe’s fervor for helping the manuscript reach publication quickly subsides:

I have now additional motives for desiring a speedy termination of my imprisonment. Yet perhaps this declaration is made too hastily. It will be requisite deliberately to review and arrange these papers. This could not, perhaps, be better done, than in a state exempted, as this is, from interruption, and secluded from noise. (70)

Without explicit knowledge of the manuscript’s contents, it is somewhat circumstantial to charge Bedloe with a suppression of an experience from the Revolution that challenges the liberal values that constitute his character. He does, after all, suggest that it remains his intention to
publish the piece in the future. To “review” and “arrange” the papers indicates his intent to edit the contents, but this does not inevitably equate to censorship. The circumstances, however, suggest otherwise. The chest and its issue provide the bulk of story’s organization, yet this is the last mention of the manuscript in the text which continues for several chapters, making the absence of any account of the document’s content conspicuous. The fact is clear that the contents do not merely replicate prevailing conceptions of the Revolution. Its importance, accuracy, and patriotism are all readily apparent. Its composition is described as having achieved the “picturesque minuteness of a romance,” suggesting a quality of writing suitable to the emerging taste for fiction among readers. What, then, is left to revise? In terms of eighteenth-century political culture, Bedloe’s first impulse is to rapidly pursue his civic duty by bringing the text before the reading public. It is only when the impulse to “go public” crosses his mind that his enthusiasm wanes. His decision to edit the manuscripts reinvests his isolation with a sense of duty, but it also reserves the manuscript for Bedloe’s “greedy” eyes only. As a result, the nationalist impulse which fires Bedloe’s paean to the manuscript is subsumed by the return of his isolation, and his failure to meet his obligation to make it publically known completes the sublimation of his civic virtues to the impulse to accumulate.

It is here where my own speculation enters, based in the superfluous details of the text. If Bedloe’s suppression, as the above analysis indicates, is the result of the conflict between the ideological impulses constituting the liberal subject (in Bedloe’s case, the consecration of liberalism’s dependence on economic power) and the citizen (the political idealism of democracy), then the content which is included in “The Man at Home” in place of the manuscript can be read for signs of bias. Accordingly, the contents of the suppressed document may be expected to support the socially leveling aspects of constitutional democracy. The hidden manuscript may be partially recovered, in so far as its potential content is concerned, by examining what is substituted for it in “The Man at Home” alongside evidence for what is excluded.

The core of this substitution involves the dislocation of a story of the American Revolution for one detailing the course of the French Revolution both in Europe and in its West-Indian colonies. In his quest to uncover the chest’s history, Bedloe (with the help of Kate) discovers the story of the room’s most recent occupants. Here, Brown’s “The Man at Home” contains the story of Baxter that would be directly expropriated for his novel Ormond: or, The
Secret Witness. (“The Man at Home” appeared in serial publication in *The Weekly Magazine* in Philadelphia from February through April 1798. *Ormond* would be drafted later in the year during November 1798.) While they were crafted near in time, significant alterations appear between the two iterations that in turn can be used to understand Bedloe’s motivations.

The central element found in both variants is the story of Baxter, a porter by trade who was hired as a night watchman during the Yellow Fever outbreak to supervise the property of those who had fled the city. In “The Man at Home,” Baxter observes what he thinks is the sign of a robbery in the house occupied by the De Moivres, a French family who had lived in the same premises now occupied by Bedloe and Kate. (Similarly, in *Ormond*, he witnesses the same events in relation to that novel’s French character, Martinette Monrose.) While peering over the fence, Baxter witnesses Miss De Moivre drag the corpse of her father to a shallow grave near his position. Believing the cause of his death to be the reigning disease (in spite of other rational possibilities), Baxter is seized by the belief that this encounter has brought him into contact with infectious effluvia and consequently suffers its effects and becomes one of its victims. This episode provides Brown a transition from the hidden manuscript from the American Revolution, for his attention subsequently turns to the story of Miss De Moivre, a French-West Indian exile, whose past (in both “The Man at Home” and as Martinette Monrose in *Ormond* – though to different extents) is entwined with the French and Haitian Revolutions that constituted alternatives to the legacy of the American Revolution. The French Revolution, as I will discuss in subsequent chapters, has long been differentiated from the American Revolution as the result of its overt class antagonisms. Traditionally, the transformation from the absolute power of monarchy to the constituent power of democracy has been described in terms of class alliances stemming from the increased power of the middle class. In France, the alliance was made between the middle and lower classes against the strong power of the aristocracy (itself associated with Catholic religious authority). The bloodshed of the Reign of Terror is accordingly associated with this alliance, particularly in contrast to the British transference of power, the stability of which was largely attributed to an alignment between the middle class and the aristocracy – or in the United States, predominantly figured as a middle-class colonial uprising. At first part of the French Revolution and then a struggle for independence in its own right, the Haitian Revolution resulted in the first independent black nation-state in the hemisphere, and would represent the dangers of slave revolt in U.S. culture throughout the
nineteenth century. The effect of Brown's displacement is both mystifying and revealing. While it hides the account of the American Revolution, the shift allows for an exploration of a class and racial content that otherwise becomes suppressed in the remaking of U.S. nationalism into a tradition of white social homogeneity.

Several important differences emerge between the episode's telling in *Ormond* and “The Man at Home” that locate race and revolution. In *Ormond*, Martinette Monrose fought in the French Revolution, and admits to killing in the name of liberty. Her relationship to the West Indies exists primarily through the thousands of refugees from Saint-Domingue and Marat who fled to Philadelphia, a group that, as a well-known revolutionary, Martinette is able to implicitly count on for support. It might seem that Creole planters who had fled the slave revolution in Saint-Domingue would hardly equate to a revolutionary base. Ashli White has shown that the response of local Philadelphians to the white refugees from Saint-Domingue included both public aid and public chastisement for bringing the colony to ruin because of their adherence to an “aristocracy of colour.” In spite of this, Brown makes it clear that Martinette and the French in general represent the dangerous potentiality of revolution combined with blackness. The French and black population of Philadelphia are associated through their imagined immunity to the Yellow Fever epidemic that forms *Ormond*'s backdrop; in the novel's terms, the French “lived in utter fearlessness of the reigning disease, ---snug and loitered in the public walks, and prattled at their doors, with all their customary unconcern.” The trouble is that though the novel marks the difference between “French” and “black” at points, there is no clear way to keep nation and race separated in the complex history of the French Revolution. Creole refugees brought slaves to Philadelphia; some masters adhered to Pennsylvania's laws of gradual emancipation while others manipulated the law on technicalities in order to keep their slaves in bondage. This led to escapes and court cases, and like elsewhere the black refugee population caused fear as potential carriers of slave insurrection. It is possible, then, in Brown's transformation of refugee into revolutionary that race has become unreadable in the text. All of the “servants” in Martinette's home, for example, are black and francophone, locating her in the form of racial aristocracy that is historically accurate, but with the dangerous possibility that it is all just a show. Society's (And Brown’s) presumptions might read her household as stabilizing race and class relations, but given Martinette's extreme commitment to the ideals of the Revolution it may be as likely that her household is a cover for a French égalité that is
inscrutable to the other characters in the novel. It could be that Martinette's implicit trust in the refugees rests with French ex-slaves rather than with the planters.

By way of this narrative evolution, *Ormond* figures as a mediating absence in “The Man at Home” even though it was composed later in that year. The variation between the texts reveals the importance of black revolution in Brown’s crafting of the shared material. In “The Man at Home,” Martinette is replaced by Miss De Moivre, a young French-West Indian creole. Born in French Guiana (her father later purchased a plantation in Saint-Domingue and lost his fortune as a result of its uprising) Miss De Moivre’s history solidifies Martinette’s affiliation with the West Indies. Like Martinette, Miss De Moivre is said to have traveled throughout Europe, gaining a sense of “every gradation of rank” in society (75). Unlike Martinette, her relationship to black revolutionary violence is made explicit by way of her relationship to the slave-woman, Laurote. Miss De Moivre’s mother is described as a “capricious” and “cruel” slave-owner, who extended her tyranny to her daughter as well. This experience creates a common cause between her and Laurote, who poisons her mother. The two became traveling companions until, as Bedloe hints as he narrates the circumstances, this crime became known. It is here that the text’s silence is once more conspicuous, refusing to describe Laurote’s ultimate fate even as it suggests repulsion at her character: “capable of avenging a contemptuous word by so black a crime as murder; capable of hiding it so long” (73). The physical violence of slavery (implied by the text’s earlier description of Martinette’s mother’s behavior) is suppressed in this statement, along with any account of how evidence of the murder came to light or Miss De Moivre’s response to such knowledge. Their relationship is, nevertheless, described as one of “signal fidelity,” and Bedloe begs her to write about it because only she will be able to “depict [it] in its true colors” (73). The final mention of Laurote acknowledges her “virtues” when the two fled from (the briefly described) machinations of her kinswoman in Paris towards Germany with “an exhausted purse, ignorance of the German language, and ferocity of peasants, revenue officers, and soldiers” (74). Bedloe notes that Miss De Moivre’s “mind is fraught with instructive facts and profound reflections on the topic of negro servitude,” and based on her experience and the ambiguity of the text in this case her political opinion is equally likely to be abolitionist in nature as it is to be influenced by a sense of horror at Laurote’s crime (73).

Miss De Moivre is decidedly not a revolutionary on the same scale as Martinette, but is
rather more focused on the intimate, small-scale resistances that fall outside nation-state revolution. She is now poor, and desires to “be happy, by making others so” - without the possibility of economic philanthropy as a means to this end (67). Miss De Moivre confides in Bedloe, according to him, seeking advice concerning how best to accomplish this effect, but since her desire precludes the world of finance for a model of direct social engagement, his only suggestion is for her to write a memoir of her past that will serve as an instruction to others. Offering to act as her translator, Bedloe positions himself once more to act as a censor of revolutionary potential. It is not unlikely, then, that Bedloe’s account of her history is already biased by his own assumptions. As the fate of Laurote and the misrecognition of Miss De Moivre’s request for advice (which itself can be read rather as Martinette’s effort to challenge Bedloe to reflect on the relationship of finance and happiness) demonstrate, Bedloe’s propensity for speculative accumulation results in distortions and suppressions in the text. Like a speculator in the market, his understanding of Miss De Moivre’s experience cannot help being imperfect.

The exchange of a French-West Indian experience of revolution for the hidden manuscript is quite an odd displacement. (The revelation of the manuscript occurs between two chapters related to Miss De Moivre, without segue. It stems from Bedloe’s investigation into the trunk’s history, but resumes without apparently revealing the intervening discovery to De Moivre.) The substitution happens only as a circumstance of Brown’s text, but is highly relevant given the promise of the manuscript and the similarity between it and the substituted material’s association with alternative Revolutionary traditions. In its link to both Ormond and “The Man at Home,” the substituted material provides the opportunity to mark the divide between race (blackness) and nation (Frenchness) while also reading the limits of that separation. The French-West Indian account of revolution engages race while U.S. nationalism avoids it in an attempt to exclude the black portion of the civic body.10 If switching to a French-West Indian account of revolution allows for the potential of race revolution to be considered via a foreign context, the larger structure of “The Man at Home” shows how both class and racial inequality in the United States is implicitly excluded from the revolutionary impulses that constitute its nationalism in the image of liberalism.

It is possible, from these observations, to consider the potential contents of the hidden tale of the American Revolution. We know only a few facts from Bedloe's brief description of the manuscript. The revolutionary had performed a “singular,” or strange, act of heroism of a
kind previously unknown to Bedloe. He penned his account ten years after the Revolution, while ill from Yellow Fever. Upon his death, he is interred in a mass grave where his body “was confounded with the vulgar and 'half-brutal mob’” (69). The revolutionary was living in the same working-class poor neighborhood in which “The Man at Home” takes place, populated by people like Kate, piece-work laborers like Black Will, porters like Baxter, and impoverished refugees from Saint-Domingue. The revolutionary also, significantly, caught Yellow Fever because “he took no care to shun the haunts of this malady” (69). Taking his brashness as a marker of the same stereotypes about infection found in *Ormond*, a new potential emerges. If the man is not French (the manuscript is written in English), then we may presume that he represents at least latently the possibility of a black, U.S. revolutionary agency. How would Bedloe know, if the writer himself didn't take the trouble to mark himself racially? Potentially driven by a desire for class equality promised by democratic leveling, potentially of African descent, the unknown revolutionary represents the presence of class and race politics in the Revolution that would be sought by writers in the decades to follow.

The closing chapter of “The Man at Home” makes a case, in terms that resonate with Butler and Spivak’s analysis of the nation-state (see the introduction), for the refiguration of the nation-state as the apparatus of private property regulation. Bedloe goes to jail rather than paying his debt, where his actions will be restricted, his companions may be disagreeable, and his health may be put in jeopardy, rather than face the certain ruin of poverty (93). This brings him to his final reflection regarding the nation-state; admitting (as liberalism holds) that the public interest requires assurance of “the fundamental laws of property,” Bedloe suggests that his fate is, in fact, not severe enough (93). “It may be urged that every thing which endears of dignifies human existence depends upon the sacredness of property; that government is instituted for no beneficial purpose but this” (95). Since the law cannot (in his time) appropriate Bedloe’s property directly, and since imprisonment alone is not “efficacious” in achieving payment in all cases, Bedloe suggests that nothing less than having the debtor “carted to the gallows, or even reduced to a state of domestic slavery” will suffice to guarantee the legal right to property (94). This final proposition depends on a narrow vision of the state’s social function; rather than argue for a law that allows for the repossession of private property (which would transgress its sanctity), Bedloe instead imagines a resolution to his own transgression of property by way of the state’s right to produce violence (that is, to kill) as the point where its agency and purpose
meet in perfect unity. In Brown’s “The Man at Home,” Bedloe is the ultimate liberal subject. Even in his ruin, his virtuous traits and desires fuel the speculative transformation of the nation-state into a violent apparatus of property management, where the agency of citizens with regard to property is minutely constrained by the legal code, all while suppressing the essential counter-narratives that challenge his worldview.

The tale ends in a series of contradictions that are far from reassuring. Bedloe is apprehended by the law and resigns himself to prison rather than forfeit his wealth, freely choosing to forfeit his freedom. It is an end that, like the suppression of the manuscript, promises further discussion but provides only silence. “I feel myself disposed to enter more particularly into this topic,” Bedloe concludes, “but my dinner has been just placed before me: when I have passed some time in prison, I shall be more qualified to judge respecting this subject” (98). He will gain the capacity to judge only after submitting wholly to the power of the state’s carceral institutions. The only thing that seems certain is that, by submitting to the mentality of liberalism and the power of the nation-state, Bedloe has at least attained a last meal – at least until his money runs out.

Speculation and Specters

While Brown’s tale of liberal life and debt in the late eighteenth century may be obscure in literary studies, Washington Irving’s “Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is one of the best-known stories from the antebellum period. It has been adapted to film and television many times in variants suitable for both children and adults. I take Tim Burton’s feature film Sleepy Hollow (1999) as an example of the problem of remembering the tale as (only) a ghost story, even though Crane’s flight from the Headless Horseman comprises a mere two and a half pages in a thirty-page printing of the text. The film makes dramatic changes to the tale, transforming Ichabod Crane from a local schoolmaster into a New York police detective (an agent of the state) dispatched to the area to investigate a series of recent homicides. The Headless Horseman commits several brutal murders during the film, becoming the embodiment of supernatural horror and danger. Irving’s original treatment of Crane’s dubious economic motivation (he seeks
to marry Katrina Van Tassel for her family’s wealth) is completely reformulated: after defeating the Horseman, Crane and Katrina wed and the film ends as they take the wealth of Sleepy Hollow back to New York City. The danger of Burton’s adaptation of the tale is that it reformulates the plot in a way that perfectly meets the expectations of a ghost story: the Horseman is an evil that is overcome by the protagonist. In the process, it exactly reverses the outcome of Irving’s tale, which preserves the rural Dutch community from the influence of outsiders.

The art of storytelling is itself a major topic in Irving’s tale, one that parallels the function of ideology in that it shapes the consciousness and perceptions of the area’s inhabitants. Sleepy Hollow “abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitious” that stem from “a drowsy, dreamy influence” or “some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs; are subject to trances and visions, and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air” (1059). Even newcomers, “however wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region… are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative – to dream dreams, and see apparitions” (1060). Louis Althusser posited that “ideology is a ‘representation’ of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence,” and moreover that it “interpellates individuals as subjects” by way of recognition, or ratification, of its own self-evident truth.12 As with language itself, a system whose meaning is determined collectively, ideology “imposes… obviousnesses as obviousnesses, which we cannot fail to recognize and before which we have the inevitable and natural reaction of crying out (aloud or in the ‘still, small voice of conscience’): ‘That’s obvious! That’s right! That’s true!’”13 (Roland Barthes would succinctly transform this positive theoretical proposition by designating the function of ideology as “what-goes-without-saying” in the commonly held social beliefs that are expressed in art, politics, and the relationship between humans and the material world – all of which become the objects of his analysis as modern “mythologies.”14) Like ideology, Sleepy Hollow’s witching influence constitutes a social order that appears to the area’s inhabitants as reality with the full force of mystification.

What sets Sleepy Hollow apart is that its inhabitants’ dreamlike perception of the world has developed from a system of economic relations different from those underlying the United
States more broadly. Irving attributes the potency of these local tales and hauntings to the stability of New York’s Dutch communities, whose “population, manners, and customs, remain fixed, while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved” (1059, 60). The power of storytelling is linked to the area’s rustic agrarian social order, which sets Tarrytown (“a small market town or rural port” that is the area’s principle population center) in contrast with the nation’s rapidly developing economic base (1058). What first appears as supernatural is quickly revealed as the outgrowth of two competing economic structures. “There is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages,” Irving laments, “for they have scarce had time to finish their first nap, and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have travelled away from the neighborhood, so that when they turn out of a night to walk the rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon” (1078). For Sleepy Hollow, ghost stories are the outgrowth of sociality and friendship, and though potentially frightening, they are more than affective responses of an individual in response to the threatening unknown. They are, to the contrary, powerful markers of the community’s past, a record of social relationships that have passed beyond material reality that the world of capital actively dispels.

If the role of ghost stories signifies the deeper conflict between New York’s Dutch communities and American society as a whole and the economic orders they represent, then the narrative structure of “Legend of Sleepy Hollow” itself deserves extra attention. Ichabod Crane (ostensibly the protagonist and focus of the narrative perspective) and Brom Bones (his antagonist) both desire the same woman (Katrina Van Tassel). Crane is a social outsider (he is a schoolmaster from Connecticut), but, by virtue of his position, is considered “a kind of idle gentleman like personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson” (1063). Crane’s association with intellectualism particularly endears him to the country damsels, “while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address” (1063). Brom Bones, on the other hand, represents the masculine traits valued by the rural order; he is “broad shouldered and double jointed,” and “with the ascendancy which bodily strength acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone admitting of no gainsay or appeal” (1069). Bones is also a master practical joker, and, when he finds he cannot directly confront Crane over Katrina’s attentions, sets about
making the schoolmaster’s life miserable. This culminates in the chase between Crane and the Headless Horseman, who ample evidence suggests is Bones in disguise: just before the fateful ride, Bones tells the story of his own race with the Horseman (which he won); the figure is of large dimensions, suggesting a person with false shoulders to provide the illusion of headlessness; at the culmination of the flight, the horseman throws its head at Crane, knocking him from his horse – Crane disappears, but a smashed pumpkin is found next to his hat the following morning. The townsfolk decide that Crane has been carried off by the Hessian, Bones marries Katrina, and “was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related” (1086). When “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is remembered only as the tale of Crane’s flight from the Headless Horseman, Irving’s narrative play is reduced once more to the focus of an individual’s terror when confronted with threatening supernatural forces. While the narrative perspective does follow Crane, placing him in the “protagonist” position, it ultimately tells the story of how Bones resolves the threat to Tarrytown’s social order posed by Crane’s outsider status and intellectualism.

The region’s witching influence is not, however, limited to Sleepy Hollow’s townsfolk. Like Bedloe and his private speculations, Crane is an enthusiastic dreamer who in many ways is perfectly suited to the “drowsy, dreamy influence” which pervades the valley. Though the narrator is quick to point out Crane’s flaws for comic effect (he has a lank and gangly body that gives him the ludicrous air of flapping wings while riding, the nasal quality of his voice undermines his role as the local singing master, etc), he seems to get along tolerably well in the community. Katrina and the other maidens are drawn to him, and both her parents are unconcerned with her choice because, as her mother observed, while “ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, [] girls can take care of themselves” (1070). Crane seems pompous and vain to Irving’s own cultured eye and wit, but to the rustic order of Sleepy Hollow he appears to be both educated and refined, and is desirable for this reason. He also endears himself to the local community, for though he is harsh as a schoolmaster he recognizes the necessity of being helpful to the families with whom he boards as per the custom of the era. He assists the farmers with making hay, mending fixes, moving the cows to pasture, and cutting wood, is a useful avenue for local gossip, and also puts aside his “dominant dignity” as a schoolmaster to gain the favor of his pupils’ mothers, minding the children and rocking the cradle “for whole hours together” (1062). While Crane is a tolerable worker in the community,
is his character, “an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity,” that suits him most for life in Sleepy Hollow (1063). Crane is a great believer in witchcraft and the supernatural, is a ready audience for the ghost stories repeated by the old Dutch wives, and shares with them in turn tales gleaned from his copy of Cotton Mather’s *History of New England Witchcraft*, “in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed” (1063). As a willing participant in Sleepy Hollow’s folk culture, it is also ultimately Crane’s imagination that brings the Headless Horseman to life at the story’s conclusion.

What distinguishes Crane’s enjoyment of the “fearful pleasure” of the region’s witching influence is, as is the case with Bedloe, a lack of restraint, either by social convention or by material existence (1064). In spite of his lank body, Crane is a “huge feeder” with the “dilating powers of an Anaconda,” and it is the schoolmaster’s attention to food and consumption that is overshadowed by his involvement with Sleepy Hollow’s specters (1062). The two, however, share a limitless quality. No matter how much food Crane consumes he continues to present the aspect of “the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield,” the embodiment of boundless consumption that produces not opulence but scarcity (1061). In this, his bodily appetite mirrors his consumption of the area’s ghost stories: “His appetite for the marvelous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary…. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow” (1063-4). When these two boundless appetites unite, Crane’s true danger to Sleepy Hollow comes to light, producing private fantasies that transform the world into the object of his accumulating hunger.

This process revolves around Katrina, who, while tempting for her beauty and coquettish charm, is likened in Crane’s imagination to a “tempting morsel,” particularly after observing the wealth of her family’s farmstead (1066). While Irving is content to talk *about* ghosts, he crafts his own tale around the reader’s always-already awareness that the final flight is “really” a prank played on Crane by Brom Bones. The text reserves imaginative dreaming for Crane’s transformation of the world into a dish fit for his own appetite:

The pedagogue’s mouth watered, as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind’s eye, he pictured to himself every roasting pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily [sic] in dishes, like snug
married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce; in the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey, but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter, which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living. (1067)

I include the length of this quote for effect, for it, like Crane’s appetite, stresses the nature of the unbounded appetite of a “devouring mind’s eye.” Several passages list the abundance of the Van Tassel farm, both indoors and out. But while Crane’s reverie begins as a transformation of the living animals into succulent dishes, it soon admits a logic of accumulation that outstrips any notion of bodily consumption or the scale of material use:

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this… his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee, or the Lord knows where! (1067)

Crane’s private dreaming is, like Bedloe, fueled by the workings of speculative capital (in this case land speculation), and while these visions bring the schoolmaster great joy they are not the kind of imaginative act likely to be well received in Sleepy Hollow. The liquidation of the Van Tassel wealth would open the farm to new owners, further the spread of speculative land investment on the frontier, and dispel the familiar ghosts of Sleepy Hollow in favor of specters of speculation, the horror of the unknown.*

The force of Sleepy Hollow’s witching influence interrupts many conventions of (assumptions inherent to) the ghost story, expanding from the phantasmagoric into territory that

* Crane’s imagination is particularly unkind, showing the relative contempt he felt for his own place in society: “Then, he thought, how soon he’d turn his back upon the old school house; snap his fingers in the face of… every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!” (1076).
includes the determining forces of economics. To remember the story as the tale of Crane being
chased through the woods by a ghoul is to put it in a register where an individual is threatened by
external supernatural forces, a reading that neglects the history of place; such a reading is
associated with the hustle and bustle world of national and economic expansion represented by
Crane, but the story works to undermine this assumption at every turn. Irving posits storytelling
as a terrain where the meaning of myth, the that-which-goes-without-saying of ideology, is
contested. The fantastic forces of storytelling that at first seem to be the rejection of fact become
the means for preserving ways of life dependent on differing economic realities (the material
reality of life which is more factual than the subjective operation of consciousness) of rural life.

The revelation of Crane’s “devouring mind’s eye” validates Brom Bones’ resurrection of
the Headless Horseman as Sleepy Hollow’s savior, rather than its menace.15 As the vanquisher
of Ichabod Crane, he safeguards the local community’s distinctness, folkways, and agrarian
economy from the encroachment of speculative capital. While this secures the immediate
generation’s happiness and connection to the area’s folk traditions and keeps the forces of
speculative capital at bay, the Headless Horseman itself remains a rather vexing spirit, still more
fiend than friend in Irving’s catalog of ghostly sociality. His is by far the most popular ghost
story of the area, displacing the story of the wailing “woman in white” (based on a real woman
who had died in a snowstorm) and other spectral “funeral trains” – precisely the types of ghosts
praised by Irving as the epitome of folkways and tradition (1078-9). The Horseman is hardly an
ancient invention for the people of Sleepy Hollow; Irving notes that the tale is set approximately
thirty years prior to its publication in 1820 (1060). This sets the tale in the early 1790s, perhaps
as few as two years after the ratification of the Constitution and the official establishment of the
nation-state, and also close in time to Brown’s “The Man at Home.” Given the recentness of the
Revolution to the setting of the tale, the obscurity of the Hessian’s origin seems willfully
oblique. The Horseman is introduced as the “commander in chief of all the powers in the air…
the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon ball, in some
nameless battle during the [R]evolutionary war” (1059). The Headless Horseman’s loss is
twofold, then: both the part of the body that contains the seat of reason and identity, as well as
the loss of recognition as part of the local community’s own history. Reduced to his Hessian
identity, the Horseman represents the problematic effect of Sleepy Hollow’s resistance to
speculative capital. Out of step with the expansionist spirit of the nation, the Dutch agrarian
community is haunted by the specter of Hessian (or Germanic) troops who fought for the British during the Revolution, a threatening reminder of their own non-Anglo origins. He is also, ironically, the headless head of a ghostly nation that is distinct from but coincident to the realm of the living. The Headless Horseman is the product of the region’s witching influence and the protector of its folkways, but it is the willful misrecognition of him by the people of Sleepy Hollow as a nameless, enemy trooper with an unknown past that signals a suppression not unlike that effected by Bedloe’s refusal to disclose the contents of the manuscript in “The Man at Home.” The potency of the Horseman as a ghost story derives from his ability to represent the area’s willful resistance to the national spirit of economic and territorial expansion while bearing the brunt (and exonerating Sleepy Hollow) of any subsequent charges of being un-American. He is both of the community and its representative “other.”

While ghost stories act to preserve the community’s folkways, the claims to U.S. nationalism by way of the revolutionary past in the story tend to function in a way similar to Bedloe’s suppression of the counter-narrative of the Revolution. Other mentions of the Revolution in the story help define the silences imposed on the Horseman. Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow share an ambiguous relationship to Revolutionary history; as Irving states, both “the British and American line[s] had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding, and been infested with refugees, cow boys, and all kinds of border chivalry” (1078). More accurately, the area had fallen between the lines, and was consequently a “neutral zone” – although lawless zone might be a more apt term – making any outright declaration of political affiliation extremely dangerous as both armies raided the area for supplies. Van Tassel’s neighbors suppress the violent and unstable past by constructing stories that affirm their patriotism: “Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each story teller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit” (1078). Irving lingers over such tales only briefly, but at enough length to verify their function. His list includes “Doffue Martling, a large, blue bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate” single-handedly, the story of a local gentleman (“too rich a mynheer” to be named) who claimed to have parried a musket ball, and alludes to “several more who had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination” (1078). Operating as the foil to these self-aggrandizing tales, the Headless Horseman keeps alive the ambiguous history of the
area, even though it is only present in a symbolic suppression in his otherness, his Hessian identity.

The Horseman’s burden becomes clearer given the circumstances of his encounter with Crane in the woods. The two meet at precisely the spot where Major André, the British spy, was taken, an event that was the defining moment of the area’s Revolutionary history. Irving mention’s André three times, always briefly and always in relation to the area of his capture, which has become the epicenter of the region’s paranormal activity: “many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mournful cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken” (1078). “It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark” (1082). However, Irving never details who André was or his significance, substituting instead the story of the Headless Horseman and his indeterminate history. André’s story is an ambiguous mixture of patriotism, treason, and lament. The British spy was captured in the midst of effecting the celebrated patriot Benedict Arnold’s defection (in return for cash), including the proposed surrender of West Point (which was under his command) to the British, a maneuver that would have strategically isolated New England from the other colonies. While riding north, André was stopped by three “militiamen” outside Tarrytown (John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams), whom he believed to be Tories because of their manner of dress (one, significantly, wore a Hessian soldier’s overcoat – a well-known detail of the affair).16 They identified themselves as such, leading André to announce himself as a British officer. They then identified themselves as Americans, and he in turn claimed the same while producing a false passport (given to him by Arnold) as evidence. Suspicious of this duplicity, the men searched him (André testified at his trial that they did so intending to rob him), finding papers outlining West Point’s defenses. They refused André’s attempt to bribe them with his gold watch and horse, and delivered him to the Continental Army – acts taken as a sign of their yeoman simplicity and dedication to the rebel cause. In the following confusion, a note describing the situation was sent to Arnold, allowing his escape. The British refused to exchange Arnold for André, and following a trial the latter was hung as a spy. André’s legend quickly spread; his refinement (he wrote, acted, sketched, and spoke well) combined with his bravery in the face of his sentence (he
placed the noose around his own neck) quickly secured his reputation as a man of honor among America’s own officers and in the public eye. Irving, for example, refers to this history as “the tragical story of the unfortunate André,” indicating how the officer’s conduct and reputation problematized what might be expected to be the patriotic (and Anglophobic) celebration of the story of how Arnold’s treason was uncovered (1081).

André’s gentility and Arnold’s betrayal of the Revolutionary cause for money drew the interest of the public, operating as a dialectic of upper-class comportment. As polar opposites on the spectrum of elite gentility, they confused patriotic expectations; the British officer represented the ideal code of conduct while the rebel exhibited base motivations and duplicity. Patriotism, in this case, was associated with the three militiamen, who were initially rewarded with $200 annual pensions, farms, and fame as virtuous patriots, but became the object of renewed scrutiny in 1817 when Paulding petitioned Congress for a larger pension. In the ensuing debate, the militiamen’s character came under question; while they were taken generally as representative of yeoman virtue, Representative Benjamin Tallmadge of Connecticut (who had guarded André before his execution) accused them of being cowboys (loyalists who pillaged in the area between the two armies), claiming they had only refused André’s bribe because he had lacked sufficient funds or assurances to tempt them at the time (his horse and watch were already theirs by right of the spoils of war). Occurring only three years prior to Irving’s publication of “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” this scandal marks a notable erasure of Paulding, Van Wart, and Williams from the circle of storytellers gathered at the Van Tassel farm, particularly since James Kirke Paulding (John Paulding’s cousin), a writer who had praised the three in verse during the scandal, was Irving’s friend. In many ways the three embody the ambiguities of Tarrytown’s past; they had each suffered from the raids and reprisals from both armies in the neutral zone, and had taken it upon themselves to waylay other cowboys and seize their stolen property. The confusion of politics necessitated by survival in the neutral zone tarnished their motivations, and their class status cast a dual significance (thievery) over their actions. This directly clashed with André’s gentlemanly bearing and undermined their claim to patriotic virtue. In any case, the techniques of dissimulation necessary for survival during the Revolution exemplified in the history of André’s capture call into question the retrospective determination of patriotism, contextualizing the self-aggrandizing stories told by Doffue Martling, the rich mynheer, and the others gathered at Van Tassel’s farm to solidify their
credentials as Americans.

Balancing the self-aggrandizing tales and the troubling history of Major André’s capture, the legend of the Headless Horseman becomes the mechanism by which the area’s residents resolve associations of foreignness and disloyalty, facilitating the region’s unique culture and economic structure while bearing the ambiguity of its Revolutionary past. Through these associations, he is essentially of their community even when misrecognized as apart from it (his Hessian attire conjures that of the militiaman who captured André). Given these observations, what is the nature of the Headless Horseman’s ghoulishness? As a figment of horror, the Horseman is narrated as the phantasm of a ghost story rather than as the memory of a Revolution. Just as Bedloe’s unknown revolutionary represents latent class and race valences, the Horseman’s revolutionary potential is represented by his most horrible trait: headlessness. The lack of a head denies the Horseman a specific identity (and history), but it also reveals, via this loss, the extreme presence of the Horseman’s body. The Horseman posits the material body returned without a mind, the embodiment of a Marxist social critique that emphasized the need to observe the reality of human actions, rather than the abstractions of the mind, as the basis of philosophy.

In this, the Horseman can be said to prefigure the “spectre of Communism” which haunts Europe in the opening sentence of the Manifesto of the Communist Party. As the basis of their political theory, Marx and Engels departed from the abstractions of philosophy (and the search for understanding the structure of consciousness in the isolated mind) by insisting on the material and social existence of that consciousness. This return to “empirical” observation, as outlined in The German Ideology, demanded attention be paid to the physical body; by observing the material existence of the human, the huge volume of effort necessitated by the day-to-day maintenance of people that passed without being remarked as important became once more the object of serious philosophical study. The return to the material world uncovered a “false consciousness,” to borrow Engels’ terminology, in which reality appeared to people in abstract forms that (according to Marxist thought) perpetuated and supported the political and economic dominance of the newly risen middle-classes. The alienation of labor was the result of the relationships between people appearing as relationships between objects: “this fixation of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations”
Marx called “estrangement.” For Marx and Engels, the modern nation-state was the outgrowth of liberal, bourgeois political organization and held as its basic premise the preservation of private property, and “all struggles within the State, the struggle between democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, the struggle for the franchise, etc., etc., [were] merely the illusory forms in which the real struggles of the different classes are fought out among one another.” The return to physical reality promised to expose the abstractions of human consciousness as a form of dominance, restoring an awareness of the real relations between humans, production, and their existence.

The core of Irving’s story from such a perspective is not Crane’s speculative imagination, but rather the revelation of the real conditions of existence in Sleepy Hollow. To put it bluntly, there are slaves in Sleepy Hollow, although outside of two small mentions in the text one might easily envision the isolated Dutch communities as uniformly white and representative of the idyllic yeoman lifestyle that equates hard work with the fruits of labor. This suppression erupts in an observation that transforms the festivities at the Van Tassel farm that immediately precedes the flight from the Horseman. While Crane is the center of attention while dancing with Katrina, the narrator unexpectedly notes the large number of slaves present: “He was the admiration of all the negroes, who, having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighbourhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window, gazing with delight at the scene, rolling their white eye balls, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear” (1077). The revelers are literally surrounded by a people marked both racially and socially as inferior, capable of description only in collective (and racist) stereotype. Juxtaposed to Crane’s apparent blindness (he has neglected to categorize them in his speculative vision as part of the farm’s property), on the temporal threshold of the revolution in Saint-Domingue, the slave’s “gaze of delight” suggests a third order of economic consciousness based on material reality where the dream (or vision) of social justice can begin.

* The usefulness of Marx’s approach to a study of Revolutionary War fiction might at first strike the reader as being somewhat askance, a tradition apart from the subject matter at hand. It should be recalled that Marx regarded himself as emanating from the tradition of enlightenment thought (both historically and intellectually), viewing his critique of economics and society as continuing the tradition of rational empiricism in the face of social forces he found to be both mystical and mystifying. His writings were also the product of the nineteenth-century, marking him as the contemporary of many of the writers studied in this text.
From this perspective, the essence of the Horseman’s revolutionary potential is similar to that of the suppressed manuscript in Brown’s “The Man at Home.” The Horseman insists that legends and tales, the witching influence that represents the relationships of society to the people of Sleepy Hollow, pay attention once more to the physical body and the work it produces. The misrecognition of the Horseman as horror (as opposed to friend, revolutionary, protector, or champion of social-economic justice as my analysis reveals) mirrors the ongoing homogenization produced by nationalism’s assumptive ideologies. Irving states that at the beginning of the encounter between Crane and the Horseman, the specter “made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road” (1083). The indeterminate nature of his presence in the moment is an apt description for his relationship to the community at large, a spirit that is neither wholly dangerous nor immediately legible as the symbol of the region’s own conflicted relationship to the patriotic mythos of the Revolution. In comparison, whether from fiend or radical leveler, the liberal subject’s flight constantly achieves its own validation via its individualist perspective and a selective memory of the past.

This is a rather imaginative interpretation of the tale, to be sure. Irving’s own Federalist politics were anything but radical, and have been described by Brian Jay Jones as “progressively conservative, favoring business, nonregulation, and individual rights, while valuing older traditions… [with a] decidedly nonconfrontational [style].”22 The author’s fusion of liberal values with a reverence for tradition would seem to side with the Dutch farmers of a bygone era, rather than the forthcoming social movements such as the rise of the organized abolitionist movement in the United States during the 1830s or the class feelings that would erupt in the Revolutions of 1848. In 1820, New York was nearing the end of its policy of gradual emancipation, for example, which had begun in 1799, diffusing in part this content of the story. There is, however, a final play at narrative framing to the tale, found in its brief postscript, supportive of the preceding avenue of interpretation. “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” was originally published in a collection of short stories, *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* Irving’s authorship was immediately revealed in a review in the *New-York Evening Post*, yet the layers of pseudonym suggest that a number of political sensibilities are in play in the telling of the tale. In “The Author’s Account of Himself,” the rather conservative Crayon depicts himself as an avid collector of stories, and an American who (while fully conscious of the potential for his country to inspire great literature) has taken it upon himself to do a tour of Europe (743-5).
However, Crayon is also distanced from authorship of “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.” Instead, it is credited to Irving’s earlier literary invention, Diedrich Knickerbocker, under whose name Irving published his satirical *A History of New-York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty, by Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809). Knickerbocker more strongly emphasizes a connection to the area’s roots as a Dutch colony, but he, in turn, denies authorship of the tale, attributing it to “a pleasant, shabby, gentlemanly old fellow… one whom [he] strongly suspected of being poor, he made such efforts to be entertaining” (1087). The fellow’s audience is described as “a corporation meeting of the ancient city of Manhattoes, at which were present many of the sagest and most illustrious burghers,” a title denoting a personage of middle-class standing (1087). Knickerbocker’s linguistic heritage and the observation of the class standing of the storyteller and his audience suggest a decidedly continental perspective on society and wealth.

This final layer complicates the reading of the story. The overt message is that the chase between Crane and the Horseman is “really” understood to be a practical joke played on the schoolmaster by Brom Bones. As the tale draws to a close, it is revealed that several years after the event, the townsfolk had received news that Crane was still alive, had studied law, “had been admitted to the bar, turned politician, electioneered, written for the newspapers, and finally had been made a Justice of the Ten Pound Court” (1086). Reality triumphs, though the old country wives continue to maintain that Crane was spirited away by the Horseman, and the result preserves the area’s folk traditions and agrarian wealth from Crane’s attempt to marry into money. The burghers laugh in approbation, thinking, no doubt, of protecting their own accumulated wealth. One of the crowd, however, takes issue with the tale; he is described as "one of your wary men, who never laugh but upon good grounds -- when they have reason and the law on their side" (1087). Sensing some latent jest or ulterior meaning, he demands that the storyteller make the moral of the story explicit. The storyteller responds with a syllogism, a logical argument in which a conclusion is inferred from a sequence of premises:

That there is no situation in life but has its advantages and pleasures, provided we will but take a joke as we find it:

That, therefore, he that runs races with goblin troopers, is likely to have rough riding of it:

Ergo, for a country schoolmaster to be refused the hand of a Dutch heiress, is a
certain step to high preferment in the state. (1088)
The wary gentleman is puzzled by the ratiocination of the syllogism, while the storyteller flashes a “triumphant leer” (1088). The gentleman in turn claims that the story is “extravagant,” attacking it aesthetically and doubting its truth. The storyteller’s reply: “Faith, sir… as to that matter, I don’t believe one half of it myself” (1088). What is to be made of this final jest?
Clearly, the joke is on the wary gentleman, the advocate of reason and law, logic and rationalism.

The storyteller’s use of the syllogism, a standard of rational reasoning, implies that the three propositions are connected. The first claim invokes complacency with a given lot in life, suggesting that even a bad lot (a life of poverty or slavery, for example) can be pleasant with the right mindset. The second claim suggests that Crane made things harder on himself by imagining the danger of the Horseman, or, for that matter, by imagining the possibility of his own social ascension – again, the burghers’ agreement is based on their class position, allowing them to agree with Crane’s failure as a social climber without considering the implications of him as a representation of speculative capital more generally. The conclusion, however, does not follow logically from these premises, but is rather the statement of Crane’s rumored fate. Rather than a logical connection, the ordering principle is narrative, yet because the final observation most closely matches reality (it does not rely on folklore), it appears to be implicitly true. The wary gentleman’s attack on the story’s form, the claim that it is fictional or sensational and therefore unauthorative, follows from this standard of reasoning. The storyteller, however, is the master of form, and has employed the power of storytelling throughout the legend to demonstrate the role played by expectation, assumptions, and patterns in shaping (and reshaping) society. His final position triumphs over the burghers because rather than rationalism, his moral conclusion is drawn from the observation of reality (a Marxist turn) to demonstrate the connection between Crane’s speculative-capital mindset and the juridical apparatus of the state. Being able to tell a story critical of exploitative economics and the state that is also able to flatter the burghers’ sensitivities is a testament to his skill. He does not believe half of it, but not in a rational, quantifiable sense of measurement. The storyteller’s triumph resides in his ability to disbelieve the interpretation that puts the burghers at ease, escaping into the elusive play of interpretation that rejects the obvious content of the tale – or, for that matter, the misremembering of the legend as a simple ghost story. The syllogism works better in reverse. The world is determined by the interplay of capital and the nation-state, it is better to recognize the Horseman as a friend and
protector of social justice than misrecognize him as a fiend, and the ability to jest and interpret can transform the structures of power and exploitation into advantage and pleasure. The solution to the riddle is not more rationalism, but rather a return to and understanding of the power of narrative, myth, and storytelling in human consciousness.

Brown’s “The Man at Home” and Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” narrate the process by which nationalism is produced in ways that reflect the nation-state’s dependence on speculative capitalism and territorial expansion, but they also suggest the latent potential of storytelling to uncover examples that restore the presence of class and race politics as alternative legacies of the Revolution. The remaining chapters of this dissertation take up this task, exploring scenarios where nineteenth-century writers invoked the Revolution to these ends. These examples raise important questions for the remainder of this study. Brown’s substitution of a French-West Indian experience of revolution for the hidden manuscript suggests the longstanding critical thesis that distinguishes between American and French Revolutionary traditions, claiming that the American Revolution transpired without extreme class tensions because of the relatively low population and abundant territory offered by North American colonization. Here and elsewhere, Brown suggests that people of African descent are “obviously” excluded from the civic body. The erasure of class politics is practically accomplished by the definition of liberal government, which at once grants a rising middle class political power (overturning the structures of aristocracy and monarchy) based on their economic power but also relegates the economy and capital to the apolitical realm of the private sphere. In the United States, history suggests an ongoing struggle at precisely this point (typified first as a clash between Federalists and Democratic-Republicans, and in the various forms of national party politics since). In spite of this, class politics needs constantly to prove its own “Americaness,” particularly so in the present post-Cold War climate of globalization and decreasing union power in the United States. While these same erasures plague Irving’s “Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” the claim that storytelling and interpretive play can restore traditions that value folk communities, local economies, and the work done by the body provides the stamina to carry on.

It is fitting, finally, that the two suppressed legends share a similar history of recovery – at least in terms of their imagined scenarios. Bedloe uncovers the hidden manuscript as the result of the previous tenant’s inability to pay for the room. Similarly, Irving’s Diedrich
Knickerbocker began as an elaborate hoax with ads placed in several New York City papers inquiring after the missing gentleman, ostensibly placed by a hotel proprietor who feared that his missing guest might “not [be] entirely in his right mind.” In subsequent ads, it was revealed that Knickerbocker left without paying his bill, and his papers are published to recoup the loss.
Notes to Chapter 1:


2 The serial publication of “The Man at Home” in itself contradicts this, of course. See below for more information regarding its publication.

3 Peter Kafer reads Brown’s concealment of the manuscript against a later episode from “The Man at Home,” of one chapter’s length, in which Bedloe reflects on the intestine commotions in Magna Graecia. Kafer importantly collates this latter episode with the arrests and banishment of Tories in Philadelphia in September of 1777. See Peter Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown’s Revolution and the Birth of the American Gothic*, 102-4.

4 Charles Brockden Brown, *Ormond*, x.

5 See also Julia Stern’s analysis of Baxter in *The Plight of Feeling*, 167-85.

6 Eric J. Hobsbawm defines the legacy of the Age of Revolution in the following terms: “This revolution has transformed, and continues to transform, the entire world. But in considering it we must distinguish carefully between its long-range results, which cannot be confined to any social framework, political organization, or distribution of international power and resources, and its early and decisive phase, which was closely tied to a specific social and international situation. The great revolution of 1789-1848 was the triumph not of ‘industry’ as such, but of capitalist industry; not of liberty and equality in general, but of middle class or ‘bourgeois’ liberal society; not of ‘the modern economy’ or the ‘modern state,’ but of the economies and states in a particular geographical region of the world.” Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, 1789-1848, 17-8.


9 Brown, *Ormond*, 161. Benjamin Rush published a letter suggesting that people of African descent had a natural immunity to Yellow Fever during Philadelphia’s outbreak, calling for their assistance attending the sick during the outbreak. This was, of course, inaccurate, with immunity predicated on past exposure rather than race. Following this, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones (leading figures in Philadelphia’s AME and Episcopal Churches respectively) published accounts repudiating charges that the black community exploited the situation. See Absalom Jones, *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, During the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia, in the Year 1793*. For more on Brown’s use of the Yellow Fever as a symbol for racial contamination, a reminder of the nation’s economic dependence on West Indian trade, and as a representation of the threatening potential of the Haitian Revolution, see Sean X. Goudie, *Creole America*, 184-187. See also J. H. Powell, *Bring Out Your Dead*.

10 This is also true elsewhere for Brown’s own writing, such as in his pamphlet *An Address to the Government of the United States*. In this document, Brown warns of a Napoleonic invasion of the Mississippi, and describes how the French would foment alliances with both Native American Indians on the frontier and with slaves, as well as attempt to cause an “intestine” revolt.


13 Ibid., 116.


15 The scene where Bones chases Crane from Sleepy Hollow follows his rejection by Katrina: “Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks, roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover” (1080).

16 See Larry J. Reynolds “Patriot and Criminals, Criminal and Patriots: Representations of the Case of Major Andrê.” Reynolds investigates the class perceptions at play in the social memory of Andrê’s capture.

17 Robert E. Cray Jr., “Major John Andrê and the Three Captors: Class Dynamics and Revolutionary Memory Wars in the Early Republic, 1780-1831,” 371-3. Cray’s major claim is that the memory of Andrê’s capture shifted over the course of time. After this scandal, the three men would once more become memorialized as yeoman heroes as Jacksonian Republicanism rose to prominence, displacing (partly) the honor paid to Andrê by a set of cultural norms that can loosely be collated to costal Federalism in the decades prior.

18 Ibid., 392.


20 Ibid., 160.

21 Ibid., 160-1.


23 “From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burgurers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.” Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 474.

24 See note ten above.

25 These appeared in the *New York Evening Post*, October 26 and November 16, 1809 respectively, as well as in other papers. Quoted in Jones, *Washington Irving*, 93-4.
2. **Class Apprehensions:**

**George Lippard, Mass Culture, and the Public Sphere.**

George Lippard's *The Rose of Wissahikon* was first published in the July 4th, 1847, edition of Philadelphia's most popular story paper, the *Saturday Courier*. (Figure 1 below.) The novel appeared in its entirety, but even so, it covered only two and a half of the paper's eight large pages.¹ There is, however, no mistaking the importance of Lippard's contribution to the special holiday edition. The eye of casual customers and dedicated followers alike would have been captured by the huge, half-page cover illustration of the novel's climactic scene: the first reading of the Declaration of Independence on the steps of Philadelphia's own State House. By this time, Lippard was at the height of his popularity as a writer of Revolutionary “legends,” and the topic seemed particularly suited to capture the patriotic spirit of Independence Day and revive interest in Philadelphia's unique heritage of nationalism. But if Lippard's readers expected an easy, flag-waving narrative, they were surely in for a surprise from his tale. While true in spirit to the history of the Declaration's drafting, Lippard invented a complex story involving a counter-revolutionary effort to arrest the drafters and install George Washington as King, murders on the frontier, and the possible seduction and rape of the title character, the beautiful, young Rose. With the fate of the nation in the balance, Lippard's revision of a key moment in U.S. nationalism turned its focus to the private lives of unknown characters, capturing his own period's social tensions while showing the extent to which class interests had been excluded from popular nationalism in the process.

The impact of *The Rose of Wissahikon*, as an example of early mass culture, stems from its history of publication. Story papers were an important, but ephemeral, part of fiction publication during the 1840s and 1850s. They were printed as weekly editions on newspaper stock, were priced cheaply and widely distributed on subscription and at the stands of periodical agents in the city, and as a result of their production and consumption they were also literally read to pieces. Their lack of durability compared to book publication contributes to the erasure
Figure 1: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), Image accompanying Lippard's *The Rose of Wissahikon* on the cover of the *Saturday Courier*, July 4, 1847.
of a wide spectrum of readership, amounting to the loss of an archive for understanding early mass, working-class readership in the study of American fiction. Often, the remaining copies of this once-vibrant component of the literary marketplace exist only as partial collections in rare-book archives. The marketplace for cheap fiction was booming during the period, resulting from a combination of advancements in printing technology, the lack of international copyrights, and cheap postal rates. Philadelphia still rivaled New York as a publishing hub, based largely on its strong local market, advantageous proximity to more southern cities, and railroad and canal distribution channels to the Ohio region. Story papers represented only one corner of the fiction trade, but even so there was stiff competition with as many as seven competing papers vying for market share at one time. Boasting weekly circulation numbers as high as 70,000, the Saturday Courier alone claimed a circulation nearly double that of the middle-class magazine, Godey's Lady's Book.²

Lippard's Revolutionary legends are known for crafting nationalist symbolism. He is perhaps best known, for example, for helping to elevate the liberty bell into the national consciousness. In the spring of that year, Lippard's tale “The Fourth of July, 1776” had introduced a narrative that would be taken as historical fact for the rest of the century. In this version, a crowd composed of old men, women and babes, merchants, mechanics, sailors, and ministers gathers outside the State House. In the tower, an old bell-keeper, who cannot read, asks a young boy, the son of a rich man, to read him the Liberty Bell's inscription: “Proclaim Liberty to All the Land and All the Inhabitants Thereof.”³ He then sends the boy down to signal when to ring the bell. Just as the man thinks he is forgotten, the boy shouts up from among the crowd “Ring!”, and the bell tolls out signaling the Declaration of Independence.

Though this earlier narrative was only the first episode in a series of stories oriented around the Declaration, and was used again in the expanded Rose of Wissahikon, the image of the young boy and the old man quickly left behind its original narrative contexts and entered cultural memory as historical fact, as Gary B. Nash has described in his history of the Liberty Bell.⁴ Benson J. Lossing, a newspaper editor from New York, repeated Lippard's story in his Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution. Joel Tyler Headley, a historical romancer who Lippard rightfully accused of plagiarism on several occasions regarding his legends, incorporated the episode of the Bell-keeper and the boy in his own serialized “Life of George Washington” in Graham's Magazine shortly after Lippard's death.⁵ The story then entered school curriculums as
part of Charles A. Goodrich's *Child's History of the United States*, was included later in George S. Hillard's *Franklin's Fifth Reader*, became a popular children's song by Henry Clay Work, and was taken as historical fact in authoritative works including the *Dictionary of United States History*, edited by John Franklin Jameson (president of the American Historical Association), and John H. Hazelton's *The Declaration of Independence* (1906). This textual history is often cited as evidence of Lippard's ability to shape cultural history with his fiction, and, to an extent, it does signify his ability to generate widely popular patriotism in his writing. For the most part, however, the evolution of the legend of the bell-keeper and the boy follows Headley's initial transformation of the tale suited for his audience in *Graham's*. Details emphasizing the class differences between the boy and the bell-keeper, such as a disparity in literacy, are lost in subsequent re-tellings. Taken out of context, the anecdote lost its symbolic content where labor both educates and cooperates with wealth, and union between class politics and nationalism is achieved. While Lippard helped craft the popular lore of the iconic Liberty Bell at a time when it had only just begun to take on its current power as a signifier of U.S. nationalism, it is necessary to consider his legends within their own immediate social setting in order to understand their impact as politically charged writings.6

*The Rose of Wissahikon* promised much more than a brief moment of symbolic flair to the readers of *The Saturday Courier*. Its half-page illustration shows a group of founders elevated above a crowd, but the scene is hardly auspicious. Jefferson slouches against the wall trying to avoid attention. Ben Franklin lends his iconic gravity to the moment, but it is the physically undistinguished John Hancock, the President of the second continental congress, who addresses the crowd.7 But it is among the crowd that Lippard's revision of history has its greatest creativity, and where the picture's most interesting actions are depicted. Far from being enraptured by the appearance of the founders on the stairs, the members of the crowd are engaged with their own concerns. Many hold private conversations, and one pair has even come to blows at this important historical moment. Other details become legible only after reading Lippard's version of history. Rose, the novel's leading female character and only woman in the picture, stands attractively posed toward the reader. The imposing Native American figure next to her is her long lost brother, Mayaniko, a character who embodies the desire to claim both Anglo and native origins. And finally, Gerald Moynton, Rose's would-be seducer, leers at her from the background.
The presence of these intriguing figures in the crowd signals Lippard's intent to tell a story “embracing the secret history of the Declaration of Independence.” If the nationalism associated with the founders represents what everyone knows, the secret history of the nation's origin represented the place where invention and imagination could bring to light truths and meaning that had been repressed in the official narrative. Lippard sought to craft a nationalism uniting labor and national politics, and used his proficiency as a writer of city crime fiction to fashion a new Revolutionary heritage in accordance with the tastes of the masses. The secret world of crime and seduction that he had exposed in *The Quaker City*, his best-selling city crime novel for which he is known to scholarship today, matched perfectly with the narrative effort to expose a secret history of class inclusion in the nation's origin. By uniting the two popular forms on which his career was founded, city crime and legends of the Revolution, Lippard opened the cultural traditions and history associated with U.S. nationalism to the artisans and laborers who were at least partly responsible for the high circulation numbers for the story papers of the day. Driven by his own emerging labor politics, Lippard offered versions of the Revolutionary past suited to the tastes of his readers that also expounded the values he himself thought best suited for improving the lives of the common man of his day.

It is when Lippard most radically departs from the historiography anchored to the wealthy and elite leaders of the Revolution, as he does in *The Rose of Wissahikon*, that his fiction most strongly embraces the central conflict between nationalism and class interests. By opening the Revolution to revision in an attempt to recode it as an avenue for social reform for the benefits of laborers, Lippard encountered a problem unique to U.S. nationalism. Historical evaluation of social conditions has long differentiated America from Europe, suggesting that class interests in the United States were less significant in its development. Traditional narratives of colonialism and westward expansion held that the United States had a different destiny from European society based on the promise of wealth and land ownership perpetually offered by the frontier. Compared to the oppressive social conditions of the European workers, it was claimed, American society was free from the abject poverty driving the social revolutions that would erupt globally in the Revolutions of 1848. In addition to the class critiques found in his fiction, Lippard would go on to found a secret society for the benefit of labor and the advancement of its politics. The Brotherhood of the Union combined intense nationalist symbolism with its labor activism, transforming Lippard's class apprehensions into the basis of a
new political practice. U.S. nationalism focused primarily on questions of individual freedoms and the formation of the nation-state, and the celebration of these ideas left nineteenth-century class tensions in the U.S. difficult to resolve with the Revolutionary iconography of its past.

In “Class Apprehensions,” I argue that George Lippard's legends of the Revolution return class politics to U.S. nationalism. I will first locate Lippard's writing within the ephemeral world of Philadelphia's cheap fiction marketplace, which boasted both cheap prices and massive circulation numbers. After establishing Lippard's relationship to this sub-industry of printing in the 1840s, I will then discuss how his legends of the Revolution function as political writing by imagining a union between U.S. nationalism and labor politics. Lippard's fiction offers a critique of the eighteenth-century's public sphere discourse, while revealing the extent to which its theoretical models establish the exclusion of class politics in public discussions about the nation-state. In The Rose of Wissahikon, Lippard's formal effort to overcome this division fused together two popular mass-culture genres: city-crime and historical romance set during the Revolution. Competing culture-codes built into narratives of criminality and nationalism helped Lippard reclaim aspects of political activity and citizenship, which were formally alienated from the populace upon the constitution of the nation-state. Taken together, the social context, political function, and formal elements of Lippard's fiction imagined social revolution to be founded in the nationalist legacy of the Revolutionary era for a mass audience during the 1840s.

**Philadelphia's Cheap Fiction Marketplace.**

When The Rose of Wissahikon appeared in the Saturday Courier, Lippard's career was at an all-time high. His immensely popular novel, The Quaker City, continued its strong sales, and his legends of the Revolution had steadily earned him praise as a key contributor to the most popular story paper in Philadelphia. But to understand the effect of Lippard's alternate version of the Declaration of Independence on his audience, it is necessary first to describe the workings of the city's cheap fiction marketplace. This section will unfold the print and publishing market situation of Lippard's literary career, showing how Philadelphia’s working-class readers influenced the production of cheap fiction. Perhaps most importantly, it is essential to
understand that though Lippard's writings were eventually published and discussed as books, they were often first available to the reader in cheaper forms like the story paper. When readers picked up a paper rather than a book, they engaged the same text differently. Questions of context, expectations of exclusivity and newness, and a sense of belonging among a particular paper's audience all contribute to the sociality of the text. The production dynamics and readership of Lippard's fiction help to describe the way Philadelphia's class conflicts could play out in the public forum of cheap fiction.

Lippard's career as a professional writer began at a desperate moment in his life. From the time he was a small child, Lippard had lived with his Aunt Mary; his mother had contracted tuberculosis and his father suffered a serious farming injury when George was a young child, and they lived in Philadelphia while the extended family raised him and his siblings in nearby Germantown. In addition to this separation, both parents died while he was still young, leaving his inheritance in trust with his Aunt. The estate, worth roughly $2000, comprised the family homestead and shares of stock in the Mechanics and Tradesmen's Loan Co. and Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co. However, either through the bank failures of 1837 or by some other means, the family lost their farm and moved to Philadelphia. At fifteen, Lippard began a career in law, first with William Badger, who had handled his father's estate, and then with Ovid F. Johnson, who later became Attorney General of Pennsylvania, spending a combined four years in their offices. After giving up these positions, he quarreled with his Aunt, and after she refused to hand over his inheritance spent some time living rough in an abandoned building in Philadelphia near Franklin Square. It was then, on the edge of poverty, that a friend introduced him to John S. Du Solle, editor of the daily penny-newspaper The Spirit of the Times, beginning Lippard's professional writing career. The paper introduced its new correspondent by describing these circumstances, and emphasized Lippard's physical distress: “His face was thin with hunger; his dress, a collection of rags, lashed together in some places with twine; his whole person the walking image of starvation and despair.” Lippard's writing career was instructed by his and his family's experience of financial crisis, and though he succeeded in earning a living as a writer, he never altered his political sympathies that sided with the common man against banking and other large-scale capital interests.

After only a brief spell with Du Solle, Lippard quickly turned his talents toward the writing of fiction. At the democratically-minded Spirit of the Times, Lippard's duties included
reporting on the proceedings of the court in the “City Police,” yet another bank crisis, and penning social satires of Philadelphia's literary establishment on the occasion of Charles Dickens’ visit to the city. By the summer, however, his sights had turned to fiction, and he sold his first two stories to George R. Graham's *Saturday Evening Post*: the gothic short-story “Philippe de Agramont” and the short Revolutionary novel *Herbert Tracy: or, The Legend of the Black Rangers*. From the beginning, his interests were split between the gothic mode that would become the foundation of his city-crime style and legends of the Revolution.

Lippard's initial successes as a writer came on the cusp of what would become an explosive popularity for each of his preferred genres among the mass readers of cheap fiction. He would soon begin serially publishing *The Quaker City* (1844-1845), his most popular novel, in pamphlet parts, and together with the French writer Eugene Sue's *Mysteries of Paris* (1842-1843) it inaugurated a craze for fiction exposing the seedy underside of city life. By the end of its first year, its publishers claimed that it had sold 60,000 copies. It continued to sell some 30,000 a year at the time of Lippard's death, and it was both plagiarized and widely imitated. From this point, Lippard did not, however, focus his writing solely on city crime fiction. He continued writing legends of the Revolution as well, and the combination established him firmly as a top contributor to Philadelphia's story papers.

From this perspective of authorship, Lippard's popularity can be understood as a result of either a revitalized gothic storytelling with “modern” updates reflecting the new experiences of expanding cities, or for breathing freshness into history that brought the past to life. Though he rejuvenated the marketability of both, he certainly invented neither genre. In Lippard's case particularly, authorial creativity combined perfectly with the market conditions of cheap fiction emerging in the 1840s to produce his success as a writer for the masses, and his writing career is equally legible from the alternative perspective of the history of the cheap fiction marketplace. In *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America*, Michael Denning places Lippard in the context of the multiple modes of cheap publication in the nineteenth century: story-papers that grew out of the newspaper revolution of the 1830s, pamphlet novels that sold for a shilling in the 1840s before postal rates increased in 1845, and the dime novels and libraries of the 1860s onward. Though story papers and dime novels were linked to specific periods and are not equivalent, Denning shows that these differing modes of cheap fiction publication had continuity in their readership, in their publishers, and in the fiction itself, which
often appeared in multiple (and sometimes all) of these forms.  

Lippard's writing career fits even more naturally in a critical paradigm of nineteenth-century popular fiction than his city-crime writing alone might suggest. Dime novels, Denning notes, carry nostalgic assumptions about their readership, linking them to a juvenile, boyish culture of adventure. Partly this is based on the cultural memory of those who read cheap fiction in their youth before graduating to "literature," and partly on the manner in which the archive of cheap fiction was gathered and preserved by private collectors. The assumptions and biases of the collectors' market placed more emphasis on materials that came to embody retrospective assumptions of worth. For example, tales of westward expansion, the frontier, and "Indian fighting" were valued as the most characteristic genre of the dime novel primarily because they resonated with a culture of American exceptionalism and the romanticization of the west in the twentieth century. As a result, archives of popular fiction of the nineteenth century have a built-in bias that diminished the importance and function of cheap fiction in culture: women, readers of adult age, and class valences were all placed under erasure through the collectors' genre valuation. Importantly, other popular dime-novel genres included aristocratic romances, detective tales, working-girl stories, tales of the American Revolution, and love stories, all of which balance tales set in the West and often contain class and populist interests more aptly reflecting the actual readership of the dime novel in its original market than the myth of the boy reader allows. But while Denning recovers Lippard as a writer for the masses based on his city-crime stories, Lippard's equally popular and populist legends of the Revolution are likewise essential for understanding his relationship to labor politics and how his writing helped communicate his vision of social reform. Taking account solely of Lippard's city-crime writing isolates labor and class conflict once more from conversations about U.S. nationalism, missing the particularities of early working-class culture in a distinctly American social setting replete with its own local codes and class constructions. Lippard's popular legends offered another genre by which to address an audience comprised heavily of laborers and artisans, fulfilling an early demand for stories rich with U.S. nationalism – a genre that would continue to sell well for the rest of the century.

Expanding the conception of Philadelphia's cheap fiction marketplace to include an appreciation for the importance of other popular genres helps prove that the marketplace was primed for Lippard's preferred styles of writing, but in his own day, the competing interests of
the various publishers of cheap fiction meant that success was far from guaranteed. As his reputation and fame grew, his relationships to the publishing marketplace shifted away from his earliest association with Graham's business enterprises and toward the cheaper end of Philadelphia's publishing industry. While writing for his friend's story paper *The Citizen Soldier* in 1843, Lippard attacked Graham's extensive literary establishment. Graham's story paper, *The Saturday Evening Post*, subsumed two competitors at this time, increasing its circulation and sway over the market. But while it boasted more power from its newly large subscription list, it also diminished the options for writers to use their fiction for promoting particular political interests. Instead, it sought to control the cheap fiction marketplace while offering only “the highest grade of light Literature, each number containing three or four chaste original and selected TALES; which, while they shall interest the young, shall at the same time point a moral.”

Lippard's dislike in part stemmed from how Graham used his sway over literary taste to promote bland and uncontroversial writing of this kind. Graham was also the publisher of the bastion of middle-class taste, *Graham's Magazine*, and his attempt to export the same mores and values to the cheap fiction marketplace was surely stifling to Lippard as his own writings grew steadily labor-oriented.

The split between “polite” and “mass” society among Lippard's readers is clear from responses to *The Quaker City*. Filled with gruesome deaths and explicit sexual content, the novel became a sensation as it transformed a well-publicized local scandal into a work that allegedly revealed the ubiquitously corrupt nature of Philadelphia's social elite. Lippard based his novel partly on the 1843 Mercer-Herberton case, and subsequent acquittal of Singleton Mercer of the murder of Mahlon Heberton. Mercer had shot Heberton for, he asserted, Heberton had seduced Mercer's younger sister by luring her to a brothel with the promise of marriage. Lippard's previous employers denounced it; *The Spirit of the Times* called it a "disgusting mass of filth," and Graham's paper declared him a "a writer of immoral works." But other papers attuned to a different readership publicly praised Lippard, including the *United States Gazette*, *The Citizen Soldier*, and *The Saturday Courier*. The scandal spilled over into the streets when the Chesnut Street Theater began rehearsing a theatrical adaptation of the novel. Mercer applied for a large block of tickets with the intent of causing a riot, and after heavy pressure from the mayor, including the withdrawal of police protection, the play was canceled. Lippard's contemporary biographer, John Bell Bouton, claimed that the novel divided the city into two
camps, with the “great body of people” supportive of Lippard.  

Though there were clearly competing interests among the publishers of cheap fiction in Philadelphia, the publicity surrounding The Quaker City helped clarify which publishers were ready to produce fiction suited for Philadelphia's adult, laboring readership rather than for chastity or morality's sake. Soon Lippard was writing legends of the Revolution for Andrew M'Makin's The Saturday Courier, and delivering them as lectures at the William Wirt Institute (whose namesake was Attorney General and a writer of Revolutionary history) and as a guest-speaker throughout the region. His audiences were likely artisans and laborers; the vice-president of the William Wirt Institute, for example, was a bricklayer, and it was likely a workingman's institute. Lippard's first lecture to this group was “The Mechanic Hero of Brandywine,” the story of a laborer whose wife and children are killed by the British. It was for this type of audience that The Rose of Wissahikon was written, and its publication history in both story paper and cheap-book form provides further insight into the marketplace.

Andrew M'Makin's Saturday Courier was already the widest-selling story paper in Philadelphia when Lippard joined its ranks. He deeply valued those who had defended his reputation during the controversy surrounding The Quaker City, and joining M'Makin's paper allowed him to publish the kind of fiction he desired for an eager readership while returning M'Makin's public display of loyalty. It did not hurt, either, that the paper was besting Graham's as its main competitor. The arrangement was beneficial for both. During Lippard's tenure, the paper's already market-leading circulation increased from 30,000 to 70,000. When he published his book compilation of his Revolutionary legends, Lippard in turn dedicated the volume to M'Makin.

Lippard's reputation as a successful writer in the story papers had already been established. Before joining M'Makin, Lippard contributed to and helped run The Citizen Soldier, a start-up paper owned and published by his friend, Adam H. Diller. The difference between it and Graham's blandly apolitical Saturday Evening Post could hardly have been greater. The paper began as a mouthpiece for the militia system and advocated against a standing army. Already old-fashioned, the politics of the paper nevertheless invoked a strong sense of patriotism in support of its aims. Lippard's fiction appeared along with news, discussions of tactics, and advertisements for militia supplies. The odd combination of interests in the paper did not keep it from unexpectedly competing in the already crowded story-paper market. In its own estimation,
the *Citizen Soldier* ranked itself in the middle of the city's hierarchy after only seven months of publication:

The city abounds in weekly papers of various grades of merit. There is that fine old paper, the 'Saturday Courier,' commanding a circulation of 30,000 subscribers, and noted for its select and original literary matter. It is the first weekly of the city. Next come the 'United States Saturday Post,' and 'The Museum,' -- pretty much alike in all respects, literary matter, and circulation. And journeying hard at the heels of its competitors, giving some uneasiness to its next door neighbor of the Post, is the 'Dollar Newspaper.' Then there is the 'Weekly Forum,' and the 'Weekly United States Gazette,' the one brilliant with the eloquence of Sargent, the dry humor of Wallace, and the other stored with the grave witticisms of Chandler. Modesty forbids us to speak of our own sheet, but were our opinion asked as to its popularity, we would place it between the 'Post' and the 'Courier;' and as for its circulation, strike a line between the 'Museum' and 'Post.'

With Lippard's help, *The Citizen Soldier* quickly expanded in the story paper market in spite of its very strong political stance. Though it led some readers who were interested only in militia news to cancel their subscriptions, Lippard's fiction increased the paper's sales to a self-claimed 30,000 by the end of September. Considering the political nature of the paper, his legends seem like a natural fit; he printed early versions of tales eventually included in his collection *Washington and His Generals* (1847), including “Legend of the Midnight Death,” “The Poor Men Heroes of the Revolution,” and a “Revolutionary Sermon,” along with a chapter from his first novel, *Herbert Tracy*, the historical account of the “Battle Day of Brandywine,” which was reprinted in some fifty other papers, and the “Battle Day of Germantown,” which sold out a pamphlet edition within its first week of printing. Lippard's career as a historical romancer was already in full swing, but his writings for the *Citizen Soldier* were not limited to legends of the Revolution. Representing a significant departure from the paper's original vision, it began serializing Lippard's gothic novel *The Ladye Annabel: or, The Doom of the Poisoner.* The novel signaled the steady move towards fiction and the story paper market for the *Citizen Soldier*; it typically appeared on the front page, and at its peak accounted for nearly eight full pages of content. As the paper entered its second year it attempted to broaden its audience even further with the hope of increasing sales to generate the additional income needed to pay Lippard.
a wage equal to his contributions. In spite of its volume, the paper did not have the correct business model to survive. The two co-publishers, brothers Adam and Isaac Diller, were most interested in its original concept as a militia paper, while Lippard had made it popular by entering the story paper market. Faced with such a split, the paper’s publication drew to a close while Lippard's literary efforts shifted elsewhere.28

When Lippard's Rose of Wissahikon appeared on the front page of M'Makin's courier, it did so as the latest offering from the paper's star author. Readers had already responded with increased patronage and dedication. But circulation numbers and competition between the city's story papers capture only a part of the story surrounding the production and reading of cheap fiction. The history of cheap fiction, including both the story paper and work published and bound in book form, is difficult to trace because even during its own time it held a marginal position in the marketplace. Philadelphia's publication industry was flourishing during the 1840s; by mid-decade a directory for the city's business community, the Mercantile Register, or Business Man's Guide, listed thirty-five unique booksellers and publishers, three bookbinders, eight entries for stereotype and type foundries, plus a stereograph printer, a lithographer, and a steam printing establishment for books, bills, and other job work.29 The list encompasses a range of endeavors: from L.B. Lippincott & Co, who had a manufactory connected with their store, to J.W. Moore, advertised as “The Philadelphia Cheap Book Store!”, and to E. Ferrett & Co.’s effort to sell “Music for the Million.” Niche shops included those dedicated to law, medical, and theological books, children's grammars (in English and German), and those catering specifically to Catholic and Episcopalian readers. Several shops selling only blank books and stationery also made the list. Although this paints a picture of a large and diverse marketplace, none of the publishers of Lippard's fiction in book form are included in the register.30 Both the ephemeral nature of the story paper, literally read until they fell apart and were discarded, and the invisible role of Philadelphia's cheapest publishers contribute to the difficulty of understanding the scope of its early cheap fiction market.

From the perspective of Lippard's career, it is clear that the world of cheap publication in pamphlet and book form was closely tied to that of the story-paper. Both were sold by periodical agents in “news offices,” a novel combination of convenience and commerce as Lippard described it in the Citizen Soldier:

Did our country readers ever see a Philadelphia news office? No? It's an
establishment of modern times, a production of the present day. We advise our friends from the country, who wish to have a look at an establishment of this kind, to call at Van Yorx's Periodical and Lozenge Depot, in Chesnut Street, below Third, North side. They will behold an elegant and varied assortment of all the light literature of the present day, suitable for presents from the beaux to their sweethearts; Sherman's Lozenges, by the way of 'Forget me not's to the children, and works of Science, Astronomy and Chemistry, Meteorology and Antiquarian research for the old folks. Van Yorx himself is none of your dry, musty old booksellers, who look like a disinterred Egyptian Mummy, but an exceedingly well preserved specimen of an enterprising New Yorker, young, go-ahead-ative and handsome. You must give him a call by all means.\footnote{31}

Visitors from the country following either the \textit{Mercantile Register} or the directions to Van Yorx's news office would find themselves at the heart of the city's publishing realm, for the neighbors of this modern marvel of retail included those very "musty old booksellers" with whom it was competing. The same block included several publishers in addition to the premises of Carey & Hart, the second generation of Matthew Carey's publishing business, as well as the offices for Graham's and Godey's magazines, all of which represented the prestigious portion of the industry.

Van Yorx was not alone in selling the "light literature" of the day. Two publishers closely associated with Lippard, George B. Zieber and Theophilus Beasley Peterson, were also located on Chesnut Street operating as newsagents. At this time Lippard's \textit{Citizen Soldier} was located just a half block south from Zieber's stand at the corner of Dock and Third Street, just across from the Girard Bank building which had been the First Bank of the United States. The building where \textit{The Citizen Soldier} kept its offices was captured in a daguerreotype (the first news photograph in Philadelphia) by William and Frederick Langenheim depicting a militia unit mustering at this corner during the nativist riots of 1844. (Figure 2 below.) The daguerreotype gives a sense of the close quarters of Philadelphia's publishing district. Along with papers \textit{The Sun} and \textit{The Citizen Soldier}, yet another newsagent, Henry Jordan, held offices in the same building. The publishers and sellers of cheap fiction coexisted in the same space as the most reputable portion of the marketplace, and readers would be in close proximity to
Figure 2: William and Frederick Langenheim, “North-East corner of Third & Dock Street. Girard Bank, at the time the latter was occupied by the Military during the riots.” Oversize half-plate daguerreotype, Philadelphia, May 9, 1844. Library Company of Philadelphia.
both when shopping for either.

Newsagents sold cheap fiction in both story paper and book form, but their relationship to the story paper went well beyond simply vending them. Although it is not precisely known how many different papers each agent may have carried at one time, the economic interests of the paper publishers likely carried over into factions among news agents, limiting the street sales of papers to the benefit of those who shared other interests as well. Lippard's *Rose of Wissahikon* is particularly instructive in this case. When it appeared in M'Makin's *Courier*, the novel was presented as the premier content of the widest circulating story paper. It was soon published in book form, and it was hardly coincidence that Lippard selected Zieber as his publisher. The two had worked together before, and it was Zieber who had helped publish *The Quaker City*.

Whether it was Lippard's decision alone or not, the choice was certainly also beneficial to M'Makin. In spite of the fact that it was the most widely selling story paper, the advertising space in the *Courier*’s Fourth of July issue was almost entirely dedicated to advertisements for Zieber's stock, representing a deep financial interdependence between the two. The same conviviality is present in the material production of the text itself; Zieber's book edition used the same typesetting as the story paper, meaning that the two shared the cost of preparing the text for printing.

When the same cramped, small-font type was broken into page length segments, the story that had easily fit in a single edition of the *Courier* amounted to a seventy-page novella in the cheap book trade.

Zieber, M'Makin, and Lippard all shared business interests in the cheap fiction marketplace, but competition existed even among the cheapest publishers. Story papers were typically sold on subscription through direct sales, but were also sold through discounts to agents. Zieber and M'Makin certainly had a lucrative agreement, and the *Saturday Courier* must have benefited from the prominent corner location of Zieber's shop in Philadelphia's densely populated publishing district. Yet Zieber was not likely to be M'Makin's only vendor. Rural postmasters and other interested parties were encouraged to act as agents in order to increase distribution. Similarly, Zieber and Lippard branched out from their reliance on M'Makin's market, and tried their hand at a quarterly magazine called *The Nineteenth Century* with C. Chauncey Burr as editor during 1848.

Finally, in spite of the close network among the three,
when it came time for Lippard to publish a collection of the legends he had written for M'Makin, *Washington and His Generals* appeared under both Zieber and his rival upstart, T.B. Peterson's imprint.\(^{36}\)

Peterson had received his preparation for the cheap fiction marketplace by working as a clerk in a dry-goods store and in a shipping business, but in a time when many of Philadelphia's publishers were no longer skilled in physical presswork he also had learned the mechanical trades of typesetting and stereotyping. Stereotyping was a technology steadily gaining employment in the U.S. publication market, whereby a text set in moveable type would be copied by first making an imprint mold, typically from plaster at this period, and then casting a solid metal copy. Stereotype plates used cheaper metal and cost less than sets of type, reduced the volume of type necessary to keep on hand, prevented the wear and tear on the original type resulting naturally from printing, and avoided the cost of re-setting the text for new copies and editions.\(^{37}\) This in turn reduced the publisher's invested capital by keeping editions small and extra copies to a minimum. Because of this arrangement, plates and copyrights were often sold in tandem. Once books were published, they often remained in print during this period, as was ultimately the case with Lippard's writings. Though Peterson only published a few of Lippard's works during the 1840s, he eventually acquired the plates and copyrights to the bulk of Lippard's total works. When a stereotype of the work did not already exist, he reset them and produced plates for his own later use.\(^{38}\)

Peterson's business experience as a newsagent and book publisher spanned both the commercial and production sides of the printing industry, and it took him across the line drawn between the interests of Graham and Lippard. He had worked for two years as head foreman of production for the *Saturday Evening Post*, which was edited by his older brother, Charles Peterson. He began his venture as a bookseller and newsagent with only $300 in capital, and was successful with his first effort as publisher of a reprint edition of Lady Charlotte Bury's sensational novel *The Divorced* in 1846. While the three-volume London edition sold for $7.50, his two-columned, single-volume edition retailed at the market standard cheap-book price of $.25.\(^{39}\) Though Zieber & Co failed during the decade, T.B. Peterson & Co continued to grow, and possessed the plates to some 600 different books and sold 50,000 copies on average annually by 1858.\(^{40}\)

Although committed to the cheap book model, Peterson enjoyed connections with both
the genteel and mass components of Philadelphia's publishing industry. When Charles Peterson left *Graham's Magazine* to start his own lady's magazine (*Peterson's Magazine*) to compete with *Godey's Lady's Book*, he attracted Ann S. Stephens as a contributor. Once her works had run serially in his magazine, he would allow his brother, with whom he shared premises, to publish them in book form.\(^1\)

Though Peterson would keep Lippard in print for the rest of the century, their immediate business relationship was sometimes as contentious as it was beneficial due in part to Peterson's ongoing connections with Graham's large publishing interests. For example, while Lippard was struggling to increase the sales of his own story paper after breaking away from M'Makin and the other established sellers of cheap fiction in 1849, he chastised Peterson in print for using his own books against him:

> By the bye, we perceive that Mr. Peterson... advertises a work, purporting to be written by the Editor of this paper, entitled 'The Mysteries and Miseries of Philadelphia.' We never were guilty of anything of the kind, and certainly have never been so 'far-left' as to affix such a thoroughly contemptible title to any one of our books. Mr. Peterson does another thing which strikes us, as exceedingly discourteous. He offers our books as a premium to any person who will send a certain amount of money, and subscribe for the *Saturday Evening Post*. Think of it! Our books forced into the service of such a thoroughly *moral* paper; the very works which describe the heartless seduction of female innocence, given as premiums to subscribers to the 'Post.' T.B. Peterson is a wag—decidedly.\(^2\)

The *Post* distanced itself from Peterson and Lippard's “immoral” fiction in an editorial, denying any responsibility for the arrangement.\(^3\) Nevertheless, a number of conclusions may be gathered. Because copyrights were often shared between the publisher and the author, Lippard could not control the sales of his own fiction once published. Also, while Peterson is primarily known to scholarship as a publisher of books, this exchange provides evidence for his continued role as a news agent and how intertwined the story paper and cheap book markets were, united by the interests of their producers and vendors. In this case, Peterson employed Lippard's earlier works directly against his future interests as a writer by strengthening the sales of a competing (and much larger) story paper.

Philadelphia's cheap fiction marketplace had a mass appeal. The huge volume of weekly
story papers being sold at a low rate gives a rough scale of the enterprise, and the increase in circulation numbers that Lippard generated first with the upstart *Citizen Soldier* and that followed him to M'Makin's *Courier* attest to a readership eager for his fiction. The mutual interests of the news-agents, cheap book publishers, and the story papers together explain the forces of production at work in supplying the market, showing how factions associated with class interests (represented in turn by the “polite” reading offered by Graham or the erotic, bloody, and political narratives written by Lippard) also determined the nature of cheap fiction. When combined with Lippard's own growing labor politics, all three material components of the text (audience, production, and composition) were influenced by the social conditions of the day.

However, while mass appeal and the interests of the laboring class often align, there is necessarily a difference between the two. As we have seen, Lippard's legends appealed to the laborers of the day when delivered to audiences as lectures, and genre, circulation numbers, and Lippard's popularity as a writer show that readers also responded to the mark that class interests left on the texts. Just as certainly, Lippard's patriotism had a broader appeal and was taken up in the general construction of nationalism, stripped of its class valences, as part of the story of the Liberty Bell. Questions of audience are notoriously difficult to prove, but the popularity of the story papers and the alterations made to his legends in their many iterations implies that Lippard's readership was somewhat larger than the interests of labor can account for alone. What is beyond question is that Lippard's writing career steadily moved toward labor activism, and his final involvement in the story paper marketplace combined his fiction with clearly articulated labor politics.

At the end of the decade, Lippard left M'Makin and struck out on his own, naming his new paper *The Quaker City* after his most successful novel. By this point, he had extensive experience as contributor and editor for many papers in the market, both start-ups and the most successful. He had seen how a politically-minded story paper could compete for market share while with *The Citizen Soldier*, but this time he was not only the star writer but also the one in charge and would reap the reward along with his partner and publisher Joseph Severns. In an effort to take his readership with him, Lippard made a clear appeal regarding his legends, announcing in the columns of his paper that “he has dissolved of his own will, all connection with the columns of Mmakin's [sic] *Courier*. The series of Legends entitled 'Washington and His Men, ten of which have been published in the Courier, have been brought to a close, by their
author – to a close, certainly, as far as regards that paper – for a reason which may some day be
told, but which we will not mention at this time."^{45} Lippard never quite enunciated the specifics
of his break with M'Makin, but several hints and an escalating feud in the columns of their
papers make it clear that in terms of the cheap fiction marketplace the two were now completely
at odds.

Free to write whatever he desired, Lippard's stories were now surrounded by a clearly
enunciated labor politics well beyond anything M'Makin would endorse. Lippard's brand of
labor politics combined now familiar (proto) Marxist principles of personal agency with the
elements of society he valued most:

- Men who do all the work of the nation – and yet with it all, are always poor! Women
  who work, – women who labor for the comfort and the luxuries of the rich – and yet are
  always poor! Listen to a frank and outspoken word...
- Why are you always poor? … Because there is gliding between you who produce, and
  the consumer of that which you produce, an Idle Man, who working never himself, lives
  by laying a tax upon both the producer and consumer. Not only lives, but riots in wealth,
  builds his fine mansions, drinks his flavourous wine, and wears his elegant apparel...
- How should you get rid of him? Form at once, in every city, town, and hamlet of the
  United States, associations for your own preservation. Establish stores, governed by
  these associations, where you may buy the necessaries of life, – in other words,
  interchange all the fruits of your labor...

**COMBINATION! ASSOCIATION!** These are the words of the last Gospel which God
has uttered to man. The Combination of labor until labor produces capital. The
Association of workers for their own good, until every worker is a capitalist.^{46}

The principle of owning one's own labor and the exploitation of workers as the basis of profit
form the revolutionary engine in such rhetoric, and it is above all the act of recognizing work and
employment in these terms that returns agency and political action to the workers whose lives
seem determined by the abstractions of the economy. Consciousness of what Marx would call
the estrangement of labor provided an alternative perspective to the disempowering “realities” of
lowered pay, the tenuousness of employment, and the erosion of the artisan system. Lippard
firmly united this idea to the values of working-class culture in Philadelphia: agency and
freedom are directed toward participation in local markets; the villain, Idle Man, is described in
terms fitting of a novel, but his main fault is excess, not wealth; the solution is not to revolt from a system of exploitation, but rather to end poverty by democratizing the economy; and, perhaps most importantly, the implication that such a path was divinely ordained maintained cultures of Protestantism and embraced features of American exceptionalism by positing the United States as the salvation of labor. While Lippard's labor politics were influenced by international thought, they were articulated through the culture of U.S. nationalism and local interests.

Lippard's new tone extended to a reflection on his own labor as a writer, as he sought to align himself with the artisans and laborers of the city. He emphasized the market forces at work during the creative process, describing the author as pinioned between the opposing forces of the “impulse of a divine thought” and the “rap of the Landlord at his door.” And, just as with any other worker, Lippard articulated his estrangement from his labor, stressing to the reader that “the Publisher is getting the produce of your Author's brain.” Lippard's critique quickly turned to his personal experience, and though M'Makin is not named, readers at all familiar with Lippard’s past writings would have understood his attack to be directed at the publisher of the Saturday Courier:

Now we have worked for Publishers for years. We have given them the very life of our blood, and parted with our heart-strings for a bundle of dingy Relief Notes. They have made their market of us. Edition after edition has paid them well. Legend after Legend, published week after week, has brought subscribers to their papers. We have worked hard, and worked long, and at the present moment, they can look at their bank account, and say justly and with proper sweetness, 'There are so many thousands of dollars, which we have coined out of the throbs of the poor fellow's brain.'

By appealing to the reader in these terms, Lippard had drawn a line between mass culture and labor interests. The question was not whether a story paper could transform fiction’s mass appeal into a vehicle for labor politics, but whether it could succeed in the market.

Several challenges immediately appeared for the upstart paper. For the first few weeks of publication, they were forced to apologize for using low-grade paper and type while awaiting delivery of their stock. The poor quality of their production was ostensibly balanced by Lippard's reputation, and by the paper's intent to do business differently. Lippard scorned the pressures implied by publishing advertisements, choosing to fund his paper solely by direct sales and subscriptions. This decision becomes more understandable in context. In an article titled
“Ambiguous Advertisements,” Lippard asked his readers to consider a scenario: “The man who pokes an obscure handbill under your door is arrested and sent to jail, like a common thief. What then is to be done with the moral daily (penny) paper which lays its obscene quack notices upon your breakfast table?”\(^{48}\) The “quack notices” on his mind were the many advertisements for tuberculosis “cures” that ran regularly in his first employer’s paper, *The Spirit of the Times*. In addition to his mother, he had just lost his sister to the disease, and both he and his wife, Rose, suffered and would die from it.\(^ {49}\) The promise to be free from advertisements only lasted for a short time before the paper made a concession and began running announcements for Lippard’s own work exclusively, but Lippard remained committed to the idea. Later, after the run of *The Quaker City* when he was trying to launch one last paper for the Brotherhood of the Union, he again demanded to be unencumbered by advertising.

Without advertising as a source of revenue, Lippard focused on the paper’s sales. All yearly subscriptions were offered solely through the paper’s own offices, and they “cautioned against pretended Agents, who no doubt will attempt to procure subscriptions, without the intention or the ability to supply the Paper.”\(^ {50}\) This measure seems mostly concerned with controlling price discounts, while keeping their affiliated newsagents to full-priced sales only.\(^ {51}\) To increase circulation, Lippard began offering editions of his own works as extras for new subscriptions, and he was furious when both T.B. Peterson and M'Makin began offering similar deals for their papers.\(^ {52}\)

Lippard also found himself responsible for generating a huge amount of writing each week. He had worked for the story papers for years and was able to write his fiction very rapidly, but filling an entire paper each week was a daunting task when each issue could easily contain the equivalent of a medium-length book. To cope with this volume, he began his paper by re-serializing *The Quaker City* in addition to new works including the novel *Memoirs of a Preacher*. By the second week, Lippard announced his intention to regain full control of the copyright for his then partly finished city-crime novel, *The Empire City*, to continue that work in place of *The Quaker City* so the paper would include more new content. M'Makin was quick to increase the pressure on his rival, and described Lippard's paper as “a new weekly, for the republication, in a popular form, of his own works,” leaving Lippard to print a correction in his own paper.\(^ {53}\)

Their feud quickly escalated. Along with slights and competition over subscriptions,
Lippard felt put out by M'Makin's refusal to print a prospectus for *The Quaker City* even when offered twice the standard rate. He was particularly shocked when M'Makin, his defender during the scandal that accompanied *The Quaker City*, attacked the vulgarity of crime writers. M'Makin had made the mistake of using the old line of argument that a writer of such violent and erotic fiction would make a despicable father, husband, or brother. Lippard, having poured his heart out in the pages of his paper after the death of his sister the week prior, responded in aggressive and direct terms. He accused M'Makin of using his personal tragedy for purely monetary gains:

> What was the impulse of this attack, made by Mr. M'Makin, upon a man who had only erred in having been *his* friend, we leave to our readers. It may have been that he disliked our enterprise, and feared that the withdrawal of our Legends from his columns would injuriously affect his paper. He may have done this thing as a simple business speculation, but – we submit it to the judgment of the community – could he not have chosen a better time, than the week which visited our Fireside with the hand of Death?

Lippard openly accused M'Makin of breaking the codes of decency, family, manliness, and friendship. He made these accusations in the public arena of cheap fiction, whose readers applauded these very virtues when displayed in Lippard's legends of the Revolution, and who were in any case sympathetic to Lippard's fiction and fans of the very crime writing attacked by M'Makin. While competition between the two continued the open exchange of hostilities in their papers ceased; Lippard had bested his former employer with a superior understanding of the audience for cheap fiction.

The history of Philadelphia's cheap fiction marketplace helps establish the grounds for considering the cultural impact of Lippard's writings, the sociality of the text. Lippard's fiction reflected the values and tastes of his most prized readers, the laborers and artisans of the city, but it also stood out from the other offerings in the marketplace as can be gathered from his popularity. Accounting for his entire readership is impossible, but his ability to increase the circulation numbers of story papers indicates a dedicated audience, and Lippard's public lectures and his steady progression toward labor politics indicates the kind of reader he most desired to reach. Similarly, class interest and mass appeal left their mark on the production of the texts in the distinction between Graham's publishing enterprise and the other cheap publishers of fiction represented by M'Makin's story paper and the periodical agents competing with the more
established booksellers of the day for the pennies, quarters, and dollars of the city's reading public. Their competition for market-share indicates a potential class-based distinction in the cheap fiction audience, mirroring the aesthetic distinction between the polite and moral fiction associated with the refined tastes of Graham's middle-class magazines and the violent, exciting, and sexually provocative elements of Lippard's foray into genres that would continue to define popular taste for the rest of the century. Along with the unique inventions of their narratives, the production dynamics and readership of Lippard's fiction describe the way Philadelphia's class conflicts could play out in the public forum of cheap fiction.

“Secret History” and the Revolution.

The publication history of Lippard's *The Rose of Wissahikon* tells a story of shifting economic interests, partnerships, rivalries, and the social contours of Philadelphia's cheap fiction marketplace in the 1840s. This section considers Lippard's hidden history of the Revolution as it appeared in the special Fourth of July edition of M'Makin's *Saturday Courier*. As part of the spectacle surrounding the holiday, Lippard's story delivered by depicting the patriotic history of the Declaration of Independence. The story ends with a reaffirmation of a key moment in the production of U.S. nationalism, but the apparatus of its telling could hardly be more novel. In *The Rose of Wissahikon*, the events unfolding in the Continental Congress are surrounded by layers of intrigue. Spurred by the machinations of Lady Marion, a group of aristocrats plot to arrest the members of the Congress, end the possibility of a democratic government, and install General Washington as King. The political conflict between elite and democratic interests is doubled in an intricate plot of seduction and desire, linked together by the fate of the beautiful young Rose. Lippard's “secret” history blends the erotic and criminal elements of the city-crime genre with the political and nationalist implications of his legends of the Revolution, suggesting that the politics of class are inadequately considered in either the realm of embodied interest or the abstract political order alone.

In this section, I argue that Lippard's *Rose of Wissahikon* placed U.S. nationalism under revision by returning the presence of class conflict to the revolutionary origin of the nation-state.
Lippard used the genre conventions of cheap fiction and the narrative mechanics of hidden history to question class, criminality, and access to political legitimacy, all of which, Lippard felt, had become stabilized in support of the interests of capital rather than the citizenry. To this end, *The Rose of Wissahikon* offers a critique of the conditions driving political participation in print in the eighteenth-century public sphere. The conventions of the public sphere's political discourse imagined a realm of political engagement free from the personal economic interests of its participants. By surrounding the textual history of the Declaration with narratives of personal interest, Lippard reinvested the narrative of the nation's origin with class struggle.

The *Rose of Wissahikon* also manifests the tension between U.S. nationalism and labor politics in its narrative form, working toward a resolution through its combination of genres. The resonance of two political moments in his legends, one revolutionary and one founded in class antagonisms, necessitated the blend of aesthetic registers. Even in “The Fourth of July, 1776,” before his departure into hidden history, Lippard envisioned another nationalist symbol, the Liberty Bell, invoking both the past and the present for his readers:

There is a terrible poetry in the sound of that State House Bell at dead of night, when striking its sullen and solemn --One!-- It rouses crime from its task, mirth from its wine-cup, murder from its knife, bribery from its gold.... but there was a day when the echo of that Bell awoke a world, slumbering in tyranny and crime! Yes, as the old man swung the Iron Tongue, the Bell spoke to all the world. That sound crossed the Atlantic – pierced the dungeons of Europe – the work-shops of England – the vassal-fields of France. The Echo spoke to the slave – bade him look from his toil-- and know himself a man. (Washington, 393)

Linked by the symbolic importance of the Liberty Bell, the nation-state resonates as both the juridical apparatus against which Philadelphia's criminality is defined and the answer to the global systems of exploited, coerced labor. Implicitly, the ongoing criminality of the 1840s becomes a symptom of the unfulfilled promise of a democratic society, where unequal economic development threatened to undermine the values attributed to and held by the American people. By bringing the Revolution back into Philadelphia's papers, Lippard's fiction offered a new generation the opportunity to engage in questions seemingly decided long before their time: the political formation of nationalism if not the nation-state.

The political nature of *The Rose of Wissahikon* begins with its claim to know the secret
history of the Declaration of Independence. History is the description of the past in narrative
terms, and the recovery of secret, or “hidden” histories, is fundamentally a political act as
Michel-Rolph Trouillot succinctly suggests: “What history is changes with time and place or,
better said, history reveals itself only through the production of specific narratives. What matters
most are the process and conditions of production of such narratives.... Only through [the
overlap of what happened and what is said to have happened] can we discover the differential
exercise of power that makes some narratives possible and silences others.”56 Lippard's novel
negotiates between historical accuracy and the very politics of history's production, and
consequently it is not merely the history of the Declaration that is under revision in The Rose of
Wissahikon, but rather the relations of its production as well. The novel's attempt to reintroduce
class politics to U.S. nationalism is therefore founded in a clash between the power dynamics of
Philadelphia's cheap fiction marketplace in the 1840s and the print culture of the eighteenth
century.

In The Letters of the Republic, Michael Warner reaches a number of essential conclusions
concerning the political nature of print in the Revolutionary era and the Early Republic. First, in
arguing against the technological determination of printing on society, he shows that printing did
not guarantee the emergence of republicanism and the corresponding enlightenment subject for it
did not produce the same results in every location where print technology developed. Contrary
to the causational model of materialism, there was no great change between earlier-colonial and
Revolutionary-era print technology, and resource scarcity remained a factor even as the trade
flourished. Rather, the discourse surrounding republicanism in the North American colonies
imbued print with meaning that located it among the many contributing factors of the
Revolutionary moment. The increase in the number of printers during this time was due less to
material changes than the uses of printing, which were fast becoming central to the idea of
political life.57 Akin to Benedict Anderson's argument in Imagined Communities, which
describes the newspaper as producing a national consciousness among readers, Warner
concludes that the growing cultural expectations linking the political life of the people with the
public sphere of letters helped transform the function of newspapers into a metric of intellectual
freedom and rational thought. The change in meaning was not the discovery of the natural role
of the newspaper in crafting such a public consciousness. Rather, it was a particular cultural
moment that transformed the function of newspapers from sources of information about distant
places to a venue for local political discussion, critique, and news. Building on Jürgen Habermas's observations on the structural transformation of the public sphere and political power more generally, Warner emphasizes that the shift in political power mirrors the shift in government more generally, from Monarchy, or “a world in which power embodied in special persons is represented before the people,” toward democracy, "in which power is constituted by a discourse in which people are represented,” with discourse linked to its physical print media: newspapers and pamphlets (39).58 It was not print alone, but the shift in political power to the reader, that made the public sphere an analogue to and precursor for the modern, democratic nation-state.

For Warner, the key feature of the public sphere was the construction of its participants through self-negation, separating their private and personal experiences from the disinterested subjectivity required by the era's conventions of public debate. Upon entering the political conversation transpiring in the public sphere, readers were asked to assume a virtuous disinterestedness in judging the matter at hand for the public good. The negation of the subject, or participant in this political conversation, is implicit, and is described as follows:

[The print public sphere is ordered by] a discourse in which publicity will be impersonal by definition. Persons who enter this discourse do so on the condition that the validity of their utterance will bear a negative relation to their persons. These perspectives are not to be separated: the impersonality of public discourse is seen both as a trait of its medium and as a norm for its subjects. Moreover, a special feature of the political order will follow, since the government can no longer remain indifferent to this independent public discourse, but must regard its relation to the public discourse as a criterion of its legitimacy. A complex network of assumptions appears here in order to render the printing of [politically critical] pamphlet[s] normal, and for the rest of the century the presses would creak in elaborating it. (38-9)59

As authorship undertook the anonymity of pseudonyms and readership became an active form of political participation, the object of public letters became the supervision of those offices regulating and ordering society. The discourse of printing that empowered the public sphere for authority and oversight enacted in practice the beginning of the political shift of government authority from the government itself to the people, positing a political authority apart from the
Lippard's secret history of the Declaration of Independence does not concern itself with either the general development of discontent with British rule during the eighteenth century, nor does it narrate emblematic public debates such as can be found in the Federalist and Anti-Federalist papers. Nevertheless, the Declaration itself is a document deeply rooted in the traditions of public sphere discourse as outlined by Warner. The Declaration depends on a Lockean perception of government as a social contract among people, and the decision to dissolve ties to Britain is grounded in the power of a people to critique the function of government. The Declaration's long, detailed list of wrongs committed by the crown is the embodiment of an independent public discourse rivaling the role of state-power itself, and is at once directed against the state and addressed to the populace. Importantly, it is the act of reading the list of grievances, rather than writing it, that activates the political agency of the people at large. For the Declaration, the importance of reading as a political act is particularly emphasized by the nature of its drafting. It is delivered in the same plural tense as would later anchor the Constitution to the public sphere: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal” and “We, the people of the United States.” For the Declaration, authorial agency is vested in both the collective, impersonal nature of the public sphere and its political agency. It was commissioned by the Second Continental Congress, and delegated to a committee for preparation. The first draft was produced by Thomas Jefferson, revised by Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, and then adopted by the Congress. Therefore, while it is possible to attach authorship to the document, it was placed before the public as the production of Congress itself, which was acting as governmental proxy for the people. The document was written as a declaration to be read by the people, but was also a manifestation of their collective political will. As Christopher Looby describes in *Voicing America*, the Declaration of Independence is “the paradigm of such self-recognizing acts of nation-making, the auto-referential rhetorical act that claims to be effectively founding the nation.”\textsuperscript{60} Theoretically, at least, reading amounted to ratification at the origin of the United States.

In this analysis, the regulatory and political role of the public sphere in the eighteenth century structured the drafting and reception of the Declaration of Independence. Ultimately, as Trouillot would remind us, this hypothetical reading of the text depends on a narrative of political and social participation in letters. How people entered the public sphere as writers and
readers through negation and the political agency such writing seized as a result are self-evident from the period's texts. However, the Declaration continued to be read long after its original moment of composition had passed, and Lippard's *Rose of Wissahikon* revisits through the revelation of the novel’s “secret” history not merely the Declaration, but production of the text itself. By revising the relations of the eighteenth-century public sphere, Lippard's novel reveals the effects of power by which class politics were erased in the mythos of the nation's origin and, more broadly, theories of democratic participation.

Far from celebrating the political agency of the public sphere, *The Rose of Wissahikon* narrates a deep uneasiness with the very nature of representational politics. Like the liberty bell myth, the novel juxtaposes the events transpiring in the State House with a crowd of anxious onlookers. Lippard's earlier attempts to paint the picture emphasized the relationship between the aged laborer in the bell-tower and the wealthy young boy, and it is only through their mutual participation that Liberty is proclaimed by the ringing of the bell. In his secret history, the crowd returns, but whereas Lippard was careful in his earlier legend to emphasize inclusion of class, religion, and gender among the crowd awaiting the announcement, *The Rose of Wissahikon* transforms the scene by emphasizing the crowd's economic identities (“merchant,” “mechanic,” “farmer,” and “laborer” exclusively), while marking their exclusion from the political activity transpiring within the State House. Reverting to midnight on July 3rd, the novel describes the crowd as being drawn by a “strange rumor” resulting from the “secret session” of the Continental Congress (51). An “immense” cloud “so black, so dense, so like a pall” gathered over the State House, and the only detail showing the activity within is the “light, through carefully closed curtains, com[ing] forth in trembling rays, and die[ing] on the darkness of the lawn” (51). The foreboding description and the secretive nature of political power is overcome by Lippard's narrative voice, which leaves behind the crowd's trepidation as it guides the reader clandestinely up stairs, along dark passages, and into the small Council Chamber of the State House. A large curtain separates the room from the door, providing a final secret space within the room itself, and it is here that the plotters hide with swords drawn ready to arrest the drafters of the Declaration. Inside the room, Thomas Jefferson has just presented his version of the Declaration for consideration by the others on the committee: John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingstone. The historical time-line is compressed, but the spirit and mechanics of the Declaration's composition remains intact.
At the climax of the novel, the drafting of the Declaration is rendered for the reader with multiple levels of action unfolding simultaneously. Awareness of the plotters hiding just behind the curtains increases the scene's suspense, and could be expected to add a layer of “right” and “wrong” underwritten by obvious class valences to the narrative. They represent, after all, an aristocratic counter-revolution, and the narrative resolution with history that must follow (through the founding of the nation as a democracy) is only possible through the failure of their plans. The novel does not, however, make its resolution a matter of course. The aristocratic counter-revolutionaries, while villainous, occupy a relationship to the narrative surprisingly similar to the reader's own experience. For both, the act of witnessing state-power in person involves a criminal act: trespassing. For the novel, becoming an active agent in relation to state-power is not merely the treasonous act of rebellion. (Rebellion is occupied by the members of the Congress, acting as representatives of a new political collectivity in relation to the old authority of colonial law.) Lippard's narrative suggests that approaching state-power without self-negation, either in representation or through the public sphere, is to define oneself as criminal – an individual acting outside of the prerogative of the norms established for the good of the collective civic body. Both the readers, who carry with them the embodied economic categories of the crowd milling outside of the State House (as well as the interests underwriting the cheap fiction publication industry of the 1840s) and the aristocratic counter-revolutionaries figuratively bring the politics of capital back into the secret deliberations of the abstracted political order of the nation-state.

Like the crowd gathered anxiously outside the State House, the counter-revolutionaries are defined by their exclusion from state power. Unlike the crowd, the plotters are the “chivalry of the state and continent” with “wealth at their beck, who never having shared in council or battle, beat with fiery impatience to do some service to their native land” (37). In patriotic terms, they too seek freedom from British rule and are dedicated to their own particular vision of the Revolution: “The country – the land which bore us, and which God has given to the free – calls to us for deliverance! Not deliverance merely from the scepter of George III, but from the wiles of faction – the tricks of anarchists!” (37). Faction is a watch-word for the problem of self-interest in politics, the incomplete negation of self and failure to assume a virtuous public persona in government leading to the exploitations of government for further gain. Walter, the leader of the plotters, elaborates on their position:
For days the Congress, sitting in the old statehouse, has held its secret session! For days with closed doors, and all the indications of mystery, it has pursued its deliberations! To what purpose do these mysterious councils tend? Witness the intercepted letters of the leaders, now spread before you on the table – witness the signatures of Hancock, and Jefferson, and Adams! They would flood the land with blood, not to accomplish its freedom, but to establish on the ruins of the British power the miserable anarchy of a Venetian Senate. They would pour armies forth on the battle field, not so much to crush King George, as to crush George Washington! (37)

As it will turn out, the “letters, papers, and parchments” offered as evidence against Hancock, Jefferson, and Adams are forgeries, but within the scene they signify an important distinction between elite and common class interests. In both cases, an effort to bring the politics of capitalism into the realm of political government implies the conflict of self-interest with virtuous, disinterested participation in government. The interests of the crowd are held in check by the very apparatus of state power; they remain upstanding citizens primarily through their obedience to the law, refusing to trespass the authority of government (and hence to become criminalized) and consequently they experience their relationship to the state as anxiety over whether the government in turn will work on their behalf. The plotters occupy a different (and hence unequal) relationship to the state by way of a favorite trope of Lippard's city-crime writing: the belief that the law does not apply equally to the wealthy, who consequently go unpunished for crimes, facilitating licentious behavior and relationships of exploitation. It is for this reason that the motivations of Walter and his fellow plotters seem virtuous and patriotic, if aligned with aristocratic class interests. The accusation against Hancock, Jefferson, and Adams is based on personal interest, discrediting their authority as agents of government. The plotters, on the other hand, seek instead an abstracted politics supportive of aristocracy in general rather than their own interests. Though this serves their personal interests as a matter of course, it does so through the discursive criteria of the public sphere, achieving a generalized interest through self-alienation. The members of the crowd remain isolated as private citizens in spite of their intense publicity, whereas the aristocrats attain a virtuous public standing while retaining the full benefits of their privacy: private property.

Already, *The Rose of Wissahikon* exhibits a deep uneasiness concerning the terms and conditions contingent to participation in the eighteenth-century public sphere. Along with the
problems surrounding the process of self-negation and the attainment of disinterested virtue, the novel questions the core political function attributed to public letters during the Revolutionary era. When political legitimacy shifted toward the democratic state-form, public approbation became an essential component of government. Observation and judgment of government consequently became the prerogative of the public sphere. The central grievance of the public in the novel is exclusion from the secret session of Congress. The masses, represented by the crowd, are alienated from active participation in the political life of the state, for they are barred from witnessing the function of state power in even its nascent form. The aristocratic plotters, with more skill, attain the posture of disinterested virtue required by the public sphere, as well as its attendant role as regulatory overseer of government. As the basis of political participation, observation and judgment consequently positions each citizen as an incarnation of the juridical order and law itself. A crisis, Lippard suggests, occurs when the limits of subjective individual observation attains a status equal to the political order of the state.

Once again, Lippard rejects an easy assessment of the aristocratic plotters. Walter and his fellow conspirators base their decision to invade the State House and arrest the members of Congress on hard visual evidence. They have the intercepted private correspondence (fakes, of course) of the committee members as proof of their treachery, and even their coup will take place in traditional juridical terms. Their plan is to “force from their grasp the proofs of their treachery,” thereby securing further evidence to support their own extra-legal actions, and after the plotters reveal themselves, they declare the committee “prisoners,” announcing to them, “we are forced to control your liberty, until the People know your crime” (55). In every respect, the aristocratic counter-revolutionaries hold true to the political dictates of the public sphere. Their shortcoming results from the unsteady basis of their first conclusion on the forgeries of the committee's private correspondence, but it is from the untrustworthiness of ostensibly empirical evidence that the shortcomings of subjective judgment are illustrated in the novel.

If the plotters obtain something similar to the role of a police force in the narrative (along with the roles of judge, jury, and turnkey), collecting evidence and apprehending suspects, the drafting session of the Declaration becomes the main evidence against the participants in Congresses' secret session. Joining Lippard and the reader, the plotters are poised behind the curtain in the room as Jefferson presents his draft for revision. The crisis of the public sphere as a political order stems from the inability of the plotters to “correctly” judge the historical episode
unfolding before them because of their preconceived notions of the committee's guilt. The declaration is debated, read aloud, and then the committee enters discussion on the form of government the new nation will take. Adams suggests emulating the English system, with internal checks and balances on state power. Franklin parodies this suggestion, and his criticism is seconded by Sherman and Livingston; he suggests that the English system is essentially a class-based system with “the King pulling one way, the house of lords tugging another, while the commons is hauled about by both together!” (54). On these words, the conspirators shift uneasily behind the curtain. For them, only one interpretation remains: they entered the State House believing the committee planned to establish an “aristocratic anarchy” to the exclusion of their own families, and consequently they interpret Franklin's meaning as a condemnation of the balance of power generally, rather than as a critique of the relatively powerless role of the people as represented in the house of commons. The plotters are convinced of their own justification based on this moment of misreading. The other content of the scene is ignored, the reading of the Declaration does not move them with its inborn Republican ideals, and even Lippard's last narrative twist does not derail their actions as they burst onto the scene and place the Committee under arrest. In a final twist, Jefferson wishes for a unanimous adoption of the Declaration, but one “lately elected Delegate from the State of --- ... has not yet taken his seat” (54). Jefferson names the missing delegate as Reginald Lansdowne who is none other than Walter (an alias), the leader of the plotters. However, instead of taking his place as an elected official, Walter continues to act out the political imperative of the public sphere, convinced of the Congress's self-interest and unaware of the fallacy of his own perceptions.

Between the exclusion from political life of the crowd gathered around the State House and the mistaken perceptions of the plotters, The Rose of Wissahikon envisions a third relationship to state power on behalf of the novel's reader. Rejecting a passive relationship to the state may be a transgressive, criminal act, but the novel argues that the same is true of history told through theoretical narratives, such as the public sphere, that can celebrate notions of political freedom and agency while eradicating questions of class conflict from the record. For his readers in The Saturday Courier, Lippard offered an alternate history that read the interests of class back into the political foundation of the nation-state.

Three key features of the scene remain impenetrable to the aristocratic counter-revolutionaries. First, the version of the Declaration read by Jefferson is not the one eventually
adopted by the Congress, but rather Jefferson's original draft, which included radical sentiments regarding the inherent political rights of all people, regardless of social standing. Foremost among these notions is Jefferson's inclusion of the political disenfranchisement of slaves along with the other grievances attributed to the rule of King George III. In Lippard's novel, after Jefferson reads the Declaration aloud, John Adams replies: “I am delighted with its high tone – its flights of oratory; especially that concerning negro slavery, which, however, I am afraid will touch our Southern brethren who own slaves ---” (52). Jefferson wrote strongly against slavery in his draft, drawing on Lockean notions of the inherent political rights of people:

[The King] has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captiving and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither.... Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the LIBERTIES of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.61

The politics of Jefferson's sentiments are complex, not least because he himself was a slaveholder and famously perpetuated standard tropes of racial inferiority in his other writings. Moreover, while this passage posits an inborn right to political agency on behalf of those enslaved, it rhetorically demarcates a race line between the new-formed civic body of the rebelling colonies and people of African descent. Nevertheless, the radical formulation of the political rights of slaves is a significant outgrowth of the democratic ideals driving Jefferson's vision of government, which embraced the populace.

The second lengthy passage expunged from Jefferson's draft by the Committee extended the charges against the crown, and denounced the British population itself. Together, both passages indicate Jefferson's political emphasis on the body politic in its totality in the course of government. In terms of the novel, Lippard does not reprint Jefferson's sentiments, allowing Adams’ commentary to be the reader's only hint regarding his draft's abolitionist sentiment. The
aristocratic plotters hear this version, but Lippard chose to abstain from any more specific mention of anti-slavery sentiments at this time, focusing instead on the concerns of labor in general rather than race.

While Jefferson's draft elaborates the Declaration's message of radical equality in terms of slavery and the political agency of social compact, Lippard further extends Jefferson's ideals in the scene. Although by no means in the original draft, Lippard's Jefferson states that the people must also “declare the rights of man, the individual, sacred above all craft in priesthood or government” (53). For Lippard, the French Revolution's Rights of Man are reduced to what is recognizable as his own political agenda:

They must, at one blow, declare the end of all those trickeries of English Law, which garnered up from the charnels of age, bind the heart and will with lies. They must perpetuate republican truth, by declaring the homestead of every American, a holy thing, which no law can touch, no juggle wrest, from his wife and children. Until this is done, the Revolution will have been fought in vain. (53)

Jefferson insisted that a yeoman citizenry, consisting of rural small landowners, was the best safeguard for democracy. Lippard, surely thinking of his own family's history of land dispossession, would similarly advocate for the socialization of the economy by emphasizing the sanctity of the home. The religious reservation, enunciated here through the description of the homestead as a “holy thing,” foreshadows the core rhetoric of Lippard's own nationalist-labor movement, the Brotherhood of the Union. In this case, Jefferson's reference to the Rights of Man is most legible as an extension of Lippard's labor politics into his nationalist mythos for the readership of cheap fiction in the 1840s.

While Jefferson's draft version of the Declaration and his advocacy for the rights of man both suggest the radical nature of the committee's intent to foreground democratic freedom rather than an “aristocratic anarchy” as the plotters fear, it is Jefferson's final proclamation that most explicitly confounds their belief that the committee's actions are either treasonous or in their own interests. Lippard uses Jefferson's character once more as the most politically sympathetic to his own political agenda. When responding to Adams and Franklin arguing over the future state-form of the nation, Lippard's Jefferson denounces centralized government altogether:

Our People must take care that the labor, the blood of the Revolution, is not spent in vain. There is one evil, above all others, which I fear – the government of this Confederacy
centralized at the Capitol, surrounded by innumerable hordes of officeholders, dependent on its will, and backed by a Judiciary independent of the People. You may talk, gentlemen, of an age not being prepared for the progress into perfect freedom, you may whisper 'It is not yet time!' but the word of God, the history of centuries, attests the fact, that for a people determined to be wholly free, it is always Time; that for an age resolved to work out its destiny, it is always Day! (54)

The ideals of the Revolution and the Declaration are dislocated from the nation's state form, and it is at this final moment that the narrative function of hidden history is most harmonious with the novel's narrative form. As an auto-referential act, the Declaration of Independence is celebrated as the origin of the nation-state. When attributed to Jefferson's authorship in Lippard's retelling, Jefferson in turn detaches the celebration of nationalism (a cluster of values associated with freedom and independence) from a celebration of the state. Lippard's characterization of Jefferson achieves this not by inventing a fiction where this holds true, but through the recognition of the state by Jefferson as it is for Lippard's readership in the 1840s: an abstracted, disciplinary political institution rather than an active political conversation among citizens.

In all three cases, Lippard uses Jefferson as a vehicle to naturalize his vision of class-based politics back within U.S. nationalism. Walter and the plotters are unable to cognitively assimilate these three moments, as his decision to continue with the plot to depose the drafters of the Declaration proves. The sentiments of the secret session are neither traitorous (they too are nationalistic, and against the crown), nor are they inclined to aristocratic anarchy. They do, however, represent class interests opposite to those motivating the aristocratic counter-revolutionaries. Walter's continued appeal to the political order of the public sphere, arresting the committee “until the People know [their] crime,” is directly at odds with the character of Jefferson's vision of socialized-democracy. The only “crime” revealed is a plea for social equality regulated through government.

In its depiction of the drafting of the Declaration, The Rose of Wissahikon exhibits a deep uneasiness with the role of the public sphere as the basis for the nation-state, and offered its readers an alternative vision of the conditions under which political independence were crafted. Warner's model of the public sphere follows Jürgen Habermas and Benedict Anderson, and describes how the “bourgeois public sphere” of “print capitalism” formed the pre-conditions of U.S. nationalism by constructing the imagined community as a political entity outside of the
authority of the sovereign or nation-state. The problem I seek to address is how this use of imagination so easily leaps over the impositions of capital, and hence class, through this negation of the subject. For though the models that guide Warner's formulation of this aspect of eighteenth-century print culture emphasize the role of class (bourgeois) and economy (capital) as a precondition for participation in this alternative political space, the role of capital becomes troublingly entwined with an erasure of class conflict in the discourse of U.S. nationalism in Warner's analysis.

By definition, the public sphere required the abstraction of its participants from the mortal sphere of necessity, represented by the notion of “disinterest.” In leaving the personal, embodied realm behind, the virtuous subject was required to decide matters placed before it by judging from the perspective of the public good, thus entering a state of negation in relation to the self. Although economic matters were often the subject of these debates, particularly issues of paper currency, a national bank, taxes, trade policy, or slavery, the public sphere formed a place where rational thought is said to have existed independently from (and superior to) economic matters. While Habermas and Anderson both suggest a fundamental link to material conditions by appending “bourgeois” to the phrase public sphere and “capitalism” to print respectively, the claim remains that the conversation transpiring in print was cordoned off from the bodily existence of participants. For Warner's study, this is a fundamental fact of the public sphere, which can be seen in its demise.

Even if we forget for a moment the “bourgeois” requirement for participation or the role that access to capital had in facilitating the business of printing by focusing instead on the discourse surrounding the public sphere, Warner's conclusions suggest the long-term inability to maintain a structural separation between abstract reason and embodied necessity. The downfall of the public sphere is said to have occurred in two ways. First, in analyzing the rhetorical construction of the Constitution, Warner shows that the intellectual crisis surrounding the legality of law found a solution through appeals to the public sphere as co-signer of the national charter. The cost of this appeal is steep. The Constitution enacts the abstraction of the people from embodied citizens as authority for its own authority, transforming the political condition of negation in the print public sphere into government itself. In doing so, it erases the difference between the state and the people as political agents, folding the revolutionary act of public supervision through critical observation back into the regulatory institutions of the new state.
The result begins the transformation of the public sphere as a community of political participation into a citizenship defined by an isolated relationship to the state: “by means of print discourse we have come to imagine a community simultaneous with but not proximate to ourselves: separate persons having the same relation to a corporate body realized only metonymically” (Warner 112). In other words, as the political order of the public sphere became formalized in the Constitution, people became endowed as political citizens in relation to the nation-state. They relinquished the first-hand political conversation among peers in exchange for a political power by and through the state, but as negated subjects their political interests became once more fully personal and interested. Now lacking “legitimate representational space outside of the constitutive we” of the Constitutional “we the people,” the new citizen was returned to their body but divided from their political agency. Theoretically, at least, this transformation displaced the role played by the local politics of embodied people and small communities into the realm of personal interest to be regulated by the state.

But even if the Constitution embraces the logic of the public sphere, the cultural life of the surrounding discourse remained intact in the assumptions, practices, and beliefs of the people. The second transformation in Warner's study accounts for the end of this aspect of the public sphere. It makes structural sense that if the political content of the public sphere were to take one path of transformation, the remaining component, print, would follow another. Re-enter capitalism. Just as a printed text is also a commodity, the act of reading was both political (as understood by the discourse surrounding the public sphere) and an economic practice. (If pamphlets were sometimes distributed at no cost, the print shops were nevertheless places of business offering other texts and commodities as well.) As such, Warner identifies a set of competing values about what a reader should be: virtuous or polite.62 Whereas virtue required the transcendence of personal interest, politeness depended on a self-crafted identity through which people could compete for social esteem (142). For Warner, the novel's “generic conditions required that any public identification found [in fiction]... be an imaginary one. The reader of a novel might have a virtuous orientation, but his or her virtue would be experienced privately rather than in the context of civic action. So the novel, despite the most rigorous intentions of its authors, developed a nationalist imaginary of the modern type” (150). The privatization of the author, the rise of critical praise for textual ambiguity rather than the assumption that print meant what it said, and sympathy, that index of embodied emotion that it
is, together mark the end of the Republic of Letters as print evolved from a conveyor of political discourse to one where fiction, and privacy, predominates.

And yet, just what is lost in this schism of the public sphere into nation-state on the one hand and a fiction marketplace on the other? Did the rational abstraction of the public sphere represent freedom, as it posits, from necessity? Have we subsequently succumbed to the divisions of life into a dual subjection to the nation-state and the economy? This end-point seems startlingly similar to the situation prior to the emergence of the public sphere during the Revolution if we have. What is lost with the vanishing of a public sphere built on the abstraction of the participant that reproduces the interchangeability of value in commerce (via money) in the political order between people (through their negation)? I do not contest Warner's conclusions, but I do contest the vilified role that fiction (and particularly sentiment) assume as destroyers of the public sphere and harbingers of a dominant liberal logic of economics and contract. To read fiction this way is to perpetuate a tradition of American exceptionalism that lifts the public sphere above the tawdry realm of necessity.

This longish account of Warner's study has been necessary, for the historical eighteenth-century public sphere plays an essential role in shaping U.S. nationalism today. Indeed, the roots of American exceptionalism begin by distinguishing the nation's origin from other conflicts in the Age of Revolution. This differentiation relies on the public sphere's abstraction from the personal and its necessities to argue that the U.S. Revolution transpired by and through the freedom of thought rather than through the struggles of the body. As a result, American exceptionalism has its foundation in the erasure of class struggle.

The crux of the thesis that differentiates between the U.S. and the French Revolutions depends on the difference of social and economic conditions in colonial America and continental Europe. In On Revolution, political theorist Hannah Arendt develops this distinction as the groundwork for an extensive analysis of the nature of constitutions and their dependence on constitutive power. By focusing on government and law as the register of the political, Arendt displaces the political role that economics play in shaping society. More precisely, the subordination of economic questions to the juridical existence of the nation-state becomes the criteria for differentiating between two revolutionary traditions. Arendt's interpretation of the U.S. and French Revolutions begins with the following claim:

What on the other hand posed the most urgent and the politically least solvable
problem to all other revolutions, the social question in the form of the terrifying predicament of mass poverty, played hardly any role in the course of the American Revolution. Not the American Revolution, but the existence of conditions in America that had been established and were well known in Europe long before the Declaration of Independence, nourished the revolutionary élan in Europe. (17)

For Arendt, the French Revolution becomes the genealogical origin for European revolutions throughout the next two centuries, particularly for the German and Russian Revolutions, which not only shared an emphasis on social justice (as defined by class struggle), but which also were influenced by Hegelian and Marxist conceptions of historical necessity and development through dialectical progression (47-8). As Arendt argues, the intellectual exchanges between the founding fathers of the American Revolution and European contemporaries, or even the French modeling of declarations and constitutions on American examples, are influences that were far outstripped by the example of wealth and private property available to emigrants in the colonies. With unlimited resources thrown open to European civilization in the Americas, the conditions for social upheavals based on class inequality are said to be absent from the U.S. Revolution.63

The unmitigated positive effect in Arendt's interpretation stems from the emergence of the right to political participation found in the American example, albeit in circumscribed form. Liberty as freedom from unjustified restraint, or to be free of want and fear, are negative protections for Arendt, and all fall short of what she identifies as the essential positive right that the American Revolution succeeded in producing: “all these liberties... are the results of liberation but they are by no means the actual content of freedom, which... is participation in public affairs, or admission to the public realm” (25). While the U.S. Revolution is moved out of the material world and into the abstractions of the public sphere in this manner, the opposed driving force of revolution globally becomes its antithesis: “instead of freedom necessity became the chief category of political and revolutionary thought” (46). Arendt's definition of good revolution is strongly tied to the existence of the nation-state, and does not tolerate the shift into the material-historical register that Marxism uses to describe changes in the social order. This definition is limited by the problem of the chain linking nation and state, and neglects the changing social existence of nations over time while raising the revolutionary origins to a dominant moment of political authority. One problem immediately suggests itself from Warner's
study of the public sphere's demise: the moment of political freedom that drives Arendt to these conclusions is quickly subverted by the imperatives of the market and the liberal social organization that Warner suggested replaced the world view of the people who imagined the public sphere into being.

Conversely, Antonio Negri argues that in Arendt's model of the American and European revolutions “we can recognize above all a formidable effort to fix the illusion that liberalism may constitute the sense and the totality, the foundation and the limit of the human community.” Expanding the theory of state power past its origin, Negri emphasizes the dichotomy between ongoing contemporary constituent power (the living civic body of nations) and the constituted power present during the founding of the state. As a result, he notes that regardless of the philosophical understandings of the Constitution's claim to power, in history the crisis between John Adams’ conservatism and Thomas Jefferson's social-democratism represented “a reopened revolution that already begins to exalt the dialectic between the democratic spirit of the masses and the active role of the State, even with the aim of determining the free constitution of the market” (169). Arendt's model downplays the internal struggles of the Revolutionary Era and Early Republic typified by the disparate aims of Adams and Jefferson, and more broadly in the party system between Federalists and Democrats. The challenge is to recall the presence of ongoing revolutionary struggles toward social equality excluded by the narrow bourgeoisification of the nation's origin and its elaboration in nationalism. Indeed, while the freedom for participation in public affairs is a strong positive right, scholars have recently emphasized the role played by popular opinion in requiring the Bill of Rights as an addendum to the national charter as a guide for protecting the citizen from the newly Constituted state – not to promote political enfranchisement but instead to protect the individual from the state’s power. The presence of this struggle can be found not merely in the historical archive or national politics, but also in the altering structure of the print public sphere as its political origins encountered the emergence of fiction as a commodity.

The Rose of Wissahikon's publication in Philadelphia's story papers challenges the aesthetic divide between publicity and privacy that guides Warner's conclusions about the demise of the public sphere as an open forum for political participation. Certainly, the economic interests surrounding cheap fiction's production and consumption disqualify it; the novel falls far short of the virtuous disinterest and self-negation associated with the public sphere. However,
the novel's skeptical depiction of the relationship of print and political activity suggests that any assumption of disinterest is nevertheless underwritten by relationships to capital, with those who appear freest from economic compulsion unlikely to be as disinterested as they think. Lippard's refusal to separate economic from political life in his fanciful depiction of the nation's founding suggests that fiction can achieve political engagement not in spite of, but through the modeling of privatized subjectivity. Consequently, the novel's seduction narratives assume a powerful political importance as the antithesis to the play of state power enacted behind the State House's closed doors and pulled curtains.

Harkening back to the seduction romances (the forerunners of intensely privatized fiction) that captivated readers during the Early Republic, *The Rose of Wissahikon* places the young and innocent Rose at the center of the novel's erotic counter-plot. Seduction romances emphasized embodied interest and the navigation of erotic desire on the path to marriage, normative domesticity, and seclusion from public life. In Lippard's city-crime writing more broadly, the erotics of seduction and sexual exploitation reflect the relations of capital. Like *The Quaker City*, *The Rose of Wissahikon* depicts the socially elite and wealthy aristocratic conspirators as the perpetrators of frauds meant to entrap and sexually exploit Rose. Lippard himself expressed the class valences driving the crime of seduction:

> In crushing the honor of an unprotected girl, he had only followed out the law which the Lady and Gentleman of Christian Society recognize with tacit reverence. Seduce a rich maiden? Wrong the daughter of a good family? Oh, this is horrible; it is a crime only paralleled in enormity by the blasphemy of God's name. But a poor girl, a servant, a domestic? Oh, no! These are fair game for the gentleman of fashionable society; upon the wrongs of such as these the fine lady looks with a light laugh and supercilious smile (*Quaker City* 417).

And yet, as Michael Denning notes, the victim in Lippard's fiction is rarely so clearly from the lower class. In Rose's case, though she has been brought up in the rustic poverty of life along the Wissahikon creek, it is ultimately revealed that she is the long-lost daughter of a wealthy planter. Denning attributes the slippage between Lippard's class politics and his attention to middle-class women as objects of seduction to “a clash between the older narrative pattern [of the seduction romance] and the new ideology of separate spheres” arising during the nineteenth century, which enforced a strict gendered dichotomy on the public and private spheres.67 There are also
distortions resulting from the shift present in Lippard's advancement of the seduction romance; the transformation of bourgeois narratives critical of the aristocracy to embody the antagonisms between the laboring poor and the emerging middle-class requires a class shift for the victim, manifested in the present case as Rose's shifting class associations and family relationships. But of all the possible symbolic representations found in Rose's character, it is least fulfilling to interpret her as a victim of nineteenth-century sex / gender systems of womanhood. Not only does she refuse to stay in her home, she spends the better part of the novel cross-dressed as a hunter and is ultimately responsible for presenting the information that ends the aristocratic counter-revolution in the State House. Lippard's use of the seduction plot in *The Rose of Wissahikon* suggests that Rose (as a private, embodied, and sexualized subject) represents an alternative to the isolation of political will in the nation-state.

Rose is the object of two competing seduction plots. Both are perpetrated by men linked to the aristocracy, and both ultimately depend on different levels of knowledge regarding Rose's situation for their motivations. Gerald Moynton is the brother of Lady Marion, and both are sympathetic to the crown. Moynton is privy to Lady Marion's plotting, and knows that while “the Rose of Wissahikon yesterday was but a poor peasant maid. Now, she is the heiress of some sweet lands, and delicious stores of gold” (45). Moynton's desire is tied to Rose's attractiveness as a commodity in the marriage market, and his seduction is consequently contrived through avenues derived from the socially dominant logics of the day. Appealing to evidence and the regulatory power of the public sphere, Moynton produces a charade in which an astrologer promises to reveal the fate of her long-lost brother. Rose, dressed in male garb, has left her rural home and awaits the revelation in the summerhouse on the grounds of Lady Marion's mansion. Moynton presents himself as her brother, with the astrologer's sham as visual evidence. However, Rose is not allowed even the freedom of response to the manipulated evidence; at the same instant “a mass of perfumed vapor, rolling in soft clouds, fills the pavilion, and penetrates the veins of the unprotected girl. She felt all power over her limbs or motions gliding from her, while her mind shone out in renewed vigor. A lulling sensation pervaded every nerve, a dreamy languor, the result of the pungent vapor, which filled the place, possessed her form; she had not power to move a hand or a foot, while her very soul shrank within her at the sight of this man, with the pale face and leaden eyes” (47). Rose is transformed through the effects of the drug into a completely subjected sexual object – the ultimate in body-control.
Continuing the confusion, Moynton repeats that he is her brother, even while delighting over her quivering form and pressing her mouth with a kiss. The implied rape of the “very beautiful, the helpless Rose” is prevented only when her real brother appears and strikes Moynton from behind.

Moynton's plan places a renewed emphasis on crime (the victim's shame of rape) and legitimacy (marriage), for he wishes not only to seduce Rose sexually, but then to transform that seduction into a marriage that will grant him legal right to her wealth. This plan dispenses altogether with the need to engage Rose herself as a desiring subject (the “trick” of the libertine), and seeks only to enact the power of subjection in both their sexual and domestic future – a subjection similar in kind to the crowd gathered outside of the State House, anxious over the fate of state-power and yet held fully under its sway: “she shrank from his polluted touch with all her soul, but the misty vapor which filled the room, rendered her helpless as though she had been chained with cords of iron” (48). Moynton presents evidence fit to fool Rose's mind and demonstrates absolute control over her body, but it is finally the inconsistency in his plan that is most telling. It is never clear in the novel how he intended to effectively resolve his status as brother and husband. The effect is nevertheless twofold. It increases the scene's transgressive sexuality by incorporating the incest taboo in the seduction of Rose, heightening the power of Moynton's exploitation. It also produces a double-bind for Rose in the event of her submission through marriage: the end of Moynton's seduction would double his authority over Rose's wealth through simultaneous claims of a brother's and husband's rights. Ultimately Moynton's seduction is in tune with the methods of patriarchal dominance of women as sanctified in inheritance and marriage law, which is in turn a component of the juridical order of the nation-state.

While Moynton's desire for of Rose arises at least partly from her relationship to capital, the remaining seduction plot is based on Lippard's standard premise of sexual exploitation as a demonstration of class exploitations and unequal accountability under the law. Walter, the leader of the aristocratic counter-revolution, has neglected his fortune and his role as an elected representative to congress because he has spent a month in the wilds wooing Rose while laying a plan to abduct her. Rose has been raised by an old hunter named Michael, who has been away on a personal pilgrimage. Walter knows Michael only from a past encounter in the woods, and is on the cusp of telling him about his desire for Rose when Michael reveals his own fatherly connection to her. Walter's seduction is predicated on a bait-and-switch, for while Rose plans
willingly to elope with him, she believes that they will travel further into the frontier to live the homesteading life central to Lippard's personal vision of social reform through land ownership. Walter, however, plans to take her to the luridly named “purple chamber” in his Philadelphia mansion, presumably placing her in his power without the need to consummate their union with a public marriage. To this end he employs his black servant, Bram, to escort a “young gentleman, somewhat slender in form” to town, who will be identified “not so much by his dress, as by the white scarf which binds his eyes --” (27). Bram understands this detail to signify Rose's full entrance into the realm of private, embodied interest, associating it immediately with its sexual implications: “Da grashus goodness! Blinefold, eh? Bress a poor darkey's stars! Dat reminds me of Paris. A berry find place is Paris, only dem folks do talk so partiklar queer. And den dey aint got no common sense! Laws! Dey treats a dark brown colored gemman just like a white person, widout de 'propriate distinction ob color!” (27). Walter's seduction plot functions as the symbolic counterpoint to the events that later transpire in the State House. It enacts cultural stereotypes of blackness that find their antithesis in the sentiments on slavery found in Jefferson's draft of the Declaration, and pretends to be uninterested in economic gain while enabled by the class inequality between Walter and Rose.

Walter's desire for Rose is matched by Lippard's own intensely erotic gaze. It seems that someone is always looking at Rose, admiring her beauty, plotting her seduction, or, as Benjamin Franklin does after she swoons into his arms after delivering the documents that exonerate the members of Congress, recognizing that she is “really” a woman in spite of her male attire and bold political actions. For Lippard, the desire could only have been intensified by the similarity between Rose-the-character and Rose his wife, whom he married in a highly romantic evening ceremony on a rocky projection above the Wissahikon creek. Readers of his city-crime fiction would also be familiar with the lingering erotic depictions of women in his work more generally, which, as Denning posits, “fuse[d] the look of the seducer with the look of the protector” and drove the accusations that Lippard's works were immoral even though he proclaimed that the exposure of vice in his work was “destitute of any idea of sensualism.” 68 The emphasis on seeing and visual evidence driving Lippard's critique of the public sphere as a model of political participation finds its opposite function in the sphere of private, embodied interest as the novel’s gaze lingers on Rose's desirable form. Ultimately, though, Rose is not seduced. Just as the visual evidence condemning the Drafters is revealed as counterfeit, the novel's erotic gaze is
unable to fully possess her as an object of privacy. Rose instead becomes the novel's heroine, modeling a type of civic engagement capable of navigating the interests of capital without relinquishing her political agency to the nation-state.

At the beginning of the novel, Rose is surrounded by personal relationships structured by the ideology of liberalism. Rose has been raised in “solitude” on the banks of the Wissahikon with the old hunter, Michael. On the surface, their lifestyle appears to fulfill Lippard's belief in the sanctity of private, rural home-ownership; Rose is particularly happy and wants to elope with the newly arrived Walter (perhaps the first male other then Michael she has ever encountered) in order to establish her own domestic satisfaction on the frontier. The scenario confirms Negri's fear by manifesting a vision of private property and contract as the “sense and the totality, the foundation and the limit of the human community.” Rose has been brought up in the fiction of Arendt's model of a classless American society, in which the idyllic frontier guarantees protection from poverty, want, and the caprice of capitalism. But while Rose has been protected and well cared for in the wooded retreat, Lippard quickly reveals the violence underlying her very limited connections to the human community. In the first chapter, Michael suffers a fit while speaking to Walter, and offers a partial confession of the reason for his annual one-month absence that has allowed the young aristocrat to meet and woo Rose in similar isolation. Each year Michael returns to the spot where, dressed in native garb, he killed his own brother and sister-in-law. For one month, Michael inhabits the burned remains of their cabin, and is compelled to place a written confession in the dead woman's grave (17). Over the course of the novel, these confessions come to light, found by none other than Michael's resurrected brother, Martin Lansdowne. The confession subsequently becomes the primary proof that re-establishes Rose and her long lost brother as Martin's rightful heirs. Ironically, with Martin's return, Michael's crime is revealed to be even more heinous than he originally thinks. His double murder was driven by his own “mad” love of his brother's wife (59); rather than killing the man whose presence made his desire impossible to fulfill, his violence destroyed only the object of his love. Rose's idyllic rural upbringing is revealed to be based on the very patriarchal dominance of women's bodies that in turn threatens her as the object of seduction in the novel. The dominance of women likewise indexes the repressed violence of the frontier and capital's territorial expansion, dispelling the vision of utopic agrarian society as the basis of political freedom. The freedom from poverty alone, the novel suggests, is a poor substitute for a lack of
political agency. When isolated from the social, the relations of private life are nevertheless dangerously capable of being criminal.

Rose's relationship to Walter is likewise underwritten by complex family and inheritance ties that neither is conscious of at the outset of the novel. The two are cousins, and their union will consolidate two branches of family wealth. Moreover, while Walter would like to be nothing more than Rose's seducer, Lippard again refuses the wishful isolation of his desire from the pressures of the marketplace. During their encounter in the woods, Michael forces Walter to swear to act as Rose's protector “not only from the touch of harm, but from the wiles of the seducer, the arts of the libertine!” (24). Walter, so willfully set on transgressing the bounds of polite society, is finally returned to his rightful place as head of his family's fortune. His early (if reluctant) agreement to uphold Rose's honor cements his return to liberalism's world order of contract government for the end of the mutual protection of private property. Later, when Rose enters the State House and presents the evidence exonerating the Drafters, Walter is given a second chance to read the Declaration as further proof of their intentions. His salvation from treason is effected by his newfound recognition of its principles, his willingness to sign the document, and pledge to dedicate his life “to maintain its truth” (57). Walter and Rose do finally enter the illicit “Purple Chamber” in his Philadelphia mansion, but as a married couple. By the novel's end, Walter is firmly re-established in the relationships of interest, subject to the contracts that he believed his wealth had given him the power to transgress.

While Walter finds that he is compelled to conform to society's expectations of a man of his wealth, Rose becomes the novel's heroine by balancing her own interests with those of the public good. Rose is surrounded by damaged social relations at the outset of the novel (she is, after all, living in isolation with her own mother's killer), but it is through her own agency that she is able to escape the dangers of privatization and enter into active political life. While she is often the object of the novel's desirous gaze, Rose proves to be adept at using her own vision strategically. Walter's social status is clearly marked on his person, as Michael attests on their first meeting: “Yer rifle and knife, aye yer dress itself, don't speak much for yer poverty. Yer hands are too white, yer skin too fair, to fancy for a minute that you've lived long in the woods. But, howsoever it is, I can't tell, but I like you...” (13). Rose cannot at first read these class markings, however, and takes him at his word that he is “but a poor hunter,” who wishes to share her rural domesticity (30). After being rescued from Gerald Moynton's seduction chamber, Rose
recovers from the effects of the gas while hearing the entire story of her family's violent past and Walter's temptation by Lady Marion to treason. For Rose, personal happiness coincides with the preservation of Jefferson's socialized democracy, and it is through her actions that Walter is saved and the Declaration is “re-read” as a prototypical labor-socialist document for Lippard's audience. By the novel's end, Rose has gained complete control in the ordering of her private interests. Walter does not yet know that she is really a wealthy heiress and his cousin when they are married: “She should have made some eloquent reply, expressed surprise at the change in her lover's appearance, or suffered an exclamation of wonder to pass her peasant lips, she should indeed-- But she did not. Nestling on his breast, in the most natural manner in the world, the Rose of Wissahikon bloomed beneath his gaze, and felt her lips mingle with his” (59). By going public, Rose consecrates the Declaration's message of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, while successfully transforming her own seduction by seizing an equality of power as a desiring subject of her own accord. Finally, though Rose gains extreme wealth, the last lines of the novel find her at her cottage home on the Wissahikon. Her lips part in a smile as she sees in a dream “the dangers that had passed, the trials that had once darkened her life” (70). She has gained economic and political safety, and has the rural life she wanted, but it is the memory of the time of her own agency in securing them that makes her happy.

Rose's political agency goes hand in hand with her ability to act on her own private desires. As a model for Lippard's 1840s audience, she transformed the desire of the erotic gaze from narratives of exploitation found in the seduction plots of Lippard's city-crime to a narrative of self-empowerment. What finally keeps Rose aligned with the interests of Lippard’s audience who read her tale in the pages of the Saturday Courier is her clear definition against the example of Lady Marion. A powerful woman and aristocrat, Marion contrived the evidence against the drafters of the Declaration to advance Walter's social standing, whom she plans to marry, while furthering the cause of the British crown. Both Rose and Marion are involved with plots that unite political and love interests, but whereas Marion seeks to navigate politics to enhance her marriage prospects and social standing, Rose does the opposite. She uses her private interests to lay claim to the right of an individual to political action. For the reader, desire for Rose models desire for wealth, power, and political agency.

*The Rose of Wissahikon* ultimately refutes the division of class politics from nationalism implicit in models of American political participation through print. Using narrative techniques
familiar to his mass audience (drawn from his career as a writer of both city-crime and Revolutionary legends), Lippard modeled an alternative history of the Declaration of Independence's production that insisted on the implicit economic interests underlying traditions of intellectual freedom and political discourse. Lippard achieved a union of his own era's class interests with the symbolism of American nationalism, presented in a form as entertaining as it was historically informative.

Paying the Cost

The close of Lippard's career as a writer for Philadelphia's story papers coincided with his growing investment in labor politics, the death of his wife, Rose, from consumption, and his own failing health. At the height of his popularity, Lippard began the organization of a grand secret society for the benefit of laborers based on the model of freemasonry and the Odd-fellows that he called the Brotherhood of the Union. The Brotherhood continued the revision of nationalism begun in his legends, using the names of the founding fathers for its officers, and crafting parables around figures such as Jefferson and Washington in its degree work. Benefits for members included unemployment and injury compensation, and the society facilitated beneficial economic relationships among circles. In a letter to brother William Macfarlane, Lippard illustrates his position:

Your ideas of cooperation are good and practical. I can name to you a sound honest man, who will buy coal for you at Pottsville; and upon reasonable terms. As Capron said in the Providence Mirror the other day, that is the only way to fight these white slaveholders. Combination! Buy and sell and work for yourselves. Strikes avail not. So on in the practice of the idea. 69

Indeed, Lippard was increasingly active in the early attempts to organize labor, attending the eighth annual Industrial Congress on behalf of the Brotherhood. With many avenues of reform possible, Lippard was ultimately against the social disorder and violence that attended workers' strikes. Instead, his vision of social reform prioritized the individuals as agents in their own economic advancement:
And (if in conclusion, I may give you a word of advice, from bitter experience), let me advise you and all good Brothers, to have nothing to do with so-called Industrial Congresses and Legislatures. The last one at Washington was a farce. Such efforts at best, are fragmentary: they feed the masses with sawdust. The Brotherhood is a permanent, living, although unobtrusive, Order, pursuing its way, for the great Future, regardless of factions, parties, Presidential elections, or spasmodic Reform societies. And the worst enemies, mankind and the Brotherhood, have, are those brawling negative Reformers (!) who pull down, but never attempt to create or build up.70

The Brotherhood of the Union grew and achieved a membership of 30,000 by 1917, but slowly declined and came to an end in 1994.

Lippard's effort to promote and expand the Brotherhood had a large and direct influence on his career as a writer. Writing the Brotherhood's charter involved a great deal of imaginative work that in his own estimation would have been worth thousands of dollars if it had instead been dedicated to producing fiction for the marketplace.71 The financial costs of the Brotherhood represented more than the labor Lippard bestowed on the project. In a melancholy, untitled autobiographical manuscript, Lippard precisely enumerated the economic realities of his devotion to the order:

It should be remembered, that in the columns of the first paper the Quaker City, in the course of its career were published a large number of original works; works which from the type of the paper, were put into stereotype plates, and the possession of which secured to the owner a handsome fortune; an annual revenue for years to come. These works written by myself were The Mysteries of the Pulpit – 200 large octavo pages: Washington and his Men, 200 pages; Empire City 200 pages; Bank Directors Son 48 pages, and other works. The copyright of these books and the ownership of one half the plates belonged to me. And this copyright, this part ownership I sacrificed in order to pay the debts of the paper; debts in great part incurred on behalf of the Order. Thus not only did I devote the paper, my literary past and future to the Order, but for its sake I gave up the labors of long years: a series of works which could have been a fortune to me, and which now being out of my possession, stand in the way of any new books which I may publish.72

Lippard surrendered ownership of his fiction to his publishing partner and Brotherhood member, Joseph Severns, who “regarded the Brotherhood simply as the servant of the paper... and
frequently delayed the printing of such work as [Lippard] paid him to do for the Order, until [he]
had made concessions or sacrifices to him in our mutual business as publishers.” Lippard did not
regret this loss, however. Already in failing health and bereaved from the loss of his wife and
children to sickness, Lippard wrote to his friend: “I only live for the Order now, My only
[remaining] child was buried to day. My wife is in the last stage of consumption.... The fact that
the Brotherhood, demands that I should live, alone keeps me alive.”73 By the end of his life,
Lippard's private interests were uncontested by the needs of himself or his family, and devoted
entirely to the Brotherhood and the cause of labor.

For the next four years following the collapse of the Quaker City Weekly until his death
on February 9, 1854, Lippard sought to convince the Brotherhood to help fund The White
Banner, a paper for the order that would instruct brothers and also function as a recruiting tool.
In a call for subscriptions, Lippard outlined his understanding of the economic side of such a
publication:

To publish such a Journal, CAPITAL is required, -- for without capital, the Journal must
for support, resort to the aid of pernicious advertisements or pernicious literature; or it
must prostitute itself to the advocacy of some mere sect or party. Without capital, in any
case, it must be involved in that system of Competition, which in the large cities cheapens
the price of books and newspapers, by reducing the wages of all workmen, employed in
the manufacture of a book or a newspaper, to the 'starvation point.'74

Lippard suggested a cooperative structure instead, seeking one hundred Brothers to buy a share
in the paper for $20, contributing toward the $2000 goal for funding the paper for one year. In
return, they would each receive copies of the paper to sell to other Brothers and “strangers,” and
in turn the paper would itself be self-sufficient in perpetuity. Though this must have seemed like
a tremendous outlay of capital for the laborers who belonged to the Brotherhood, compared to
The Quaker City's subscription structure this would account for a very modest circulation of one
thousand papers necessary to break even. The type of paper proposed was a weekly with essays
and tales, sketches, legends, and biographies related to labor concerns, an update on the order,
and a critical commentary on the news – all in 16 pages that could be bound together at the end
of the year. In short, it would be very much like The Quaker City had been. "Upon lower rates
than this," Lippard added, "no Journal of this size can be conducted honestly." The White
Banner as it was eventually printed is substantially different. It appeared as a quarterly, rather
than a weekly, and only a single number was ever published. Though it shared many features of a story paper (it included an expanded version of an earlier story retitled *The Pilgrim of Eternity*, “Legends of Every Day,” as well as news related to the order), it was printed and bound in book form.

Though he had succeeded in a sense by bringing one issue of *The White Banner* to print, Lippard continued to urge the Brotherhood to fund a regular paper. Two key measures were taken at the third Annual Convocation of the Supreme Circle, attended by the Brotherhood's supreme hierarchy and leaders of the smaller circles scattered throughout the country who were able to make the trip to Philadelphia. First, the Brotherhood's Grand Fund, or the collection of dues, was declared mandatory. Until this point, Lippard had kept such dues optional in order to encourage growth, and the result was that Lippard spent the next year writing correspondence with circles that were refusing to pay, threatening expulsion. A related resolution that likewise inspired much debate was the decision to use half of the Grand Fund for starting a paper. The following year's convocation report shows that though Lippard was re-elected to his post of Supreme Washington (by a 2/3 vote of those present, and by 31 of 36 sent by letter), both the Grand Fund and the paper remained controversial issues. The Grand Fund Law was generally approved by a near-unanimous vote, but the Brotherhood at large remained skeptical concerning the question of a paper. Meeting continued resistance, Lippard announced the decision by the Supreme Circle that the “best way to extend the Order is not by an Organ – an Organ will cost too much... The best way to extend the Order is by lectures; by the personal influence of good Brothers; and by the judicious distribution of tracts and pamphlets.” However, Lippard's manuscript account makes no mention of this aspect of the proceedings, for as he announced in the circular he had fallen ill and did not expect to live until the next convocation. Without him as a writer or editor, Lippard likely agreed with the Supreme Circle's decision to use other, cheaper means of addressing the working masses.

Lippard sought to use his work as a writer to promote a vision of political engagement that did not neglect the economic disparities of American society as it progressed on the path towards industrialization and modernization. In turning to the Revolutionary past, he highlighted the ongoing struggles between economic determination and political freedom in the democratic state-form, and seized nationalism as a tool for modeling political engagement among laborers. From his career as a popular contributor to Philadelphia's story papers to his own private
sacrifices to promote the Brotherhood, Lippard's work demonstrated the political potential of cheap fiction in an emergent mass society.

Notes to Chapter 2:

1 The paper contained other fiction, including a humorous anecdote about a husband and wife who cheat death with the magic power of telling long-winded stories ("Death and the Fisherman" by "A Modern Pythagorean"), "The Snake," a psychological sketch of a man who grows to believe he is married to a snake-woman by noted writer of the day Henry B. Hirst, and "The Soldiers Wife," a sentimental sketch where a young soldier takes the place of another man so he doesn't have to leave his wife by S.C. Hall. But on this day in particular, The Saturday Courier predominately appealed to the patriotic spirit of Independence Day with news from the war with Mexico, presidential portraiture, and depictions of famous Revolutionary War naval officers and sea battles. Page numbers cited in the text are from Lippard, The Rose of Wissahikon as published in book form by G. B. Zieber.

2 See Michael Denning, Mechanic Accents, 88 and Mary Noel, Villains Galore, 5.

3 Lippard, Washington and His Generals, 392.

4 See Gary B. Nash, The Liberty Bell.

5 Headley also published a work under the title Washington and His Generals, and lifted narrative details from Lippard's account of the life of Benedict Arnold among other appropriations. See also: Graham's Magazine 44 (June, 1854).

6 It is uncertain when the Bell first cracked; among the many different stories, the two most popular claim it happened during the funeral procession of John Marshall, chief justice of the Supreme Court, in 1835, or during the celebration of Washington's birthday in 1843. The city decided to ring it again on Washington's birthday in 1846, with the edges of the crack smoothed down to dampen vibrations. The Bell developed its large compound fracture, and completely lost its tune.

7 Lippard is generally said to have perpetuated historical inaccuracies related to the signing and first reading of the Declaration in order to craft a picturesque story. The actual first public reading at the State House transpired on July 8th, and was read by John Nixon, a Philadelphia financier and militia officer. Though Lippard did alter these details, he was up front with his reader about his change, and included a historical footnote with the correct dates at the end of The Rose of Wissahikon in the Saturday Courier: "It may be remarked, that the Declaration was signed on the 4th, published on the 5th, and read at length from the Statehouse on the 8th of July, 1776."

8 Butterfield, "George Lippard and His Secret Brotherhood," 292, note 18.


10 Ibid., 38.

11 Spirit of the Times (Feb. 7, 1842).
12 A representative collection of Lippard's "City Police" writings have been collected on "The Early Writings of George Lippard, 1842-43" website, www.lippardarchive.cdh.ucla.edu, maintained by Christopher Looby and David Shepard.

13 David S. Reynolds, George Lippard, 12-13. For circulation, see Butterfield, 287; Saturday Courier (August 23, 1845); De Grazia, 128.

14 Michael Denning, Mechanic Accents. For this reason, Denning extends the label “Dime Novel” to all cheap fiction in spite of the retrospective anachronism resulting from the term (12). The fluctuating paper sizes and material production of the cheap fiction industry largely resulted from changes in postal regulations, which determined the profitability of different publication types, though the production of each type overlapped and cannot be wholly limited to a model of sequential evolution. The post office raised prices on newspaper supplements to par with books in 1843, but then lowered the rate for all books in 1845. For more on how postal rates impacted cheap fiction, (19).

15 Denning notes the history of Frank P. O'Brien's collection of Beadle's Dime Novels, whose collection was split between the New York Public Library and the Huntington Library, (13-15).

16 United States Saturday Post (October 8, 1842).

17 Spirit of the Times (January 17, 1845) and United States Saturday Post (September 5, 1846). For more on the response to The Quaker City, see Butterfield, 296, De Grazia, 168-176, and Reynolds, 9-14.

18 Bouton, The Life and Choice Writings of George Lippard, 19.

19 The William Wirt Institute originally met in the church of Lippard's friend, C. Chauncey Burr (see below). Lippard thanked this institution and another, the Institute of the Revolution, in his introduction to Washington and His Generals. Little is known about this other institution. See also De Grazia, 180-2.


21 De Grazia, 180.

22 Ibid., 184.

23 In addition to thanking him for being a supporter of revolutionary fiction, Lippard made sure to mention the circumstances of The Quaker City scandal: "Last summer, when my good name as a citizen, my honor as an author, was attacked in the most licentious manner, by a band of obscene libelers – some of whom have since made their humble and fawning apologies to me – you did not count the cost, nor falter for a moment, but came out for me like a Man, and in the columns of your paper, whipped the whole pack into their native obscurity" (Washington, 3).


25 Citizen-Soldier 1 (September 27, 1843).

26 According to advertisements in the Citizen Soldier (January 24, 1844). The following are a selection of items relevant to understanding Lippard's range of writings from his time with the Citizen Soldier: a chapter from the already published Herbert Tracy (January 19, 1843); an early version of “Legend of the Midnight Death” (February 1 and 14); “The poor men heroes of the Revolution,” (August 23, 1843); “Revolutionary Sermon,” (September 13, 1843); a comedic story entitled “Legend of the Coffee Bags,” (June 7, 1843); “Battle Day of Brandywine,” (June 28- July 12, 1843); “Battle Day of Germantown,” (November 15, 1843); “The King of the Spirit Band,” (February 14, 1844); a gothic story entitled “Adrian the Neophyte” (July 26 to Aug 2,
1843). For a larger list of writings including the “Walnut Coffin” and “Spermaceti” papers, see http://lippardarchive.cdh.ucla.edu
27 (November 29 through January 17, 1844).
28 See The Citizen Soldier (January 3, 1844) for their statement on the necessity of an even greater circulation to cover the outlay of capital.
29 Mercantile Register, or Business Man’s Guide. The distinction between publisher and bookseller is complicated by the division between capital and production in the industry; some shops had both production and retail interests, others would publish books under their own imprint but would hire out the physical production to printers. Claims to publisher status signified a certain prestige among shop-holders and the draw of unique items, but did not necessarily mean that publication was their primary business interest. Booksellers and publishers were more united in their relationship to the investment of capital in stock and titles, while the production of the physical text remained an associated, yet distinct, industry.
30 This includes the important publishers G.B. Zieber and T.B. Peterson. It is worth noting that the list also neglects the large Carey & Heart Co., and does not represent a comprehensive list of businesses. The Philadelphia city directory for 1846 includes Zieber on its own list of thirty booksellers, but excludes Peterson who is nevertheless listed as a bookseller in the general index.
31 Citizen Soldier (July 19, 1843): 165.
32 They had, however, disagreed over the best way to continue publication in the wake of its initial success. Lippard was for a complete book volume while Zieber wished to continue it serially. The disagreement must have been a slight one, for rather than quarreling they continued their business relationship.
33 A comparison of the line justification also shows that the same setting used for the story paper printing was used by G. B. Zieber for his pamphlet edition of the same year. While line breaks can be reproduced between two different settings if a typesetter were to exactly follow the example of a previously printed text, the insertion of space between words to stretch a line to the required length is idiosyncratic and nearly impossible to reproduce. As a result, characteristic alignment of letters from one line to the next can reveal when different publications were made from the same setting or from a stereotype plate, saving the cost and labor of readying a text for publication. For more on the topic of textual comparison, see Philip Gaskell, A New Introduction to Bibliography.
34 Clubbing Terms for The Saturday Courier included a price discount at 3 copies, one year, or one copy for three years, $5.00. M'Makin also offered the inducement of packaging it with Peterson's Magazine (see below), or either Sears' Pictorial Magazine, Pictorial American Revolution, or Pictorial Great Britain for $3.00 a year -- $2.00 if paid in advance. The Saturday Courier's offices were at 97 Chestnut Street, in the thick of the same neighborhood.
35 Burr wrote the introduction to Washington and His Generals, and performed Lippard's wedding ceremony.
36 Zieber's advertisements in the July 4th edition of The Saturday Courier included an offering for a Zieber edition of Legends of the Revolution. Lyle H. Wright's American Fiction 1774 – 1850 suggests that there were two printings at, 8v0 and 12mo, with no distinguishing differences between formats, indicating that both Zieber's and Peterson's publications were made from the same stereotype plates (225). In this advertisement, Zieber claims that Lippard's Legends “have created such an unprecedented sensation as published (in part) in the great Literary Journal of the Union, The Saturday Courier, and [have been] copied in some 300 papers throughout the United
States.” The work was issued in four paper volumes at a cost of 25 cents per part and one dollar for the whole, a bit more expensive but still a fair price for a large work amounting to a collection of several book-length works under copyright by an American author.  


38 Stereotyping did not necessarily mean that texts would not change, as corrections and revisions could be made. See Winship, 46.  

39 Marie E. Korey, “T.B.Peterson & Brothers,” 229-234 and Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography. T.B. Peterson brought his younger brothers George and Thomas into partnership in 1858, altering their imprint. They were also successful publishers of cookbooks, and innovated the use of author's portraits and biographical blurbs in their advertising. For more on Peterson's later career, see Raymond Shove, Cheap Book Production in the United States and Mary Noel, Villains Galore for his role as E.D.E.N. Southworth's publisher.  

40 It seems unlikely that Zieber was as dedicated to stereotyping, for though he used the same type-setting as The Courier for his edition of Rose of Wissahikon, Peterson reset it for his own edition when he later published it as part of Washington and His Men indicating that no plates existed.  

41 Korey, 233.  

42 The Quaker City 1 (January 20, 1849). Comparatively, the harshest barb Lippard aimed at Zieber was in the context of his own anti-gold rush stance: “We understand that Zeiber & Co., are getting out a new edition of the Arabian Nights, embellished with a map of California, as a Guide to all persons who may wish to join the Gold Hunt.” The Quaker City (Dec 30, 1848).  

43 Saturday Evening Post (Jan 27, 1849).  

44 Jos. Sevens & Co. were located at 72 Chestnut St.  

45 The Quaker City (January 13, 1849).  

46 The Quaker City (April 14, 1849).  

47 "The Poverty of Authors," The Quaker City (January 20, 1849).  

48 The Quaker City (January 13, 1849).  

49 De Grazia, 309.  

50 The Quaker City (January 13, 1849).  

51 “With regard to the prospects of our paper any body who wishes to know all about it may question the pressman who printed our two editions – each of five thousand – or call at our office and consult our subscription books or ask the Booksellers how many copies were sold at their counters.” The Quaker City, (January 6, 1849).  

52 “They are offered as Premiums to persons who will take the Saturday Evening Crutch; and an Editor whom we had served for three years, and who, after all, had refused to place our Prospectus in his columns, this very week blazons one corner of his paper with 'Lippard's Works,' in an advertisement which looks like a badly constructed Play Bill, and at the bottom we are told that all persons sending so much money, will be supplied with our books and --- with the aforesaid Editor's Paper. This, indeed, is small.” The Quaker City (January 20, 1849).  

53 Lippard responded to this slight in The Quaker City (January 6, 1849).  

54 The Quaker City (January 20, 1849).  

55 The Quaker City, (February 3, 1849).  

56 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Silencing the Past, 25.  

57 Warner develops these claims over the course of The Letters of the Republic's first chapter, 1-33. Page numbers cited in the text are from this edition.
58 See also Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 1-26.
59 This helps further explain the fraught entry of personal narratives from impoverished veterans into print in the nineteenth century as described in the following chapter. By drawing on their first-hand experience of the Revolution, their testimonies radically transgress the negation required of this discourse. Such tales were therefore more easily received in terms of patriotism and benevolence, lacking the political pose that had come to define the Republic of Letters.
60 Christopher Looby, *Voicing America*, 3.
63 Such is Arendt’s claim at least, and we should be wary of the hermeneutic driving her analysis. In an attempt to understand her Cold-War contemporary moment, Arendt’s analysis of the two eighteenth-century Revolutionary traditions mirrors the dialectical forces of the Cold-War itself. If all European revolutions, which are implicitly tied to the Soviet Union as a representative of class struggle in nation-state form, stem from the original example of the French Revolution, then the absent genealogy that did not flow from the example of the American Revolution is fulfilled only by the United States itself – regardless of the significant historical changes it has underwent from its eighteenth-century form. The American exceptionalism generated in the wake of the World Wars which has shaped literary scholarship, and which has recently come under sustained critical investigation by hemispheric and transnational critical methods, finds its completion in the reinterpretation of its revolutionary origins in this manner. Significantly, the eradication of class interests as anti-American is completed in the exclusion of those interests from the nation's foundation mythology as represented in this version of the Revolutionary “elan.” This also of course results in an erasure of other revolutionary genealogies, most conspicuously those surrounding the end of colonization in the Americas represented by the recovery of the Haitian Revolution's importance in the resistance to the economics of plantation slavery.
65 Negri notes that this thesis itself emerged from “Friedrich von Gentz in his introduction to the German translation of Edmond Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*… and was popularized by John Adam's supporters against Jefferson during the presidential campaign of 1800” (14-5). See also Richard Buel, *Securing the Revolution*.
68 Ibid., 99.
69 Library Company Brotherhood of the Union Collection: Box 1, Folder 6: Letter from Lippard to William Macfarlane, (March 3, 1851).
70 1852 Supreme Circle circular report (October 18, 1852).
71 In his own words, Lippard expressed this sentiment in the untitled autobiographical manuscript quoted at length below: “The authorship of the B.G.C. I hold as the most arduous labor of my life. The time expended in it, the thought and literary labor bestowed on it if applied in the usual channel of authorship – that is in the composition of literary works for general sale – would have benefited me to the amount of thousands of dollars.”

Library Company Brotherhood of the Union Collection: Box 1, Folder 6: Letter from Lippard to William Macfarlane, (March 3, 1851).


Printed report from the Third Annual Convocation in Lippard's Diary, between pages 12-3, held at the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Printed report from the Fourth Annual Convocation in Lippard's Diary, between pages 44-5, held at the Library Company of Philadelphia.

“Shortly after his return in infirm old age to his native land, a little narrative of his adventures, forlornly published on sleazy gray paper, appeared among the peddlers, written, probably, not by himself, but taken down from his lips by another. ... [T]his blurred record is now out of print. From a tattered copy, rescued by merest chance from the rag-pickers, the present account has been drawn, which, with the exception of some expansions, and additions of historic and personal details, and one or two shiftings of scene, may, perhaps, be not unfitly regarded something in the light of a dilapidated old tombstone retouched.”

“The gloomiest and truthfulest dramatist seldom chooses for his theme the calamities, however extraordinary, of inferior and private persons; least of all, the pauper's; admonished by the fact, that to the craped palace of the king lying in state thousands of starers shall throng; but few feel enticed to the shanty, where, like a pealed knuckle-bone, grins the unupholstered corpse of the beggar.”

- Herman Melville, *Israel Potter*, 1855.¹

By the time Herman Melville re-wrote the autobiographical account of Israel Potter, a lowly Revolutionary War veteran, for publication in *Putnam's Monthly Magazine* during the mid 1850s, the few surviving members of the Continental Army were entering extreme old-age.² First-hand accounts of the Revolutionary War had been published throughout the nineteenth century, allowing their authors to publicly claim the right of honor from their fellow citizens. For Israel Potter, sharing one's story of hardship as a prisoner of war was also an attempt to earn a scant income in advanced age, leveraging both the public's sense of patriotism and the shame that attended the charge that society had turned its back, economically speaking, on the very soldiers who had won its liberty.
Potter's account exposed the shortcoming of an American society that widely celebrated its national origin, yet simultaneously had allowed many of its patriots to fall into abject poverty, belying the sense of all-inclusive economic prosperity that rose in the wake of the Revolution. In *Israel Potter*, Melville emphasized the contrast between the nation's patriotic zeal for the Revolutionary past and the hard reality of an economy itself undergoing extreme changes as industrial capital transformed the nature of work and labor in society. As I argued in Chapters 1 and 2, the erasure of class conflict from U.S. nationalism resulted in part from the way political discourse had been distanced from private economic matters in liberal democratic government. Both Potter's biography and Melville’s revision of the story into fiction undermine the categorical distinction between public and private - both are primarily “private” productions written for profit that both reflected and critiqued the cultural memory of the Revolution.

As one facet of the ongoing re-figuration of the nation's revolutionary origin in fiction, the transformation from personal biography into fiction penned by authors born well after the Revolution represents the difference between a lived-experience of history and the cultural forces at work in the production of nationalism. Citizens born after the ratification of the Constitution, or those who “inherited the Revolution” to borrow Joyce Appleby's phrase, experienced a very different relationship to the national government than those who had lived through its founding. The sense of active political participation characteristic of the Revolutionary era would give way to the comparative passivity of citizenship as experienced under strengthened, abstracted, and institutionalized government. Appleby's study traces the production of this brand of American exceptionalism by turning to the narratives of “those who did something in public – started a business, invented a useful object, settled a town, organized a movement, ran for office, formed an association, or wrote for publication...” or, in short, people whose lives defined success.³
Potter, like many veterans, lived in poverty, and his plea for a pension problematized the link between American freedom and economic prosperity, reminding his readers that financial failure and public obscurity were part of American history, if at odds with its ideal “character.”

In the first half of this chapter, I consider how readers (from the nineteenth century and historical critics alike) have judged the truthfulness of Potter’s text. Interrogations of Potter’s narrative are concerned primarily with the veracity of the individual, but in many ways the text is more accurate as a representation of shifting cultural beliefs when it errs. By considering the text's truth-telling apparatus, its shortcomings from the standards set for government pensions, its subsequent relationship to a marketplace where sales are doubled as charity for texts intended to earn their subjects a scant income, and its discrepancies from the historical record, I show how Potter's story has long been under investigation from a critical eye that would disqualify its claims to patriotic nationalism (and a pension). I argue that Potter’s *Life and Remarkable Adventures* reflects the nationalist sentiment of the early nineteenth century, and that attempts to discredit its historical accuracy have misinterpreted its discrepancies as a criminal (or suspect) attempt to defraud the reading public. Casting Potter as a suspect in this way once again threatens to misread the role of poverty in national history, suggesting that impure motives of personal interest disqualify the text’s record of economic hardship.

From these insights, Melville’s development of the themes of nationalism and poverty in his novelization of Potter’s text take on new significance. If Potter’s *Life and Remarkable Adventures* is of the 1820s, Melville’s novel’s approach to these topics reflects an increasing skepticism regarding the way poverty and class were (or, more precisely, were not) depicted in nationalist tropes during the 1850s. While Potter attempted to leverage the belief that poverty was un-American to secure himself an income, Melville found in his source evidence for the
longstanding problem of poverty in the United States – even for its venerable patriots. *Israel Potter* has long held the reputation in literary criticism as a work critical of nationalism, but I argue that it is instead an effort to reinvest nationalism with a consciousness of class politics. To this end, I consider how Potter, as a character, personifies the difficulties of a working-class subject when confronted with iconic American tropes embodied by famous patriots such as Benjamin Franklin and John Paul Jones, insisting on the mutual determination of the nation-state and the economy on the lives of its citizens. Taking Potter as a case-study of the subject constituted by and through his relationship to the nation-state, Melville challenges the liberal-bourgeois values represented by Benjamin Franklin, explores the hegemonic force of nationalism as embodied by John Paul Jones, and ultimately inverts the suspicions directed toward Potter's text by imagining the world through a transformative gaze that finally envisions it as the product of production in addition to the nation-state.

It is in the union of nationalism and class interests that *Israel Potter* lost its legibility for early twentieth-century leftist criticism. I conclude with a description of *Israel Potter*'s relative neglect by landmark Melville studies in order to suggest the role played by the Cold War and the contemporary configuration of the nation-state in further obfuscating the history of class conflict in the formation and growth of the United States during the nineteenth century.

**Interrogating the Text**

Although there is no clear date for when he acquired the narrative of Israel Potter, Melville had it
in mind as a potential source for nearly five years before *Putnam's Monthly Magazine* began serial publication of his novel. As he narrates in its dedication, Melville encountered the *Life and Remarkable Adventures of Israel R. Potter* (1824) by chance, and “rescued” the work before “rag-pickers” could deem it more valuable as a recyclable source of paper pulp than for the narrative it contained (vii). Potter's account had been published with the hope of earning its author an income to support him in his old age, after his petition for a military service pension was rejected by Congress on the grounds that he had been absent from the country when the Pension Act of 1818 came into effect. As both a story and a commodity, Potter's foray into the economic world of print commerce sought to transform public approval (and consumption) into earnings. The text also attempted to wage a public relations battle, positioning Potter as an exemplary patriot in the public eye in order to increase his chances of finding success with his renewed attempts to qualify for a pension. By rewriting Potter's account, Melville did more than merely save a rare book from the oblivion of being re-purposed for blank paper stock. Though Melville himself would claim that even “with a change in the grammatical person, it preserves, almost in a reprint, Israel Potter's autobiographical story,” the act of revising the text for an audience decades removed from the circumstances of its original publication dramatically altered its meaning (vii). To understand the dynamics of how Melville employed Potter's story to level a critique of America's class structure, it is necessary first to consider how Potter's account itself was a product of the nineteenth century rather than an appeal echoing down from the Revolutionary past.

For each text, the grounds for leveling a critique of U.S. culture depend on the veracity (or seeming veracity) of Potter's original claims. Consequently, Potter's *Life and Adventures* includes the formal apparatus of truth-telling typical of autobiographical accounts whose
credibility among readers may have been questionable. At the end of the text, a testimonial by John Vial, a fellow sailor and prisoner, provides evidence of Potter's service and capture aboard the ship *Washington*, and verifies that Potter was indeed part of an attempt at resistance by the prisoners during their Atlantic crossing. Vial verified Potter's patriotism and suffering by stating the facts of his own sixteen-month imprisonment (which ended only with escape), as well as his recollection that one third of the crew had died from disease. By extension, Potter, who had shared these experiences, is verified as a patriot not for his individual actions, but rather on account of the circumstances of the more general experience of prisoners of war during the Revolution. However, Vial's testimonial cannot account for the more puzzling aspects of Potter's case. What were Potter's motivations for returning to the United States after a lifetime spent in London, where he married, worked, and raised a family – especially in light of Vial's own prompt return? Were past experiences enough to offset the fact that Potter spent the majority of his adult life outside of the country? Was he telling the truth? When Potter published his account, the question was not if the text needed interrogation, but rather on what grounds.

Potter's account counters the uncertainties surrounding his life through his appeal to nationalism and to an innate American character. Three wounds received while fighting at Bunker Hill establish Potter's credentials as a patriot, but more importantly link his character and ability to a battle highly symbolic in Revolutionary lore. Bunker Hill signified the ability of the Colonials to stand up to the well-trained British Army through innate skill and bravery, and Potter invoked the litany of the battle's iconic moments from the order not to fire until the men could see “the white of their [enemy's] eyes” to the use of clubbed bayonets once the rebel's ammunition was depleted. To further this mythos, the text emphasizes that Potter's experience as a hunter in the backcountry forests of the American wilderness had prepared him for war as an
extremely skilled marksman (301). The text also uses another popular folk legend about General Israel Putnam to generate patriotic credibility: having heard the news of the outbreak of fighting at Lexington, Putnam departed in such haste that he left his plow in the furrow. In contrast, Potter explains that having gotten the summons to march the next morning while employed at the same work (as a hired farm hand, not as a landowner), he was able to finish plowing a field of twelve acres, concluding “that I might not leave my work half done, I improved the sabbath to complete it” (300). By crafting his own character in relation to widely known stories about Bunker Hill, Potter simultaneously insisted on his own patriotism while emphasizing the importance of hard work and labor in the American character.

After Bunker Hill, Potter volunteered to man an American privateering vessel, the Washington, (in part based on his previous experience as a sailor aboard West Indian trading vessels and two whaling voyages) in an effort to blockade Boston, then occupied by the British. Like many American privateers, the ship was quickly captured due to the superiority of British military seamanship, and the sailers were transported to the coast of England and incarcerated in prison hulks. Other moments similarly serve to justify Potter's dedication to the Revolutionary war-effort, such as when he encounters British subjects (including the historically well-known sympathizer Horne Tooke) who support the colonials' cause. Having passed their test for loyalty to his native land, Potter reports that on two occasions he carried private messages to Ben Franklin in Paris on their behalf. Finally, answering his detractors, Potter declares that he was unable to leave his British wife and children after the cessation of hostilities (they, however, show their sympathies by joining in his celebration of victory), no matter how great his desire to return home, and only has done so when all but his son have passed away (344-5).

In addition to the invocation of Bunker Hill and other demonstrations of patriotism,
Potter is characterized by association with the notion of an industrious American character while depicting the British as degenerate, a difference predicated on the economic conditions of each nation. One of the foundational mythologies of American exceptionalism was the belief that the unbounded wilderness of the American frontier prevented the development of poverty (and consequently class conflict) in the United States. This line of thought provides a foundation for the erasure of class conflict in the historiography of the nation's early period; it was also useful for Potter's effort to align his character with the core values of U.S. nationalism. The narrative begins with an account of Potter's earliest labors, including hunting and trading expeditions, whaling voyages, a disastrous journey on a West Indies trading vessel whose cargo of lime catches fire while at sea, and various experiences of farming and clearing land. By extension, Potter's ability to turn a steady profit in most of these endeavors is set in balance to his years of toil in England where he generally descends in the hierarchy of labor, from a respectable (if ill paid) farm hand to work as a coachman and brick-maker, and finally to the trade of chair-bottoming and street-scavenging. Potter himself was well aware that his fluctuating financial position was due to the surplus of cheap labor resulting from mass discharges from the Army when the British were at peace (354, 364-5). His depictions of London are all negatively inflected, offering his American reader a description of the city that “is always more or less infested with gangs of nefarious wretches, who come under the denomination of Robbers, Pickpockets, Shoplifters, Swindlers, Beggars, &c.” (343). After detailing many examples of his and others' suffering in poverty, Potter challenges his reader with a comparison of American and European poverty:

Complaints and murmurs [sic] are frequent I find among those of the inhabitants of this highly favoured country, who are not only blessed with the liberty and means of
procuring for themselves and their families, the necessaries and comforts, but even many of the luxuries of life! – they complain of poverty, and yet never knew what it was to be really poor! Having never either experienced or witnessed such scenes of distress and woe as I have described, they even suppose their imaginary wants and privations equal to those of almost any of the human race! (361-2)

However, while Potter's conclusions about the state of poverty in America accord with its reputation as a land of opportunity, it should be noted that his comparisons are made across a lifetime of experience and under shifting conditions. Along with caring for his family, Potter's increasing age gradually debarred him from the more strenuous and better-paid forms of manual labor. Moreover, his vision of labor before the Revolution is devoid of accidental injuries or the dangers presented by frontier violence, and likewise his comparison omits the possibility of economic hardship attendant to life in the growing cities of the United States by the 1820s.

Potter's comparison of American and European poverty can therefore be read as a strategic effort to present an ideal American society where the efforts of labor are guaranteed to procure comfort and freedom from necessity rather than as a statement of fact, one that contextualizes Potter's own ongoing efforts to be included on the pension list. Such claims must be set in balance to what evidence Potter does provide concerning his economic status at the time of his text's publication. His observations (as well as those of his son) are influenced by the hospitality he enjoys from a gentleman in Boston, presumably an acquaintance of the American Consul who had arranged their return. Soon after his return, however, Potter journeyed to his family homestead where he had left his father “possessed of very considerable property” to which he hoped to assert his rightful portion of inheritance from any surviving members of his family that he could find. On learning that his remaining family had long since moved
westward, Potter reflects: “I felt myself for the first time, unhappy, since my return to my native country, and even believed myself now doomed to endure, among my own countrymen (for whose liberties I had fought and bled) miseries similar to those that had attended me for many years in Europe” (390-1). Potter's extended family relations are discussed exclusively in these economic terms and solely as they relate to his own frustrated hopes, though their absence suggests something of the frontier's illusory promise to raise impoverished immigrants to the prosperity of gentleman farmers. Having exhausted all hope of salvation through the privatize economy, Potter turns once more to his public persona as both a patriot and a storyteller. Calling his pension “remuneration for services rendered,” he concludes his account with the hope that his renewed effort to gain a pension will succeed, while declaring his desire that the “strange and unprecedented circumstance, of withholding from me that reward which they have so generally bestowed on others, may never be told in Europe, or published in the streets of London, least [sic] it reach the ears of some who had the effrontery to declare to me personally, that for the active part that I had taken in the 'rebellious war' misery and starvation would ultimately be my reward!” (392). By first stressing the relative prosperity available in the United States compared to the squalid conditions of life in London where even hard work would not pay, Potter effectually equated his personal prosperity with that of the nation-state. His ultimatum rests in the power of narrative, that the failure to live up to the standards linking prosperity and patriotism never be told in Europe lest it undermine the ideals of the Revolution.

Potter's appeal for a pension itself signals a great change in American society from the Revolutionary era to the nineteenth century, particularly concerning the role of government and the idea of a permanent, standing army. In the Revolutionary period, public sentiment regarding the Continental Army was driven by the ideals that had led the colonies to declare independence
from the British state. A history of political struggle between Parliament and the Crown over the control of the British Army emerged as a clear anti-military stance in the writings of revolutionary agitators, who followed the example of radical Whig writings in viewing military power as a force for suppression and tyranny in times of peace. As civil unrest grew in the North American colonies, the crown dispatched more soldiers, confirming these worries by example. Consequently, both the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights reflect these concerns, respectively charging the King with a litany of militaristic aggression and guaranteeing freedom from the burden of quartering soldiers in times of peace. Antipathy toward a standing army in turn manifested itself in the form of the republican faith in a virtuous militia comprised of citizen-soldiers banded together for mutual protection.

Although the militia resonated with the public, the leaders of the Revolution considered a paid, professional army a necessity. From the earliest days of the conflict, General Washington lobbied for a professional army, believing that the militia's citizen-soldiers were inadequate for the task of defeating the British. Pay and enlistment bonuses drew volunteers, but also introduced motives of personal interest to those of patriotism. As a result, the ranks of the Army were increasingly filled with the poorest and lowest members of society, “unmarried farmers' sons, laborers, servants, transients, apprentices, slaves, felons, and recent immigrants.” Losses at Brandywine and Germantown further dispelled some of the idealism surrounding the soldiers, and as the war persisted, stories spread of the soldiers' disorderly behavior (including drunkenness, looting, and mutinies) and of the officers' ineptitude (indecisiveness, stupidity, and laziness). Yet even the officers, who typically hailed from the wealthier and elite circles of society, required the right inducements to maintain their dedication to the war effort. Following the extreme trials suffered at Valley Forge that resulted in numerous officers' resignations,
Washington wrote to Congress, declaring the necessity of “some better provision for binding the Officers by the tye of Interest to the Service” in order to hold the Army together.\(^7\) The Committee on Army Affairs responded by proposing half-pay lifetime service pensions for officers, sparking opposition based on the measure's philosophical contradictions to notions of republican equality because of its perpetuation of old class distinctions. Service pensions also raised opposition because of the lasting financial obligation this would place on a new government.

While half-pay lifetime service pensions for Officers were a necessary expedient during the war, the economic and political realities immediately following the cessation of hostilities in 1783 made them both deeply unpopular and logistically impossible. From 1776 on, Congress enacted invalid pensions for those officers, soldiers, and sailors who had been wounded in a manner that rendered them incapable of making a livelihood. But while disability pensions were generally accepted by the public as a just recompense for injuries, the notion of pensions for service alone was a highly controversial matter. Democratic and anti-military sentiment remained high, and the Confederation government (operating without the power to tax) was unsuccessful in its attempts to have the payment of officers' service pensions guaranteed by the states. As part of the Federalist effort to strengthen the national government, Congress compromised with the Commutation Act, which committed the assembly to paying each officer a lump sum worth five years' full pay with 6 percent interest.\(^8\) In order to meet these payments, Congress requested a new impost duty on goods. Popular opposition was fierce: denouncements filled newspapers in the North, Connecticut passed a resolution condemning commutation, and Massachusetts went so far as to recall its representatives for agreeing to the Act.\(^9\) The controversy began to fade by the spring of 1783. The Army disbanded without actually
receiving a cash payment, lessening tensions over the role of military in the new government. Both officers and soldiers instead received certificates for later redemption, but the government remained in default until 1790 after the ratification of the Constitution strengthened national government by giving Congress the power to tax. By then, however, many veterans had sold their certificates at significantly reduced rates to speculators, meaning that many never received even the agreed-upon payment for their service. 

Public antipathy toward the idea of service pensions and debate over the role of central government both contributed to the early history of pensions for Revolutionary War veterans. As time passed, the expectations of citizens changed and the national government continued to expand and gain power over the fate of the nation through policy and law. The years following the Revolutionary War saw the general transformation of the Continental Army's reputation. For succeeding generations, the Army became a symbol of nationalist pride, while memories of its misconduct and of the experiences of hardship and personal sacrifice felt by all strata of society faded and passed away. The young vagabonds that had filled the ranks had become hoary-headed patriots who embodied in their persons the Spirit of '76. By 1817, the United States had fought a second war against the British, continued military-backed expansion into the Northwest Territory, and the economic hardships of the post-war period had given way to comparative prosperity and a sizable Treasury surplus. A strong military was steadily becoming essential to the state, and the Revolutionary Era’s distrust of its power gave way to a surge in patriotism. The figure of the Revolutionary War veteran assumed a new symbolic importance, recalling the ideals of the Revolutionary era for a society undergoing rapid economic, population, and political changes. However, their patriotic appeal came with a price, as many veterans struggled with poverty in spite of the nation's development and increasing wealth. Since the Revolution,
Congress had responded to individual pleas for assistance from impoverished or needy veterans on a case-by-case basis, often with the refusal of support.\textsuperscript{11} It was in these circumstances that President James Monroe urged Congress to establish need-based service pensions for both officers and soldiers who had fought during the Revolution, reasoning that so much time had passed \textquoteleft\textquoteleft that the number to be benefitted [sic] by any provision which m[ight] be made, w[ould] not be great.\textquoteright\textquoteright\textsuperscript{12} The 1818 Pension Act enjoyed bipartisan support and broad public appeal; society had clearly changed a great deal since Revolutionary times.

As Laura Jensen argues in \textit{Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy}, the Pension Act fused the concept of service pensions with that of assistance for the poor, setting an early precedent for using entitled groups of citizens as a model for effecting social policy. By operating categorically, rather than on a case-by-case basis as in the past, the Pension Act defined criteria of deservingness for public benefits and thus \textquoteleft\textquoteleft construct[ed] the virtuous patriot in law.\textquoteright\textquoteright\textsuperscript{13} The version of the bill that passed in the House included all officers and soldiers who had fought in the Revolution and where reduced to indigence and incapable of work. The Senate, foreseeing the potential volume of claims, proposed eligibility restrictions, including a minimum service period of three years or until the end of the war and restriction to Continental Army soldiers exclusive of the militia. The compromise bill maintained this limitation, reduced the service period to nine months, was contingent on current residence in the United States, and also required applicants to make a declaration of need before a district judge.

The textual apparatus of Potter's account itself reflects these criteria. John Vial's testimonial to the account's truthfulness was made through an appeal to his own experience as a Prisoner of War, establishing the veracity of Potter's suffering in the name of the Revolutionary cause by the extension of a categorical definition of personal sacrifice. Vial's own credibility
was in turn verified by District Judge David Howell, a former member of the Continental Congress. Pension applications brought veterans into contact with the expanding state bureaucracy required to distribute state funds. Those who fell outside of these requirements like Israel Potter, such as the militia, veterans with short service periods, and others who were more tangentially involved in the Revolution (such as women and non-military laborers, for example) were implicitly categorized as “undeserving” in their exclusion.

In addition to creating a legal definition of the virtuous patriot, the Pension Act exposed the limitations of prevailing assumptions regarding both the economic well being of citizens and the relationship of the nation to its Revolutionary past. In part because of underestimates of the number of surviving veterans, and in part because of the broad language of the Act which required only that applicants be in a “reduced circumstance in life... [and] in need of assistance from [their] country for support,” the number of applicants greatly exceeded Congressional expectation.14 The largest estimation suggested that 200 officers and 1,687 soldiers still lived, and that the program would generally decrease from the first-year cost of $115,480. By the end of 1819, a year of financial panic, there had been 28,555 claims, resulting in 16,270 pension certificates, costing $1,811,329. Together with disability pensions and other previous grants to veterans, the new Revolutionary War pension program accounted for 10.6 percent of that year's budget.15 Facilitating this vast new program resulted in expanding institutional bureaucracy and new measures for vetting fraudulent applications increased state scrutiny into the lives of recipients. Public support for Revolutionary veterans, which resulted in part from the state's increasing dependence on the military, contributed in turn to the expansion of governmental size and power in the Early Republic.

The appeal to nationalism and American character in Potter's *Life and Adventures*
resonated with the changing relationship of American society to the veterans of the Revolutionary War, appealing to the period’s upsurge in reverence for aged patriots. Potter did not, however, qualify for a pension because of his absence from the country when the Act was passed, rendering his patriotic claims moot from the perspective of Pension administrators – even with the modest support of John Vial and District Judge David Howell. Though it was very much a product of the sentiments of the time, Potter’s biography entered the literary marketplace facing a new series of truth-telling criteria.

In the literary marketplace, the *Life and Remarkable Adventures* joined the ranks of biographical accounts that appeared before the public with the avowed goal of earning their subject an income. As such, it united his appeal to nationalism with personal interest, and consequently invoked a relationship of private beneficence between Potter and the book's purchaser. When injury or hardship befell an individual, leaving them without the ability to labor or otherwise earn an income, men and women in reduced circumstances were often left with only their story to tell. In *The Unvarnished Truth*, Ann Fabian notes that the reading public would be familiar with such circumstances both in the realm of printed texts and in scenarios where such tales were recounted orally to an audience - as happens repeatedly in Potter's narrative. (Familiar genres of such tales include captivity narratives from the frontier as well as fugitive slave narratives.) At this juncture, the difference between printed text and related story rests in its commodity form; once in physical form, narratives assumed a trade value above that of spoken stories, though their content may be approximately the same. As such, although Potter himself denied that he had ever sunk "below the mud, to actual beggary," Fabian places his narrative categorically with other “beggars” who sought to position their stories as acts of charity on behalf of the reader (165). Like other accounts that promised that the proceeds of the book's
sales would go to the relief of the subject, Potter's *Life and Adventures* had entered the literary marketplace with the express aim of monetizing his life experiences in lieu of any other means of income.

The use of stories to gain charity, however, was common enough in everyday life to promote skepticism in at least some readers, as personal narratives (both verbal and textual) were often a site for shiftiness and lying. The act of reading (or hearing) was subsequently also tasked with determining the authenticity of another person's story. Unsurprisingly, even while the question of authenticity looms in relation to "deserving" charity, narratives told in ways that flatter the audience sometimes made more money for their tellers than honesty. Under these circumstances, artifice reveals the way culturally pre-approved narratives (such as romance, patriotism, adventure, etc) trump the comparatively boring day-to-day necessities of life (work, accidents, or sickness) when explaining the cause of the subject's woes.

Fabian notes a relevant scenario recorded in London reformer Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (1861-2), using it as context for Potter’s narrative based on similarities to certain elements of Potter’s experience as an impoverished laborer in London. The collection's “Beggars” section, penned by Scottish journalist Andrew Halliday, considered the problem of imposture in begging, for if beggars were not actually impoverished then the practice raised the phantasm of swindle to obscure the question of poverty:

Another class of them, to which I have not referred, is familiar to the London public in connection with rudely executed paintings representing either a shipwreck, or more commonly the destruction of a boat by a whale in the North Seas.... Their misfortune so far is not to be questioned. A man who has lost both arms, or even one, is scarcely in a position to earn his living by labour, and is therefore a fit object for charity. It is found,
however, that in most instances the stories of their misfortunes printed underneath their pictures are simply inventions, and very often the pretended sailor has never been to sea at all.  

Halliday recorded a “case” that he had “investigated,” concerning a man named Henry, who had lost both arms after breaking them badly while falling from a scaffolding while working as a bricklayer. Potter likewise would number brickmaking among his many employments, and Henry's fate suggests the difficulty of narrating the fate of the impoverished laborer. Although honest, Henry's early attempts at begging were unsuccessful, for “his appearance (dressed as he was in workman's clothes) was not sufficiently picturesque to attract attention, and his story was of too ordinary a kind to excite much interest” (428). In addition to the “unintenteresting nature of his case,” Halliday noted that Henry also “had no experience in the art of begging” (428). Whereas the nature of Henry's injuries left little doubt to his deserving nature, Halliday disapproved of his begging once he had assumed a successful partnership with a fellow double-amputee, Trafalgar Jack, and began receiving steady takings by impersonating injured tars. Henry, on the other hand, viewed his imaginative use of storytelling as “honest” work, declaring that it kept him from using the over-taxed workhouse which he had witnessed turning away women and children in need. The problem for Halliday and his compatriots at the Mendacity Society was that sometimes a beggar with an interesting story could benefit a little too well from public largesse, and for the study Henry's case became another example of a "large class of beggars who get their living in the streets, chiefly by frequenting public-houses and whining a tale of distress" (429). It is tempting to imagine the circumstance which led Henry to reveal his “true” tale to Halliday, for he must have believed him a trustworthy and sympathetic listener to reveal details which would lead to his own censure, raising the question of Halliday's own
potential imposture as not merely a recipient of Henry's tale, but also its hardest critic.

The romantic conjuration of action and adventure on the high seas achieved more than merely increasing donations for the injured brickmaker; by participating in the ideological constructions surrounding benevolence and injury-value, such performances do more than “lie.” Pretending to an injury "out there," on the sea, the false story told by Henry displaces the source of his injury from the heart of society and the labor on which it depends to the distant extra-national periphery. Creating this distance made charity palatable by exonerating the benevolent consumer of the story. Fabian limits her consideration of Potter's text to the category of begging (she considers the case of Prisoner of War narratives only in relation to the Civil War), concluding that “brickmakers (a job that, as the unfortunate Israel Potter learned, was reserved for the desperately poor) had no such adventure stories.”18 When critiquing the authenticity of narratives, it may be true that, as Fabian concludes, brickmakers in the narrowest sense don't have adventure stories within their identification as brickmakers, because labor is not adventure. However, the larger narrative of Israel Potter serves to complicate stable identifications within one job or for that matter within one mode of narrative, and through its juxtaposition of nationalism and the concerns of properly rewarded labor his text recovers the existence of a brickmaker with quite a story to tell.

Potter distances his own storytelling from the charge of begging, and, like Halliday, criticizes those imposters who undeservedly bilked the charitable public of its money:

[T]here are many; however, who so far from being the real objects of charity that they represent themselves to be, actually possess more wealth than those who sometimes benevolently bestow it – these vile imposters, by every species of deception that was ever devised or practiced by man, aim to excite the pity and compassion, and to extort charity
from those unacquainted with their easy circumstances – they possess the faculty of assuming any character that may best suit their purpose – sometimes hobbling with a crutch and exhibiting a wooden leg – at other times [calling out] “an honourable scar of a wound, received in Egypt, at Waterloo, or at Trafalgar, fighting for their most gracious sovereign and master King George!” (348-9)

By alerting his reader to the need for scrutiny in judging stories whose intent was to elicit charity, Potter implied the comparative trustworthiness of his own printed account. A similar uneasiness is suggested after his first escape from the prison ship, when, having traded his clothes and adopted a limp in order to discourage the attention of press gangs by pretending to bodily unsoundness, he remarks to his reader in an aside that “I had now become almost an adept at deception, which I would not however have so frequently practiced, had not self preservation demanded it” (316). In his novel Melville would accentuate Potter's charge, claiming that imposter-beggars were “a sort of crafty aristocracy in their way…. while some of the genuine working heroes, too brave to beg, too cut-up to work, and too poor to live, laid down quietly in corners and died” (165). Yet unlike Halliday's rampant distrust of any beggar's story, Potter's life attests to the conditions of poverty that the question of imposture obfuscates. Likewise, in Moby-Dick, Melville describes “a crippled beggar (or kedger, as the sailors say) holding a painted board before him, representing the tragic scene in which he lost his leg. There are three whales and three boats; and one of the boats (presumed to contain the missing leg in all its original integrity) is being crunched by the jaws of the foremost whale.” In a scene nearly equivalent to that described, and discredited, by Halliday, Melville aligns his sympathy with the beggar as laborer, basing his trust on the fact that the illustration of the “three whales [was] as good whales as were ever published in Wapping, at any rate; and his stump as unquestionable a
stump as any you will find in the Western clearings.” For Melville, the standard for trustworthiness rested with the extent to which the reality of labor is represented in the narrative.

Potter’s text was a product of the nineteenth century and the conditions under which it was composed and published. It was an attempt to leverage the shifting role played by veterans of the Revolutionary War in American society to win its subject a pension and recognition as a patriot, and in this it can be said that Potter was as guilty as the false-tar Henry in finding the best story to “sell” his audience as a means to sustain himself. *The Life and Remarkable Adventures of Israel R. Potter* entered the discourse that was in part constructive of U.S. nationalism by flattering the reader's sense of national pride, but in both its aspects (as pension petition and charitable text) it did so by incorporating the possibility of poverty and failure into the traditional narratives of American economic prosperity with the demand that its promises of a fair economic reward be made good. It is in this sense that no matter what liberties Potter took in his narration his text offers a truer accounting of American society, both reflecting the nineteenth century's selective memory of the Revolution and recalling the economic conditions that historically corresponded to the nation-state.

To read Potter’s text from this perspective is to take it as a response to broad cultural stances towards Revolutionary War patriots in the context of social programs meant to alleviate the poverty of veterans as a reward for their service – while also supporting the increase in governmental size, control, and function that was itself facilitated by an emerging sense of nationalist pride and the military needs of territorial expansion. Potter’s attempt to leverage this trend in the marketplace was not, however, rewarded by way of crisp sales; both pension application and publishing venture failed to provide him an income in his declining years. Both efforts established criteria for judging Potter’s tale, but ultimately correlation between these
categories of value and Potter’s lack of success remains interpretive. For pension administrators, Potter’s patriotic claims were offset by his technical absence from the country, but in general the program sought to relieve the kind of poverty made visible by his account. His subsequent foray into the marketplace invoked additional standards for veracity while also revealing the relative power of the text’s nationalist appeal compared to the reality of his poverty after years of labor in both the United States and England. While each category suggests that Potter’s contemporaries were aware of poverty as a problem, Potter’s appeal for relief itself depends on the argument that poverty is un-American – not on an indictment of the economic system or a call for a class-based politics. Rather than interpret Potter’s lack of success as a judgment against his patriotism, I argue that his situation is best understood as a complex interplay between cultural expectations and a particular text. It is one that, as a literary-historical episode, reveals the nuances of nationalism and the economy of the 1820s.

As a historical document, on the other hand, Potter’s Life and Remarkable Adventures has been the object of a renewed skepticism. Historians David Chacko and Alexander Kulcsar, authors of "Israel Potter: Genesis of a Legend," the foremost study of the text’s accuracy, note the inauspicious publication circumstances of Potter's account as well as several discrepancies between it and what can be verified in historical record. They note, importantly, that his publisher, Henry Trumbull, was known for publishing a newspaper akin to a gossip sheet, penny-thriller novels, an error-filled History of the Indian Wars, and other biographical oddities such as an account of an ex-slave hermit rumored to have lived in isolation for fourteen years. In addition, one of Trumbull's apprentices was arrested for selling obscene materials to the youth of Providence.20 Such evidence suggests that Trumbull's publishing business catered to the cheap, popular marketplace, with sales and personal interest triumphing over historical accuracy and
literary taste. As the front matter demonstrates, Trumbull claimed the rights of authorship for the publication and announced his role in its composition in a preface to the public, even though it is written in the first-person voice of its subject (288-9). It is often suggested for this reason that Potter was illiterate, and his inability to write is supported by the evidence that he signed his pension application with a mark rather than a signature. However, reading and writing were sometimes learned separately and internal textual elements describe Potter as a reader; he recalls reading tales of hunger and cannibalism as a youth and describes his fellow British laborers as illiterate yet humane (319, 325). In any case, it is ultimately only fair to acknowledge an authorship that admits both Trumbull's propensities as a publisher of sensational materials as well as Potter's own motivations as a storyteller, whether he was able to proof the text himself or not. The mercenary nature of Trumbull's interests in turn reflect badly on Potter's foray into print, but as we have seen Potter's text was invested with economic interests in many ways beyond those of his publisher. That his text was written and published by Trumbull is pertinent in evaluating the text, but while such knowledge disparages its worth historically, it is consistent within the broader social trends and erasures that had come to invest tales of the Revolution with meaning. Indeed, to the extent that Trumbull and Potter may have sensationalized his story, it would have been done so in order to more readily appeal to the tastes of the public consumer.

Chacko and Kulcsar note several discrepancies within the narrative compared to the historical archive as well, evidence which mounts against Potter as proof of his intent to deceive. I argue in turn that these errors often have reasonable explanations or mitigating circumstances. Contrary to his claim of respectable parentage, Potter was born out of wedlock and boarded with a man who later became known for drunkenness until, when three years of age, he was apprenticed to John Potter. While it may be that John was Israel's paternal grandfather (by way
of his unidentified father), it is noteworthy that their relationship was modeled both on local methods of charity (the boarding of orphans with private families with a stipend paid by the town) and on the economic model of apprenticeship as a method for education and upbringing. (Also, that Potter himself may not have known these “facts,” being only a child when these decisions were made, is not considered.) Several of Potter's claims concerning his labor appear to be accurate, or at least consistent with the historical record, excepting his account of a second whaling voyage to the South Seas - which was unexploited at the time of the Revolution (Chacko 372). However, such a claim would have been significant for Potter's nineteenth-century audience, particularly his fellow Rhode Islanders, as a symbol of the extremity of effort required in the industry, whether the claim is authentically Potter's or was added in either deliberately or unintentionally by Trumbull.

These early glosses and discrepancies establish a pattern of deception for a historical reckoning, but it is in the details of Potter's Revolutionary War service where questions of inaccuracy are replaced with charges of fraud and theft. The Rhode Island militia did not respond immediately to the news of Lexington and Concord, contrary to Potter's account; the company marched for Boston more than a month later at the end of May 1775, and was consequently better provisioned than those who had arrived more rapidly. (Perhaps Potter was one of the militia who reported for action on hearing the news, only to be turned back by the general of the state's militia. 22) In any case, Potter likely exaggerated in narrating his role in the battle of Bunker Hill to elevate his claim to heroic status, for though he depicts himself as a defender of Bunker Hill his regiment was stationed well outside of the area visited by hand to hand combat (Chacko 374). His description of service on the Washington likewise omits an episode of mutiny by the sailors stemming from a combination of the commander's ineptitude,
the poor quality of the ship itself, and horrible winter weather that took its toll on the poorly dressed sailors. Washington responded practically, forbore punishment of the men, equipped them with slightly better clothing, and suggested the lure of the potential prize value to be had in capturing an unarmed British ship (Chacko 376-8). While interest and economic motivation is a factor in everyone's decision-making, from Washington to the outfitters and officers of the ship, the charge of criminality (mutiny) lands squarely with the rebellious seamen.

The intersection of economics and criminality similarly invests the conclusions reached in Chacko and Kulcsar's interrogation of the text. Improbably, the letter delivered by Potter to Franklin survives, yet its contents are at such variance with the narrative as to arouse the “suspicion” of the “historical detective” (Chacko 380). In Potter's telling, though he does not know the contents of the letter he is nevertheless certain that it contains information regarding the state of the British cabinet in relation to the Revolution (336-7). In reality, the letter offered an introduction of Potter to Franklin, detailed his circumstances as a prisoner of war, and begged Franklin to contact its senders with information. The letter suggested that Potter would supply additional information regarding its signatories. The historical record shows that Franklin was suspicious (he labeled it “Israel Potters, pretended Letter from some Gentm. in England") but nevertheless gave Potter some money to help in his effort to return home. Further evidence suggests that Franklin expected Potter to contact his nephew Jonathan Williams at Nantes to arrange passage, and his failure to do so implies that his return to England corresponded to an embezzlement of Franklin's money. The time-line suggests the possibility of two courier trips as Potter narrates, but the second is not evidenced in Franklin's papers. Searching for motives, Chacko and Kulcsar suggest that Potter may have in fact been spying on behalf of the English, but if this were the case then the evidence which debarred Potter's original claim to be working
on behalf of pro-American interests is similarly relevant. The low quality of the original letter, devoid of useful information and full of poor spelling, does raise suspicions regarding Potter's claims, but it would be reasonable to expect that sanctioned government espionage would have handled the same letter with enough expertise as to assuage Franklin's suspicions rather than inciting them. The letter is signed C:W:K and J:H, perhaps Charles Woodcocke and John Horne Tooke as the narrative claims, but the latter would certainly (as the historians suggest) have penned a much finer missive as the author of a book on language and grammar.

Accusing Potter of base motives and suspecting the veracity of his account produces a substantial misinterpretation of Potter’s letter to Franklin. The transcription provided by Chacko and Kulcsar is particularly telling at one point of clarification: “But we Have sent him unto you and Have Asised [assisted?] him as well as we Could at Present” (Chacko 380). This sentence transitions from the description of Potter's history and is immediately followed by the request for information. Without much context, the historians' suggestion that the word be read as “assisted” suggests that Potter's main role is as a subject of charity for both the senders and recipient of the letter and places a renewed emphasis on Potter's desire to return home as the point of his visit to Franklin. Another meaning is entirely likely, given the nature of the letter’s poor spelling. As a phonetic approximation, the use of “asised” in the letter is likely a misspelling of “assized,” from the juridical term “assize,” a word that denominates both the gathering of a court or counsel as well as its edicts. In this, it denotes both the act of judging criminality as well as the assessment of value primarily for the purpose of taxation. The writers of the letter therefore suggest that Potter's desire to return home is not mentioned to solicit Franklin's charity, but as proof of his trustworthy character in the matter at hand just as the text itself states. To misread this word is to divide Potter's story from the letter's request for
information, to insist that his proper sphere is only that of personal interest and charity rather
than as an agent of government – no matter how limited that role may be.

The depth and skill of Chacko and Kulcsa's investigation into the archive is impressive, and though there are discrepancies, overstatements, and misunderstandings present in Potter’s text, the bulk of the evidence shows that the narrative is more or less a representation of history, even if that history is flawed by the memory and motives of its main subject and the
circumstances of its publication. The problem enters with interpretation, when Potter's motives become suspicious. Any other explanation will do, must do, in order to make sense of the
narrative, because no matter how well his story does fit within the historical archive he has been found to be a liar. Personal interest returns as the only motivation that can explain both the fact of the story's telling and the claim that it is a fabrication, but personal interest is only a problem for those who are impoverished - not for a man of Washington's stature or for the nation-state itself. Therefore, to be poor is to be a liar, a perjurer of a pension application, an extorter of the public's charity, and, by a simple extension, a criminal. Or such, at least, seems to be the implication of a historical inquiry into Potter's narrative. That any of the discrepancies alone may have reasonable explanations is beyond the scope of an approach that operates antagonistically to its object of analysis, and in this case that antagonism mirrors the antagonistic class relations that would remember the Revolution only in terms of the rise of bourgeois, liberal interests and values. Put simply, an interrogation of Potter's narrative in these terms assumes the class values that are bound to find his poverty unfit for inclusion in nationalism's patriotic mythos. To mistake “assized” for “assisted” is to misread into the narrative a division between economics and political participation that is always mutually formative both in the text and in society, a relationship essential for understanding the text as a product of the nineteenth century
rather than as a text of the eighteenth century. It holds an individual responsible for history, when in many ways Potter's text is “truer” as a reflection of society's assumptions and the changing role played by veterans in the cultural memory of the Revolution when it errs.

Regardless of his hopes, Potter learned that poverty was a fact of American society. His pension application was rejected, and the second and third printings of his book were published by J. Howard, a money broker and seller of lottery tickets, perhaps in exchange for a debt. Once more in poverty, Potter was judged by the Providence Town Council to not legally settled in the town. He was taken to the limits of neighboring Cranston, his place of birth (Chacko 389). Deported once more on a small scale, Potter ended life as he entered it, shuttled and displaced as an object of civic charity with only his story to tell.

"Suddenly Illuminated by a Dreadful Suspicion"

In Potter’s Life and Remarkable Adventures, Herman Melville found a “pealed knuckle-bone” perspective of the American Revolution, one that offered a unique vehicle for investigating assumptions surrounding the nation’s character. Much of the novel simply restates material from the source, but it is when Melville departs from Potter’s account that the novel makes its case not only for a critique of U.S. nationalism, but also for an inclusion of working class politics that reflect the steadily industrializing economy of the nation.

Literary scholars have long appreciated the novel’s challenging depiction of U.S. nationalism. Arnold Rampersad argued that the novel “illuminate[es]... the dark, violent side of
the American body.” Kenny Jackson called it “an indictment against that part of America which could not distinguish between a popular hero and a true patriot.” More recent criticism has not challenged this point substantially. Bill Christophersen, for example, suggests that its “purpose is to scrutinize America's actual identity while deposing her inflated self-image...” in which case, he concludes, the novel may surely be counted as “a triumph, not a failure, of will and art – a fiction that pursues its themes to their conclusion, demythologizing America and mythologizing modern man in its stead.” Robert Levine notes that from a transatlantic perspective, the novel “seems less intent on identifying the United States as particularly evil than on challenging all claims to national exceptionalism.” Peter J. Bellis argues that Melville “turns the pamphlet's first-person tale into a distanced and ironized third-person narrative and its Revolutionary War hero into a decidedly antiheroic figure, alienated from and dispossessed by history itself.”

Although critical of nationalism, neither the novel nor the source dismiss it outright. Rather, it is through the reintroduction of class interests to patriotism that new theoretical reflections emerge.24

While scholars have often recognized the critique of nationalism found in Israel Potter, the novel historically has been regarded as a lesser work written in the aftermath of his classics Moby-Dick and Pierre. However, from an economic perspective, this valuation is undeserved. The novel was serially published in Putnam's Monthly Magazine, with a circulation varying between twelve and twenty thousand, and was generally well reviewed.25 It went through three printings, selling fewer than ten thousand copies, which was, however, significantly more than either Moby-Dick at fewer than four thousand or Pierre at fewer than two thousand.26 The novel is regarded as having helped Melville recover from the critical backlash from Pierre, which garnered harsh attacks on his mental state because of its erotic and incestuous themes. Having
turned to magazine publication that allowed for shorter works while providing good pay and the
cover of anonymity, he promised his publishers at Putnam's that the story would contain
“nothing of any sort to shock the fastidious. There will be very little reflective writing in it;
nothing weighty. It is adventure.”27 In spite of the monetary importance of the novel to
Melville's career and a circulation (both in Putnam's and in book form) which compared only to
his first novels Typee and Omoo, Israel Potter certainly remains near the bottom of the list of
Melville's works, even as critics have noted the complexities of the novel's critical depiction of
U.S. nationalism which quite belied his promise to Putnam's to deliver a popular and
unchallenging narrative.

Melville's novel begins with several chapters that closely follow Potter's account, as
promised in its dedication. In these chapters, Melville maintains the story of Potter's childhood,
his early experience as a laborer (as a farmer, trader, hunter, and whaleman), his service at
Bunker Hill and aboard the Washington, his capture by the British, transportation to the British
coast, and escape from the prison hulks into the countryside. After establishing his narrative
firmly in Potter's experience of prisoner of war captivity, Melville follows his lead in describing
his difficulty in finding work, his unlikely encounter with the King, George III, while employed
as a gardener at his estate, and finally his interaction with American sympathizers who employ
Potter as a courier of secret documents to Ben Franklin in Paris. But whereas Potter describes
his encounter with Franklin as a modest hour of conversation (during which, he asserts, Franklin
assured him that the government would remunerate soldiers for their service), Melville's version
seizes the opportunity to investigate the meaning of nationalism by incorporating three fanciful
episodes in which Potter encounters iconic American figures: Franklin, the celebrated naval
captain John Paul Jones, and the taker of Fort Ticonderoga, Ethan Allen (337). In total,
Melville's creative digression amounts to approximately double the length of the material drawn from his source.

Significantly, the rupture between the two texts occurs at a point where Potter invokes his encounter with an iconic historical figure in order to validate his pension claim. Melville, on the other hand, was free from the imperatives that shaped Potter's text, and from his depiction of the three iconic figures of U.S. nationalism emerges a critique of the state and its relationship to the individual. The divarication of texts begins just prior to Potter's encounter with Franklin. Upon arriving in Paris, he encounters a man who offers, in French, to clean and polish his boots, which have become mud-spattered during the voyage. Potter had received his new boots from his friends, the American sympathizers, and in addition to being custom-made for him they contain in their false heels the secret missives of state he is in the process of delivering to Franklin. Potter is guided by the bootblack's “tender violence” to the box, where he “unwillingly” submits to the procedure (37-8). However, “suddenly illuminated by a dreadful suspicion,” he “fetch[es] the box a terrible kick” and runs like mad. The man, incensed, chases him, which only confirms Potter in his suspicions. This brief episode enacts a complex display of recognition and misrecognition, in which an ostensibly economic transaction is transformed into an affair of state. Paranoia, the “dreadful suspicion,” transforms Potter's consciousness, inaugurating his elevation from the categorical identity of being a prisoner of war to one in which his relationship to the state is defined by and through his interactions with iconic patriots. Potter's suspicion, moreover, internalizes the suspicion that always points toward criminality, inverting his role as an escaped prisoner (and object of suspicion) that inundates his character throughout the novel (and which, in another form, also surrounded Potter's foray into the economy of charitable storytelling). At the moment where Melville's text departs from his source, intrigue crafts Potter
as an active, unfettered agent of the state.

Following the episode with the bootblack on the bridge, Potter's newfound self-importance prepares him for his encounter with Franklin, a fact underscored by Melville's portrayal of their initial interview. As Potter moves across the room, looking for a seat to occupy while removing his boots in order to retrieve their hidden contents, Franklin, true to his reputation as a keen (if playful) observer and reasoner, sustains a steady monologue critical of Potter's actions. A slip on the wax floor is mis-attributed to the vanity of high heels, and the removal of Potter's boots is likewise mis-attributed to their being too tight. Melville emphasizes the extremity of Franklin's status as rational observer by having him reason that if nature had intended men to wear tight boots it would have resulted in the evolution of feet made of solid bone or iron, while gently noting the venerable sage's own slippered feet. Finally, detecting the concealed compartment in Potter's boots, Franklin's clearly erroneous perception is quickly resolved: "I was mistaken this time," Franklin states, "your high heels, instead of being idle vanities, seem to be full of meaning" (40). Ever the literalist, Potter replies "pretty full." This exchange typifies the interaction between the two throughout Potter's stay in Paris, with Franklin's force of personality held in check by Potter's sardonic wit.

When Potter describes his encounter with the boot-black, Franklin didactically critiques his response, dismisses Potter's paranoia, and orders him to find the fellow and pay him restitution, to which end he gives him three silver coins. After a brief aside, Franklin returns to this point and sets terms for how Potter should repay it, stating that he should give the equivalent amount to the first soldier's widow he meets once he returns to America. Not wanting to be under such an obligation, Potter returns the money to Franklin, stating that he only accepted it “because [he] thought it would not look well to push it back after being so kindly offered,” and
jests that he hopes no interest has accrued (42-3). However, Potter's wit and effort to distance himself from obligation to Franklin do not, as he hopes, remove him from the savant's critical appraisal, for even when it is not his own money Franklin issues minute instructions concerning how Potter is to handle the transaction: exact change, counted in French currency, and placed in a pocket separate from his other money to prevent thieves and robbers from knowing its location (43). Potter declares that he is not so simple as to need such instructions, Franklin retorts that he had (after all) knocked over the man's box, and Potter finally insists, “That, Doctor, was bravery” (43). This rather comedic exchange restores the quotidian, economic basis of Potter's encounter with the boot-black, but in the process demonstrates the great extent to which Franklin's sense of self-importance, extending into a belief in his own superior ability to accurately interpret reality, is predicated in turn on the subjection of Potter's agency. The extent to which Franklin's domination of Potter replicates the paradigm of authority between a subject and the state becomes apparent when Franklin declares that Potter must stay in his room “just as if you were my prisoner” (43). Symbolic of the American belief that hard work and industry would naturally be rewarded, Franklin seeks to dominate Potter from the start, dictating his actions both economically and as an agent of the state.

Potter's resistance to the allure of Franklin's character is grounded in his experiences as a laborer, and it is through a burgeoning sense of class consciousness that he gains a position from which to critique the ideology of hard work and industriousness (or, more precisely, the promise of plenty that these entail) that Franklin represents. Earlier in the novel, after his escape from the prison hulks but before making contact with the American sympathizers, Potter finally finds work as a hand at the estate of Sir John Mallet. After four days of hunger, Potter prepares for his employment by purchasing two loaves of bread. Whereas Franklin, in the Autobiography, uses a
similar circumstance to describe his own silliness in over-purchasing bread upon his arrival in Philadelphia (he is unfamiliar with the local economy and refuses to seek clarification from the baker before making his purchase), Potter ravenously consumes both loaves even though he had intended to save one for the following morning (24). The practical education of both men belies the belief that a position of detached reflection could be free from the imperatives of the economy that enfold both in differing class affiliations, and Potter's case particularly demonstrates the extent to which the necessities of the body at times may undermine the will of a subject. Over the course of Potter's stay with Franklin, their differing class affiliations manifest as the basis for reaching different analytical conclusions. When debating the impropriety of consuming alcohol, for example, Franklin argues against it by suggesting a cost-analysis, arguing that to consume the value of the alcohol equates to the gluttony of over-consuming the equivalent value in loaves of bread. Potter, undeterred by this line of reasoning, states that the two are not so equivalent as their market value would suggest and is left unmoved by the argument. In the course of the debate, however, Franklin queries Potter as to the value of a glass of port and scoffs at the low answer given, decrying the “poor” quality of such wine, and instead uses his own valuation to carry out the sum. Franklin's superiority rests not only with his line of reasoning, but with the sense that his own valuation further carries the point; the contradiction arises when his argumentation demonstrates a familiarity with the very luxury good that he denounces (and that is usually out of Potter's reach), and it is the unintentional class bias (Franklin's effrontery of Potter's very low estimate of the value of fine wine) that in turn maintains Potter's ability to resist Franklin's powerful conclusions concerning standards of thought and behavior for the everyman.

Potter's resistance to Franklin's world-view culminates with an episode that enacts a type
of encounter with the savant that would be similar to what many of Melville's readers could have experienced. Confined to his room, Potter is given two texts to occupy himself with: a guide to Paris (in the event that he is ever allowed to return) and a copy of *Poor Richard's Almanac* (45).

The circumstances of Potter's encounter with Franklin's alter ego, Richard Saunders, is closely linked with their disagreement concerning alcohol. Although he speaks no French, mispronounces the names of places, and is generally unfamiliar with local customs, Potter is, nevertheless, able to correctly interpret the circumstances he finds in the room that Franklin has ordered for him. On entering, he is happy because he sees himself, reflected in a large silver mirror over the fireplace, surrounded by luxury consumer items that have been arranged on the mantel. Through examination, he is able to overcome the language barrier: “putting this and that and the other thing together, it’s a sort of alphabet that spells something. Spoon, tumbler, water, sugar, ---brandy-- that's it. O-t-a-r-d is brandy” (50). Moreover, through a line of careful deduction, he is able to reason first that the arrangement is “a very polite invitation from some invisible person to help myself,” considers, however, that they may be “some other person's private property,” and ultimately intuits that whatever is used will be charged to the bill (50).

Having correctly interpreted both the cultural and economic circumstances of the scenario, Potter is just in the process of opening the brandy when Franklin intrudes, declares that the Otard is “poison,” and systematically removes most of the items from the room (51). In the absence of his preferred form of entertainment, Potter turns to the almanac at precisely the moment when his consciousness is occupied by the desire for class mobility:

I wish something extraordinary would turn up now; for instance, a man come in and give me ten thousand pounds. But here's 'Poor Richard;' I am a poor fellow myself; so let's see what comfort he has for a comrade.... *So what signifies wishing and hoping for better*
times? We may make these times better, if we bestir ourselves. Industry need not wish, and he that lives upon hopes will die fasting, as Poor Richard says. There are no gains, without pains. Then help, hands, for I have no lands, as Poor Richard says.' Oh confound all this wisdom! It's a sort of insulting to talk wisdom to a man like me. It's wisdom that's cheap, and its fortune that's dear. That ain't in Poor Richard; but it ought to be,' concluded Israel, suddenly slamming down the pamphlet. (53-4)

In this moment, Potter's frustration takes the form of a class politics outside of the ideology of American industriousness: the realization that hard work does not necessarily guarantee success, or that failure signifies lack of effort. The central dynamic is contained within the quote itself; despite exhibiting the mindset of a merchant, having no lands indicates Poor Richard's status as a laborer, who, lacking private property from which to extract wealth, is left with only the labor of his body to sell.

Compared to the antagonistic relationship depicted between Potter and Franklin, Potter's second encounter with a famous American is typified by absolute subordination. John Paul Jones, the most celebrated sea captain from the Revolution, embodies in his being the very essence of an American nationalism that, while distinct from the economic ideology represented by Franklin, nevertheless fetishistically depends on those beliefs for self-preservation and protection. Though deeply suspicious of Franklin / Saunders (Potter later reveals that he knows perfectly well that Saunders is Franklin's nom de plume), once he and Paul return to his room to pass the night his skepticism vanishes before the compulsive attraction of Jones. Jones picks up the pamphlet and begins reading where Potter had left off, declaring that the famous maxim “God helps them that help themselves” is precisely true to his experience and goes so far as to declare that he needed a copy of the pamphlet to wear around his neck as a charm (61).
Described as an “Indian Chief in European clothes,” Jones is characterized as an iconic individual who “looked like one who never had been, and never would be, a subordinate” (56). Further, in describing the Revolution, Melville suggests that being “intrepid, unprincipled, reckless, predatory, with boundless ambition, civilized in externals but a savage at heart, America is, or may yet be, the Paul Jones of nations” (120). It is especially significant that Potter encounters Jones just at the point of his critique of Poor Richard's maxims, for what should be a disagreement over the text becomes instead an example of how nationalism (particularly in the case of the United States) functions in superseding a class critique of society. Rather than debating the antithetical position he had previously reached during private reflection, Potter instead becomes smitten with Jones and seeks to emulate his character. Such is the case after their first evening spent together in Potter's room. Jones, refusing sleep, is spied by Potter removing his boots and pacing rapidly, but noiselessly, in meditation (62). At the beginning of the next chapter, after three days have passed, Franklin encounters Potter mimicking precisely this behavior down to his stockinged feet (64). Potter's emulation of Jones is the beginning of the erasure of his agency from the text, as Potter becomes a secondary character as the novel follows Jones's naval exploits for several chapters. The attractiveness of Jones signals a division between the interests of class and the appeal of nationalism for Potter, a split that is always contingent on the erasure of the vital link between the state and the economy. By emulating Jones, Potter performs actions that signify stature; the act of reflection suggests a deep interior filled with matters of import and the nervous energy of ceaseless pacing bespeaks boundless potential free from the exhaustion of labor.

The chapters in *Israel Potter* dealing with Jones's command are filled with nationalistic depictions of his bold and brash attacks on the British in their own waters, leaving no room for
descriptions of the minutia of military seamanship. Instead, Potter is completely dedicated to Jones and the nationalism he represents. Moreover, nationalism and capitalism entwine in the description of Jones's celebrated battle with the *Serapis*, which Melville describes as a “co-partnership and joint-stock combustion-company of both ships,” with the sailors “toil[ing] in mechanical magic of discipline. They tended those rows of guns, as Lowell girls the rows of looms in a cotton factory” (127). Far from opening the way to a post-national confederation of laborers, *Israel Potter* suggests that American nationalism has both incorporated and stabilized issues of class within its system of meaning.

Potter's relationship to John Paul Jones represents the subject-state relationship, one that is characterized by Potter's complete surrender to the ideals embodied by Jones. Whereas elsewhere in the novel Potter's daily necessities (marking his precarious position at the bottom of society's economic structure) largely constitute his subjectivity by validating his ability as an agent skilled in survival and escape, in the chapters dedicated to Jones his will is essentially subjected to that of his commander. The two meet once more on the sea after parting ways in Paris. Potter, having been impressed into the British navy, is transferred to a revenue cutter in distress in order to replace the crew who had perished in a storm. As the only common seaman on board, he is worked hard by three superior officers, including two mates and the captain of the vessel. After being cuffed and kicked by the other men, Potter rises up and knocks the captain down, but is soon subdued and threatened with death, ending his ineffectual personal revolt (87). Just as Potter's individual resistance is thwarted, the ship is accosted by Jones' privateering vessel and the captain gives the command to flee. In the midst of the chaos of intense action by those around him, “Israel stood indifferent, or rather all in a fever of conflicting emotions,” for “he thought he recognized the voice from the strange vessel” (88). Driven by this exterior force,
Potter declares himself a national enemy before knocking the captain overboard, killing him. Next, while clashing with one of the ship's officers, the man slips, grabbing Potter by “the most terrible part in which mortality can be grappled” rendering him “insane with pain” (89). In a frenzy, Potter dashes his head against the sharp iron edge of a hatchway. He kills the third man by catching him around the loins “bedding his fingers like grisly claws into his flesh, and hugging him to his heart. The man's ghost, caught like a broken cork in a gurgling bottle's neck, gasped with the embrace” (89). Across the three murders, Potter's agency is gradually diminished from Yankee rebel to a bestial rage (from insanity driven by sexualized bodily pain to wielding animalistic “grisly claws” in an embrace of destruction), yet unlike Billy Budd the question of guilt is displaced by the revolutionary lawlessness generated by Potter's internal response to Jones's voice. The boarding crew, shocked by the markers of violence aboard the cutter, begin the process of adjudication by securing the half-dead officer to verify Potter's account, but he dies while being transported to the ship. Paul recognizes Potter, which is enough to identify him as a patriot, and conversely Potter testifies that he thought he recognized Jones' voice “hailing” him, and that “it was Captain Paul's voice that somehow put me up to this deed” (89). Once again Potter is left to relate his story to verify his claims, and the cutter is left to drift into port not as a symbol of Potter's violent uprising but rather as a sign of what Jones intends for the future.

The story of Potter's violent destruction of the cutter's crew offers a prescient example of what Louis Althusser terms “ideological interpellation” in his account of the cultural functioning of state power, as I have described in chapter 1. In his analysis of how the relationships of production are reproduced at the level of society (outside of work, on the employee's own time), Althusser turns his critical analysis to social institutions whose function it is to replace a varying
and wide-scale spectrum of workers required by the global-level interconnection of production. Institutions, such as the church and schools, are said to prepare people to “submit to the rules of the established order,” and as such are labeled “ideological State apparatuses” denoting their implicit connection to the interests of the nation-state which in turn is defined as the legal / juridical order through which the extraction of surplus labor is carried out in the interest of the dominant classes (89).* The mechanisms of Althusser’s theory describe the interiorization of a determining social order, charting the “ambiguity” of the subject, who is at once “a free subjectivity, a center of initiatives, author of and responsible for its actions” as traditions of liberalism and individualism hold, but who is also “a subjected being, who submits to a higher authority, and is therefore stripped of all freedom except that of freely accepting [their] submission” (123). A Marxist critique of society relies on an analysis of how the economic base of culture is mutually conditioned by the superstructure, which Althusser in turn subdivides into two components: the juridical / legal order of the state and the cultural domain of ideology. The three social registers (economic, legal, and cultural) each play a role in locating an individual's subjectivity as a socially constructed consciousness. Between the state, the power of ideology (things which appear natural, or which go without saying), and economic determination, the purportedly free subject of liberalism in fact contends with external compulsions at every turn as a consequence of the social aspects of human consciousness.

Potter's experience (his external indifference belying his feverish internal conflict)

* Nationalism in turn is identified as an element through which personal interest is constituted, theoretically parallel with such social forces as moralism, economism, and chauvinism, all of which combine to support the social structure by investing the subject with motivating beliefs that overlap and reinforce society's structure at large (104). For our purposes, I argue that the nation-state relationship should be more carefully considered as a contested site of social beliefs that can in turn impact and dictate state power rather than merely serve and perpetuate its ends.
suggests the case in which an external force (the expectations of nationalism and patriotism) erode or supersede his prior state of consciousness, in this case Potter's individual sense of class injustice at the hands of his superiors aboard the cutter. While this analysis suggests that his agency as a rational (liberal) subject is diminished, it is accomplished by a reinvestment of both revolutionary agency and the right to deploy violence in his subsequent actions. Melville suggests that there is no need for a trial (even though Jones's officers begin the process by securing a witness) because Potter has been subsumed into the apparatus of state-power by way of being an extension of Jones's representative American character.  

Melville's elaboration of the patriotism on which the living Israel Potter depended for validation of his story in the marketplace and his reapplication for a state pension takes Potter out of his personal history, depositing his now-transformed character more abstractly into the world re-imagined through a nationalist filter. His entrance to London and eventual return to Boston are altered in the novel to correspond with each place's national day of celebration, Guy Fawkes' Day (November 5th) and the Fourth of July respectively, and in Melville's telling both arrivals symbolize the public rituals through which state power are demonstrated. At London, Melville describes a historical vision of London Bridge adorned with the “withered heads and smoked quarters of traitors” which (as Foucault has shown) symbolized the authoritative power of monarchy, while at Boston the aged Potter encounters a “riotous crowd” at Faneuil Hall and is nearly run over by the parade's triumphal car, demonstrating Bunker Hill's transformation from an event linked to lived experience to national symbol celebrated in public demonstrations that help craft power in a democratic society (158, 167). In each case, Potter's experience of the public display of state power takes a material form, or what Marx would call its empirically verifiable aspect.
While Potter is pushed aside as his countrymen celebrate nationalism at the end of the text, his time under Jones's command is characterized by his total devotion to the ideas he represents, which in turn invest Potter in their patriotic splendor just as happens metaphorically when he hoists the American flag: “The bright flag blew around him, a glorified shroud, enveloping him in its red ribbons and spangles, like upspringing tongues, and sparkles of flame” (112). At once a symbolic death (the shroud) and a transformation into an object of consumption (licked by the upspringing tongues), Potter's interpellation in nationalist ideology places the state as the dominant source of determination of his subjectivity, displacing (or subordinating) the role of necessity and economics during his time under Jones's authority.

This relationship is clear in an episode revealing the “secret history” of the renaming of Jones's famous ship to Bon Homme Richard. Jones is tired from a day spent consulting with his subordinate officers and arguing with brokers for requisite stores, while Potter sits on the floor “at his commander's feet” patching old signal flags. Potter declares that he doesn't like the ship's original name, because being “cribbed up” in a ship named Duras reminds him of “durance vile,” or forced confinement (115). Jones agrees that a name change is in order, but rejects Potter's suggestion to name it after Franklin in order to keep the Doctor's role in the matter secret. They decide to name it Poor Richard in honor of the maxim “God helps them that help themselves,” but in translating the name into French a subtle shift results. Poor Richard becomes Bon Homme Richard, dropping the pretense of virtuous poverty that earlier had incited Potter's skepticism; the newly consecrated Goodman Richard invokes instead the status of middling prosperity essential to the rise of liberal government during the period. Potter's effort to resist compulsion (durance vile) is subverted to the interests of the state at every turn, and while the exchange honors those liberal values of freedom and agency (the ability to help
oneself) it does so while inscribing Potter's real subjection to the state and the class interests it serves. Potter is free to suggest a name change, so long as the exchange reproduces his position at his commander's feet. Like the old signals he mends, his suggestions are re-signified in support of the liberal values that result not in his prosperity but in his impoverishment.

Potter's interpellation to Jones's representative nationalism is juxtaposed in the text to a sequence of events in which Potter assumes an entirely different, British identity, suggesting the transitory nature of national and class affiliation as socially determined identity categories. Potter departs the company of Jones during a subsequent engagement, when, obeying orders to board their enemy, he grabs other ship's jib-boom; with sudden wind, their opponent flees with Potter aboard. Finding himself among a large crew of English sailors, he decides to insinuate himself among their society if possible, approaching each gang of the ship in turn while pretending to be one of their number. Each reject him in turn, suspecting him of secretly belonging to their rivals on the ship; the main-topmen believe him to be from the fore or mizzen-top gang, and so on with the gunners, holders, and even the waisters, the “vilest caste of an armed ship's company; mere dregs and settlings... comprising all the lazy, all the inefficient” members of the crew (135). In each case, “with the spirit of class, no social circle would receive him” (134). Eventually Potter is found out, accused of “molestation” and “imposture,” and is declared to be beyond “reason,” out of “all men's knowledge and memories” (137). Upon examination, he declares himself to be Peter Perkins, a new subjectivity as yet unrecognized by his social ties. His lack of official documentation on the ship's quartering bills (the ship's economic-legal apparatus) is countered by the claim that he might have shipped under another name while drunk.

Potter maintains his story, and is able to answer many of the questions put to him through
deductive reasoning or clever evasion, and through hard work integrates with the crew to the extent that by the time they reach their home port the officers recognize that he belongs to the main-top after all. Melville suggests in this moment the antithetical scenario to the historical Potter's claim to a fundamental interior “Americanness”; in this case the difference between external imposture and internal identity effectively collapse, not as it does under the external force of Jones's representative nationalism, but rather because it is in this moment alone that Melville's character enjoys his social position and labor, where hard work really does equate to promotion in the ship's social hierarchy and where it proves Potter's ability to determine his own identity. Ultimately, even this brief respite proves short lived, as once the ship returns to port all are once again subject to the power of the state when a third of the ship's crew is impressed for service aboard an outgoing military vessel.

Following Potter's brief flirtation with the ability to consciously employ the forces of social interpellation for his own benefit, the novel suggests an ever-constricting enclosure of personal agency at the hands of the economic forces underlying society in ways that reflect the power-dynamics of social determination between the subject and the state. As we have seen, Potter's dawning consciousness of the ways in which class politics tend toward erasure in U.S. nationalism is based in his own sudden illumination by a dreadful suspicion that the world is not as it appears. As a critical praxis, suspicion first internalizes the nature of society as Potter encounters it as an escaped and hiding prisoner of war and then reverses the direction of that suspicion outward. Whereas the historical Potter would continue to deploy his untroubled internal Americanness to claim a patriot's privileged status before the government, Melville's Potter inhabits a world in which suspicion becomes the dominate aesthetic through which the world itself meets his perception. The overlay between economic and political interpellation is
demonstrated early when Potter first flees the prison hulk at Spithead; as Potter flees he is accosted by unknowing villagers who shout “Stop thief!” when he takes flight, drawing forth a crowd to chase and apprehend him (15). Although inaccurate, the charge of (economic) criminality leads to his confession of prisoner of war status, and potently invokes Althusser's famous example of the police hail, by which (through the process of recognition) the person on the street demonstrates their subjectivity as a citizen under the law.

For certain people, according to their class position, such a hail is overladen with an antagonism (the antagonism deriving from the state's assurance of property and Capital) that inflects their interpellation as citizen-subjects under the state with the relationship of criminality. (The power of the police hail is arrested action. There are, subsequently, at least two “types” who would not feel beholden to the call of the police: those who recognize themselves as “really” criminal and who have an interest in not submitting to the police hail, and those whose position in society is characterized by a privileged relationship to the state by way of their protected social standing. This latter group would perhaps stop for the police officer out of politeness, as one would for a servant – in this case a public servant – but not out of a sense of subjection to the officer's power.) It is the subject who is recognized from without, ratifying an external reality by and through the functioning of their own consciousness (the recognition of their own position). Freedom of choice enters after this basic capitulation has already gone into effect, qualifying the possibility of a free subject. In the context of liberal, democratic society, the freedom of an individual follows precisely this pattern. Freedom is constituted by and through a person's subjectivity as a citizen only after they have given up what John Locke notes is an absolute freedom of action in the state of nature – relinquishing the power to kill to the state in return for the protection of their own life and private property.31 For those with no or little
property other than their own person (the means of production in Locke's accounting), the relationship to the state is experienced less as a contract than a series of rules that must be obeyed.

By the conclusion of *Israel Potter*, it is not escape or freedom, but rather incarceration, which constitutes his experience of the world. Concurrent to the end of Potter's life as Peter Perkins, he encounters American prisoners of war, including Ethan Allen, who had been treated with a standard of imprisonment equal to that of a “common mutineer” rather than with the respect demanded of enemy officers. However, Allen's iconic individualism and repeated boisterous proclamation of his role in the Battle of Ticonderoga where he had achieved fame and glory set him quite apart from the common prisoner of war experience. Indeed, while it is Allen's fate to be redeemed during an exchange of prisoners, it is Potter's encounter with a prisoner named Singles which signals incarceration as his fated state (152, 340). In Melville's retelling, Singles is elevated in importance from an unspecific past acquaintance, becoming the very person who had married Potter's youthful love while he was away seeking his fortune. This alteration dispels the single most significant factor responsible for Potter's early roving disposition, suggesting that either path (marriage or a life of rambling) was destined to end in incarceration as a prisoner of war.

Although incarceration with national significance characterizes Potter's experience throughout the novel (as a prisoner of war, as confinement by Franklin to his room, as impressment in the British navy, or more abstractly as a subject under John Paul Jones's representative nationalism), after Potter discovers (as Peter Perkins) that the relationship of the individual to the state does not guarantee freedom for the laborer the novel descends into a grim depiction of society itself as a form of incarceration. Indeed, in high dialectical form, when
confronted with this conundrum upon his return to England with Franklin's secret correspondence, Potter suggests the opposing positions as such: “Poverty and liberty, or plenty and a prison, seem to be the two horns of the constant dilemma of my life” (69). This reflection occurs while he is hidden in a secret compartment in Squire Woodcock's mansion (in order to conceal the Squire's political sympathy to the colonial's revolt). The cell's origin lies in the pre-bourgeois past, when it served the Templars as a place to punish those who resisted their authority, whereupon they were confined to a coffin-shaped enclosure that prevented their movement while allowing them to overhear and participate in church-service. Symbolically dead, these prisoners were only punished in this manner after penitent, thus achieving through force (arrest) the obedience characteristic of the other members of the order in their comparative freedom.*

As Potter settles into his fate in London, Melville suggests that the final resolution of Potter's dilemma rests in the knowledge that poverty transforms the nature of freedom when the wages of labor prove insufficient to promote social elevation. Consequently, the mass flow of London's laboring population assumes the shape of the industrial forms of labor arising during the nineteenth-century: “All laborers, of whatsoever sort, were hued like the men in foundries. The black vistas of streets were as the galleries in coal mines; the flagging, as flat tomb-stones minus the consecration of moss; and worn heavily down, by sorrowful tramping, as the vitreous rocks in the cursed Gallipagos [sic], over which the convict tortoises crawl” (159). London, refashioned after the City of Dis from Dante's Divine Comedy, is filled with people “settled in

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* Significantly, Melville expresses the corresponding role of government in the cell's current configuration, describing how it was expanded during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, for use as a “place of concealment during times of civil disension” (71). At this point, when convinced of his own importance by way of his service to the state, Potter is affronted when he believes that the Squire intends him to sweep the chimney that conceals the entrance to the cell (67).
dry apathy, content with their doom; others seemed mutely raving against it; while still others... seemed undeserving of their fate, and despising their torture” (160). Even a small plot of grass in a fenced yard that Potter tends is likened to a jail, “between whose bars the imprisoned verdure peered forth” (164). Quite unlike his source's obstinate claim to a pension as payment his past un-remunerated service had earned, Melville suggests the social, rather than the individual, aspect of labor, extending the motif of physical incarceration to include the determining factors of society's economic foundation, showing how the depressed value of labor conditioned the lives of London's inhabitants just as surely as an ecological niche shaped the evolution of tortoises on the far side of the globe.

For all its nationalism, Israel Potter delivers, in no uncertain terms, a succinct account of how industrial labor shapes the mind of those who are engaged in it. “Worn-out, half-starved, and haggard,” Potter enters into the factory-like work of brickmaking along with “scores and scores of forlorn men” (154). Before entering the pit, he is “struck by the dismally devil-may-care gestures of the moulders...” but after only three days he himself has abandoned his “previous sedateness of concern at his unfortunate lot... [and] began to conform to the reckless sort of half jolly despair expressed by the others.” Because their work is treated as “stuff of little worth,” Potter is “taught, in his meditations, to slap, with similar heedlessness, his own sadder fortunes, as of still less vital considerations.” The men, as producers of brick, are themselves produced (as Marx would suggest) as “muddy philosophers” whose lesson it is that as “men and bricks were equally of clay,” the difference between dukes and ditchers is merely vanity. But while the workers internalize the devaluation of their labor as a lowering of self worth (resulting in an increase of risky and heedless work), the nihilistic lesson that teaches them to recognize the fact of social-economic hierarchy as fated and natural ("Are not men built into communities just
like bricks into a wall?” (156)) is juxtaposed to the final output of their effort: the commodity. The kilning of the bricks holds a curious fascination for Potter, who witnesses in them a social metaphor with a different lesson:

[The bottom-most layer were] burnt to useless scrolls, black as charcoal, and twisted into shapes the most grotesque; the next tier would be a little less withered, but hardly fit for service; and gradually, as you went higher and higher along the successive layers of the kiln, you came to the midmost ones, sound, square, and perfect bricks, bringing the highest prices; from these the contents of the kiln gradually deteriorated in the opposite direction, upward. But the topmost layers, though inferior to the best, by no means presented the distorted look of the furnace-bricks. The furnace-bricks were haggard, with the immediate blistering of the fire -- the midmost ones were ruddy with a genial and tempered glow – the summit ones were pale with the languor of too exclusive an exemptions from the burden of the blaze. (156)

Yet even with a clearly developed metaphor for productive labor's relationship to society, the question of why bricks should be kilned in such a manner as to produce disfigured lower-class bricks and undercooked aristocratic ones is withheld. The bricks are sold, destined to be used in the construction of “ambitious edifices,” arranged in social forms that inhibit consciousness of their means of production. Potter, in turn, is driven “half mad” with the knowledge that his labor goes to improving an enemy nation, leading to still more reckless laboring and an even deeper despair.

In the end, Potter's return to the United States suggests the limits to patriotism's ability to provide recompense for the economic structures it endorses and perpetuates. Abstractly, Potter embodies the nationalism essential to the cultural production of the nation-state, but in his
individuality he is nearly run over by the Independence Day celebration he encounters on his return to the country. While other pension claimants were endorsed as categorically ideal citizens by the state in its large and expanding institutional form, it is finally Potter's absence of forty-five years with nothing but his seemingly free-will to remain in London that debars him from such recognition. In Melville's retelling, it is Potter's encounter with the forces of economic determination and relationship to an emerging industrial-capital form of production that constitute his expulsion from the sanctioned forms of nationalism as they had evolved in the nineteenth century. Suspicion, so often directed at the property-less in the day-to-day practices of the nation-state, steadily directs Potter to an awareness that all is not as it seems; the ideals of the American Revolution operate as a discourse of freedom and resistance, but in effect was bound to the prisoner-patriots who simultaneously embodied the possibility of a free agency in throwing off one form of government but whose experience was often comprised of incarceration and subjection. At the conclusion of the novel, after the parades and public displays of nationalism, Melville's Potter returns to his family's farm, and discovers that, like three-quarters of their neighbors, they had migrated west as part of the ever-expanding reach of the market.

The turbulent reconstitution of society in its local form is offset, in turn, by the concrete markers of national memory, the monuments that, as Michael Kammen suggests, characterize the formation of nationalism during the period. Indeed, the novel is dedicated to the Bunker Hill Monument, and as Russ Castronovo argues in *Fathering the Nation*, it preserves Potter's individual experience in relation to the “iconic moments and figures of American history.” However, what is preserved in Melville's telling is something different than Potter's “heroism and individual action,” for the liberal virtues of freedom and personal agency are consistently
under suspicion in the novel. Rather, in both the opening and closing chapters, alternative “monuments” stand in contrast to the national iconography of the Bunker Hill monument. The first is a ghostly “rude white stone” which stands on a roadside marking the spot where a “farmer was upset in his wood-sled, and perished beneath the load” (6). Later, when Potter is searching for his family's homestead among a completely altered landscape (a walnut grove has been planted, grown to fruition, and replaced by the subsequent tenants in his absence) he finds “a strange, mouldy pile” of firewood that he had cut in his youth. Both represent monuments to the labor of the area's local inhabitants, and in Potter's case the decaying cord signifies all of his bodily exertion for which he never received his proper benefit. It is in this juxtaposition of monuments that Melville marks the dual forces of social determination, the nation-state and the forces of capitalism. It is in their distance that the history of an American class struggle is removed from the mythos of U.S. nationalism.

**Israel Potter and the Cold War**

Whereas Potter himself had invoked his patriotic service to the nation while endeavoring to hold society to the premises that linked U.S. nationalism to economic prosperity, Melville's novel emphasized that labor, production, and the necessity of the body were equally important in shaping a critical perspective that could critique the limits of iconic tropes of American character, making way for new figurations of patriotism and narratives of the Revolution. As a result, Israel Potter confounded two landmark leftist studies from the early twentieth-century
that have helped shape Melville scholarship.

In *American Renaissance*, F.O. Matthiessen describes the novel as a “failure,” because it "slurred over" Potter's destitution in London "in a couple of short chapters" (Matthiessen 672, 491). As part of his criteria for defining the core canon of American Literature (or, in his phrase, “literature for our democracy”), Matthiessen invoked nationalism, declaring that it was “incumbent upon their generation to give fulfillment to the potentialities freed by the Revolution, [and] to provide a culture commensurate with America's political opportunity” (xv). Matthiessen in turn emphasized the patriotism of his own work by proclaiming that “true scholarship...” is for “the good and the enlightenment of all the people, not for the pampering of a class...” and that the scholar ought to be “a citizen, not a lackey, a true exponent of democracy” (xv). While his final phrasing invokes the popular, anti-aristocratic bent of democratic society, it also signals Matthiessen's own socialist political leanings in its rejection of those classes (certainly not the working class) with which one could associate the need to be served. As relates to Melville, the notion of democracy in *American Renaissance* is tied to the humanist "sense of tragic loss at the distortion or destruction of the unique value of a human being" (442). However, Melville's tragic vision of democracy is ascribed less to an iconic individualism (famously critiqued in the character Ahab), than to the sense of separation from society (443). This is precisely the scenario developed in *Israel Potter*, whose main character is quite out of synch with the society he finds upon his return to the United States.

Yet for Matthiessen, the nature of *Israel Potter*'s depiction of nationalism, seemingly the obvious democratic content in the work, passes unremarked, and the novel is considered for that which it does not contain. He attributes Melville's choice not to novelize the litany of Potter's suffering in London to the belief that “any attempt at tragedy fails of catharsis in those situations
where the protagonist's suffering finds no vent in action” (491). Finally, Matthiessen laments that "the utterly abject suffering of the really poor is something to whose existence the world will only blind itself" while pondering "whether our fierce individualism does not make our perhaps fewer victims of poverty 'suffer more in mind' than those in any other country" (492). Although Matthiessen concludes with the worry that the American character might impact the experience of poverty in the United States, his socialist sympathies are ultimately hindered by his attachment to the positive affiliations of nationalism. One might go so far as to say that it is this contradiction which prevents an analysis of the novel's class critique as it exists, displaced onto the lament that Melville had not followed his source more closely (a choice which would necessarily diminish his role in the creation of the text as an aesthetic artifact). It is particularly odd (for a socialist critic, at least) that the historical-material document, Potter's Life and Adventures, which does attest to the very content which has been ostensibly expunged in Melville's novel, counts so little in the literature of democracy as defined by American Renaissance itself.

The importance of Israel Potter arises from the symptoms visible in American Renaissance: that Matthiessen, publishing in 1941, whose socialist politics (in addition to his sexuality) would lead to investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee, sensed only intuitively the novel's message that the particular attributes of U.S. nationalism tend to worsen the experience of poverty which, far from being nonexistent, must exist in society erected on a foundation of capitalism.35 But whereas Israel Potter demonstrates the limit (and the ideological blind spot) of Matthiessen's criticism, it forms a literal hole in C.L.R. James's 1953 study of Melville, Mariners, Renegades & Castaways.36 Although analysis of Moby-Dick dominates James's text, every novel and many of the short stories that comprise Melville's
literary corpus are discussed, with the exception of Israel Potter.\textsuperscript{37}

James wrote \textit{Mariners} during his detention on Ellis Island while fighting deportation under the McCarran Act, a piece of McCarthy Era legislation that allowed for emergency detention and deportation of “subversives.” Though married to an American citizen, James had been denied citizenship based in part on his past writings, which included \textit{World Revolution}, \textit{The Rise and Fall of the Communist International}, a \textit{History of Negro Revolt}, and \textit{The Black Jacobins}, among others (James 155). The study of Herman Melville became, in part, his answer to charges of un-Americanness. In his final chapter, which details James's struggles and experience of incarceration on Ellis Island, he states: “as I have shown, the book as written is a part of my experience. It is also a claim before the American people, the best claim I can put forward, that my desire to be a citizen is not a selfish nor a frivolous one” (166). Like Matthiessen's claim that a scholar should be a “true exponent of democracy,” James's text was written in order to demonstrate his desire to “understand the United States and become a part of the American people” (159).

While \textit{Israel Potter}'s relative obscurity was greater during the period of James's composition of \textit{Mariners}, the omission is particularly grave given the nature of his critique. The core premise of \textit{Mariners} is a study of the totalitarian type, figured in Ahab, who abandons the dictates of commerce by subverting the economics of whaling to his own revenge, an act that sacrifices all on the alter of his isolated individualism. Railing against the dehumanization of command, Ahab is, for James, the outgrowth of man driven by science and formed in the crucible of Capital. And it is the political development of totalitarianism of all kinds that James sets against the traditional narrative of Marxist historical development:

Generations of people believed that the men opposed to rights of ownership, production
for the market, domination of money, etc. were socialists, communists, radicals of some sort united by the fact that they all thought in terms of the reorganization of society by the workers.... [N]obody, not a single soul, thought that in the managers, the superintendents, the executives, that administrators would arise such loathing and bitterness against the society of free enterprise, the market and democracy, that they would try to reorganize it to suit themselves and, if need be, destroy civilization in the process. (9)

For James, Ahab's revenge on Moby-Dick becomes the analogue to the totalitarian “Plan,” or single-minded orthodoxy. He does not hesitate in comparing it to either the Nazi effort to fashion a master race or the Soviet effort to plan the economy, for he sees in them a similarity not only in cause but methods: “In pursuit of what they call planning the economy, they have depopulated Russia of tens of millions of workers, peasants, and officials so that it seems as if some pestilence sweeps periodically across the country. In pursuit of their plan, they have placed and intend to keep millions in concentration camps” (14). While such claims in a book of literary criticism may seem extreme in themselves, they are not, after all, much different from Matthiessen's claims about democracy. In both cases, the analysis is conducted in relationship to the nation-state, which finds its likeness in Ahab's command: the management of people. The nation-state is central to both Matthiessen's and James's analysis, and for the latter it has its roots in a particular origin:

The political organization of Modern Europe has been based upon the creation and consolidation of national states. And the national state, every single national state, had and still has a racial doctrine. This doctrine is that the national race, the national stock, the national blood, is superior to all other national races, national stocks, and national

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bloods. This doctrine was sometimes stated, often hidden, but it was and is there, and over the last twenty years has grown stronger in every country in the world. Who doubts this has only to read the McCarran Immigration Bill of 1952, which is permeated with the doctrine of racial superiority. (13)

Totalitarianism is, according to James, the outgrowth of the conditions of the nation-state, and James arrives at a radical formulation concerning the organization of human relationships drawn from the two iconic examples of the totalitarian state in the twentieth century: “If the political basis of the national state was the racial superiority of the national stock, its strictly economic basis was the development of the resources of the national state” (14). This description of the nation-state accords strongly with the one put forth in this dissertation’s introduction, and James’s own effort to lay claim to American citizenship suggests his awareness of the importance of culture in determining meaning. However, Israel Potter, the Melville text that most directly engages the inheritance of nationalism passed down through the nineteenth century from a working-class perspective, remains unstudied.38

James is attracted to and writes his critique with the hope of joining U.S. society, but his critique of totalitarianism leads him to a deeply wary vision of the nation-state. In both Ishmael and Pierre, James finds his own era's Cold War tensions personified in the state of the intellectual character, but both are set in relation to the humble world of labor that remains free from the constraining isolation of intellectual conundrum: “how light in the scales is the contemporary mountain of self examination and self-pity against the warmth, the humor, the sanity, the anonymous but unfailing humanity of the renegades and castaways and savages of the Pequod, rooted in the whole historical past of man, doing what they have to do, facing what they have to face” (114).39 Both James and Melville's "candidates for the Universal Republic are bound
together by the fact that they work together on a whaling-ship. They are a world-federation of modern industrial workers. They owe allegiance to no nationality. There are Americans among them, but it is the officers who are American. Among the crew nobody is anything. They owe no allegiance to anybody or anything except the work they have to do and the relations with one another on which that work depends" (20). His heroes are the workers, the renegades, castaways, and savages of Ahab's crew, and even Ishmael eventually falls into isolated philosophical reflection in the end (48). Such is the central contradiction of James's own text, and it is precisely here that *Israel Potter* figures as a resolution. The story of a common laborer and Revolutionary War soldier, written at the nexus of freedom and incarceration, has passed through the hands of Henry Trumbull and Herman Melville to reach us as a story that weds truth and fiction, history and aesthetics, class interests and U.S. nationalism.

The problem plaguing both Matthiessen's and James's critical appraisal of Melville stems from the difficulty in articulating class conflict within the narratives comprising U.S. nationalism, at least in the wake of the Cold War. From the perspective of democracy, Matthiessen's effort to use his scholarship as a tool for the enlightenment of all people, not just the flattery of a certain class, is capable of acknowledging Melville's critique of the nation's economic inequities in *Israel Potter* but does not analyze the limits of the democratic nation-state which attend this charge in the text. For James, the difficulties were somewhat greater, a clash between the appeal of American citizenship and his belief that salvation rested with federated workers whose purpose, happiness, and fulfillment, there very civic allegiance, rests in their immediate co-workers rather than in the abstractions of the state. That neither critic seized on *Israel Potter* as the essential Melville text for addressing the interplay between nationalism and class politics might be coincidence or a product of the novel’s obscurity, but it also plays out
Cold War tensions that would refashion class politics as subversive and un-American.

*Israel Potter* is pinioned between the impulse towards American nationalism and the desire for a working-class politics. It is both saturated with nationalist iconography and yet remembers the material interest and bodily labor of the Revolutionary patriot. Potter’s *Life and Remarkable Adventures* is best remembered as a product of the nineteenth-century’s growing nationalism and the cultural shift towards larger state institutions, one that united political parties by combining populist nationalism and increased government power. The inheritance of the Revolution was therefore strategically remembered, and Potter’s text reflects the culture of the 1820s more accurately in its presumptions than it does the eighteenth century in its archival accuracy. Whether as a pension application, an attempt to earn an income in the literary marketplace, or as a historical artifact, it is essential to not miss-read Potter’s poverty as a sign of falseness or criminality. Rather, the *Life and Remarkable Adventures* and Melville’s *Israel Potter* offer a way to understand the evolution of nationalism in the nineteenth century as the country transitioned steadily toward industrial labor. Melville would explore the limits imposed by the dual determining forces of the nation-state and economic necessity on subjectivity, while the interplay between these forces itself has shaped the critical evaluation of the novel in the twentieth century. The key transformation from Potter’s biography to fiction is the understanding that patriotism would not, in itself, guarantee success or prosperity – and that its record of economic struggle would come to be as important as its claims to patriotism.
Notes to Chapter 3:

1 Melville's dedication accompanied the first book publication of *Israel Potter* in March, 1855, but was not included in its earlier serialization in *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*. Melville, *Israel Potter*, vii, 161. Page numbers cited in the text are from this edition, which includes a reprint of Israel Potter's *Life and Remarkable Adventures*.

2 Melville's *Israel Potter* was published serially from July 1854 through March 1855, and was published as a book in both London and New York upon completion.


4 See the historical note by Walter E. Bezanson in the Northwestern-Newberry edition, 174.


7 Quoted in Jensen, 56.

8 Ibid., 59-63.


10 Resch, 208-9.


12 Quoted in Jensen, 70.

13 Ibid., 80-82.


15 Ibid., 92.

16 Ann Fabian, *The Unvarnished Truth*. Fabian does so despite devoting another chapter to prisoners of war, which is limited solely to a discussion of narratives from the Civil War.


18 Fabian, 45.


21 Ibid., 369, 388.

22 The militia were eventually included by the Pension Act of 1832. That Potter seems to have had a just claim for a pension (other than his absence from the country) as his biography implies in 1824 is slightly confusing. It is possible that his time spent on the *Washington*, though brief, qualified him under the earlier legislation.


26 Levine, “Introduction,” viii, x. See also G. Thomas Tanselle's "The Sales of Melville's Books."

27 Quoted in “Historical Note,” Israel Potter, 182.

28 Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy.

29 That this takes place before the historical establishment of the nation-state is ameliorated by both Potter's and Melville's position as nineteenth-century writers.

30 Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish. David Waldstreicher, In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes.

31 For more on Locke's claim that the protection of property is the basis of government, see Locke, 18-30.

32 In Michael Kammen's formulation of the United States' historical constructions of national memory, there are "shifts from a sense of the past achieved almost by inadvertence (prior to 1870) to an age of memory and ancestor worship by design and by desire (1870 to 1915); then to history for pleasure and profit, when tradition became a by-word yet remained contested (1915-1945); to an age of consensus and heritage by compulsion that seems in our own time to satisfy an array of psychic needs, commercial enterprises, and political opportunities.” Michael Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory, 12-3.

33 Russ Castronovo, Fathering the Nation, 151. Castronovo suggests that monuments invert Foucault's description of panopticism, transforming the traditional internalization of a disciplinary vision into one that allows people once more to function as free agents, choosing to survey "a common point that unifies them as sharers of the same historical vision" (139).

34 F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance. Page numbers cited in the text are from this edition.


36 C.L.R. James, Mariners, Renegades & Castaways. Page numbers cited in the text are from this edition.

37 Below is a list of Melville references from James’s Mariners.

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(This is the mention of the actual whale, the discussion of Moby-Dick spans the entire work.)

| Pierre          | 90-105, 113-4, 167 |
| "Bartleby the Scrivener" | 105-8 |
| "Encantadas"   | 108-10         |
| "Benito Cereno"| 110-12         |
| Israel Potter  | Not Discussed  |
| Confidence Man | 83             |
| Battle Pieces  | Not Discussed  |
| Clarel         | 113            |
Aldon Nielsen further suggests the importance of the theme of incarceration both to James's study of Melville and to his historical writings. *Mariners*, Nielsen writes, “is inhabited by specters of imprisonment, is narrated in confinement, and is written to serve as an instrument for bringing James out of jail and into the American body politic. From the outset of James's historical studies he had an understanding of the relationship between the aspiration for freedom and the criminalization of the writing of that aspiration.... James glimpses both the tragic confinements of New World history and the possibilities of emancipation to be read out of that history.” Nielsen, *James: A Critical Introduction*, xiv, xvi. Nielsen further discusses the publication history of *Mariners*, describing how its republication without James's final chapter (until the Dartmouth edition of 2001) allowed scholarship to overlook the importance James's personal relationship to the state, and his desire for civic inclusion in the national body, played in shaping his critique of Melville (37-8).

One of the foremost examples in *Mariners* revolves around the novel *Pierre*, in which James finds a critique of the modern intellectual, whose dominant trait is a singular preoccupation with “the idea of the unconscious, and particularly the sexual unconscious, the struggle between the unconscious and the need for disciplined behavior, the influence upon adult personality of the relations between parents and children, the pervading consciousness of sickness, of guilt, of crisis, in the individual personality” (*Mariners* 91). At the cusp of a radical revolt against his family's aristocratic roots, Pierre is unable to expose his father's adultery to the world and thus destroy his Mother and his family's place in the social order. Instead, he abandons his beloved Lucy Tartan, entering into an incestuous relationship with Isabel (his probable half-sister) by pretending a marriage in order to bring her under his social protection. Together, they live in poverty, while Pierre retreats into himself while writing a dense theoretical text: “with the soul of an Atheist, he wrote down the godliest things; with the feeling of misery and death in him, he created forms of gladness and life.... And every thing else he disguised under the so conveniently adjustable drapery of all-stretchable Philosophy” (*Pierre* 339). For James, Pierre falls into the unforgivable trap of isolated individualism and his writings reflect the dialectical contradiction between his desire to promote social change and his individual inaction, culminating in his own death as well as that of the women who were ready to follow his lead - even to the point of rejecting traditional social, gender, and sexual roles. Pierre is thus unfavorably compared to Ishmael, who, in facing a similar intellectual impasse in the experience of the grimness of his society, goes “directly to the working class” rather than indulging in the isolation of his counterpart (James 104). Scholars have since complicated the analysis of *Pierre* in this tradition by reading Isabel (who has only obscure memories of her childhood and is described throughout *Pierre* as the dark analogue to his rejected Lucy) as a “Franco-Africanist figure.” See Anna Brickhouse, *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere*, 244. Robert Levine extends this analysis, showing how Melville's novel “illuminate[s] the ways in which domesticity was deployed to define and regulate the national 'family,' distinguishing between the whiteness inside and the 'blackness' without.” Levine, *Dislocating Race and Nation*, 162. The haunting of a potential West-Indian element to Pierre's dilemma increases the attractiveness of his rejection of the elite class interests that situate his family while challenging the fiction of racial homogeneity on which the nation-state is founded, “depict[ing] racial and, by extension, national identity as incoherent and tottering on the point of
collapse, for the blackness 'outside' appears to be lodged uneasily inside the homes of the post-Revolutionary generation.”
4. Domestic Revolution:

The Tragic Mulatto's Revolutionary Heritage

“Every man is born with a double right: first, a right of freedom to his person, which no
other man has a power over, but the free disposal of it lies in himself. Secondly, a right,
before any other man, to inherit with his brethren his father's goods.” - John Locke, 1689.¹

“You boast that this is the 'Land of the Free;' but a traditio

nary freedom will not save you. It will not do to praise your fathers and build their sepulchres. Worse for you that you
have such an inheritance, if you spend it foolishly and are unable to appreciate its worth.”
- William Wells Brown, 1853.²

Thomas Jefferson's initial draft of the Declaration of Independence included the institution of
slavery among its lists of grievances against the crown. Although the passages referring to
slavery were expunged by Committee before the document was adopted by the Continental
Congress, its wording suggests both the similarities of emancipation to the Revolutionary cause
as well as the limitations of the logic that led Jefferson to his conclusions.³ The King, Jefferson
argued, had “waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life
and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying
them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in the transportation
thither.”⁴ The description of slavery is a stunning extension of Lockean concepts of individual
rights to people of African heritage, particularly since it undoes Locke's own justification of
slavery in the Second Treatise of Government. Slavery, Locke had argued, was a state of death-
in-deferral, wherein people conquered in the state of nature were taken prisoner. For the slave,
life equated to consensual contractual servitude, “for, whenever he finds the hardship of his
slavery outweigh the value of his life, it is in his power, by resisting the will of his master, to
draw on himself the death he desires.”⁵ By incorporating the subjection of people to slavery as
the grounds for revolution in the North American colonies, Jefferson dismissed Locke's assertion
that slavery was justified through the logic of past wars.
Jefferson's reconfiguration of Lockean notions of individual liberty and contractual government in his draft of the Declaration insisted on the dual nature of slavery as an economic and legal institution. He argued that the king promoted the “execrable commerce” by trampling on the colony's right to locally legislate its restriction or end. However, it is also clear that the extension of the basic rights of life and liberty to people of African descent did not, in Jefferson's mind, make them eligible for inclusion within the new civic body taking shape in the colonies. While the plight of slaves served as a metaphor for the colonials' own lack of political freedom, the prospect of revolution marked the difference between races as peoples with separate political destinies. “[The King] is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us,” Jefferson concluded, “to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the Liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.”

This sentiment articulated the racial grounds for distinction in U.S. society by imagining separate political destinies for black and white peoples, offsetting the fact that many people of African descent served the Revolutionary cause and that Congress, like the British, had contemplated offering slaves freedom for military service (which was ultimately opposed by South Carolina and Georgia).

The early history of legislation barring interracial marriage demonstrates the extent to which interracial domesticity threatened to undermine the racial distinction posited by Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence. The legal prohibition of interracial sexual encounters began in Virginia in 1662, and six North American colonies had legislated against it by 1725. Moreover, these laws repealed the tradition of British common law, instead decreeing that children follow the political status of their mothers rather than their fathers. The purpose of such legislation was to prevent marriages across racial lines between slaves, indentured servants, and free people of the lower class, discouraging cross-racial social alliances. Virginia would follow these measures in 1691 with penalties against free white women who bore mixed-race children. If a heavy fine could not be paid within one month, the woman would be bound to servitude for five years, and her child for thirty. After 1705, ministers faced a fine for performing interracial marriages. As the myriad court cases, divorce petitions, wills, and census data suggest, though these laws decried interracial marriages they did not prevent social mixing. Such cases hint at forms of interracial sexuality and of domesticities that run counter to the exploitation of black
women under slavery. But even in the case of the idle rich of the planter class, whose status and wealth granted them the power to exploit their female slaves without fear of personal punishment, the example of the law consistently moved to foreclose the bonds of familial recognition. This included laws prohibiting the emancipation of slaves, making it progressively difficult for those planters who had fathered interracial children to liberate their own offspring. ⁸

The ideals of the Revolution would, however, serve as a key strategy in the fight to abolish slavery in spite of Jefferson's efforts to qualify the right to inclusion in the national body. In abolitionist literature, William Wells Brown invoked Jefferson's relationship with Sally Hemings as the basis for his well-known novel, *Clotel: Or, The President's Daughter*, restoring the presence of a black-American inheritance of the Revolution that Jefferson himself had denied. (Persistent rumors spread by the opposition Federalist Party during Jefferson's reelection campaign had widely popularized his relationship with Hemings.) ⁹ As a character, Clotel combined the inheritances of her mother's bondage and her father's status as founder and President of the nation, thoroughly confusing the categorical distinctions which had once seemed so clearly drawn in Jefferson's draft of the Declaration. As the two quotations in this chapter's epigraph suggest, the right to freedom depended in multiple ways on the right to inheritance. For Locke, it was the guarantor of property and hence economic agency; for Brown, the inheritance of freedom could be spent as foolishly as money.

Published in 1853, Brown's novel had itself inherited a set of literary and cultural assumptions about the nature of interracial characters, the typology of the “tragic mulatto.” The tragic mulatto character represents a divided racial inheritance with black and white impulses held in tense, internal conflict. While its origin lies in narratives of interracial coupling between European and indigenous people in the Americas, by the nineteenth century the character's force derived from its ability to represent the underlying tension of the nation's black / white racial ideologies and the exploitative economic structure they buttressed.

Brown's fiction drew on sources as diverse as his own experience, oral and written accounts of other escaped slaves, newspapers, and other abolitionist writings. His depiction of strong female interracial characters followed the example set by Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). But among the many sources engaged by Brown's novel, the most important may be his source for the tragic mulatto type: Lydia Maria Child's short story, “The Quadroons,” which had been published in the abolitionist literary annual, *The Liberty Bell*, in
Brown employed Child's story (either verbatim or with minor alterations) for the bulk of three chapters in his novel, including material central to the tragic mulatto plot: the sale of Clotel with her mother and her sister, Althesa; the breakup of Clotel's marriage to Horatio; and the death of Althesa's daughters. By re-contextualizing Child's story, Brown's novel disrupted the flow of the short story's narrative, including the stereotypical tragic death of the female character from a broken heart, opening the text to alternate possibilities. For example, although Child's main tragic mulatto character, Rosalie, dies from the emotional pain of her husband Edward's betrayal, Clotel survives not only the emotional shock of abandonment, but also escapes from slavery and leaps to her death in the waters of the Potomac in a final act of resistance. Consequently, scholarship has traditionally applauded Brown's revision of Child's story, particularly noting the effect of a black writer's challenge to the stereotypes implicit in the character. Eve Allegra Raimon extends this critique into the realm of nationalism, comparing Child's “as yet unrealized multiracial Eden” to the practical specificity of Brown's “effort to unsettle the very categories of identity at work in the construction of founding U.S. ideologies of national origin and identity” by linking the tragic mulatto character to Jefferson and Hemings. A closer consideration, however, reveals that the structure of Child's story likewise crafts the interracial domesticity central to the tragic mulatto figure through and against the household's relationship to the nation-state, using the conventions of sentimental literature to expose slavery as a legal and economic institution. Similarly, while Brown's novel makes this claim much more strongly by casting Clotel as the President's daughter, later editions of his novel reversed this trend, becoming in a sense more similar to Child's story by departing from the Jefferson-Hemings relationship. The literary exchange between Child and Brown helped craft the meaning of the tragic mulatto figure in antebellum U.S. literature. As an abolitionist tool, the figure embodied both the troubled past of slavery's exploitation of women and represented the latent kinship (both genetic and political) awaiting recognition by a society stubbornly insistent on racial distinction.

While the intertextuality between Clotel and “The Quadroons” is an important component of the literary evolution of the tragic mulatto figure in U.S. literature, this chapter focuses on the tragic mulatto character's role as a cultural expression of race relations from the 1830s, prior to Brown’s symbolic resolution of Jefferson’s racial distinction of the civic body. As the abolitionist movement organized societies to promote the immediate abolition of slavery
in the early 1830s, violent anti-abolitionist mobs formed in towns and cities throughout the North with the intent of disrupting meetings, interrupting speeches, and suppressing publications through the destruction of abolitionist presses. The organization of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 coincided with many events contributing to the tension surrounding anti-slavery activism in the United States, including the publication of David Walker's *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829), Nat Turner's slave rebellion in Virginia (1831), and the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies (1833). Although there were many anti-abolitionist riots, the outbreak of large-scale mobbing in New York City during July of 1834 struck at the epicenter of abolitionist organization. Large crowds rioted for days, destroying black and abolitionist homes, businesses, and churches, driven by rumors spread in the press that abolitionists were promoting and practicing interracial marriage. Abolitionist became synonymous with “amalgamator,” and the social tensions surrounding the slavery debate set the stage for the emergence of the tragic mulatto as a character embodying two racial destinies in conflict.

In this chapter, I argue that the tragic mulatto figure in U.S. literature both completes and confounds Jefferson's vision of a racially divided civic body. People who consensually entered interracial domestic relationships implicitly rejected the hierarchies of race that had been consecrated in the nation's laws, and in their refusal to endorse the economic and social structures that organized society more broadly made them a target for the anti-abolitionist vitriol that followed the organization of abolitionism on a national scale. Focusing on the social tension surrounding abolitionist organization and the violent anti-abolitionist mobbing which followed, I argue that the figure of the tragic mulatto is in part a product of the revolutionary potential of interracial households. In the first part of this chapter, I show how anti-abolitionist mobbing sought desperately to dislocate blackness from Americanness – and thus to deny the inclusion of people of African descent in the body politic. Mobbing of this type subverted the political process, denying abolitionists the basic rights of assembly and freedom of speech through intimidation and physical violence. Anti-abolitionists similarly accused abolitionists of promoting interracial marriage and with subverting the Constitution, suggesting that interracial domesticity was itself threatening to the nation-state. Subsequently, I consider how texts written directly in the aftermath of the 1834 New York City riot represent interracial marriage. While foreign and anti-abolitionist authors employed the tragic mulatto figure to foreclose the potential of interracial domesticity, Lydia Maria Child sought to reunite the segregated revolutionary
legacies of the eighteenth century in support of abolitionist politics.

The Anti-Abolitionist Riots

The use of the tragic mulatto character by abolitionists, as inaugurated by Child's “The Quadroons” (1842), came after the tumultuous years of the 1830s. Though her short story is sometimes credited with creating the character, or at least introducing it to U.S. literature, its social and literary precedents qualify such a claim. Narratives of cross-racial sexual contact were no new thing, though they typically had depicted encounters between Europeans and Native American peoples. Child herself had been writing such fiction since 1824, when her first novel, *Hobomok: A Tale of Early Times*, depicted the marriage of a colonial woman to a native man. Although “The Quadroons” was Child's first fictional depiction of characters of mixed African and European descent, James Fenimore Cooper's novel *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) employed the narrative of a sexual desirable woman doomed by a mixed racial heritage in his character Cora Munro, whose mother was a mixed-race woman from the West Indies, well before Child began exploring the topic in support of abolitionism. Indeed, Werner Sollors has traced the textual genealogy of the figure from the exchange between Child and William Wells Brown (through sources including John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* [1796]) back to the story “Inkle and Yarico,” which in turn first appeared in Richard Steele's *Spectator* (1711) before enjoying a popular career in reprint and eventually as a comic opera (1787). Inkle, an English sailor shipwrecked in the West Indies, is found and saved by the native Yarico. Yarico attracts a ship, expecting to return to Barbados Inkle sells her and their unborn child to slave traders, juxtaposing a vision of erotic, romanticized natives with a critique of Inkle's “calculating and merciless frugality.” With literary precedents harking back to early contact and colonization of the Americas, Child's use of the figure was itself far from being an origin. Rather, her story invoked a history of contact and interracial coupling dating back centuries, as well as a body of texts that had long been critical of slavery if not outright abolitionist.

In addition to this long literary tradition, the employment of the tragic mulatto character
by abolitionists in the United States occurred within a specific set of historical circumstances that also helped determine the meaning of the figure. Child's decision to write “The Quadroons” transpired in the wake of a decade of anti-abolitionist rioting, driven by the belief that the interracial political coalition among abolitionists was the equivalent to and harbinger of an amalgamated society without racial distinction. Consequently, the leveling potential of abolitionism was associated with the tragic mulatto figure by those who most feared racial equality. Or, more precisely, during the 1830s the character was symbolic of interracial political alliance as well as the conflicting “blood” destiny rhetoric so aptly described by Sterling Brown. In spite of the persistent negativity associated with the tragic mulatto figure, it is essential to remember that the violence perpetrated against interracial characters in antebellum literature paralleled the violence used to suppress abolitionism as a primary vehicle for the politics of social change during the period.

The emergence of united, national abolitionist organization in the United States during the 1830s did not take place in a void of anti-slavery activity. For more than a decade, the American Colonization Society (ACS) had existed as the primary social institution for anti-slavery benevolence and social feeling. Just as was true of the supporters of abolition, the supporters of colonization represented a wide range of people with conflicting motivations. Yet unlike abolitionism, colonization made it possible for pro-slavery, liberal reformers, and free black people to advocate for the same goal. Just after Paul Cuffee, the successful merchant and shipbuilder, financed and enacted a plan to settle a group of African Americans in British-controlled Sierra Leone, a group of white elites (including Charles Fenton Mercer, a member of Virginia's legislature, and Henry Clay) established the American Colonization Society in 1816. The ACS helped found the colony of Liberia in 1820-1, and was endorsed by a combination of Quakers, northern elites, and southern slaveholders who supported the movement with the general purpose of removing the free black population from the United States in order either to maintain a white civic population in the North or to stabilize the slave system and prevent black revolt in the South.

William Lloyd Garrison's anti-slavery platform targeted the American Colonization Society from the outset. In the Liberator as well as Thoughts on African Colonization (1832), Garrison emphatically denounced colonization, criticizing the ACS's goals as “a libel upon humanity and justice – a libel upon republicanism – a libel upon the Declaration of Independence
The ACS held a monopoly on antislavery, and promoted the idea that the black population was out of place in the United States. The colonizationist solution sought the emigration of the free black population, the gradual end of slavery through the same means, and the Christianization and colonization of Africa and the West Indies. It also tacitly supported slavery through its non-aggressive politics, its support of the racism that buttressed slavery as an economic system, and by its channeling of charitable benevolence into a form that achieved little other than to assuage the consciences of those who donated to its coffers. Though Garrison's denunciations appeared in stark terms, the colonizationists initially refused to draw attention to the growing abolitionist movement by responding to their charges. The situation changed dramatically over the next two years, however, as abolitionism expanded and disrupted the Society's funding. By the end of 1833, the abolitionist movement had founded forty-seven societies in ten states, and the ACS's collections dropped from $12,000 in 1832, to $4000 the following year, and as the result of many unfulfilled pledges, the society faced a deficit of $46,000 at the end of the year. In five years' time, the number of abolitionist societies would grow to more than 1,300. Though abolition's main target was the end of the slave system, the movement's origin lies in a confrontation between the status quo of the ACS's sympathetic form of antislavery and the newly emerged and vociferously outspoken call for an immediate end of slavery by abolitionists.

As abolitionism revolutionized anti-slavery politics, the violent backlash of anti-abolitionist mobbing assumed a characteristic form as accounts of colonizationist-led reprisals were widely publicized in newsprint. Emphasizing the whiteness of U.S. nationalism, the mobs asserted the colonizationist belief that people of African descent had a separate political destiny. This is particularly clear during the 1834 anti-abolitionist riot in New York City, where mobs rioted for days, destroying black and abolitionist homes, businesses, and churches. On the first night of rioting, three key buildings were targeted by the mob. The Chatham Street Chapel, Bowery Theater, and the home of the wealthy abolitionist Lewis Tappan each became the setting for a complex display of race and class antagonism. When an integrated anti-slavery meeting failed to materialize, the mob occupied the Chatham Street Chapel, listened to William Wilder converse on the horrors of immediate abolition in Haiti (an argument nearly forty years out of date), passed “resolutions in favor of Negro deportation,” and were further entertained by “mock negro style” preaching and a Jim Crow chorus. The mob proceeded to the Bowery Theater,
which was hosting a benefit evening for George Farren, a British actor and stage manager. Word had spread that Farren had disparaged Yankees, and the mob more generally associated abolitionism with British subversion in the wake of the British abolition of slavery in the West Indies. The rioters dispersed from the Bowery only after Thomas Hamblin, the manager, rushed on stage waving two U.S. flags and arranged for the performance of the minstrel show favorite, "Zip Coon." Still looking for action, the crowd assembled at Tappan's home, broke windows, and set the furniture and linens on fire in the street. (Both Lewis and his brother – Arthur - were leaders and wealthy financial backers of the American Anti-Slavery Society.) Tappan's portrait of George Washington was saved from the fire, put gently aside, and guarded from harm by the rioters. Over the next two days, the violence escalated. Churches that were rumored to preach "amalgamation" and consecrate interracial marriage were desecrated. Finally, on the last night of rioting, the mob demanded that residents light their windows and attacked black homes and those that had remained dark.

At each location, the mob's effort to distinguish between blackness and U.S. nationalism is clear. The city's black population was symbolically excluded from the protections of the state through the juxtaposition of the theater's minstrel show conventions (mock preaching, the Jim Crow chorus, and "Zip Coon") and the sequence of entertainment and items that embody U.S. nationalism (colonization referendums, flag waving, and Washington's portrait). Black nationalism, represented by the historical example of Haiti's revolutionary founding, completes the exclusion, silently invoking Jefferson's position that black people shared a political destiny with a separate (and dangerous) revolutionary heritage. The forms that the 1834 riot adopted in order to play out the city's class and race tensions reveal how central cultural tropes were in resisting the social changes called for by abolitionists. U.S. nationalism, the minstrel show, the Haitian Revolution, and even anti-abolitionist mobbing itself were all performances whose forms had been stabilized by their repetition on stage and in newsprint. Visions of Haiti and the ACS's desire to racially purify the nation by removing the black population to external, if dependent, colonial states both relied on the mentality of the nation-state as a means to stabilize race as distinct categorization. Undermining these visions, however, was the real example of New York City's integrated neighborhoods, and the growing collaboration of both black and white abolitionists.

The New York City mob violence shared many of the features typical of the more than
two hundred anti-abolitionist riots recorded in abolitionist newspapers. Mobs targeted abolitionist meetings for disruption and coordinated their attacks against property with strategic symbolic value. Around the country local elites appeared at the head of the crowd in newspaper accounts, proudly leading the efforts to stop abolitionist “agitators” from entering their communities. The sanction of the leading men of society validated the violence directed at traveling lecturers and the anti-democratic refusal of their neighbor's right to free speech and public debate. Leonard Richards, the foremost historian of the riots, found that the intensity of initial anti-abolitionist violence correlated strongly with the newness of abolitionism's politics in a community and the power of racist rumormongering. After initial confrontation, violence typically dropped in towns with a steady abolitionist presence. Moreover, areas with a sustained abolitionist presence were less likely to face violence as their influence expanded compared to communities to which abolitionism was a new idea, though there was significant variation in responses throughout the North.

Unlike the bulk of anti-abolitionist violence, the New York City mob erupted nearly a year after the first abolitionist organizing in the city. However, anti-abolitionist efforts following the typical pattern of harassment had transpired in the city from the start. On October 1, 1833, a group of colonizationists (including the writer John Neal) met in the office of James Watson Webb, editor of the Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer. They planned to disrupt the inaugural meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society (to be founded by Garrison, the Tappans, and others) by posing as supporters, and circulated a public announcement that drew an anti-abolitionist crowd. After regrouping at Tammany Hall after the abolitionists abandoned their original meeting location, they were informed that the abolitionists were instead meeting at the Chatham Street Chapel (a key location in the later 1834 riot). They arrived too late to interrupt the hurried meeting, during which the abolitionists had organized their society in under thirty minutes before leaving through the back door. To assuage their frustrations and entertain themselves with their own wit, the anti-abolitionists dubbed an elderly black man “Arthur Tappan” and made him enact resolutions for immediate emancipation and “immediate amalgamation.”

Like other riots, this earlier episode was clearly organized by colonizationists and men of standing in the community with ties to Tammany Hall, a political group who would dominate the New York political scene for the next century.

The 1834 riot of the next year is noteworthy for the ways in which it differs from its
predecessor. Both its size and makeup diverged from the standard of the period. The second mob attracted a different set than those who first united to oppose abolitionism in the city, largely comprised of skilled laborers who lived in integrated neighborhoods. Though the mob was not precisely organized by colonizationists, the mob's fear of amalgamation (exhibited by both the targets of their violence and their actions) marked them as the ready audience of city papers like Webb's *Courier and Enquirer*, that continued to spread such rumors. While Webb and the other colonizationists had failed in their earlier intimidation of the abolitionists, their charge that equated abolitionism with amalgamation galvanized a larger and much more violent crowd.27

It is no accident that on the same day as the first outbreak of mass anti-abolitionist rioting two incendiary articles appeared in the *Courier and Enquirer*. One, entitled “Negro Riot,” described a conflict between a black group engaged in a delayed Fourth of July celebration and the New York Sacred Music Society at the Chatham Street Chapel from the week prior. As its title suggests, it expressed outrage that the group had defended itself with force and in typical form blamed them for inciting the riot that resulted. The group had rented the hall, refused to leave the premises when confronted by the Music Society, and defended themselves from their white antagonists when the confrontation came to blows. Alongside the article, Webb printed yet another tirade accusing Arthur Tappan of advocating interracial marriage. Mixing his charge against Tappan with a broader attack on abolitionists, Webb asked, "is amalgamation to be familiarized into vogue? Are the disgusting negroisms of [William] Lloyd Garrison, and his tribe of gizzard-lipped disciples to be repeated through the columns of such papers as the United States Gazette, until the white people of the United States shall lose their natural horror of the idea attached to a mixture of the races?"28 The *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, a similarly themed paper edited by the secretary of the New York Colonization Society, William Leete Stone, captured the sentiment of the anti-abolitionist rumors: “We are happy to learn that nothing in these disturbances can be ascribed to the colonizationists. They had no part or lot in the matter. It was an affair not connected with their interests or objects. It grew out of the absurd and outrageous project of the abolitionist to force public sentiment, and *mulatoize* our posterity.”29 While Stone is correct in noting the disconnection of the mob from direct colonizationist involvement during the riot per se, his effort to blame the victims of the rioting as their cause is typical of the colonizationists' policy to disparage and slander abolitionism in the
public's eyes. Further, several features of the mob indicate that even if they were not led directly by colonizationists, they nonetheless took their cues from previous anti-abolitionist mobs led by supporters of the ACS (Recall: Wilder's speechifying and the colonizationist-style “resolutions in favor of Negro deportation”). Stone's claim about colonizationist non-involvement was an effort to distance his organization from the exceptionally large-scale violence of the first night of rioting; other than the scale, the mob violence was exactly the kind supported by colonizationists.

As the violence continued to rage, citizens who had looked on with indifference began to fear for their own property. On July 12th, the mayor finally denounced the riots and ordered the police and militia to quell the riot. The American Anti-Slavery Society issued a disclaimer printed on handbills posted around the city in an effort to fight the rumors fueling the violence:

1. We entirely disclaim any desire to promote or encourage intermarriages between white and colored persons.
2. We disclaim, and utterly disapprove, the language of a handbill recently circulated in this city, the tendency of which is thought to be to excite resistance to the laws. Our principle is, that even hard laws are to be submitted to by all men, until they can by peaceable means be altered.
3. We disclaim, as we have already done, any intention to dissolve the Union, or to violate the constitution and laws of the country; or to ask of Congress any act transcending their constitutional powers; which the abolition of slavery by Congress, in any state, would plainly do.  

For the rioters, interracial marriage signified abolitionism's growing political clout, and threatened the wellbeing of the nation-state. The attacks leveled by colonizationists in the city's newspapers were potent for their ability to harness their reader's antipathy toward black people, and disgust at the idea of interracial marriage. The magnitude of these feelings is demonstrated by its result. While abolitionists had made the repeal of anti-amalgamation law in Massachusetts a key part of their platform on the grounds of providing legal equality, it is ultimately the anti-abolitionist riots that attest to the power that interracial marriage held as an idea during the decade. Interracial households demonstrated, quite against the comprehension of rioters, that people would willingly countervail prevailing social structures that insisted on racial hierarchy, demonstrating equality in the intimate relations of the home. Above all else, the violence of the rioters politicized interracial domesticity in the North.
Alternative Perspectives

In the aftermath of the 1834 New York City riot, three texts appeared that demonstrate the cultural response to interracial domesticity's revolutionary potential. French writer Gustave de Beaumont responded to the riot with the novel *Marie, ou l'esclavage aux Etats-Unis* (*Marie, or Slavery in the United States*), which featured prominent depictions of the fully developed typing characteristic of later depictions of the tragic mulatto figure. While Beaumont saw the injustice inherent in U.S. society, his novel ultimately forecloses the possibility of interracial domesticity, and erases the presence of abolitionist politics in the United States in the process. A second novel, *A Sojourn in the City of Amalgamation in the Year of Our Lord 19—by Oliver Bolokitten – Esq.*, was published under pseudonym by Jerome B. Holgate, a twenty-two year old fervent supporter of the American Colonization Society native to Utica, New York. Quite in tune with the mob, Holgate's novel depicted his vision of the horrors of a future of social integration. His imagined city of Amalgamation is not, however, integrated, and the novel repeatedly stressed the impossibility of interracial mixing, culminating in the fictional autobiography of Boge Bogun, a man who is white from the waist up and black from the waist down. Finally, although Lydia Maria Child would forbear her investigation of the tragic mulatto character (in relation to slavery) in fiction for nearly a decade, her abolitionist gift-book, *The Oasis*, directly responded to the riots and explored the implications of interracial domesticity as a revolutionary force.31

Gustave de Beaumont's *Marie* is cited in virtually every piece of scholarship concerning the 1834 New York City riot. Along with the novelization of the tragic mulatto romance, the text was set in part during the riot, and appeared with extensive non-fiction footnotes and appendices that rival the work done by later scholarly and historical accounts. Beaumont is famous for being the traveling companion of Alexis de Tocqueville, and together the pair toured the United States on behalf of the French government to inspect its prisons for nine months during 1831-2. While Tocqueville's well-known text, *Democracy in America*, surveyed the institutions of the United States, Beaumont sought to convey the potency of the nation's customs through his fiction. Given Beaumont's authority as an observer of the United States and the text's
engagement with the riots, it is an easy mistake to assume Beaumont was a direct observer of the social unrest he documented, that in fact took place two years after his return to France. The basis for Beaumont's historical account of the riot is information gleaned from several city newspapers, nearly all of which had anti-abolitionist and colonizationist biases. Though Beaumont is a careful reader of these sources, his presentation of the events (both in the appendix and in the novel) emphasize the anti-abolitionist vitriol as representative of U.S. culture, in essence excluding the abolitionist movement from his accounting of America.

The contradiction between the United States' commitment to democracy, social mobility, and freedom and its attitudes toward black and native peoples captivated Beaumont. In order to demonstrate the extremity of racial prejudice, he penned a romantic tragedy in which his French protagonist, Ludovic, falls in love with and wants to marry Marie, a woman with only the faintest African ancestry. Beaumont saw that “intermarriages are certainly the best, if not the unique, means of fusing the white and the black races. They are also the most obvious index of equality. For this twofold reason, unions of this sort arouse the rancor of the Americans above all else” (245). While Child would carefully position The Oasis as a response to the equation of abolitionism with amalgamation, Beaumont seized the allegations of the mob and sought to manifest the social tension surrounding interracial marriage as a direct challenge to prejudice. But even with the intent to critique society's injustice, Beaumont’s novel is guilty of misrepresenting those social tensions through the erasure of blackness that accompanies the limit-case scenario of the fully developed tragic mulatto character. Beaumont's anger, social critique, and erasure of race tumble together to form the contradictions found in Ludovic's response to Marie's revealed genealogy: “You sun-browned white men will bow your heads before the lily whiteness of the colored girl – I will make you respect her!” (67).

Beaumont's play at reversing power in racial hierarchy exults in the sacrifice Ludovic must make in order to pay homage to the heaven-sanctified womanliness embodied by Marie. Ludovic leaves his familial farm hoping to lead both a virtuous and grand life. He is a revolutionary for Greek independence, tries his hand at the boring minutiae of an unnamed career, and after adventuring to America and meeting Marie he dreams of becoming an artist with the capacity to change society's prejudices. After each path fails to fulfill Ludovic, his purpose in life becomes first protecting Marie's virtue and then lamenting her after her tragic death. Alone in the woods of Michigan, the novel is told by Ludovic in retrospect to another
French immigrant searching for happiness. The fate of Marie allows one man to become a martyr while another is delivered from a similar fate.

Though Ludovic's love appears heroic, Beaumont's emphasis of Marie's African heritage makes certain important elements of the story less clear. In terms of genealogy, the emphasis in the tragic mulatto plot falls on Marie's mother, Theresa Spencer. Unlike Ludovic, Maria's father, Daniel Nelson, married Theresa without the knowledge of her distant African ancestry. Theresa, an orphan of Creole ancestry in New Orleans, is only marked as mulatto by a spurned and villainous ex-suitor, the Spaniard Don Fernando d'Almanza. After consultation with the old people of the town, Theresa's heritage is confirmed, and she suffers an early death from shame (55-6). The focused attention on Theresa's tragic African heritage helps to hide Nelson's role in the family. Not only is he a New Englander who has repaired his wealth in the South, but his character places an inordinate emphasis on his own genealogy, which in turn is heavily invested with patriotism. The device on the coat-of-arms adorning his coach is “Ubi libertas, ibi patria” (where there is liberty, there is the fatherland), and he seals his letters with a ring engraved “John Nelson, 1631,” the name of his ancestor and year of his family's emigration to the Americas (32).

For Nelson, the balance of inheritance is set against his children, whose actions and character are defined by their distant great grandmother's racial status, for even though the family is once again passing in society, he adamantly marks Marie in the private sphere of their domestic life. Upon Ludovic's declaration of an even deeper love once he learns of her mother's history, Nelson indifferently declares: “If you contemplated reality with a less prejudiced eye, you could not endure the sight, and you would realize that a white man can never marry a woman of color” (57). With the drama of racial heritage at the center of attention, Nelson's tacit rejection of Marie's right to claim his family's history hides the otherwise obvious content of the romance plot: Ludovic marrying into wealth. Nelson never sinks into poverty, even while suffering through successive social and credit crises resulting from the unmasking of the family's African ancestry first in New Orleans and then in Baltimore. Even during the family's emigration to Michigan, a plot twist that becomes inexplicably linked to missionary work among the doubly displaced Cherokee tribe, the emphasis is on living a reserved life away from society rather than productive homesteading or farming. In the end, after the deaths of his family and the inter-tribal extermination of his savage charges, Nelson returns to New England, “to resume his former way of life” unencumbered by family ties to the nation's racial past, present, or future.
Beaumont's odd alteration of the history of the Cherokee's removal (displacing them from west of the Mississippi to the Midwest) is perhaps somewhat understandable, since his novel appeared during the earliest stages of their eviction from tribal lands. Set in the year 1827, *Marie* also significantly reordered causality in the emergence of abolitionism and the history of armed black uprisings. The events of the riot become condensed into a single scene, and the marriage of Ludovic and Marie becomes not only the center of attention, but also the cause of the riot (130). Just as the priest is about to place the ring on Marie's finger, the mob bursts into the church and interrupts the consecrating moment. Amid the violent scene, Marie's brother, George, arrives and clears a path to safety. George embodies the rebellious and vindictive characteristics of the typical male tragic mulatto character, and becomes the would-be leader of a black revolution as a result of the riot. It is later recounted that "when the Negroes of Virginia and the two Carolinas learned that the Americans in New York had burned the churches of the colored people, it was the signal for the outbreak of the revolt," which is led by George (163). Placing the "lily white" George at the head of the revolt does more than erase black revolutionary agency as embodied in its leadership; Beaumont's choice also displaces the historical rebellion led by Nat Turner in Virginia in 1831. Moreover, Beaumont's reordering of history replaces Turner's resistance to enslavement, the cause of widespread social tension, with its result: the riots. Though he intended to show the social prejudice directed against people of African descent, Beaumont's outsider's perspective damagingly installs those biases as an absolute in American character by ignoring their cause. The eradication of a simultaneous revolutionary, black, and national character leads to the complete degradation of black agency in his version of history, for in Beaumont's novel the slaves, "whether through stupidity or fear," do not rise and George is left to die a brave but meaningless death at the head of a band of revolutionaries comprised solely of Native Americans (164).

Beaumont's substitution of Marie and Ludovic's marriage for the historical circumstances of the riot is similarly problematic. By making interracial marriage the center of his critique of racial prejudice in the United States, Beaumont's tragic emphasis enacts once more the very social antagonisms he sought to expose. Following the marriage ceremony's interruption by the mob, Ludovic and Marie's marriage becomes infinitely deferred to the future, until Marie dies of sickness before the ceremony can be performed on the frontier. In line with the tragic mulatto
character's propensity for fatal bouts of sadness, the text suggests that “her strength waned at the same time with her faith in the future...” (157). Marie's final fate is a contradiction both for the novel as a whole and for Ludovic's drive as a protagonist. Seeking to politicize interracial marriage, both are devoted to Marie's simultaneous social degradation and womanly perfection, deferring the domestic equality that marriage across the color line can bestow. The result is the politicization of Marie, herself, as a tragic mulatto figure, while withholding the revolutionary potential of interracial domesticity. Speaking to his fellow Frenchman, Ludovic explains the tragic fate of domesticity in the novel: “you told me that there one could live happily with a beloved object; oh, I too believed in that happiness! That was the home prepared with such care; Marie's refuge, the roof which would shelter our pure and mystic joys – but since Heaven did not wish my plans to be accomplished, nor that dwelling to contain our felicity, I made of it a tomb” (170). Beaumont's Marie transforms interracial domesticity into the death of progressive politics in the United States.

While Beaumont's novel employed the tragic mulatto narrative to parse the riot's meaning in fiction, the colonizationist response, found in Jerome Holgate's novel A Sojourn in the City of Amalgamation, stressed the impossibility of social equality. Holgate regularly attended abolitionist-colonizationist debates in Utica both before and after the riots in New York City during the summer of 1834. Debate, assuredly, is a kindly name for these meetings, as tensions ran high and they repeatedly ended with resolutions supporting the ACS. After one meeting, the crowd burned an effigy of Beriah Green, an abolitionist and president of the Oneida Institute (an interracial manual labor school dedicated to the ideals of practical reform), who was, as the result of his political stance, rumored to have performed an interracial marriage ceremony. Holgate almost certainly shared his self-published novel with the Utica Literary Club, among whom Elise Lemire has identified seventeen young men whose fathers participated in anti-abolitionist mobbing in the city.33 On October 21, 1835, anti-abolitionists held a large meeting and succeeded in denying abolitionists the use of the Utica Court Room for a convention, and when abolitionists met instead at the Second Presbyterian church a mob quickly disrupted the meeting with the threat of violence, but not before abolitionists had formally organized the New York State Antislavery Society. Later that evening, the offices of an affiliated newspaper were attacked.34

As the novel's title suggests, Holgate's narrator, Oliver Bolokitten, experiences a journey
through a futuristic northern city whose society employs amalgamation as the vehicle for ending racial prejudice. The city, its inhabitants, and their customs represent the “debates” between colonizationists and abolitionists, albeit through the ideological lens of Holgate's politics. As a result, Holgate's fictional city of amalgamation, while technically dedicated to interracial marriage, fully supports the colonizationists’ belief that an amalgamated city would be monstrous. In the city of amalgamation, Bolokitten finds white people who are reluctant, unwilling, or unable to enter into interracial marriages, in spite of the social pressures to do so. The most reasonable, rational, and non-violent argumentation is attributed to characters who support colonization, contrary to the city's law, while the novel's amalgamationist figurehead, the preacher Wildfire, is aggressive, violent, and buffoonishly tyrannical. Among the many arguments presented in the novel, Holgate suggests that abolitionists are responsible for the negative effects of their platform; they are responsible for producing a knowledge of misery among slaves by “excit[ing] the longing fancy of an imprisoned wretch, hopeless as to immediate liberation”; for increasing the brutality of Southerners through their polarizing influence; and for the brutality of the mob violence, since, like powder waiting for the fire, abolitionists were consequently guilty for sparking the violence directed against them (100). The city's distinguishing feature, then, is the transformation of the violence of anti-abolitionist mobbing into a perceived reality that displaces the anti-social actions of the mob onto their abolitionist adversaries, exonerating ACS supporters while figuring themselves as the victims of dangerously inverted social customs.

Bolokitten encounters two interracial couples on the outskirts of the city of amalgamation, on their way to be married. Addressing the white gentlemen, Bolokitten's surprise at their company and obvious unfamiliarity with local customs results in extreme effrontery, yet before the chapter is finished one of the party, Mr. Hoffle, announces his own opposition to amalgamation, to which he is driven in order to fit in among fashionable society. Thus, Bolokitten's entrance into the city of amalgamation is fortified in the knowledge that in spite of appearances to the contrary, the city holds “many dissenters” who share his beliefs. The group proceeds to Wildfire's church, figured in terms similar to the invectives leveled against abolitionist meetings in Webb's *Courier and Enquirer*, which held that social mixing at abolitionist meetings promoted amalgamation. During the days before the riot, Webb would even accuse the Reverend Dr. Cox of promiscuity, stating that he had “particularly distinguished
himself by his attention to the ladies, both ivory and ebony – seeming to be particularly alive to their accommodation even during prayers.” Wildfire’s church ostensibly employs amalgamation as the rectifier of social prejudice, but unlike the “promiscuous” meetings held by abolitionists, Wildfire's congregation is amalgamated in spite of the deep internal prejudices experienced by congregants: “You are aware, I presume, Mr. Hoffle, that there is something within you, which repels you from Miss Sincopy, which is a prejudice; and a horrible crime; and which it is our benign purpose to annihilate” (21). Wildfire's creed in regard to the city's black population is likewise based on equality measured by actions, without addressing the deeper feeling of racial prejudice:

I am astonished that any of you, my friends, should be discontented. What is there we have, that you have not! You are admitted to the same privileges, the same society. Your pew, instead of being tucked away, as formerly, in one corner of the church, with the label, COLORED PEOPLE, on it, is in our very midst. We are all intermingled, without regard to colour or character.... Prejudices, by the ingenious inventions of great men, have been utterly baffled! What is there, then, my beloved Africans, to make you seditious? (19)

The dangerous political potential of abolitionism's integrated meetings is dispelled, and interracial marriage becomes the imperative of the city of amalgamation's legal enforcement of equality.

However, the naturalization of amalgamation in Holgate's novel is paralleled by the adamant assertion that antipathy between white and black people is natural, which is figured as a violent physical repulsion in the white body. Drawing on the era's belief that black people smelled distinctly bad, a “fact” circulated in print by anti-abolitionist newspapers reporting on the riots, Holgate emphasized the monstrousness of amalgamation by emphasizing the white body's response to the revolting sensory inputs resulting from physical proximity to people of African descent. With racist ideology at work manufacturing imaginary odors, the novel in turn imagines a “curious contrivance” perched between husbands and wives in the pews of Wildfire's church: “It whizzed round seemingly by a perpetual motion power, and with amazing swiftness: its object being to protect the husband from those disagreeable evaporations exhaling from the odoriferous spouse, which it did by fanning off the offensive air, and at the same time dispensing, by means of the vials, a delightful perfume” (17). For some of Wildfire's
congregants, even these futuristic machines are not efficient enough to prevent compulsive projectile vomiting. Hoping to give the new couples the best possible start to their marriage, the church has annexed mills that distill “a certain drug or spirit, yclept Enthusiasm.” (The mills are powered by a throng of laborers, “who if they relaxed in the least their efforts, [were] flogged... most outrageously,” representing the wage slavery argument that held that slaves were better off than free laborers.) The couples are placed in a large kettle and inundated with the vapor, which subdues the brain's judgment and reason producing a “powerful inclination to be amorous” (27). Though the mills succeed in generating desire in the couples to be married (Bolokitten is himself swept up in the drug's effects, but his experience is limited to the compulsion to dance), Holgate insists that yet another course of action is required to manage the bodily impulses that tend toward repulsion. Entering the perfumery, the initiates to the amalgamated lifestyle are separated. The women are bound to a table and whipped, “which fractures the flesh just enough for the purpose,” and are then encased in a “coop and fumigated” before having syringes of perfume injected into their veins (36). It is ultimately unsurprising that Holgate's vision of the pains needed to make amalgamation practical subject his female characters to the harshest physical punishments, indeed to acts of torture very similar to those practiced by slaveholders that abolitionists sought to publicize, thereby replicating the violent relations of exploitation under slavery. His city of amalgamation has no room for relations that challenge the prejudice at the center of the anti-abolitionist mentality, and must therefore resort to brutal physical domination of black women to validate desire. The men fair better, merely having a robotic bottle of perfume attached to their nose hair.

Outside of Wildfire's church, Bolokitten discovers that the city of amalgamation is full of race tension. Returning home late one night, Bolokitten is attacked and robbed by a group of black men, though not before he kills their leader in self-defense. Taken captive to their hideout, Bolokitten witnesses the interrogation of Wildfire, whom has also been kidnapped for the purpose of providing Holgate the opportunity to argue, through his black characters, that their lives were better while slaves than as free men in the north. With no work and nothing to eat, the men are reduced to criminal activity, and as an act of revenge the ungrateful ex-slaves tar and feather their liberator (116). To complete the lesson, Holgate threatens the life of Bolokitten, for the man he killed was the brother of the gang's leader. However, while the others raise the call for revenge, the gang's leader declares that since his brother was killed in a criminal pursuit,
Bolokitten's actions were just. Although dangerous and criminal, the black gang justifies Bolokitten's beliefs regarding abolition and murder of his assailant – once more by invoking the state’s criminal code.

A similar lesson is implicit in the novel's concluding scene, which unites the final instance of interracial marriage with the threat of black revolt. Julia Sternfast's marriage to one Mr. Cosho has been arranged by her father, a devoted amalgamationist (in his second marriage, for Julia is unquestionably the symbol for all that is desirable in white beauty). Julia herself is violently opposed, ostensibly because she is in love with the white Albert Ossleton, but also because she is Holgate's representative virtuous, racist woman. Ossleton understands that the barrier between them exists solely in her father's political beliefs, and instructs Julia to marry the as yet unknown black man, Mr. Wyming, who is Ossleton's blackface alter ego. Mr. Cosho accompanies Julia to a grand ball, where she meets the gallant Wyming, whose tact and manners belie his black appearance causing her much confusion. The contrast drawn between the two suitors quickly escalates, for in a non sequitur of massive proportions, a black revolt erupts, comprised of “at least two thousand dark fellows, fierce, resolute, neried by fancied wrongs, and unwavering in their lawless purpose,” and bursts into the ball hunting for Julia (176). At this point, the novel is hurrying to its overdue conclusion, and reveals without elaborating that the uprising is a plot to extort money from Julia's father (175). Mr. Cosho is cast in a cowardly role, is expected to capitulate to the rebel's plans out of racial affiliation, and is subsequently killed in the militia's first volley of fire. Wyming, meanwhile, kills the rebel leader, and escapes with Julia in his protection.

Holgate's city of amalgamation faces difficult questions in the wake of the suppressed black revolt, such as how the mere form of equality is insufficient, and consequently that Holgate's insistence on innate prejudice might be mistaken. The novel does not investigate the city's racial antagonisms, focusing instead on the resolution of its last iteration of interracial marriage. Julia, still disgusted with the thought of marrying a black man, becomes more frantic, for she is compelled by the parting words of Ossleton to marry his black persona, Wyming. He seeks to soothe her tension, but his advances only repulse her. In spite of its obviousness, he will not tell her his identity, and she cannot herself figure it out. Torn by simultaneous repulsion and attraction, Julia is reduced to a terrified, screaming maniac, who seemingly consents to the marriage with the belief that Wyming is somehow in league with Ossleton, without
understanding exactly how (185). Julia's capitulation to the inscrutable plans of her suitor(s) is not enough for Holgate, who also incorporates her father's physical domination to underscore the forced nature of Julia's marriage. (The novel does not grasp the breakdown that blackface implies for its belief in racial odors.) In his desire to abrogate prejudice by uniting his daughter in marriage with a black man, Mr. Sternfast contemplates the possibility of Julia being “flogged to love” with corporal chastisement, and, when her husband-to-be balks at this course of action, compromises with a plan to drug her with opium until the vows are tied. In spite of her seeming capitulation, Julia is indeed drugged with the help of Sternfast's black wife. The novel concludes with a private scene in their wedding bower. Julia's sadness and emotional “torture” are reversed when her husband plunges his face into the washing bowl, replacing the “black brows and facetious look of the unaccountable Wyming” with the “intelligent features, lit with a sweet smile, and sparkling eyes of Albert Ossleton” (190). This final example of interracial marriage is perhaps the most interesting of all in the novel, for it is ostensibly the “correct” marriage in Holgate's opinion. Nevertheless, it consummates, in full accordance with the colonizationist mentality, the forced interracial marriage. Consequently, Julia's subjection to her father and her white husband equates Holgate's endorsed union with traditions of female exploitation. The novel does not conclude with the resolution of a marriage constructed on positive affiliations, but rather with a final reversal that simply removes the possibility of interracial sex.

The city of amalgamation is ultimately a very segregated space. Although men and women enter interracial marriages, the emphasis of the novel is on the polarization of race in the various couples, rather than on people of mixed race. Unlike Beaumont's Marie, the notion of the tragic mulatto figure is beyond the scope of Holgate's consideration, and consequently the novel succeeds in transforming the threat of amalgamation into an imagined cityscape filled almost exclusively with racially distinct people. There are a few exceptions, such as the completely black man whose ancestors were once white, whom Bolokitten wondrously declares represents the climax of amalgamation, along with a pew filled with Wildfire's interracial children who attest to the preacher's commitment to amalgamation. In comparison to the passing references to these people, the novel emphasizes Bolokitten's encounter with Holgate's theoretically amalgamated man, who is on exhibition at the city's Barbary Building. Boge Bogun is a man whose top half is white and bottom half is black, and is at once the literal manifestation of the negative logic behind the tragic mulatto's characteristic form that sets white
intellect over black physicality as well as the embodiment of amalgamation's impossibility.

The story of Bogun is told through a digression that takes the form of biography. At the exhibit, Bolokitten purchases *The Memoirs of Boge Bogun, With and Account of the War Which Took Place in His Own Body, Between the Differently Coloured Particles of Flesh, and the Consequent Result*, which is then excerpted at length in the text, and confusingly includes its own title page and independent chapter numbering in the middle of Holgate's novel. The bulk of the twenty-five page digression is spent narrating interior battles between the two camps of racialized particles in a style that demonstrates Holgate's familiarity with a medical dictionary, layered with a grandiose narrative of war. After many daring, repetitive adventures through the stomach and near the spinal cord, the white particles win control of Bogun's brain causing his body to be divided into racially segregated halves. In comparison, the only non-interior biography is delivered in the first three pages, which describe the circumstances of Bogun's conception. Like Julia Sternfast, Bogun's mother (an English woman) was made to marry a black man, in spite of her partiality for another (white) man named Dangen. Bogun's father is said to be wealthy, deriving his fortune from the odor trade. Holgate's attempt to denigrate Bogun's father is clear, for it is rumored that his perfumes include a secret ingredient comprised of essence derived from orangutans and other monkeys, and consequently he is supposed to have extensive land holdings in Africa. After Bogun's conception, Dangen returns from abroad, and kills his rival in a duel. Although it is not explicitly described, it is implied that Dangen would have married Bogun's mother. In any case, as can be judged from Bogun's hateful attitude toward his biological father, he has been raised to despise his paternal lineage, with Bogun's internal war between his white and black blood reflecting his upbringing. The white molecules, having gained sole possession of his brain, displace the question of an integrated psyche, just as Bogun's racially bifurcated body displaces questions of a truly interracial political, civic body from the city of amalgamation. It is strange, then, that Bogun's father would have made so much money disseminating an odor symbolic of a black, animal sexuality to consumers who claim to need perfume to overcome their physical repulsion to blackness. A similar question arises when considering how Bogun might exhibit the black lower half of his body to his paying customers. While Bogun might seem to be the ultimate argument against the possibility of racial integration, the details of his biography subvert the novel's emphatic dismissal of the desirability of the black body. His biologic father's ability to monetize this contradiction is set in opposition to the
unhappy domesticity that has led to Bogun's internalized strife.

Together, the novels written by Beaumont and Holgate in the wake of the riots suggest that the question of race and interracial marriage can only be considered at the margins of U.S. society, whether pushed to the frontier as in Marie or the dystopic future as in Sojourn in the City of Amalgamation. In each case, the nation is dissociated from the interracial domesticity that refused to replicate society's antipathetic racial hierarchy. The abolitionist response to the riot faced significantly more difficult publishing circumstances than either of these novels.

Beaumont was protected by distance and language, his novel being written for a French audience, while Holgate enjoyed the support of like-minded ACS members who typically counted the leading members of society among their number. Abolitionists, however, faced the physical violence of anti-abolitionist mobbing, and consequently their response to the charge of promoting amalgamation required restraint.

Published in October 1834, Child's gift-book, The Oasis, follows the abolitionists' careful posturing in the disclaimer against promoting amalgamation that was circulated in an attempt to end the riot. Although Child only once directly mentions the “late disgraceful riots” in The Oasis, a number of references in her introduction establish the link between her text and the event (xiv). In her introduction, Child quotes from two leading clergymen who had been attacked during the riots to set the tone of her response. “We are natives of this country,” states the Reverend Peter Williams, “we ask only to be treated as well as foreigners. Not a few of our fathers suffered and bled to purchase its independence; we ask only to be treated as well as those who fought against it” (ix-x).37 The emphasis on an inherited right to equality stemming from participation in the U.S. Revolution is balanced by the sentiments of the Reverend Dr. Cox: “We will not blame [Southern slaveholders] for the legacy they have received from their ancestors, but merely warn them of that they are about to bequeath to their posterity” (xvi). Hinting at the violence of ending slavery through war or revolution, Cox's message completes the thought begun by Williams. Although neither directly advocates violence, both invoke inheritance and revolution as abolitionist tools either for claiming equality or for predicting the violent downfall of the slave system.

For the previous four years, Garrison and his supporters had targeted laws forbidding interracial marriage in Massachusetts in The Liberator, and Child had followed suit by denouncing the law in her influential Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called
However, in the aftermath of the riot in New York City with anti-abolitionist rumors still powerful in promoting violence throughout the North, Child's introduction follows the abolitionist disclaimer in denouncing interracial marriage: “the principles of abolitionists are likewise strangely misunderstood. There is among them a deep abhorrence of any efforts which could excite the passions of slaves against their masters.... But of all accusations, that concerning intermarriages is the most perfectly ridiculous and unfounded. No abolitionist considers such a thing desirable” (xi). But what, then, are we to make of her disavowal of the desire for intermarriage and the social leveling an interracial marriage signifies? It is a strange claim for a writer who made a career out of writing interracial fiction, and for a gift-book that includes examples of both black revolution and interracial marriage. Close attention to The Oasis reveals that far from foreclosing discussion of the two issues most generative of anti-abolitionist mob anger, Child's introductory dismissal opens the way for further consideration of interracial domesticity's revolutionary potential.

Gift-books (sometimes referred to as literary annuals) were a popular form of publishing in the nineteenth century, typically filled with short literary pieces by noted authors of the day, designed to be given as gifts during the holiday season. Passing from friend to friend and house to house, the distribution of gift-books depended as much on the connections of sentiment as on the market forces behind their production and original purchase. The culture of giving surrounding gift-books created a unique kind of readership with less emphasis on individual choice and the predispositions of the reader, but with an increased emphasis on the collective culture shared among people with close interpersonal ties. As a form both shaped by and constructive of social opinion, the gift-book was ideal for spreading new ideas in the public realm. Breaking with the democratic traditions that defined the public sphere (the coffeehouses and newspapers of the eighteenth century) as the realm of political discourse and social agency, Child's turn to the gift-book market produced a fundamental shift in tactic for abolitionist politics. By emphasizing the home life of her readers as an ideal place for converting people to the anti-slavery cause, Child identified domesticity as a place to begin the larger revolution in public sentiment desired by the movement.

The range of content in The Oasis was meant to appeal to the entire family, and it is tempting to link certain portions to their implied readers: masculine appeals to jurisprudence and biography, feminine narratives laden with pathos, and even a dramatic sketch to be acted by
children. However, while normative domestic roles can be read into the gift-book's content, there is ultimately no way to distinguish borders based on the rhetorical strategies offered in different cases. Fathers weep while their families are torn apart by slave traders, Mothers choose to remain in the Americas rather than suffer the prejudices of European society, and children are given the right to vote whether or not to allow their school to be racially integrated. Because it was meant to be shared by the entire family, *The Oasis* encouraged reading and debate across the gender and age boundaries of domesticity.

The centerpiece of *The Oasis* is a forty-page redaction of John Gabriel Stedman's eighteenth-century account of his deployment to suppress a maroon revolt in colonial Surinam. Child's commentary focuses on the relationship between Stedman and Joanna, a woman in bondage, isolating their interracial marriage subplot from the other material in Stedman's massive two-volume *Narrative*. For scholars interested in Stedman's text as a historical document recording the sociological relationships of colonial America, Child's “Joanna” is largely regarded as one of many unauthorized textual variants of Stedman's text and is typically discussed without regard to the other content of the gift-book. An independent printing of Child's excerpt “Joanna” appeared in 1838, further enabling scholars to discuss Child's editing apart from its original context in *The Oasis* and the specific challenges facing abolitionist organization in the first half of the decade. From the opposite perspective, however, Child's employment of Stedman's *Narrative* can be understood as a strategic rebuttal to anti-abolitionist mob violence. Unlike Beaumont's *Marie*, Stedman and Joanna's story allowed Child to represent interracial marriage not as a tragedy of mixed blood, but as a domesticity capable of preserving black cultural origins and producing unexpected affiliations between colonizer and revolutionary.

In a brief introduction to the piece, Child recalls the language so critical in situating *The Oasis* as a response to the anti-abolitionist riots: “Should any fastidious readers be alarmed, I beg leave to assure them that the Abolitionists have no wish to induce any one to marry a mulatto, even should their lives be saved by such an one ten times” (65). Though it is tempting to read Child's words as a sign of her own bias toward interracial marriages, to do so overlooks the ironic chiding generated by her description of the reader as “fastidious” along with the apparent respect that Child held for Joanna's skill in preserving Stedman's life. In the context of the social tension surrounding the abolitionist movement in the 1830s, Child's pronouncement can be said
to operate as a signpost directing the reader's attention from the introduction's dismissal of the desirability of interracial marriage to material deeply engaged with revolutionary domesticity produced by an historical example of the opposite.\textsuperscript{44} Stedman and Joanna's marriage is a potent example of how domesticity can recode the relations of social exploitation, transforming a marine sent to suppress black revolution into a loving husband and father.

Child's focus on Stedman and Joanna's relationship offers readers of \textit{The Oasis} a positive example of interracial domesticity. Joanna takes care of Stedman through several bouts of illness (nursing being a traditional and stereotypical role for black colonial women), but Stedman is in turn attentive during Joanna's pregnancy and times of ill health. In the wider \textit{Narrative}, Stedman's character is established as a person who looks beyond race in his treatment of people; he often esteems black knowledge where others dismiss it outright, judges fairly between both white and black people under his military command, and though he doesn't outright denounce slavery as an abolitionist he speaks powerfully against the excessive, twisted cruelties and inequalities practiced against people in bondage. Stedman exemplifies how African culture and domesticity shape his relationship with Joanna when she takes twenty-three chigoes (a painful parasite) from his foot with a needle, claiming, “I bore the operation without flinching, with the resolution of an African” (\textit{Oasis}, 85). Referencing the cultural stoicism and disdain of Akan-speaking people in the face of pain or death, Stedman models his behavior after examples of black masculinity, showing that while his and Joanna's marriage conveys a great status change for Joanna (elevated from slave to wife), Stedman is also influenced by expectations established by African culture.\textsuperscript{45} Stedman finally gives utterance to the change brought about by his familial connection when Joanna becomes pregnant: “The idea that my best friend, and my offspring must be slaves, was insupportable” (82). Never against slavery as an economic practice in general, Stedman's role as a colonial agent is dramatically altered by domestic affiliations that were by no means standard.

While Stedman and Joanna's marriage offers a vision of love transcending the degradations of slavery, it is also fraught with the erasure of domesticity as it existed in concurrence with colonial slavery. Stedman's manuscript and journals reveal the discrepancies between the published portrayal of Joanna and the private record of her life.\textsuperscript{46} The key difference between how the three different levels of Stedman's text (journal, manuscript, and publication) describe Joanna stems from how her role as Stedman's domestic partner hides her
simultaneous position in the sexual exploitations of slavery.

Readers of the published version alone would know that Joanna's bondage is a constant threat to the sanctity of her and Stedman's marriage, which is described in both the *Narrative* and its reprinting in *The Oasis* in social (if not legal) terms: “Many of our respectable friends sanctioned the wedding by their presence; and I was as happy as any bridegroom ever was.... Thus concludes a chapter, which, methinks I hear many of my readers whisper, had better never had a beginning” (72). When in the published account Stedman meets Joanna, she is in a dangerous position. Daughter of a planter father (Mr. Kruythoff) and a slave mother (Cery) who was owned by another plantation, Joanna remains in bondage after Kruythoff is unable to purchase her freedom for any price. Not only has Kruythoff suddenly died, but the plantation with rights to Joanna has fallen into foreclosure and possession by a series of absentee owners in Holland. In the *Narrative*, Stedman reports feeling “sadness and stupefaction” on hearing Joanna's story, and falls ill. A basket of fruit and cordials arrives, and it is eventually revealed that Joanna sent them. However, though Stedman declares his “strange determination of purchasing Joanna, and giving her a good education,” the text reports Joanna's rejection of becoming Stedman's on any terms. They marry only after she nurses Stedman through yet another illness and makes her own offer to be with Stedman while she is still a slave, rather than awaiting his impractical plan to first seek her freedom and education (69-71). In its way, the published *Narrative* imagines an agency for Joanna in choosing to enter a relationship with Stedman, and though its editing typically downplays their sexual relationship it also puzzlingly elevates their connection to the level of unqualified marriage through the normative codes of sentimental romance that shape the *Narrative*'s depiction of their union.

In *Ghosts of Slavery*, Jenny Sharpe uses the traditions of concubinage in colonial America to show that while Stedman's effort imagines a kind of agency for Joanna, it does so by erasing her real historical existence. Concubinage, or the arrangement of white men to engage black or mixed-race women as a “housekeeper” or “secondary wife,” supplied the sexual relationships and domestic labor of marriage. Though Stedman's manuscript works hard to distinguish his and Joanna's relationship from the prevailing practice of concubinage, his private journals reveal that far from being an exception to the rule, their relationship was based in the same economics of sexual exploitation, revealing the negotiations between Stedman and Joanna's mother over the price of Joanna's company, culminating in their wedding. Joanna's gift of fruit
and cordials is part of the negotiations, which involved competition with other girls. Though the detail of the exchange remains in the *Narrative*, Joanna's motivation for sending the gift is radically altered. Her agency *within* the sexual commerce of colonial slavery vanishes, and is replaced by what Sharpe calls “the trope of the 'nurturing native'... Once all signs of a monetary exchange are banished from the text, there is no logical explanation for Joanna's actions other than her concern for his pain and suffering.”

Though Stedman's journals dramatically transform our understanding of his relationship with Joanna, their story is not reducible to any one level of the textual record. Nor do Stedman's journals automatically represent his authentic experience, although they do offer essential supplemental data to the material in the *Narrative*. Ultimately, all of the textual iterations of Stedman and Joanna's relationship are vital to understanding the meaning of their relationship.

For Child, Stedman's depiction of his and Joanna's relationship is important as a historical example of interracial marriage not because it falsifies the initial exploitative economic arrangement of their union, but rather for the familial connections that form in spite of it. At various points in the *Narrative*, Stedman spends time with Joanna's mother, sister, grandfather, aunt, uncle, and other relatives. Joanna's family gives them presents, and Stedman records how her grandfather passed on familial knowledge, relating that “he was born in Africa; where he had once been treated with more respect than any of his Surinam masters ever were in their own country” (*Oasis* 76). On a later visit, Stedman is gripped by the bitter thought, “Oh, if I could but find money enough to obtain freedom for them all!” (88). And, when finally ordered to depart Surinam, Joanna's family “hung around [him], crying, and invoking Heaven aloud for [his] safety” (102). Though it began as an arrangement of concubinage, Stedman's participation in extended kinship networks establishes his and Joanna's domesticity as significantly more meaningful than the explo mimcry of domesticity's labor and sexual relations typified by concubinage. Whether it is shown through the oral history imparted by Joanna's grandfather, or the traditional West African farewell, domesticity in Stedman's *Narrative* creates connections where concubinage does not.

Stedman makes it clear that several of the European soldiers of his acquaintance leave children in perpetual slavery, attesting to the widespread practice of the men engaging in the colonial exploitation of slave women. In the middle of the vast, uncertain, and expensive effort to obtain freedom for Joanna and their son, his messmates advise him to “do as we do... Keep
your sighs in your bosom, and your money in your pocket, my boy” (85). Stedman differentiates himself from the standard colonial-soldier, relating the scene in order “to show how much [his] feelings must have been hurt and disgusted” (85). This departure is key for establishing his role as a father in terms resistant to slavery and racism. Stedman receives word allowing him to purchase Joanna and Johnny, but for a sum equivalent to three years worth of his officer's salary. A plantation-owning acquaintance purchases them, placing them under her protection until he and Joanna can satisfy the debt in full. However, even with this arrangement, additional fees and securities must be satisfied before manumission is granted. Finally, after a direct appeal to the Governor, their son, at least, was freed.

The particulars of Stedman's relationship with his son show the meaning of his becoming “a free citizen of the world” (99). First, their son is also named John Stedman, proclaiming their relationship beyond a doubt. Second, in celebration of Johnny's emancipation, Stedman makes out his will in favor of his son. In doing so, he recognizes Johnny's full standing in the Lockean concepts of property and government, which emphasize inheritance and freedom as essential rights of enlightenment subjects. Finally, though only presented in a very limited fashion in the Narrative and The Oasis, Johnny rejoined Stedman in Europe after Joanna's death, arriving with an inheritance of nearly two-hundred pounds from Joanna – an amount equal to what was originally demanded for her and Johnny's freedom. Though the Narrative records Johnny's death on the coast of Jamaica as a sailor in Britain's merchant fleet, only Stedman's journals (the same responsible for preserving the truth of Joanna's concubinage) record the years of Stedman's interracial household in England, and Johnny's inclusion in British middle-class domesticity.49

Child's use of Stedman's colonial encounter and domesticity dramatically downplays descriptions of colonial sexuality found in Stedman's Narrative.50 As Sharpe notes, Child's effort to further incorporate Joanna into the codes of universal (white) womanhood are visible in the alterations made to her portrait in The Oasis, which modestly cover's Joanna's breast. Accepting scholarly critiques of erasure and sexual exploitation, I argue that the continued focus on Joanna's body has in turn hidden the revolutionary content of Stedman and Joanna's domesticity as figured in The Oasis. While scholars have considered Child's use of Stedman's Narrative in the single redaction offered under the title “Joanna” in the gift-book, few have accounted for the other content gleaned from the same source.

The neglected portion of Stedman's text in The Oasis is found in the article “Three
Colored Republics of Guiana,” attributed to Lydia Child's husband, David. Compared to the narrow focus on Stedman and Joanna's relationship, the section depicts not only the horrors of slavery by relating episodes of torture witnessed by Stedman, but also the revolutionary history and qualities of the revolted slaves of Surinam.⁵¹ As Child's biographer Carolyn Karcher notes, _The Oasis_ avoided violating gender conventions by having David present the material directly discussing black revolt and military force.⁵² As editor, Lydia Child had good reason to approve this gendered division of content. Her _Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans_, published the year before the New York City riot in 1833, had launched Child's career as a prominent abolitionist, but had also harmed the sales of her other popular domestic writings: _The Mother's Book_ went out of print, the periodical _Juvenile Miscellany_ folded, and sales of _The Frugal Housewife_ plummeted.⁵³ Uniting the abolitionist politics of the _Appeal_ with the verve of a career writer of literature associated with the home as defined by women and children readers, _The Oasis_ in turn politicized the home by including material associated with masculine public discourse. By having David present material deemed unsuitable for women writers, Lydia Child was able to present a range of abolitionist argumentation while avoiding the gendered criticisms and market reprisal that had met her _Appeal_. In the process, _The Oasis_ addresses a domesticity inclusive of men, women, and children in the home, avoiding the audience limitations of her earlier publishing career.

Child's entrance into abolitionist politics employed historical research into the question of slavery, and epitomized the intellectual basis of the emergent movement. Although Child had rejected violent revolution as a path to immediate emancipation, her research into the history of the Haitian Revolution provided readers of her _Appeal_ knowledge that the revolutionary violence against France had not occurred “until Bonaparte made his atrocious attempt to restore slavery in the island.”⁵⁴ Forecasting the revelatory work accomplished by C.L.R. James' _The Black Jacobins_ in the twentieth century, Child's historical research found a hidden truth behind the cultural fears associated with the Haitian Revolution in the nineteenth century. Child had proven herself ready to take on the topic of slave revolt, and ready to use the Haitian Revolution as a metric for judging the acceptability of violence directed toward securing emancipation.

_The Oasis_ similarly draws upon the Haitian Revolution to accompany a wider knowledge of black revolution in the hemisphere as a comparative mechanism for the possibility of black revolt in the U.S. South. Speaking of the maroons of Surinam, David reflects, “Freedom gave
them the same fearless and dignified air said to characterize the Haytians [sic]” (123-4). His evocation of the Haitian Revolution is significant for two reasons. It shows the extent to which the Haitian Revolution would be familiar to the audience of The Oasis, those both aware of the hemispheric history of slavery and undecided on the issue of abolition – or, in other words, people with both an ideological investment in slavery and a fear of black revolt. Perhaps more importantly, though, it illustrates that the revolution in Haiti, which led to the establishment of the first black nation-state in the Americas, stood as a representational icon for the larger extra-national slave rebellions against the violence inherent to the social organization of slavery and the plantation system in the hemisphere. Instead of reducing all threat of black revolution to a source in Haiti, The Oasis invokes the potential for revolution throughout the hemisphere more widely as a continuous and parallel potential. In this sense, The Oasis reveals the tendency in nineteenth-century U.S. culture to narrate black revolution in terms similar to that of the heroic slave – a figure produced in literature as an isolated, romantic, but ultimately defeated individual. In David Child's redefinition, revolution is a characterization available to any of the spontaneous uprisings toward freedom conditioned by the plantation-slavery social structure.

Slavery's sexual exploitation of women remains present as one of the justifiable sources of black revolution in “the Three Colored Republics.” Among the litany of violence directed toward the enslaved population, David emphasized the degradation of marriage: “The negro husband is often unmercifully whipped by a profligate overseer, for no other reason than because his wife is handsome and happens to love him. Should he attempt to protect her from abuse, he would be cut to pieces for his pains” (118). The schisms and dislocations of family ties under slavery were, of course, an essential part of abolitionism's appeal to universal womanhood. Here, the emphasis falls again on the role of masculinity under such circumstances. The Oasis presents a story from Stedman's Narrative, shifting the emphasis from the terrorized husband and abused wife to the question of genealogy and inheritance. The rebels capture an outlying plantation, and Mr. Shultz, the overseer, is tied by the rebel leader Jolly-Coeur. Shultz begs for mercy, citing the “dainties” he had given Jolly-Coeur as a child and favorite of his:

Jolly-Coeur replied, ‘I remember it perfectly well. But remember, vile tyrant, your shameless treatment to my poor mother, in my infant presence. Remember how you flogged my father for trying to protect her. Remember this, and die by my hands.’ As he spoke, he struck the head from the body, and rolled it along the
beach. (123)

“The Three Colored Republics” expressly describes an alternative to the legacy of the tragic mulatto figure by allowing Jolly-Coeur the revenge against the slave system not only for his humiliation as a youth, but for the sexual violence against his mother. With Mr. Shultz, by extension of his kindness and abuse of Jolly-Coeur’s mother, at least potentially his father in the marginal biological sense of the term, David Child’s tacit acceptance of the interruption of marriage’s sanctity and equality as a condition for endorsing black revolution emphatically resists the logic of the tragic mulatto figure as an inheritance of conflicting racial imperatives. Instead, Jolly-Coeur, the witness of his mother’s rape and his slave-father’s punishment for trying to protect her, presents the reader of *The Oasis* an image of righteous vengeance against the ongoing tragedy that may or may not have purchase on Jolly-Coeur’s body, but definitely on his mind.

The story is still more complex. By dislocating the story of Jolly-Coeur's revenge and Stedman and Joanna's interracial domesticity, *The Oasis* has imposed a different silence on its source. Jolly-Coeur's story is presented in *The Oasis* as a symbolic narrative of revenge told by a nameless “old slave” of the colony. However, it is not the first mention of the rebel leader to be found in the gift-book. At the outset of Stedman and Joanna's story, it is related that Jolly-Coeur was once a slave on the same plantation as Joanna and her mother, and by his “industry” had protected them after Kruythoff's death (67). The domestic tie between Stedman, the colonial officer, and Jolly-Coeur, the rebel slave, becomes both clearer and more confusing when Jolly-Coeur's story is returned to its original context. The nameless “old slave” of *The Oasis* is actually Joanna's uncle, Cojo, a man who had fought against the rebels and won the distinction of being “true to the Europeans.” Even more strangely, Cojo's story of black revenge does not inspire fear or operate as a threat to Stedman. Instead, it stands as a conversation about family between the two. At least, Stedman takes it that way when he ends the story: “Thus ended the history of Mr. Schults [sic]; when Cojo, with young Tamera, departed, and left me to go, with an increased impatience, to receive the news, that I soon was to expect from Amsterdam, viz. When the deserving Joanna should be free from the villainy of such pests of human nature” (336). Stedman appears to take Jolly-Coeur's revenge as a personal favor, for in the killing of Shultz, the man once set over Joanna's family, a sexual threat is removed. Even more strangely, Tamera, the young girl accompanying Cojo, is introduced as Jolly-Coeur's daughter. By reciprocating the
protection once granted to Joanna, Cojo has reaffirmed the two families’ interconnection. Moreover, while he had once fought in service to the colony, Cojo will no longer engage the rebels since his companions had joined them. Stedman's role as a colonial officer fighting rebel slaves has been so altered through extended family ties and kinship networks that he records the story of Jolly-Coeur not as an outrage of black revolutionary violence, but as a lens through which to see the dangers to his own family under slavery.

Taken together, and culminating with the revolutionary murder of Mr. Shultz by Jolly-Coeur, the material drawn from Stedman’s _Narrative_ in _The Oasis_ links the anti-abolitionist fears of racial intermarriage and black revolution. Critiques of Child’s projection of the abolitionist domestic ideology of universal womanhood overlook the attending implications that allow _The Oasis_ to endorse black revolutionary violence toward the end of slavery. As a hemispheric context, the black republics of Guyana – produced as sovereign nations by virtue of their freedom rather than through proprietary ownership of territory – dramatize the revolutionary spirit in terms independent of national or colonial space. Taking place on a plantation, the infinitely replicable colonial social space, Jolly-Coeur’s revolutionary strike is not dependent on, but parallel to, the Haitian presence in the hemisphere. When linked to domesticity, revolution becomes likewise replicable, reproducible, and inheritable.

For the casual reader of _The Oasis_, the importance of the material reproduced from Stedman’s account of slave revolt is clarified by the images adorning the front and back covers that invoke illustrations from the _Narrative_. (Figure 3 and 4 below.) While most extant copies appear to have been bound since distribution, _The Oasis_ was initially adorned with paper covers meant to be removed when the volume was bound to match the purchaser's library. The front image depicts a revolted slave in Guyanese-like jungle, while the back locates a plantation within similar space. In the center a planter drives a line of slaves between a cocoa and coffee plant, merging into jungle. Almost undetectable at first, wearing clothes and a hat similar to Stedman's uniform, a European fades in and out of definition due to the quality and technique of the woodcut. Like this ghostly figure, suspended between colonial and the revolutionary space of the republic of Guyana, the legacy of Stedman's deployment in the service of European colonialism becomes the very tool by which abolitionists presented interracial domesticity and revolution.
Figure 3: *The Oasis*, 1834, Front Cover. Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.
Figure 4: *The Oasis*, 1834, Back Cover. Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.
The turn to an inheritable revolutionary mandate, as envisioned through Jolly-Coeur and the domesticity established between Stedman and Joanna's extended family, is not limited to a hemispheric black resistance to slavery in *The Oasis*. Against the background of the emergence of organized abolitionist politics in the United States and the violent anti-abolitionist backlash, *The Oasis* engages the revolutionary legacy of the late eighteenth century in order to confront the “naturalness” of the nativism performed by the rioters as a marker of racial separation in the body politic. The process is clear when David Child remarks, “the design of the planters was to intimidate the 'rebel negroes'; for thus, like the heroes of the American Revolution, were they denominated. But these transactions inspired them with new fury. They laid waste the plantations, and murdered the inhabitants, and triumphed, hand to hand, in the fiercest battles” (119-20). By way of such unsubtle re-significations of meaning, *The Oasis* steadily dismisses the violence of the mob and the planter for that of the legitimacy of revolution.

As editor, Lydia Child steadily employed the patriotic mythos of the spirit of '76 to unflatteringly turn the tables on the South's role in determining the violent backdrop against which the discussion of interracial marriage took place. Defining the “Scale of Complexions,” Child linked the terminology of race with the social analysis of “an elderly gentleman, who served during the Revolution in the South, lately returned from a Southern tour. He expressed great surprise at the change that had taken place during forty-five years. He said black slaves were numerous in the time of the war, but now he had seldom met with one in the old slave States” (200). Child's witness of forty-five years' worth of sexual abuse of enslaved women has the ability to see from a perspective coincident with the revolutionary spirit and on the time scale of the life of the nation. Stated boldly, Child declares that whoever examines abolitionism will find that it “would tend to prevent amalgamation, instead of encouraging it; for they would place a large defenseless class under the protection of law and public opinion” (200). If the language is unflattering, Child's message is clear. The anti-abolitionist mob's vision of the United States is dangerously distorted from one that can clearly see where inequity and interracial sexual abuse lies, and which only the protection of republican inclusion of an otherwise defenseless class can rectify.

The play of perspective is an essential component of Child's role as editor, rather than author, of the overall gift-book. Just as the inclusion of Stedman's *Narrative* allowed Child to employ an historical text in strategic ways, her use of other sources allowed her to ventriloquize
her observations through other perspectives. Mirroring both the external perspective found in Beaumont's *Marie* and the rumor of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings relationship employed by William Wells Brown's *Clotel*, the section subtitled “Opinions of Travellers [sic]” employed a European witness to pass judgment on the politics and culture of the United States through the troubled genealogies of U.S. nationalism. Quoting from Thomas Hamilton's *Men and Manners in America* (1833), Child's editorial eye focused on the mixed race descendants of Jefferson:

While Jefferson was continually puling about liberty, equality, and the degrading curse of slavery, he brought his own children to the hammer, and made money of his debaucheries. Even at his death, he did not manumit his numerous offspring, but left them soul and body, to degradation and the cart-whip. A daughter of Jefferson was sold some years ago, by public auction, at New Orleans, and purchased by a society of gentlemen, who wished to testify, by her liberation, their admiration of that statesman. (241)

The paradox of slavery in the land of the free becomes manifested in the gesture of the “society of gentlemen.” By manumitting Jefferson's daughter, the gentlemen showed their regard for the statesmen in part by making his daughter a living monument to that paradox. She is set free, but objectified again in the very act. Thus, eight years prior to “The Quadroons” and the subsequent revision of the story by Brown in the novel *Clotel*, Child employed the fact of Jefferson’s mixed-race progeny as an argument against slavery, setting the stage for Brown’s latter elaboration.

The recoded network of signifiers that constitutes nationalism in *The Oasis* is displayed in an image at the end of this section, revealing the hidden link between U.S. nationalism and the unfreedom of slavery. The nation's flag and a liberty cap are incorporated with the auction flag, bloodhound, whips, chains, and other tools used to perpetuate slavery. Together, these symbols surround the coffin of the dead, slavery's symbolic geography.

Child's response to the anti-abolitionist riots in *The Oasis* envisions a form of nationalism inclusive of both black and American Revolutionary inheritances, revealing the tenuous nature of the rioters’ performance of nativism. Nationalism, when employed as a revolutionary discourse in society, refashioned the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence into the foundation of abolitionist politics.
Figure 5: Image immediately follows “Opinions of Travellers,” The Oasis, 241. Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries.
As abolitionism organized into a large-scale political movement in the United States, interracial domesticity became a prominent social code for imagining the post-slavery future. In the minds of anti-abolitionists, the call for an immediate end to slavery conjured visions of society thrown into chaos. An end of slavery implied equality and social mixing, and the interracial household became the symbol for the larger social relations being contested by abolitionists. Writing in response to riots triggered by rumors of amalgamation, Child's turn to the gift-book market in The Oasis mirrored the politicization of interracial marriage by taking abolitionist politics into the home, and in turn is the foundation for the use of the tragic mulatto figure in later U.S. abolitionist literature.
Notes to Chapter 4:

1 John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, 98.
3 In *The State as a Work of Art*, Eric Slauter details the clash between the use of the rhetoric of slavery to describe the colonies’ political position and the early application of its ideals as an argument against slavery. He argues that “slaves were the animating but often buried referent for the language of rights” and that debates over political equality became entangled with debates concerning mental equality and racial inferiority, contributing to the emergence of modern forms of racism (174).
5 Locke, 17.
6 Jefferson, 318.
7 Jensen, 55. See also Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution*.
9 For more about these rumors, see Elise Lermire's "Race and the Idea of Preference in the New Republic: The Port Folio Poems About Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings" in "Miscegenation".
10 Brown acknowledges this in his novel’s conclusion.
13 In “The Quadroons,” the story's main character, Rosalie, is the mixed-race daughter of a wealthy merchant. Her demeanor and education reflect her father's class status, and she in turn falls in love with Edward, a wealthy young man from Georgia. Because of her ancestry, the law will not sanction their marriage, but at Rosalie's insistence they are wed in her mother's church. Together, the couple lives year-round at a summerhouse on the outskirts of Augusta, where they are free from their neighbors for most of the year. It is only when Edward, driven by ambition, decides to marry another woman in order to advance his career in politics that the protected interracial domestic space is dispelled. Rosalie is overcome by the tragic fate of a broken heart, and her death from emotional turmoil follows the archetype of the “tragic mulatta,” whose death stems from the loss or rejection by her white lover.

Brown's novel appeared in three revised variants in the United States. (The novel's first edition was published in London.) Brown serially published his revised novel, retitled *Miralda, or the Beautiful Quadroon*, in the *Weekly Anglo-African* (1860-1). This version downplayed the
character’s relation to Jefferson, and George, who had once been crafted on the tragic mulatto type, is exchanged for Jerome, a character of clear African descent. Retitled Clotelle, A Tale of the Southern States (1864) for James Redpath’s “Books for the Camp Fires” dime-novel series (widely read by Union troops), the novel retained the changes made in the second version, but the characters are figured only as the children of an anonymous Senator. A final edition, entitled Clotelle, or, the Colored Heroine (1865) returned its escaped characters from Europe to the United States, where Jerome joins the Union Army and dies fighting during the Civil War. These changes suggest Brown’s shifting sentiments regarding race and slavery in the United States, as his characters transition from disenfranchised co-inheritors of the nation’s Revolutionary ideals to active participants in the Civil War and reconstruction. Coincidentally, while Jerome offers a more traditional representation of black male agency than George’s cross-dressing escape narrative, the revisions steadily moved toward the more generic, less specific genealogical construction of the character’s paternity, ultimately settling on the abstraction of the patriarch’s political affiliation very similar to that found in Child’s short story. Miralda appeared from November 30, 1860 through March 16, 1861 (Yellin, The Intricate Knot, 174-7).

In limiting the scope of this study, I also resist the meanings that would eventually become associated with the character in the aftermath of the Civil War. With the withdrawal of federal troops, the end of Reconstruction left the black population without basic protection, and the Jim Crow era witnessed the further transformation of society into a form predicated on rigid segregation. As James Kinney notes, this later history of racial isolation (and particularly its emphasis on anti-amalgamation) occludes the broader social attitudes toward race as they evolved over the long history of slavery. Part of the exigency, then, for analyzing the textual interplay between authors who used the tragic mulatto character as a representation of the struggle to abolish slavery is to show how the figure reflected the rise of an interracial political alliance among abolitionists of the 1830s. The longer tradition of the character extends across historical eras, and eventually it came to symbolize the segregation that accompanied the shift in social organization from one based on an economic dependence on black labor in the South’s cotton industry to one in which an implicit compact between elite and poor whites systematically excluded black people from employment and in society more broadly. While much ambiguity surrounded biracial people during the antebellum period, after the 1920 Census all biracial people were simply classified as “Negroes,” “officially creating a simplified biracial America” reflective of post-bellum attitudes toward race (Kinney, 27). Before emancipation, the legal definition of whiteness in many southern states remained somewhat ambiguous at the limit case in which black ancestry was distant, and though genealogies could be provided the courts sometimes accepted the defendant’s claim to whiteness (and its entailing freedoms) based on evidence that they were accepted as such in their community. (For more on the legal cases that helped define race as a social (as well as scientific) construction, see Zackodnik, 3-41.) However, though there was ambiguity in the cases where blackness was not definitively legible on the body, the increasing pressures of slavery tended toward the mentality of the “one drop rule” as the designation of race moved from what could be visibly witnessed on the body to one where any genetic crossing would qualify a person as racially black. Consequently, the tragic mulatto figure invokes both the difficulty of legally defining race in a society with a steadily increasing interracial population, as well as the mentality that held any African heritage in contempt. In order to better understand the
origins of the figure in U.S. literature, this chapter will limit its scope to the 1830s, a period defined by the wide-scale organization of the abolitionist movement, showing how the figure of the tragic mulatto was defined by its relationship to the social tensions surrounding the growing power of U.S. abolitionism as a political movement.

15 For example, such a claim is made by Yellin in Women and Sisters, 53.
16 For a discussion of Cora Munro, see Jackson, Barriers Between Us: 9-29.
17 Sollors, Neither Black Nor White Yet Both, 194-7. Steele's version drew on Richard Ligon's A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes (1657) for inspiration.
18 At its worst, the tragic mulatto character type invokes associations that resonate strongly with the discriminatory logics of race. In 1933, Sterling Brown described the tragic mulatto figure as a “stereotype of situation," the outgrowth of the abolitionist movement's effort to build sympathy for the plight of the slave while simultaneously extending the premise that, regardless of race, “in given circumstances a typically human type of response was to be expected, unless certain other powerful influences were present” (Brown, “Negro Character as Seen By White Authors,” 193).

The tragic mulatto figure imagined blaxness in ways as potentially damaging as the other typecast characters next to which it appeared in print and on the stage: The Negro of unmixed blood is no theme for tragedy; rebellion and vindictiveness are to be expected only from the mulatto; the mulatto is victim of a divided inheritance and therefore miserable; he is a 'man without a race' worshiping the whites and despised by them, despising and despised by Negroes, perplexed by his struggle to unite a white intellect with black sensuousness. The fate of the octoroon girl is intensified – the whole desire of her life is to find a white lover, and then go down, accompanied by slow music, to a tragic end. (Brown, 195-6)

In the case of the tragic mulatto character, the effort to redeem the humanity of enslaved persons through the terms of dominant white society is signified through the logic of inheritance, internalized in the character's racially mixed blood. At the extreme end of the spectrum, the visibly white tragic mulatto character became a means for abolitionists to undermine the argument of black racial inferiority that was used to justify slavery. As the character's racial makeup approached the limit-case of the one-drop mentality, abolitionists stressed, the claim that slavery resulted from a hierarchy of race justified biologically or “naturally” was nullified. By removing blackness (as far as possible) from consideration, abolitionists attempted to expose the workings of slavery as a system simply predicated on exploitation and greed. At times, abolitionists extended this line of argumentation a step farther, such as when William Wells Brown included the case of Salome Müller, a German immigrant who had been claimed as a slave after the death of her family as a context for his tragic mulatto narrative in Clotel. Her story appeared in National Anti-Slavery Standard (January 1, 1846). She eventually regained her freedom from the supreme court of Louisiana (Brown, 147-8). Both black and white abolitionists argued from the margins to divest slavery of its supporting racial ideologies, exposing the institution's readiness to exploit any human.

As a result, however, the tragic mulatto character envisioned the breakdown of racial ontology by re-inscribing the existence of race categories held by society more broadly. Essentially, this characterization became the last and best evidence for racist thought that set white intellect over black physicality, exalting the former in its “degradation” and the later in its “improvement.” Moreover, the tragic mulatto figure symbolized the problem of race in the abolitionist movement, with white advocacy for the end of slavery threatening to erase the presence of black agency in its own revolutionary struggle. Attributing the revolutionary
impulse to the tragic mulatto character's white heritage (combined with a sense of injustice denied to slaves of a darker complexion) rejected the potential for black revolution to produce a self-achieved independence, thus giving credence to the white supremacist belief of racial superiority. Christopher Castiglia, for example, argues that this relationship relied on a differentiation of civic interiority, suggesting that "white reformers took on blackness not on the surface of the skin, but as a suffering interior, a civic depth. With an inner experience of black suffering, white reformers claimed a public authority that differentiated them from other whites even while it maintained an affective difference from persecuted blacks" who were themselves seeking to achieve an abstraction from their rigid embodiment (103). For more, see "Abolition's Racial Interiors and White Civic Depth" in Interior States. However, Ann duCille rightfully acknowledges the reciprocal relationship that existed between abolitionists and those campaigning for women's rights, particularly with black women writers exposing the limitations of conventions such as genteel femininity, female virtue, and marital protection, while narratives of slavery and escape in turn gave white women activists a model through which to articulate the exploitations of white women in patriarchal society. DuCille, The Coupling Convention, 6. See also Zackodnik 50-1, Lindon Barrett, "Hand-writing: Legibility and the White Body in Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom," and Saidiya B. Hartman, Scenes of Subjection.

19 Garrison, Thoughts on African Colonization, 12.
20 Richards, Gentlemen of Property and Standing, 26.
22 Richards, 111-122; Beaumont, 243-252. See also Linda K Kerber's “Abolitionists and Amalgamators” and John B. Jentz, “The Anti-Slavery Constituency in Jacksonian New York City” and “Artisans, Evangelicals, and the City.”
23 Mobbing was a prevalent phenomenon during these years, and anti-abolition mobbing peaked between 1833-1838 representing the bulk of the 209 northern mobs reported by the three leading abolitionist newspapers: the Liberator, the Emancipator, and the Philanthropist.
24 Richards, 81.
25 Richards, 29-30.
26 Key members of this group include Webb, the writer John Neal, the future state senator Frederick Tallmadge, future postmaster James Lorimer Grahm, and others. Richards, 27.
27 The vocabulary of interracial sexual relations reflects key historical ideologies. While intermarriage stresses the religious and contractual union of marriage to emphasize the ideal of universal womanhood against the larger backdrop of the sexual appropriation of women under slavery, the term “miscegenation” invokes a specifically reconstruction era turn to scientific racism very much like the anti-abolitionist efforts to incite violence. “Miscegenation” appeared in a pamphlet published by the newspaper editor David Croly in 1864, posing as an abolitionist advocating interracial marriage in gratuitous and intentionally inflammatory terms to incite a racist response and to discredit antislavery Republicans. See Forrest G. Wood, Black Scare.
28 James Watson Webb, *Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer*. This claim was made in the context of an accusation being made by Webb claiming that abolitionist papers had carried an advertisement seeking a black wife.

29 From the *New York Commercial Advertiser* (July 10, 1834).

30 The disclaimer is reprinted in Lewis Tappan's *The Life of Arthur Tappan*, 215-6. Tappan describes the mob's numbers as being in the thousands, and details the destruction directed at the black community.

31 Lydia Maria Child, *The Oasis*. Page numbers cited in the text are from this edition.


34 Lemire, 81.

35 *Courier and Enquirer* (July 7, 1834).

36 Lemire, 73-80.

37 Child makes it clear in the text that William's quotation originates in a Fourth of July speech from 1830. It was taken dramatically out of context. Williams, the first black Episcopalian minister in the United States, was discouraged by the riots. Taking them for a sign that equality was unattainable in the United States, Williams left the abolitionist movement and advocated for colonization. See also, Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *Alexander Crummell*.

38 Lydia Maria Child, *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, 187.

39 Along with Child, who contributed most of the content and served as the editor, *The Oasis* features pieces by her husband David Lee Child, the emancipated slave James Bradley, John Greenleaf Whittier, and his sister Elizabeth H. Whittier among others.

40 Gift-books, or literary annuals, were a popular form of publishing in the mid nineteenth century. *The Oasis* was well received as the first abolitionist gift-book, appearing five years before *The Liberty Bell* (1839). However, its sales disappointed Child, who had the volume published at her own expense. In comparison, the very successful *Liberty Bell*, edited by Maria Chapman and published for several consecutive years, was printed more modestly and funded by donation and sold at anti-slavery bazaars. Child's involvement with the *Liberty Bell* was extensive and several of her most important anti-slavery short stories appeared in its pages, including “The Quadroons,” “Slavery's Pleasant Homes,” and “The Emancipated Slaveholders,” among others. For more on Child's involvement with abolitionist gift-books, see Carolyn Karcher's *The First Woman in the Republic*, 208-9, Valery Levy's “Lydia Maria Child and the Abolitionist Gift-Book Market,” and Ralph Thompson's “The *Liberty Bell* and Other Anti-Slavery Gift-Books.”

41 While Stedman's *Narrative* is gaining critical attention in the field of Atlantic studies, a close look at its textual history reveals that it has never been out of the public's consciousness for long. The current multiplex configuration of Stedman's *Narrative* emerged in 1988, the result of Richard and Sally Price's new scholarly edition of Stedman's *Narrative*. The Prices' text transcribed Stedman's 1790 manuscript version for the first time, aiming to restore his original authorial intent and expose the extent to which the text had been altered by Stedman's first editor, Joseph Johnson. The Prices' restored text exists in both a full transcription complete with original orthography and spellings (1988) and a modernized, abbreviated version (1992). The original, 1796 published version of the *Narrative* was successful, resulting in several editions in
multiple languages. However, it contained views on race, slavery, social justice, and interracial sex that were very different than those found in Stedman's manuscript. Upon seeing these alterations, Stedman reflected in his journal, “receive the 1st vol. of my book quite mard oaths and Sermons inserted etc” (June 24, 1795). These changes coalesce around the description of Stedman's relationship with Joanna. In their introduction to the revised manuscript edition the Prices note that “the edited version, saying nothing of her beauty, emphasizes Joanna's pitiable condition (bathed in tears rather than bathing with her companions) and makes Stedman her protector and patron, rather than her lover-aspiring-to-be-her-husband” (lxi). If the editorial imperative to cloak Joanna in the modest garb of a sentimentalized relationship with Stedman protects her, in a sense, from being the Narrative's object of sexual desire, it also obscures the nature of Stedman and Joanna's relationship by defaulting to the confines of gender hierarchies: paternal protection and female emotional dependence. Both versions of the Narrative are troubled by what they cannot contain, whether it be the sexual exploitation made possible by plantation-slavery or the interracial desire that would eventually mark Stedman's Narrative as a singular example of resistance to the exploitations inherent in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world. I would like to especially thank Dr. Marguerite Ragnow and the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota for assistance with Stedman’s manuscript materials. John Gabriel Stedman, Journal, Diaries, and Other Papers, 1772-1796, James Ford Bell Library 1772oSt.

42 It appeared as the Narrative of Joanna; an Emancipated Slave of Surinam, Isaac Knapp, 1838.

43 Jenny Sharpe reads Child's words in just such a way. See note 47 below.

44 Child's point is made even more strongly by the generally pro-slavery stance imposed on the published version of the Narrative by Stedman's editor.

45 See also, Marcus Rediker, "The Red Atlantic; or, 'a terrible blast swept over the heaving sea'."

46 Both the Prices' introduction to the revised edition and Werner Sollors note this discrepancy between the journal and the text.

47 Jenny Sharpe, Ghosts of Slavery.

48 Ibid., 68.

49 For more on how the textual variation relates to the relationship between Stedman and his son, see Dustin Kennedy, “Going Viral: Stedman's Narrative, Textual Variation, and Life in Atlantic Studies.”

50 See Jenny Sharpe; Marcus Wood, Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography; Tassie Gwilliam, "Scenes of Horror,' Scenes of Sensibility: Sentimentality and Slavery in John Gabriel Stedman's Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam.

51 The additional material is a combination of Stedman’s account with updates supplied by more recent travel accounts of Guyana. These include Adrian Balbi’s Abrégé de Geographie (1832), the Reverend Wiltshire Stanton Austin's testimony (he being the inheritor of slave estates) before the British House of Commons in favor of emancipation (1832), and Captain J.E. Alexander's travel narrative (1833).

52 Karcher, 205, 160.

53 Karcher, 192.

54 Child, An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans, 84.

55 This and the subsequent citations of Stedman’s Narrative reference the first edition, rather than the modern scholarly edition. This choice reflects the fact that this text variant would have
been most similar to whichever early edition Child used as her source. The passage is also found in the scholarly edition. Stedman, *Narrative*: (vol. 1, 334).

56 Images are from the copy of *The Oasis* held at The Pennsylvania State University's special collections library. Strangely, Karcher describes the cover as follows: “The volume's patterned green cloth binding with the title stamped in gold on the spine between two vignettes presents the inviting appearance typical of the gift book” (204).

57 In “How Mixed-Race Politics Entered the United States: Lydia Maria Child's *Appeal*,” Robert Fanuzzi discusses the politics in interracial marriage found in Child's *Appeal*. Overall, Fanuzzi grounds Child's use of interracial marriage in what he views as a larger argument to recognize the U.S.’s colonial past. Noting the transnational, comparative historiography of her writing, Fanuzzi adamantly claims that Child “never relied on the institution of republican citizenship to create a civil-rights policy for mulattoes in the United States or to give legal protection to the female victims of slaveholders' sexual abuse...” (91). While I strongly disagree, Fanuzzi’s observations on the centrality of domesticity to Child's abolitionist politics are correct.
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