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Nineteenth-century editors frequently discussed their work in public forums (including their own periodicals) and in private correspondence. These sources provide insight into how editors imagined their work and their professional roles. For many nineteenth-century editors, one of the most important (and underappreciated) elements of their work was building expansive social networks that promoted productive relationships between writers, readers, and other editors.

After establishing the function of the nineteenth-century editor in Chapter II, I proceed in the remaining chapters to examine how specific Southern editors attempted to gain access to a national audience by cultivating relationships with their Northern counterparts. Chapter III uses Caroline Gilman's career to demonstrate the many ways that, despite her religious and family connections to the Boston literati, her gender prevented her from establishing the types of professional ties that could have advanced her career. Chapter IV analyzes the impact of the New York-based Young America movement on the career of William Gilmore Simms, and Chapter V contends that Edgar Allan Poe lacked the social capital necessary to successfully negotiate a professional relationship with New York editor Nathaniel Parker Willis. These chapters demonstrate the importance of social networks, particularly connections with Northerners, in the professional lives of Southern editors.

BOUND BY PAPER: NINETEENTH-CENTURY SOUTHERN EDITORS  
AND THEIR NORTHERN CONNECTIONS

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Newspaper editors seem to have constitutions closely similar to those of the Deities in “Walhalla,” who cut each other to pieces every day, and yet get up perfectly sound and fresh every morning.

—Poe, “Fifty Suggestions”

Joseph Buckingham, an unfamiliar name in the twenty-first century, was a prominent nineteenth-century editor dedicated to encouraging the growth of his profession.<sup>1</sup> With the intention of preserving elements of ephemeral media, in 1822 he published and edited *Miscellanies Selected from the Public Journals*, a collection of material from American periodicals that included obituaries, poems, and essays. Since he maintained a geographically expansive definition of America, he included items in *Miscellanies Selected from the Public Journals* from the *Mississippi Republican*. Buckingham stated, “If...its [the book’s] ill fortune should forbid all future attempts of the kind, some indemnification for pecuniary loss will have been realized in the pleasure derived from the collection and preservation of these proofs of the genius and talent of my countrymen” (Preface). As this statement suggests, Buckingham viewed himself as a

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<sup>1</sup> As the editor of the *Courier*, an influential Whig newspaper in Boston, Buckingham was active in cultural and political debates. He was involved in a particularly passionate exchange of ideas with Nathaniel Parker Willis, the infamous editor of the *American Monthly*. Henry Beers, a Willis biographer, describes Buckingham and Willis as engaging in a “good-natured war” about morality and literature (87). A twentieth-century Willis biographer, Cortland Auser, offers a different interpretation of these public exchanges; he argues that Buckingham was one of a long list of people (including William Snelling and Lydia Maria Child) whom Willis offended. Regardless of the relationship between Willis and Buckingham, the fact that Buckingham was involved in such a visible newspaper war points to his professional status and notoriety.

curator protecting the work of all of his fellow American editors—including those from the South.

As editors forged distinct professional identities in the mid-nineteenth century, Buckingham turned his attention to creating a history of their occupation, focusing on New England. In 1852, Buckingham diligently preserved the work of a previous generation of printers and publishers in the book *Specimens of Newspaper Literature with Personal Memoirs, Anecdotes, and Reminiscences*.<sup>2</sup> He describes this book and himself in very humble terms:

These volumes make no pretension to a high literary character. They are the production of one, who had no advantages of education, but such as were supplied by the district schools in Connecticut, more than sixty years ago, and before he was ten years old. For all else of literary qualification, he is indebted only to his own unaided efforts. The printing-office was his academy, and he has no diploma from any other University than that, of which Gutenberg, Laruentius, and Faust, were the founders. (viii)

In this passage, Buckingham repeats the well-known tale of the self-made man and assumes a posture that would be familiar to nineteenth-century readers of Horatio Alger's work. Arguing that the printing office is an appropriate and sufficient academy, he implies that other editors are similarly autonomous. According to Buckingham, an editor's only debts and social connections are to those great men who previously compiled and conducted texts. Yet, editors were involved in intricate social networks connecting them to contemporary colleagues. As Buckingham implies by focusing on

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<sup>2</sup> Unsurprisingly, Evert A. Duyckinck, one of the most important nineteenth-century editors, owned this book. It is listed in an undated catalogue of Duyckinck's books to be sold at auction.

New England, the nodes of these social networks were most heavily concentrated in the North.

In the antebellum United States, publishers and editors in Northern metropolitan areas—including New York, Boston, and Philadelphia—controlled national print culture; in order to gain a national audience Southern writers and editors had to cultivate relationships with Northern publishers and editors. Ronald Zborary explicitly states, “Authors and publishers, aware that the Northeast constituted the primary market for literature and that the distribution of imprints by rail left most of the South untouched, could afford to ignore the South altogether” (12). Given the communication and technological infrastructure in the nineteenth-century United States, Southern writers and editors who desired a national audience were forced to collaborate with Northern publishers.

To some extent, Buckingham acknowledges the importance of social networks as he works to establish editors as members of a productive professional community. He dedicated this book “To all printers and conductors of the newspaper press, who entertain a true regard for the dignity of their profession, and disposition to render it a blessing to humanity as well as a source of profit to themselves, these volumes are respectfully and affectionately dedicated, by their friend and fellow-laborer.” By dedicating this text to editors and printers, he positions himself as serving a specific and defined professional community. Given that “conductors” includes editors,<sup>3</sup> Buckingham uses his dedication

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<sup>3</sup> In the eighteenth century, the term “editor” was restricted to certain people involved with book publishing. In the nineteenth century, the term “editor” became more widely used. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, it was first applied to those who “conduct” a newspaper or periodical and then to those supervising particular departments of the newspapers or periodicals. Buckingham, who is trying to preserve

to position editors as a members of a larger professional community with specific types of social networks. He also suggests that this community is prompted by certain shared values to work for both the public good and a profit.

Buckingham makes claims about who editors are, how they are related to one another, and the ramifications of their work. The lives of the eighteenth-century editors Buckingham researched were as ephemeral as the work that they produced. To preserve a history of the editorial profession, Buckingham adopted a biographical approach to understanding the editor, an approach that presented him with many challenges. In the preface to *Specimens of Newspaper Literature*, Buckingham complains about the issues he faced gathering information about the lives of editors:

...the personal notices have not been compiled without labor and vexation. This portion has been tedious and discouraging. Many fruitless inquiries have been made—many letters have been written, which produced no satisfactory answers. I have been anxious to present more particulars of the lives and actions of several persons than I have been able to obtain. In respect to some, who have deceased within a few years, and who are still remembered, I have not been successful in learning, even from their nearest relatives, any more of their history than the places and times of their respective births and deaths. (vii)

These research difficulties underscore the status of the editor. These editors, such as Isaiah Thomas, were neither particularly powerful nor prominent; they were drawn from the middling classes as printing in the eighteenth century was viewed as a trade that required an extended apprenticeship. During the nineteenth century, however, technological innovations led to a split between intellectual and manual labor in the

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and honor the work of a previous generation, seems to have deliberately elided the term editor, a term that might have alienated the very people he was attempting to honor, by using the more accessible “conductors of the newspaper press.”

publishing industry, and editors began to occupy a more powerful position in both the publishing and larger world by developing a more clearly defined professional identity that relied on extensive social networks.

The rise of the editor is integrated with the rise of American nationalism.

Nathaniel Parker Willis, a prominent nineteenth-century New York editor, provides important historical context for understanding the relationship between periodical print culture and an emerging nationalism in “National Literature,” an article published in the first periodical he edited, *American Monthly Magazine* (1829-1831). Willis asserts that there are two types of literature. The first, periodical literature, he describes as “limited, local, transient” (380). He goes on to say that such literature is “in fact, only one of the ordinary luxuries of civilized life, abundantly produced, but useful only for immediate consumption; very well in its way, but too much diluted to keep long” (381). While Willis recognizes the limitations of periodical literature, he also affirms its importance, which raises the question: why is such ephemeral material significant? Other scholars have answered this question in a broad way,<sup>4</sup> but I assert that periodicals provided Southern editors (and writers) with a way to cultivate social networks that, in turn, allowed them to advance both their careers and their ideologies.

The second type of literature Willis mentions is “national literature.” He argues, “...when we speak of the literature of a nation, we must be understood to intend something lasting, solid, substantial. National literature implies accumulated treasures of

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<sup>4</sup> In *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America*, Isabelle Lehuu explains the ways that such ephemeral material impacted Americans’ reading practices; in *The American Magazine: A Compact History*, John Tebbel emphasizes the political and cultural functions of periodicals; and in *Partisans of the Southern Press: Editorial Spokesmen of the Nineteenth Century*, Carl R. Osthaus explores the relationship between periodicals and the Southern socio-political conscience.

poetry and philosophy; monuments of learning, and labors of science” (381). National literature is presented here as an eternal canon, as something both to be defended and to provide defense (a cannon?). Canonical American literature is—by definition—nationalistic and even imperialistic, but literary nationalism is not confined to one particular print medium. Novelists pitching a particular nationalistic ideology in their books unsurprisingly promote a similar political position in their periodicals. Benedict Anderson famously articulates the relationship between newspapers and nationalism in the seminal work *Imagined Communities*, but the relationship between other types of periodicals—particularly monthly magazines—and community formation has been under-researched. Yet, my work demonstrates that periodicals and “ephemeral” texts proved valuable vehicles for editors, particularly Southern editors, to promote nationalism and their particular ideological agendas.

The antebellum U.S. South is a productive site for thinking through questions about the relationship between print culture and nationalism. As nineteenth-century Americans struggled to articulate a national identity, antebellum Southerners were striving to participate in the expression of an American identity while simultaneously creating a regional identity. In time, the regional identity these Southerners imagined became the basis for Confederate nationalism. As David Nord argues, “The power of nationalism always depends upon its claim to be the spontaneous political expression of a legitimate nation. Yet, despite this universal tenet of nationalism, the opposite is often true. Often, perhaps even most of the time, it is not the nation that makes nationalism; it is the nationalists who make the nation” (394). White Southern editors—in part due to the

privileges their whiteness afforded them—often, but not always, used periodicals to present a nationalistic vision that read as the natural expression of the readers being formed into an imagined community.

To better understand the role that editors played in the development of a Southern identity, it is useful to consider how they themselves saw their own work. Nineteenth-century editors frequently discussed their work in public forums (including magazines) and in private correspondence. These sources provide insight into how editors imagined their work and their periodicals functioning in society. Previous research has focused more on the historical and material conditions surrounding editorial labor than on the way that it was imagined. For instance, in *Partisans of the Southern Press: Editorial Spokesmen of the Nineteenth Century* (1994), Carl R. Osthaus argues “Southern editors simultaneously served three major functions, as narrators (reporting events), as advocates (advancing arguments), and as weathercocks (indicating the prevailing views of the elite and a relatively small, middle-class readership), but the greatest of these was the last” (xii). I have no doubt that Osthaus’s classification of editorial tasks is thoroughly grounded in historical data, but his view of editorial work fails to adequately account for the ideological motivations behind many periodical publications. While Osthaus argues that “Southern editors...had to reaffirm and reiterate, not reform or crusade” (xii), I contend that Southern editors understood themselves as professional crusaders or, as Buckingham would say, as “a blessing to humanity.”

In Chapter II, “The Role of the Editor: Creating Community and Teaching Taste,” I argue that editors, as Buckingham suggests, viewed their professional work as both

performing a social good and earning a profit. In the first section of this chapter I explore the ways that Caroline Gilman and William Gilmore Simms attempted to forge a Southern reading community. After negotiating a professional identity as a female editor, Gilman tried to use the *Rose-Bud*, a magazine for juveniles that she both owned and edited during the 1830s, to cultivate interregional understanding while Simms, a celebrated Southern writer and the editor of over nine different periodicals, viewed them as a tool for developing a Southern literary community. In the second section of this chapter, I investigate the ways that Edgar Allan Poe used periodicals to promote an aesthetic vision while building a reputation as a literary critic.

Chapter III, “An Alternative Approach: Caroline Gilman’s Self-Reliance,” examines the impact of gender on the formation of productive cross-regional collaborations. When compared to the other Southern editors included in this study, it initially seems as though Gilman was in the best position to forge meaningful relationships with Northerners. Born in Boston and the wife of the prominent Unitarian minister Samuel Gilman, Caroline had access to many well-connected Northern family members and the support of a well-organized religious organization. Yet, Gilman’s relationships with her Northern family and friends were strained by her decision to embrace a conservative Southern ideology and to support the rights of slave-holders. Finding herself at a geographic and ideological distance from Northern publishers, Gilman adopted a new strategy for conjuring a national audience. While male editors had the opportunity to forge professional relationships based on aligned interests, Gilman found it necessary to establish professional relationships around shared identities; she,

therefore, attempted to cultivate a community of readers by mass-marketing a curated version of herself through semi-autobiographic novels and essays.

Chapter IV, “Toward a National Southern Literature,” more directly explores the relationship between regionalism and nationalism by analyzing the ways in which William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe advanced their own careers by joining Young America, a nationalist literary movement centered in New York City. Young America, ideologically committed to promoting a regionally inclusive American literature, was led by the New York editor Evert Duyckinck. Obviously, to advance this vision of American literature, Duyckinck needed to develop relationships with Southern writers. In some ways, he needed professional connections to the South just as much as Simms and Poe needed Northern collaborators. Simms’s involvement with Young America developed organically as his views on the relationship between regional and national literature evolved, while Poe’s commitment to Young America was a more calculated step intended to put him on the New York literary map. Both Simms and Poe benefited from working with Duyckinck; their involvement in Young America allowed them to increase their social capital and to gain access to a wider audience.

Despite Poe’s successful collaboration with Evert Duyckinck, the Southerner struggled to navigate the politics of a New York literary scene as he was being manipulated by the conniving New York editor Nathaniel Parker Willis. Chapter V, “An Expanding Network: Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Parker Willis,” investigates the complex relationship between these two “frenemies.” Poe’s poverty and lack of social capital forced him to work for Willis, the editor of the *New York Evening Post*; Willis’s

desire for celebrity and his knack for marketing led him to use his employee to attack Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the popular Boston poet, in what came to be known as “The Little Longfellow War.” This literary scuffle further alienated Poe from the Boston literati and confirmed his inability to establish an expansive social network. His failure to build social capital and forge stable professional connections cost Poe publishing opportunities and financial security; his literary talents could not compensate for his lack of social acumen and resources.

The failures and successes of Caroline Gilman, William Gilmore Simms, and Edgar Allan Poe demonstrate that social networks (or, more specifically, connections to powerful Northern editors) determined the ability of nineteenth-century Southerners to reach a national reading public.

While the early nineteenth century witnessed Joseph Buckingham attempting to preserve the work of editors and implicitly arguing that they facilitated professional networks, the middle of the century saw the New York Publishers’ Association (NYPA) minimizing editors’ contributions to literature. The NYPA responded to escalating tensions between authors and booksellers by hosting a lavish, “complimentary,” fruit festival for them at the Crystal Palace on September 27, 1855. This party involved long-winded toasts devoted to such aspects of the literary world as “American Literature,” “The Booksellers of the Union,” and “Literature and Statesmanship.” While “Periodical Literature” was listed as one of the topics to be toasted, no statement was made regarding

this realm of literature. The work of periodical editors was overtly minimized in the program for this event, and it continues to be overlooked today.

According to George Haven Putnam's *George Palmer Putnam: A Memoir, Together with a Record of the Earlier Years*, the NYPA was (re)organized by George Palmer Putnam and William H. Appleton for the singular aim of "having the publishers of the country give some kind of entertainment that should bring together the authors of the country" (219). The goal of the NYPA was to host an elaborate party that displayed the importance of publishers—not editors—to American literature.

Reflecting on the fruit festival fifty-seven years later (1912), George Haven Putnam deemed it a worthwhile venture. He writes, "The occasion was described as a great success, and is a noteworthy incident in the history of American literature and of American literary relations. It certainly emphasized the growing importance of the group of literary worker" (219). The significance of the fruit festival lies in its function as a location for the cultivation of social networks. For instance, Evert Duyckinck and Nathaniel Parker Willis both attended the fruit festival, which is the only recorded time that they met. Although the festival brought together a wide-variety of "literary workers," unfortunately it did reinforce a hierarchy among those workers. As the hosts, publishers presented themselves as possessing the most social and financial capital.

Issues of the *American Publishers Circular and Literary Gazette* published on September 29, 1855 and October 6, 1855 present the details of this industry-wide conference. According to the September 29, 1855 issue, George P. Putnam, the Secretary

of the Association, prefaced his assigned toast with an “Introductory Statistical Sketch” that underscored the purpose of this unique literary gathering:

Eighteen years ago, Mr. President [William Appleton], a gathering like this, of authors and booksellers, took place at the old City Hotel. Our recently formed Association of Publishers came to the conclusion,—a sensible one, we hope our guests think,—that it was quite time to have another such caucus, or rather mass meeting:—perhaps it may be voted that this should not be the last. The interests of the writers, and publishers, and sellers of books, in this great and thriving country, are daily growing in magnitude and importance;—and these interests are, or should be, mutual and identical. Friendly social intercourse between ourselves is one of the prominent objects of the Association of Publishers; and surely it is both pleasant and proper, and profitable to extend and strengthen his intercourse between publishers and authors.

The fruit festival was the NYPA’s attempt to use social capital to force other members of the literary realm—authors and booksellers—to align their interests with those of publishers, which points to the importance of both New York publishers and social capital. The last sentence of Putnam’s comments underscores that these publishers are trying to turn “friendly social intercourse” into something that is “profitable.”

Nineteenth-century American literature is the product of relationships among people bound by paper. In 1855 the NYPA attempted to forge social networks among different types of literary professionals as publishers simultaneously secured their own vocational identity, but periodical editors had been facilitating connections between different regions of the country since the early part of the century. Unfortunately, the importance of periodicals to publishing has been silenced and overlooked. But this dissertation is the story of how the Southern editors Caroline Gilman, William Gilmore Simms, and Edgar Allan Poe endeavored to develop relationships with Northern editors

in order to enter a national literary marketplace controlled by Bostonians and New Yorkers.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROLE OF THE EDITOR: CREATING COMMUNITY AND TEACHING TASTE

Periodicals became such important cultural productions during the nineteenth century that John Tebbel, in *The American Magazine: A Compact History*, refers to the period from 1825 to 1850 as the Golden Age of the American Magazine. During this time period, Tebbel reports, “there were about six hundred periodicals existing in 1850 where less than a hundred had been published in 1825, and in that quarter century it seems probable that somewhere between four and five thousand were published” (48). Tebbel proceeds to claim, “Nothing like this gigantic wave of publication has ever been seen since” (48). The rise of the periodical has typically been ascribed to the confluence of a number of “revolutions” such as the transportation revolution and communication revolution.<sup>5</sup> Often technological and social changes are treated as though they are somehow distinct, but Ronald Zboray discusses the relationship between the two in great detail in *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public*. According to Zboray, developments in communications systems allowed

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<sup>5</sup> Many scholars have studied the ways in which technological changes transformed both the function and form of periodicals. For instance, Richard Kielbowicz outlines the ways in which policies pertaining to postal rates impacted the development of the communication system. His research reveals that debates regarding postal policy related to ideological divides concerning the value of national as opposed to local media voices and played an important role in determining both the type of communication systems that developed and the types of periodicals supported within that system (4). Another example is the work of Gerald Baldasty, which emphasizes the role that economic systems played in the development of a periodical print culture. He outlines the relationships among political changes, the advertising revolution, and the communication revolution as he emphasizes that “at no time in our history has circulation alone been able to pay the entire costs of the newspaper, and in the early nineteenth century political patronage often spelled the difference between success or failure for many newspapers” (409).

periodicals to circulate more widely and freely, giving individuals a greater opportunity to develop connections with like-minded people living in other sections of the country (xviii). As community attachments became increasingly voluntary, they simultaneously became less stable. While the antebellum period saw an exponential increase in the number of periodicals published in both the North and the South, many of these publications failed. According to William Hoole, Charleston periodicals existed for an average of only 25 months, earning Charleston notoriety as “the graveyard of magazines” (4-5).<sup>6</sup>

Southern periodicals faced a particularly difficult set of publishing circumstances. For instance, Southern editors faced the complicated logistical problem of how exactly to distribute their periodicals to a rural (and rather small) reading public. Given the transportation and communication logistics, collecting the money subscribers owed was also often difficult.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, many Southern readers preferred the already popular British and Northern periodicals to the new local publications. This, obviously, resulted in the popular magazines remaining popular and, perhaps less obviously, in desirable contributors continuing to publish in the British and Northern magazines as a way of

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<sup>6</sup> Jane and William Pease provide a comprehensive analysis of the demographics of both Charleston and Boston in *Ladies, Women, & Wenches: Choice and Constraint in Antebellum Charleston & Boston*. According to them, in 1820 Boston and Charleston were, respectively, America’s fourth and fifth largest urban centers (4). A later census, taken in 1848, showed the demographics of Charleston and Boston to be fairly comparable with the principle difference being the higher number of widows in Charleston. Pease and Pease argue, “Charleston women married earlier than their Boston counterparts. They were, in fact, half again as likely as Bostonians to be married by the time they were twenty-five. Therefore, because Charleston men married later than their Yankee brothers—and were thus even more likely to die before their wives did—Charleston women even in their early thirties were 20 percent more likely to be widows than were their Boston sisters” (11).

<sup>7</sup> To address some of these issues, Gilman required subscriptions to be paid in advance, and she established depositories for her periodical in Charleston, which alleviated the need to figure out how to ensure regular and timely delivery of the magazine to rural areas.

maintaining access to a wider audience. Undeterred by these obstacles, Caroline Gilman and William Gilmore Simms each determined to establish periodicals in Charleston.<sup>8</sup>

Both editors wanted to use periodicals to create a community of readers with a shared ideology, but Gilman and Simms defined their respective communities of readers very differently. Gilman thought that periodicals would provide an opportunity for the South to articulate itself to the North by uniting members of both regions in a single reading community that would result in greater interregional understanding. Basically, she hoped that periodicals would promote more cordial relations between the North and South. Simms occasionally discussed the potential for periodicals to promote understanding between the regions, but he primarily imagined periodicals as uniting Southerners. He viewed periodicals as an opportunity for Southerners to develop a common identity and a shared ideology.<sup>9</sup> In other words, Gilman imagined her periodical cultivating an inclusive community involving both Southern and Northern readers, while Simms envisioned his periodical creating an exclusive community focused on meeting the needs of Southerners. To some extent, Gilman and Simms were forced to appeal to a

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<sup>8</sup> It is important to note that in 1832, South Carolina nullified the tariff acts of 1828 and 1832, which unified many Charlestonians in a sectional stance.

<sup>9</sup> Simms was not the only Southerner to recognize the nation-building potential of the periodical press. Between 1825 and 1875, Charleston became the center of Southern periodical production, hosting three of the most prominent Southern periodicals of this period: *The Southern Review*, *The Southern Literary Journal*, and the *Southern Quarterly Review*. These three periodicals were aimed at a sectional audience and encouraged the development of a distinct Southern literature. The rise of Southern periodicals reflected the development of a small, but significant, network of editors, printers, and publishers who championed the cause of a regional literature. This network significantly impacted Simms's editorial career. For instance, J.S. Burges, an accomplished tradesman, printed two of the periodicals that Simms edited, *The Magnolia* and the *Southern Literary Journal*. Although born in the North, Daniel Whitaker became a central figure in the Southern press as the founder of both the *Southern Literary Journal* and the *Southern Quarterly Review*; Simms edited both of these publications. Simms was most obviously affected by the work of his fellow Southerners, but his career was also significantly influenced by Northern writers, editors, and publishers as discussed in chapter four.

particular audience and position their respective periodicals as doing certain types of cultural work because of their different rhetorical positions. Gilman, as a female Northern transplant, had to first create a relatively non-threatening way to enter the public sphere, while Simms, as a celebrated Southern male writer, already had authority within the public sphere.

Caroline Gilman's desire to promote understanding between the North and South stems, in part, from her own close connections to the North. Gilman was born Caroline Howard in Boston in 1794 to a middle-class family. She had ample access to books, appeared to enjoy writing, and was first published in the *North American Review* when she was only sixteen years old. In an autobiographical sketch published in John S. Hart's *Female Prose Writers of America* (1855), a sixty-year old Caroline Gilman describes her response as a sixteen-year old to the publication of her poem "Jephthah's Rash Vow." Gilman writes, "To show the change from that period, I will remark, that when I learned that my verses had been surreptitiously printed in a newspaper, I wept bitterly, and was as alarmed as if I had been detected in man's apparel" (55). This anecdote, featuring a crying and cross-dressing Gilman, has become a commonplace in Gilman criticism with many historians, including Mary Kelley, reading the statement as a straight-forward expression and explanation of events. Kelley, who titled Chapter Eight of *Private Woman, Public Stage* "A Man's Clothing" based on Gilman's narrative, interprets

Gilman's account as articulating a divide between women writers and the public sphere.<sup>10</sup>

Gilman certainly is concerned about women writers' access to the public stage, but the primary purpose of this account does not seem to be to articulate the institutional issues surrounding Gilman's early career. The time lapse between the alleged incident and Gilman's account of it—approximately fifty-four years—leads me to believe that Gilman, much like Zora Neale Hurston in *Dust Tracks on a Road*, is less concerned about establishing the facts than she is about creating a mythical origin story for herself.

As a female editor, Caroline Gilman had to justify her work in ways that male editors such as William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe did not. In "Politics and the Writers Career: Two Cases," Michael Gilmore argues that politics can simultaneously limit and inspire the work of an author; he writes:

But the political ferment of a given historical epoch can also operate as inspiration and possibility. It can start writers into speech; it can enable them to find their voices; it can embolden them with the assurance of a sympathetic hearing. And politics can effect him or her to bursts of productivity and then stunting the very talent it has liberated, driving the writer to silence or to the protracted suicide of drink and despair. (199)

Due to their ideological commitments and Southern identities, both Simms and Poe experienced some constraints on what they could say. But Gilman, as a conservative female editor and writer, provides an even more salient example of the way socio-

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<sup>10</sup> Due to a discrepancy in the dates Gilman cites, I am not convinced of the historical veracity of this event. Gilman reprinted "Jephthah's Rash Vow" in 1833 in *The Rose Bud, or Youth's Gazette*, the periodical she created and edited. When she reprinted the poem, she stated that it was "first published in the 'Pearl'" (192). *The Pearl and Literary Gazette*, a Boston publication, appeared from 1833-1834. Gilman was born in 1794 so she would have celebrated her sixteenth birthday in 1810. Obviously, "Jephthah's Rash Vow" could not have been published in *The Pearl and Literary Gazette* when Gilman was sixteen. Of course, this apparent discrepancy could be explained in a variety of ways. For instance, when reprinting the poem, Gilman could have simply cited the most recent, rather than the original, publication in which it appeared.

political situations can both limit and inspire speech. Susan Coultrap-McQuin, in *Doing Literary Business: American Women Writers in the Nineteenth Century*, explains the tension experienced by female writers such as Gilman in this way: “they had a place in the literary world, yet that world often rendered them invisible” (7).<sup>11</sup> Gilman was forced to find ways to articulate her reasons for writing that were legible within nineteenth-century social norms.

Gilman frequently suggests that her literary endeavors are a useful service to her family while simultaneously implying that she experiences tensions between her family and career obligations. For instance, Caroline Gilman begins an 1856 letter to Susan Waring with a poem, “To Miss S. Waring: On Her Seeing Me Paint the Hearth in My Husband’s Study,” in which Gilman defends domestic labors.<sup>12</sup> Gilman instructs Waring “...do not start/astonish’d at my useful art” (lines 1-2) and implores her, “Nor think my mind oblig’d to bend,/Because my body may descend” (lines 3-4). Emphasizing the distinction between the mind and body as well as the connection between the body and the soul, Gilman encourages Waring to accept and value Gilman’s daily work for her family.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information about the way gender impacted nineteenth-century women writers, see Karen Halttunen’s *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870*, Melissa Homestead’s *American Women Authors and Literary Property, 1822-1869*, and Richard Brodhead’s *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America*.

<sup>12</sup> The dilemma that Gilman is exploring in this poem between establishing herself as a professional and fulfilling felt familial duties is one that is also examined in Kathleen Norris’s work *The Quotidian Mysteries: Laundry, Liturgy, and “Women’s Work,”* which considers how women relate to the everyday. Norris understands the ways in which domestic affairs have been used to confine women; she argues, “...such elevation of daily work has all too often proved condescending, too easy a means of keeping us in our place” (71). Norris, reflecting on her own career shares incidents in which second wave feminists criticized her poetic treatment of household chores because of the way that traditionally feminine work was valued and elevated (72). Yet, she also argues that the everyday is imbued with a significance that must be recognized; she writes, “The paradox remains, however, as these are essential tasks, and they retain possibilities for religious meaning” (71). Gilman advances a similar argument in her manuscript poem.

Gilman often used her domestic endeavors to establish herself as upholding gender norms, yet she also attempted to connect her physical labor to her intellectual work. In “To Miss S. Waring: On Seeing Me Paint the Hearth in My Husband’s Study,” Gilman’s transcendental ideas converge with an understanding of identity formation as she contends that subjectivity is established through both reflection and performance. As the poem begins, the speaker’s body appears destined to conform to domestic norms while the speaker’s mind is preoccupied; as the narrative unfolds, the relationship between mind and body becomes increasingly complex. The speaker, wanting to cultivate “The virtues God may bid me wear” (line 16), seems to accept conventional understandings of women’s roles. However, in the fifth stanza the speaker recognizes that others idealize her role and that women are understood to be imagined creatures—fairies—rather than actualized subjects. The speaker subverts her position as a “fairy” other by emphasizing her own ability to see and look. Her own subjectivity—her own glance—is rhymed with dance, signaling a recoupling of mind and body. In the sixth stanza the speaker continues to emphasize the reliance of women upon God; Gilman writes, “And every lowly path well trod, / Soars nobly upward to her God” (lines 33-34). Gilman sees the routine and daily as instrumental to her efforts to relate to God and society, and she affirms the transformative power of the quotidian while arguing for women’s subjectivity. The speaker observes herself completing domestic chores; engaging in this type of work allows the speaker to fulfill certain social obligations, while reflecting on the actions allows the speaker to imbue the activities with self-determined meanings.

In the prose following this manuscript poem, Gilman continues to explore power dynamics as she discusses going to the circus and seeing an elephant interact with his master. She writes, “My dear cousin I went to the circus and I saw the elephant step over his Master and walk over him so gracefully and Did not mash his master and took him on his tusk and whirl round and round and then walk out with him on his tusk...” Initially, this sentence seems to suggest that Gilman is impressed by the ease with which the Master controls the elephant; it seems that Gilman is amazed by elephant’s training. However, this sentence could be read as ascribing more freedom to the elephant. Gilman tacitly acknowledges the power of the elephant, focusing on the ways in which the elephant interacted with the master rather than on the ways in which the master trained the elephant. Inverting the power dynamics of the relationship between the master and the elephant suggests that power is both dynamic and ambiguous.

Caroline Gilman’s origin story—regardless of its historical accuracy—helps us understand her rhetorical position as an editor. In 1832 Gilman established the *Rose-Bud*, a literary magazine, with the aim of adding a Southern voice to Northern domestic didactic fiction.<sup>13</sup> In the dissertation “Windows into Antebellum Charleston,” Cindy Ann Stiles points out that “As editors, women could select, edit, and print the opinions of others without being accused of meddling in affairs outside of the domestic sphere sanctioned as woman’s acceptable domain” (3-4). Editors, as members of an emerging professional community, were often viewed as conduits of information rather than

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<sup>13</sup> According to the terms printed on September 5, 1835, the periodical could be purchased for two dollars per annum and “persons remitting subscriptions for five copies will be entitled to one gratis.” The paper was printed every other Saturday by J.S. Burges. Interestingly, payment was required in advance.

generators of content; therefore women's participation in the community was generally not seen as threatening the patriarchal order. To some extent, being an editor rather than a journalist did protect Gilman from charges of transgressing social norms surrounding gender while still allowing her to influence public opinion. As Stiles suggests, Gilman chose whom to publish and what ideas to promote. During the seven-year run of the *Rose-Bud*,<sup>14</sup> Gilman promoted such acclaimed Southern writers as John Pendleton Kennedy and William Henry Timrod. She also engaged quite frequently with transcendental ideas at a time when many Southerner writers were offended by what they considered the transcendentalists' exclusively Northern perspective. For instance, Gilman devoted a significant portion of the seventh issue of volume seven to Ralph Waldo Emerson. In promoting a Southern literature, Gilman engaged with local, national, and international writers and texts. Positioning Southern writers in relationship to national and international intellectuals, Gilman attempted to surround emerging Southern literature with a sense of gravitas.

At the same time, however, as the editor of the *Rose-Bud* Gilman was doing more than just compiling the work of others; she was creating and generating new texts.<sup>15</sup> For instance, Gilman frequently published her own original verse and prose, devoting ample space to the serialization of her work *Recollections of a Southern Matron* in volumes

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<sup>14</sup> In many ways, the *Rose-Bud*, which Gilman launched in 1831, grew up with her six children during its seven year publication. Its changing title reflects this: for the second volume, the *Rose-Bud* was retitled the *Southern Rose-Bud*, and, for the final four volumes, it was retitled *Southern Rose*. The four-page magazine contained a wide-variety of material including serialized novels, books reviews, and other prose items.

<sup>15</sup> In *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance*, Ellen Gruber Garvey argues that compiling previously published materials in to a new form imbues those materials with new meanings. She sees scrapbooking as a generative activity. While I agree with Garvey's interpretation of the act of scrapbooking, editors were necessarily doing something different since they were creating public documents and often generating much of the content of those documents.

three and four. As Gilman engaged in more blatant self-promotion and as the role of the editor became increasingly professional, she looked for additional ways of justifying her appearance in the public sphere.

To strengthen her rhetorical position as she appealed to relatively conservative Southerners, Gilman involved her husband in the paper. The couple apparently met when he read her poem “Jephtah’s Rash Vow” at a social event in Boston, which quite obviously positions her literary work as uniting her and her husband. Given the prominent role her writing plays in drawing the couple together, it makes sense that she would continue to suggest that her career positively impacts their marriage. Just as Caroline evokes an image of Samuel reciting her poetry as a way of indicating his approval of her career in general, she invites him to contribute a “Moral and Religious” column to the *Rose-Bud* as a way of demonstrating his approval of her editorial work. In addition to his “Moral and Religious” column, Samuel also occasionally translated foreign works for the publication. (Translations of German and French works were typically given space in the magazine in the “Exotic” section.<sup>16</sup>)

Another way that Gilman justified her appearance in the public sphere was by focusing on children. The first volume of the *Rose-Bud* included an editor’s address emphasizing that certain topics—primarily divisive religious and political matters—

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<sup>16</sup> While Gilman did establish numerous departments in the paper, the departments were not entirely consistent across either issues or volumes. In fact, the back page of many issues was devoted to “Original Poetry.” News was printed in the “Leaf and Stem Basket” department and “The Bud” remained a column aimed at children. One of the most interesting sections of the paper was the “Editor’s Boudoir,” a dialogue between two fictional women about literary topics. Literature remained a focus of the magazine. In volume three, book and magazine reviews were published in the “Flower Vase” but in volume four that column was replaced with the “Turf-Seat Shade.” Volume four also witnessed the appearance of a new column, “The Pruning Knife,” that focused on analyzing the four major British reviews: *Westminster Review*, *London Quarterly Review*, *Edinburgh Review*, and *Foreign Quarterly Review*.

would be avoided in the magazine as it was a children's periodical. Although particularly controversial subjects were allegedly avoided, editing the *Rose-Bud* offered Gilman a unique opportunity to promote her idea of the South in a socially accepted manner.

While Gilman's magazine was initially a children's weekly, Gilman included more adult content with the publication of the second volume in 1833. She also renamed the monthly magazine the *Southern Rose Bud*. The publication of the third volume involved even more changes in format as the periodical became bimonthly, doubled in length (becoming eight pages), and matured in content. In volume four, the magazine, renamed the *Southern Rose*, became a decidedly adult publication. One of the factors driving these changes was a desire to increase circulation.

Gilman longed for a more national audience and sought support for her publication in Boston. Gilman rather aggressively sent two Boston shopkeepers, Messrs. Hilliard and Gray, copies of her periodical to sell. In an undated letter to them, she wrote, "I have taken the liberty of making your store the depository of the little paper, which I have commenced editing, & for whatever trouble it may cause you, I request you to charge the usual commission." In the same letter she argues that it is only proper for the North to support Southern periodicals. She points out, "In consideration of the thousand juvenile books that we patronize from the north, I should hope, if the R.B. is properly conducted it might receive northern patronage in return." Gilman's reference to Northern juvenile publications points to her prime competition, the *Juvenile Miscellany*, which Lydia Maria Child founded in 1826.

Gilman certainly viewed Child as both her colleague and her competition.

Gilman, in the postscript of an undated letter to her sister-in-law Louisa Loring, writes:

I am afraid Mrs. Child's agent here wants drumming up. I heard a little girl say she had not seen a number for three months—If Mrs. C. wishes me to notice the No.'s as they come out, she had best send one to me by mail, & as I have 400 Subscribers in this city, it may be favourable to her beautiful work to notice them regularly. Ask her to write *Rose Bud Exchange* if she wishes it. (SCHS)<sup>17</sup>

It is interesting to note that although Gilman was extending Child the professional courtesy of advertising her Northern magazine, Child had not even asked Gilman to send complimentary copies of the *Rose-Bud*. Gilman's implicit request to engage in an exchange with Child was ignored, which limited Northern readers' exposure to Gilman's work. This letter underscores Gilman's desire and need to cultivate Northern subscribers, but Gilman's attempt to attract Northern readers is also embedded in the paper itself.

While the periodical celebrated a particular brand of conservative Southern identity, the masthead of volumes four and five touts, "Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the Rose.—Milton" The emphasis on diversity—of flowers of different hue—seems more

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<sup>17</sup> When an editor entered into an exchange with another editor, he or she would mail that editor complimentary copies of his or her respective publication. Given that exchanges involved providing free copies of publications and paying postage, they could be prohibitively expensive. Gilman eventually issued a notice in Volume Two, Issue 23 stating that applications for exchanges must be declined. Gilman did, however, offer a complimentary copy of the magazine to anyone who forwarded five new subscribers. In the 1840s, the cost of exchanges increased as postage rates changed. In *News in the Mail*, Richard Kielbowicz explains that postage rates shifted to protect local newspapers. He writes, "The newspaper policy formulated in the 1790s, tailored for an industry and nation just emerging from the colonial era, grew increasingly untenable in the mid-1800s. Originally, newspapers were small, similar in appearance, published once a week, and restricted to circulation in a few Atlantic Coast states. By the 1840s, however, periodicals appeared in a variety of sizes and formats, at different intervals, and circulated from one coast to the other. The long-standing postal policy took little notice of these changes, for newspapers could still circulate anywhere in the country for 1.5 cents regardless of size or weight, a rate set in 1792. Sapping the office's resources, this outmoded policy threatened extension of services in the West" (81).

likely to pertain to regional differences than racial ones as Gilman frequently highlights ways that the American and Southern identities both converge and diverge.

Despite Gilman's attempts to attract a Northern and national audience, her readership remained primarily local. In an 1832 letter to her sister-in-law, Gilman writes:

I have 520 subscribers therefore patronage is not essential to my existence as an Editor any longer. Every week since it commenced has brought me twenty or thirty new ones. I did love the thought that I might excite some interest & give some pleasure in Boston, — but no matter – the South is all to me now, & if I can benefit the children here it is all I will ask.

Here Gilman seems to be resigning herself to producing a regional periodical and being identified primarily as a Southern writer. While Gilman had difficulty securing advertisers and Northern agents for her magazine, she did attract subscribers. The support of these subscribers allowed Gilman to speak more directly to the interests of Southern readers. In other words, the demographics of Gilman's readership altered her approach to editorial work.

Rather than using her periodical to promote understanding across regions, Gilman started using her periodical to promote Southern literature and ideologies. Gilman was positioned by her circumstances, by her readership, to edit a decidedly Southern periodical. Gilman herself acknowledged this in yet another letter to Louisa, dated January 17, 1833, when the editor explained that the *Rose-Bud* had 735 subscribers but only twenty resided in Boston.<sup>18</sup> An awareness of her readership enabled Gilman to more explicitly engage with Southern readers. Since Gilman had a Southern audience, she

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<sup>18</sup> The majority of the *Rose Bud's* subscribers lived in Charleston, but some lived as far north as Maine and as far west as St. Louis.

attempted to market to that audience, which, in turn, narrowed her potential audience to those Southern readers.

Gilman initially thought that her periodical would unite Southern and Northern readers in an imagined national community, but her work was unable to capture the imagination of Northerners. In large part, this is because Gilman failed to establish professional connections with Northern editors and publishers. Despite her personal connections to Boston transcendentalists and literary figures, Gilman's conservative ideologies and emerging Southern identity created a barrier between her and her Northern colleagues that discouraged them from entering into exchanges and more overtly promoting each other's work. Lacking connections to Northern media outlets, Gilman's periodical received little attention in the Northern press, and, therefore few Northerners purchased it.

If her periodical is evaluated based on her own goals, then it failed to be the instrument of peace and interregional understanding that she had hoped it would become. However, Gilman did demonstrate through her editorial work with the *Southern Rose* that Southern women could participate in the public exchange of ideas. Gilman strategically carved out a space for women in the antebellum South to speak on contemporary cultural and social issues and in that regard her editorial endeavors might be considered a success. William Gilmore Simms, who started his editorial career from a much stronger rhetorical position, and certainly did achieve his goal of promoting a community of Southern readers, might still only be considered a qualified success as an editor. It is difficult to

meet a goal when that goal is to produce a periodical that can be, as Joseph Buckingham says, both “a blessing to humanity” and “a source of profit.”

With at least seventy-two works appearing in book form, William Gilmore Simms was one of the most prolific—and popular—antebellum Southern writers. There is an apocryphal story that continues to circulate that the 1856 Southern Convention passed a resolution that “there be a Southern literature” and that Simms “be requested to write this literature.”<sup>19</sup> C. Hugh Holman, one of the most influential Southern studies scholars of the mid-twentieth century, refers to Simms as “the literary spokesman of the Old South” (181). It is understandable that Simms is often read as the representative Southern writer since throughout his lengthy career as an editor he aggressively cultivated a Southern literature that furthered his own career and mirrored his ideologies.

Simms edited nine periodicals between 1825 and 1865: *The Album* (1825), *Southern Literary Gazette* (1828-29), *The City Gazette* (1830-32), *The Cosmopolitan* (1833), *The Magnolia; or, Southern Apalachian* (1842), *Southern and Western Monthly Magazine and Review* (1845), *Southern Quarterly Review* (1849-55), *The Daily South Carolinian* (1865-66), and *The Columbia Phoenix* (1865). Undoubtedly, Simms was an experienced editor, but it is debatable whether he was a successful one. Given the relatively short tenure of most of the above publications, it is tempting to say that he was not. However, John Gibbs, an expert on Simms’s editorial work, suggests that the financial collapse of these periodicals resulted from an over-reliance on Southern

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<sup>19</sup> Perhaps most recently Cole Hutchison mentions this story in the first chapter of *Apples & Ashes: Literature, Nationalism, and the Confederate States of America* (18).

subscribers. Gibbs accuses the South of being “a community that cared little for native productions” and suggests that the planters “who were able to support a magazine” chose to “live in self-satisfied complacency...on their immense rice plantations” (6). For the most part, Simms’s editorial endeavors were financially untenable projects, but he was more concerned about the problem Gibbs identifies: the lack of interest among Southerners in creating a sectional literature. For Simms, periodicals were a way to build identities and nations rather than wealth.

Given Simms’s editorial interests, his success should be measured in cultural, instead of financial, terms. As a planter, Simms understood the ways in which periodicals could further his political and ideological objectives. While Gibbs attributes Southerners’ lack of support for regional publications to a “dependence on England” (6), it seems that the more significant issue was that the community of planters failed to appreciate the ways in which periodicals could support their own interests. The conservative Southern community failed to grasp the many ways that printing technologies could be used to advance their own cause(s). Simms, however, remained convinced of the power of the press. Even though Simms had personally experienced the failure of such literary magazines as the *Album* (1825-1826), the *Southern Literary Gazette* (1828-1829), and the *City Gazette* (1830-1832), in 1842 he agreed to edit yet another literary magazine, *The Magnolia*, in order to, as he expressed in a letter to the New York editor, Evert Duyckinck, “establish a manly & proper organ of literature & criticism in the South” (qtd. in Guild 145). This letter underscores that Simms prioritized the creation of a distinct Southern culture over purely financial concerns. Although Simms believed that

periodicals could be a vehicle for Southern intellectuals, he did not think that the South would actually achieve its own literature.<sup>20</sup>

William Gilmore Simms understood literature to be foundational in the building of nation-states. Simms underscores his esteem of periodicals by leading the first issue of the *Southern Quarterly Review* with a sixty-four page article, “The Newspaper and Periodical Press.”<sup>21</sup> This unsigned 1842 article, likely written by Simms, depicts an evolution in periodical publications from newspapers through essays and magazines to quarterly reviews, the highest form of periodical. The article provides a general overview of newspapers that offers some insight into how periodicals were imagined to circulate through a community.

The author of “The Newspaper and Periodic Press” believes that the free press is foundational to promoting American nationalism and identity. The essay asserts, “The newspaper appeals to so many interests and represents so many, that human affairs could not well be carried on without its agency” (8). For Simms, one of the key facets of the newspaper is that it is used by “everyone.” In a vignette the author of this column imagines how one paper might be read and used by the members of a particular

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<sup>20</sup> It is important to note here, though, that Simms believed that periodicals could be a vehicle for Southern intellectualism but he didn’t think that the South would actually achieve its own literature. As Edd Parks suggests, “However confident he [Simms] may have been that the South could be politically independent, Simms had little confidence that it could be intellectually independent” (100).

<sup>21</sup> Although this article is unsigned, I believe that it was written by Simms; as editor, he at least approved of its contents. The style and content both correspond to other works known to have been written by him. However, regardless of who wrote the piece, the article deserves a thorough discussion as it presents a fairly nuanced understanding of the importance of nineteenth-century ephemeral publications.

household.<sup>22</sup> This lengthy vignette offers an interesting imagined scene of reading worth close examination:

Observe, how it [the morning print] goes the rounds. It is called for first by the master of the family, and after its ample sheet is expanded and dried before the fire, he devours its contents with an eagerness that shows how deeply his whole soul is in it. It then passes into the hands of the good lady of the house, who is usually satisfied with a perusal of what occurs in the poet's corner, with the interesting items that appear in the hymeneal or obituary departments, with the strictures, light and graceful, upon the last published novel, or with the laughable anecdotes with which its page is usually enlivened. The daughters next claim the privilege of glancing an eye over the paper with a view to...the latest fashions, the next concert or assembly, or, if among the patrons of the stage, the play or opera for the evening entertainment. Thus the important visitant passes from hand to hand, till every member of the family has gratified his periodical curiosity, down to the little children, who ask permission to look at the ships, the houses, or the pictures of wild beasts that are for exhibition in the menagerie. After performing this accustomed circuit at home, some little urchin from a neighbor, who is too poor or too covetous to patronize the press, comes with the modest request, of 'a loan of the morning paper only for a few minutes, as mistress wishes to know at what hour the furniture auction takes place today.' He is scarcely gone, when a messenger from some other neighbor comes running at the top of his speed and all out of breath, with a 'pray, sir, father says, as how he will be much obliged to you for a sight of the morning paper, just to look at the ship news half a minute;' and so it circulates from one to another, till the numerous thumbprints upon the margin bear evidence of as faithful service, as grandmother Cloe's big Bible, which has been in the family for three generations;—a practice of borrowing and lending, which is apt to provoke some severe animadversions from the editor, when the time of paying his compositors and pressmen comes round, but which proves one thing, and that not a little flattering to his vanity,—how very important newspapers are, every where, and to every body. (8-9)

In this scene of imagined reading, the newspaper becomes an object that is simultaneously aristocratic and democratic. Newspaper reading provides an opportunity

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<sup>22</sup> Thomas C. Leonard coined the term "parlor fancy" in "News at the Hearth: A Drama of Reading in Nineteenth-Century America" to describe a particular imagined shared reading experience of an attentive family gathered around the hearth to hear one member read the news of the day.

for gender and class norms to be performed and reinforced while the object itself circulates among a diverse group.

Access to the paper is both open and limited.<sup>23</sup> While “everyone” in the household and many in the neighborhood have the opportunity to read the paper, the order in which they are permitted to read reinforces social hierarchies. The paper is read first by the master followed by the “good lady of the house,” daughters, little children, and then neighbors. Gender and class hierarchies are upheld as the man reads the paper before the woman, and the owners of the paper read it before the poorer members of the neighborhood. And, of course, the vignette does not imagine this material being available to slaves.

For Simms, access to reading material is a very important political and social issue. The author of this article argues that newspapers are inherently democratic and unifying as they give “all classes of society, the poor, as well as the rich” access to “a cheaper kind of literature” (6). Admitting that more different types of literature are published in periodicals than in books, the author maintains that “The Newspaper is the greatest agent in promoting civilization known to modern times. The power it has exerted on popular opinion, and the information it has diffused through all classes of society upon

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<sup>23</sup> In *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in the Antebellum America*, Isabelle Lehuu points out that “Communal reading of the news in the family home may in fact have become a thing of the past by the middle of the nineteenth century, when self-absorbed readers, alone and silent, failed to interact with one another” (15). Lehuu argues that “reading was not just a measurable ability but rather a contested terrain where social differences were exposed and opposite values confronted” (9), and she suggests that periodicals created “textual classes,” which both established and mirrored social classifications. According to Lehuu, nineteenth-century periodicals promoted and encouraged a reading revolution by both making the consumption of popular print a more private affair and by encouraging bonds between readers of a particular publication (25). Lehuu states, “The very nature of periodicals published at regular intervals is particularly significant for an understanding of the new reading practices. Antebellum America was witnessing the creation of social bonds within the reading audience of a particular daily, weekly, or monthly journal” (26).

subjects of vital interest, political, commercial, statistical, literary and religious, is beyond calculation” (6). For Simms, the newspaper was a tool for educating and influencing the masses who could more easily afford newspapers than books.

Since newspapers are relatively affordable, Simms considers them to be a mode of connection. According to the author of this article:

Men knew little, formerly, of what was passing beyond the limits of their own immediate neighborhood, but now, through the agency of the newspaper press, town and country, state and nation, and the most distant parts of the world are brought together, and whatever is new, rare and important, is conveyed with rapidity to every reader,—is set forth in the most succinct manner, and in a style adapted to the comprehension of all. (7)

Recognizing that the newspaper circulated across geographic boundaries, Simms suggests that the press unites politically discrete units. The newspaper is depicted as bringing people together by relaying the “new, rare and important” (7) news of the day. Since newspaper material is both financially accessible and intellectually comprehensible, the masses can be united through simultaneously experiencing events while yet being at a temporal remove from them.

At the same time, Simms does not imagine all readers using the paper in the same way. Class and gender shape how readers use the paper. The master of the family “devours its contents” (8); he consumes the entire paper and is imagined to be invested in all aspects of social and political life. Given his status and position, he is presented as being impacted by all elements of the paper—he is a thorough and conscientious reader. The other readers merely use the newspaper as a conduit for entertainment and personal connection; they are selective readers. The female members of the household are

presented as using the paper to develop personal connections and cultivate social opportunities. The “good lady,” who reads the poet’s corner, hymeneal or obituary departments, reviews of novels, and anecdotes, reads the paper as a source of gossip and entertainment. While the lady of the house finds her entertainment in the paper, her daughters use the paper to plan their evening activities. In a similar vein, the daughters of the house use the paper as a guide to fashions and an entertainment directory. The youngest members of the family find their entertainment in the images printed in the paper.

The use of the paper by neighbors follows a similar dividing line. The first neighbor, a poor or excessively frugal woman, sends an “urchin” to borrow the paper in order that she can attend a furniture auction while the second neighbor, a “father,” is represented by a “messenger” and is interested in shipping information. In both situations, the borrower needs the paper in order to gain information about financial transactions. But the first borrower is ridiculed as being either “too poor or too covetous” to purchase her own paper while the second neighborhood reader is merely mentioned as an example of the ways a paper might circulate. The paper circulates among the neighbors, which Simms sees as inherently uniting them around a common object, but the neighbors use the paper in ways that reestablish and confirm a hierarchical social structure.

Simms asserts that newspapers provide “everyone” with access to important information. Yet, he recognizes that newspaper readers are voyeurs observing a curated world. He writes, “Newspapers are...a microcosm—a little world in miniature, where,

without going out of the house or mingling with the mass of his fellow citizens, a man may look on quietly and without interruption, and see whatever of interest is passing or being transacted in the gay, bright and busy world around him..." (9-10). For Simms, newspapers present a simulacrum. By reading a paper, a person gains the sense of participating in the world or somehow experiencing the world. However, as the reader is consuming a constructed world, the reader is being positioned within that world. Through newspapers, readers gain a sense of their place in the world. Simms more clearly articulates his view of the interdependence of newspapers and readers in a discussion of whether the newspaper press creates or merely represents popular opinion. In this article Simms claims:

...it [the newspaper] may, and sometimes does, perform both these functions. If the Newspaper Press creates opinion for the mass of society, it can only be when it is under the control of men of commanding powers of mind and genius, and great experience and sagacity. There are such men to be found in every community, who lead and direct, to a considerable extent, the opinions of the people; and if such men have the management of the free press, there is no means of calculating the amount of influence which, in an age of light and inquiry, they may exert on public sentiment. Public opinion is usually nothing more than private opinion, which, after having been first conceived in some master mind, is made public, and is finally incorporated into the popular creed, simply because it is true, and because the truth of it has been brought home forcibly to the understandings of the people. (15)

Simms recognizes that a newspaper has the potential to construct public opinion when guided by a charismatic enough editor. In other words, the newspaper is a miniature world that has been constructed through the work of an editor.

While the newspaper may be foundational in the workings of a republic, "The Newspaper and Periodical Press" also acknowledges its limitations and suggests the

periodical press as a remedy to these faults. According to the author of this piece, newspapers lack the space necessary to discuss weighty matters, newspaper editors lack the time necessary to thoroughly research topics, and newspaper correspondents lack the objectivity necessary to adequately treat complex situations (26-27). Fortunately, “The wants which the Newspaper Press, in these respects, cannot supply, and the great objects which an inquisitive, thoughtful and philosophical age cannot accomplish through its instrumentality, are supplied and attained to the fullest extent, by the periodical press...” (28). The periodical press, including the *Southern Quarterly Review*, is presented as an evolved and much improved newspaper press that is better equipped to meet the needs of the current age and contemporary readership. The article explicitly states that “Quarterly Reviews are the embodiment, so to speak, of the national mind on all great questions...” (41-42) and that “Ablly conducted [Quarterly] Reviews are the offspring of a high state of civilization, and are the best evidence now-a-days that can be furnished, of intellectual advancement and of the prevalence of a pure and elevated philosophy” (42).

Quarterly reviews are clearly associated with the development of a national identity, and it is therefore implied that editors will be working to construct such a national community. One of the key ways that editors are to contribute to an emerging (Southern) nationalism is by cultivating the talents of native writers (43), and the article emphasizes that native (Southern) writers are needed in order to combat Northern misrepresentations of Southern institutions (slavery). The author states:

At a moment when fanatical, but powerful writers, unenlightened as to the true merits of the question, and the real state of affairs in this region, are endeavoring to excite a deep, permanent, bitter, living and breathing power of odium and

opposition against us; at the very moment when not only individuals, but large, powerful and constantly increasing combinations of misnamed philanthropists, are feeding the greedy avarice of one party, and nursing the weak and conscientious scruples of another party, or ministering to the wicked hopes or foul ambition of political aspirants, who constitute a third party, by dark, subtle, concerted measures to assail institutions which constitute the strength and almost the very life-blood of this Southern section of the confederacy, institutions secured to us by the Constitution which our fathers purchased with their blood, transmitted to their children as their patrimony, and in the subversion of which, the Union, dear and venerated as it is, and beautiful as is its structure, must be shattered into a thousand fragments, disappointing the proudest hopes of our race.... (43-44)

This sentence, which continues for another page, stresses that the author considers the South under attack by Northern writers and ideologues who are attempting to undermine Southern institutions (slavery).

Newspapers, due to the various space and time constraints that have already been discussed, have proven ineffective weapons against such assaults; therefore, according to the author, the South needs more periodicals along the lines of magazines and quarterly reviews. For this author, periodicals are a defensive weapon that can protect Southern institutions and ideas. In fact, the author sees periodicals as providing an opportunity for “the plantation states, bound together by common pursuits and common ties of interest” to unite in protecting themselves from “danger in the distance, coming even from the land of the Puritans” (52). This portion of the article foregrounds the author’s call for a Southern literature through which Southerners can unite to defend slavery.

William Gilmore Simms was invested in using periodicals to construct a unified Southern identity that could be consumed and adopted by locals throughout the region. And, as previously mentioned, the *Southern Quarterly Review* was not his only foray into

editorial work. The very title of *The Magnolia; or Southern Appalachian: A Literary Magazine and a Monthly Review* speaks to this objective as it claims a very specific geographic identity; Simms considered this periodical to be speaking to and for the Southern region.<sup>24</sup> The paratextual elements of *The Magnolia* also gesture towards Simms's desire to construct a regional literature. Due to the magazine's relocation from Georgia to South Carolina in 1841, there were publication offices in both states. The locations of these offices appeared on the cover, making it easier for both writers and subscribers to communicate with representatives of the journal while simultaneously emphasizing the regional ambitions of the magazine. Even more significantly, the interior of the cover of each number lists the contributors as well as the location of their residences. By presenting authors as representatives of various places and by including a geographical diverse list of contributors, *The Magnolia* provided a forum for a unified Southern identity to develop. An examination of the first number indicates that Southerners from as far south as Florida, west as Texas, and as north as North Carolina contributed to *The Magnolia*. Interestingly, some of the writers are located within urban areas while others are placed within a state. For instance, E.F. Ellett is affiliated with Columbia and D.H. Robinson with Tuscaloosa, but Alex B. Meek is associated with Alabama and Mary E. Lee with South Carolina. The lack of standard references to place

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<sup>24</sup> Ronald Zborary, in *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public*, points out that most of the stridently nationalistic Boston papers—the *Star Spangled Banner*, the *Universal Yankee Nation*, the *Yankee Blade*, *Flag of Our Union*, and *Uncle Sam*, among others—eschewed news (aside from short, tabloidlike, human interest stories) for sensational, romantic fiction, usually natively authored and often with American settings. Original fiction in newspaper form thus helped to unite the still heterogeneous national reading public created by rail” (13). It follows, then, that the proliferation of essays and nonfiction pieces in periodicals helped define and create regional identities amongst these more national newspapers.

indicates the degree to which Simms sought to represent the varieties of Southern localities.

For Simms, the South needed a literature in order to develop a platform for championing its political agenda. Simms wanted this periodical to unite the South and the West (Appalachia) against the North. The reverse of the cover to the first volume includes both a note “To Editors of Newspapers” and various extracts from letters of correspondents. The 1842 note “To Editors of Newspapers” is primarily an invitation to participate in exchanges with *The Magnolia*. Those wishing to participate in such an exchange are instructed to send a paper containing “the circular, or other such notice of the work” to the editorial office. But read with some of the extracts from the letters of correspondents, this note takes on new meanings. One of the letters laments that “its [*The Magnolia*’s] literary physiognomy may not even secure...a willing recognition from some of its courtly northern neighbors” and suggests that the magazine will need to depend on those “proud of the intellectual resources of their own inspiring clime...until the glowing thoughts and bold sentiments of the land they love, shall, through this, and other kindred organs, have left their burning impress upon the popular mind and found their way into the galaxy of letters.” This correspondent (much like Caroline Gilman) insists that Southern cultural productions are ignored by the North and posits reading Southern publications as the duty of every civic-minded Southerner. Underlining the significance of regions supporting their own literature, the correspondent acknowledges that Southern cultural productions are meant to foster particular ideologies. These claims reframe Simms’s note to editors as a call for the development of a Southern literary social

network; Simms is inviting editors who understand themselves as Southern to promote his magazine and to work with him toward the cultivation of a homegrown Southern literati or, as the correspondent would say, a Southern “galaxy of letters.” The imperial South finds a new frontier in the guise of literature.

Caroline Gilman and William Gilmore Simms both viewed periodicals as a means to promote a particular brand of Southern identity, and in the end they created a circumscribed community of conservative Southern readers. For Gilman and Simms, editorial work mainly involved creating a printed microcosm of the world that appealed to readers. To create the microcosm, Gilman and Simms relied on local writers but they focused on presenting a relatively static ideology that would alter readers’ understanding of their own civic identities; they emphasized codifying a Southern identity that readers could subscribe to along with their periodicals. For Gilman and Simms, periodicals provided a platform for Southern writers to promote a pro-slavery ideology and were an effective weapon in the nineteenth-century culture wars.

Edgar Allan Poe similarly recognized the importance of periodicals—and the role of editors—in connecting writers and readers. Poe’s editorial career started in 1835 when he moved from Baltimore to Richmond to join the editorial staff of Thomas White’s *Southern Literary Messenger*. In 1837, after two years as an Editorial Assistant, he left that position, and he would not hold an editorial post again until 1839; in Philadelphia, he was the assistant editor for William Burton’s *Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine* from 1839 until 1840 and then he was the editor of a reincarnate form of that periodical, George

Graham's *Graham's Magazine*, from 1841 until 1842. Poe continued his editorial work in New York through his affiliation with *The Broadway Journal*, the last journal that he would edit and the only journal that he would (at least partially) own. In the period from 1845 to 1846, Poe edited this periodical with both Charles Briggs and Henry Watson, then with just Watson, and finally alone. Although Poe was unable to achieve his goal of publishing his own periodical, which he originally intended to name *The Penn* and then *The Stylus*, he did have a significant editorial career. But, unlike Gilman and Simms who tended to view periodicals as providing a platform for editors to relay concepts to readers, Poe focused on periodicals as providing a space for a dynamic exchange of ideas and ways of viewing the world.<sup>25</sup>

For insight into Poe's publishing ideology, it is useful to consider the introduction to *The Broadway Journal*, which was first printed in January 1845 and edited by C.F. Briggs, Edgar A. Poe, and Henry Watson. One of the key statements from these remarks, aptly titled "Introductory," is a description of the types of transactions occurring through the pages of a periodical: "We hope to receive the aid of true hearted and good people, in our undertaking, not only as subscribers but as contributors; to the first we will give the worth of their money, and to the others the worth of their articles" (2). This statement implies that the editors of this new publication were desperate for contributors, but it also

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<sup>25</sup> Susan Belasco Smith and Kenneth M. Price argue, "The periodical—far more than the book—was a social text, involving complex relationships among writers, readers, editors, publishers, printers, and distributors" (3). Similarly, Michael Schudson argues the transmission model of communication, a model that understands communication to be the transmission of material from one speaker or writer to another, lacks the explanatory power of the ritual model of communication, a model that posits communication as an inherently social function. At the same time, Schudson thinks that the ritual model is unable to thoroughly explain the function of the press who he sees as "voicing, if not authoring" the desires and values of a community (428).

places editors in the position of middlemen: the authors sell texts to editors who then sell that text to readers. The way that Briggs, Poe, and Watson articulate this transaction underlines that the editor is adding value to the texts being produced and circulated by evaluating and curating texts. In other words, editors are positioned as selling their critical expertise.

A brief notice, “The Magazines,” in the February 8, 1845 issue of *The Broadway Journal* discusses types of magazines in this way:

There are two kinds of Magazines, those that appear on the first of the month, and those that appear in the middle of it. The first are the five dollar ones [the *North American Review*?] without illustrations, the others the three dollar ones with them. Instead of illustrations, perhaps it were safer to say pictures; and again, instead of pictures, it would be safer still to say engravings. There is still another point of different between the Magazines. One kind are printed in Philadelphia and the other in New York. Nothing higher than three dollars in the shape of a Magazine, has ever thriven in Philadelphia; nothing lower than five dollars has ever done well in New York. We have thus, we believe, given the distinguishing features of the two species of Magazines. We might distinguish them still farther, as: the three dollar species have pinkish colored covers, fifty leaved, and are of both sexes; while the five dollar species are generally males, have a hundred leaves, and are bluish or brown covered. In other respects the points of difference are not very marked. (93)

The lighthearted tone of this notice suggests that the three and five dollar magazines are basically the same despite their use as markers of class and gender differences. The blurb, however, actually serves to define several common nineteenth-century binaries such as text/image and male/female. The stereotypically stronger and weaker terms in these traditional binaries align respectively with the five and three dollar magazines. Magazines obviously functioned as markers of class and status. Yet not all periodical readers could be expected to know or understand exactly what the books and magazines they were

purchasing signaled about themselves. While the audience of periodicals varied, typically five dollar magazines were aimed at an elite male readership and three dollar magazines were targeted to middle- and low-brow cultural consumers.

Editors were expected to help these readers navigate the literary marketplace. For the most part, editors tried to help their readers develop literary taste without directly insulting their current ability to evaluate literature. Poe, referred to as the “tomahawk critic” for his harsh reviews of writers, uses his reviews to more directly judge readers. For instance, Poe explicitly judges readers based on their reaction to a work in his review of “Historical Sketches of Statesmen who Flourished in the Time of George III” by Henry Lord Brougham. In this review, Poe writes, “The first series of these Sketches excited a profound attention in all the better classes of readers” (166). Clearly, Poe is presenting the idea that there are different types of readers and that readers of a “better class” will respond positively to this particular work. Poe uses the term “class” in a way that links economic and social forms of capital. Even more importantly, the critic is positioned as evaluating the amount and type of cultural capital that should be attached to specific works.

Editors presented themselves as arbitrators of taste by crafting specific personas. Poe implicitly argued that his readers should trust his critical judgments because he was well-read and belonged to a particular class, but he demonstrated significant anxiety about status—his own and that of those around him. In a review of “The Phantom Ship,” by Captain Marryatt, Poe argues “His [Captain Marryatt’s] English and his method of putting it together betray too unquestionably a deficiency in the ordinary education of a

gentleman” (359). In this statement, Poe posits language markers as a sign of education and, therefore, as a sign of “gentleman” status. Poe defines the term gentleman in a way that allows him to more easily signal that he himself is a gentleman. Gilman exhibited considerably less anxiety about class and took a different approach to establishing credibility with her readers. She argued that readers should trust her because they were intimate acquaintances.

Poe was first noted as being the Editorial Assistant of *Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine and American Monthly Review* in the June 1839 issue. In this issue a fictional humorous tall tale, “The Man Who Carries Chickens Home from Market,” was published and signed Polonius. This anecdote is in some ways a parody of the more well-known story of Benjamin Franklin carrying papers home in a wheelbarrow in order to appear industrious. The author certainly underlines the focus of this tale on the significance of appearance by stating, “Now this world is ruled by appearances...” (329). In this tale a pastor carries some chickens and a butter-kettle home. However, these acts, rather than inspiring the community to view the pastor as hardworking, cause the pastor’s congregation to see him as a humorous figure. The narrator states, “Several times, when nearly the whole congregation were overwhelmed with grief at being despatched without mercy into the lowest depths of the infernal regions, we held fast to the chickens and butter-knife and were saved” (328). The image of the pastor carrying domestic goods home minimizes the impact of his sermons on his congregation. The act of engaging in manual labor obviously means something different at this point than it did during the colonial period.

The speaker emphasizes that actions may have multiple interpretations by offering the argument that “If a man can afford to live splendidly, he can afford to pay somebody for carrying his things home from market, and if he don’t, he is a mean fellow” (329). At this point, the American public seems invested in examining the ways that people spend their money. The system of exchange has accrued more layers of meaning and now more clearly and thoroughly involves cultural capital. The pastor signals his standing in the community by his ability and willingness to pay people to do certain types of work for him. The speaker argues, “The picture of himself, which he desires to present to the world, is that of one living handsomely, fashionably...” (329). A fashionable man does not carry his own chickens and butter home from the market.

In some ways, this story sheds light on the issues that Poe faced as someone wanting to present himself as an aristocrat but lacking the means to do so. One of the ways that Poe attempted to establish his aristocratic identity is through alluding to a library that he did not own. Kevin Hayes perhaps states it best when he says, “Poe knew he could not afford a good library of his own, but he saw no reason for his readers to know. For the Longstreet review, he assumed the persona of a well-to-do gentleman who owned an excellent library. Poe would retain the persona throughout his editorial career. It gave him the authority to tell his audience what books they should or should not have in their libraries” (78). As Hayes suggests, Poe created an aspirational library for himself in order to establish his authority as a reviewer.<sup>26</sup> The point, though, is that Poe

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<sup>26</sup> I use the phrase “somewhat fictional” here because Poe did have access to books. While he might not have had the financial capital to purchase his own library, he did have the social capital to access the libraries of others. He also often received copies of the books that he reviewed, but he generally sold most of these.

understood the ways that the material condition of books and texts functioned to signal social standing.

By adopting such personas, Poe the literary gentleman and Gilman the editor next-door gained the credibility necessary to help readers navigate the maze of class signs associated with print culture. Like other editors, Gilman and Poe used their status as literary connoisseurs to provide the masses with a very particular type of literacy instruction: editors taught taste. This type of instruction is primarily found in review and editorial columns. While Edgar Allan Poe's reviews are the most (in)famous of the three editors in this study, Gilman's reviews are worth more extensive study. As the editor of a children's publication, she could most directly provide literacy instruction to her readers.

One of the most interesting features of the *Rose-Bud* is the "Editor's Boudoir," which attempts to teach readers how to relate to books. The setting of this column, featuring the fictional editor "Medora," is, as the title suggests, the editor's private rooms. This intimate setting reflects antebellum tensions surrounding the female author as a public figure. But Gilman uses this setting to create a sense of a personal relationship with her readers, to perform intimacy, in order to bolster her popularity and celebrity. The intimacy created in this particular column is complicated, however, by the presence of the character "Medora." The existence of "Medora" makes it obvious that Gilman is not offering her actual self for her readers' consumption. Throughout this column, Gilman is both supporting and questioning the role of the celebrity author through a sense of play.

The primary focus, though, of the “Editor’s Boudoir” is teaching an audience how to interact with books. In the September 5, 1835, issue two editorial figures, Medora and Lisa, have a frank discussion about literary matters. Medora states:

The birds know that I have come to make them happy, the flowers not yet released from night-dews, look in my window with their silent smiles, and my books too, these quiet, but precious companions. I sometimes fancy what will be the compensation for these vehicles of thought in a more spiritual state of existence. There, perhaps, mind will rush to sympathetic mind from unknown distances—doubt, if it can exist, be answered by whispering spirits almost in anticipation—and the high speculations which here are surrounded by the mists of the earth, be solved in words of light and glory, beaming from the fount of thought. But I must rouse myself from these musings, for *material* books are before me.

For Medora, books take her away from her inner thoughts and connect her to an external reality. In part, Medora appears to be a vehicle through which Gilman can create a parody of herself. Medora allows Gilman to gently satirize some elements of the transcendental philosophy that she, along with her husband, so frequently espoused. Medora’s poetic prose points to connections between nature and books, emphasizing the importance of both, as books are discussed in the same sentence as living matter and are treated as living companions. Medora seems to desire an intimate relationship to develop between books and nature and appears to seek the pure transmission of ideas from one person to another. However, forced to recognize the material conditions surrounding both the production and consumption of books, the speaker states that she “must steal back to my boudoir” in order to spend time with nature and books, which positions books as either a leisure item or a temptation for wasting time. In this statement Gilman points to one of

the traditional anxieties surrounding women's literary activities as she tacitly acknowledges that books often require "stealing" time from other commitments.

The material aspects of books are underscored throughout the periodical as Medora and Lisa frequently comment on their physical attributes and construction. For instance, in a later column, Lisa remarks "how prettily the engravings in the Harpers' edition of Mrs. Sherwood's works are got up," and mentions "I have the eleventh volume and they form quite a beautiful looking row on my book shelves" (14). Lisa promotes an understanding of books as commodities to be valued for their construction and visual aesthetic. Reminding readers that books will be displayed, Lisa insinuates that books will signify a particular alignment of the reader/consumer and a system of thought. Books reflect a person's ideology and social status to others. While Lisa points readers to the social significance of reading particular works, she encourages readers to enjoy all acts of consuming a book. She states, "I call the cutting of the leaves of a fresh printed book a pleasure" (22). Cutting the pages of a book, making the book accessible, brings great joy to Lisa. At the same time, in the same paragraph Lisa encourages her readers to reread books. Asking, "How can we [modern readers] attend to you, and Confucius, and Zoroaster, and other hard named old fashioned people, when Miss Sedgwick has issued a new novel, and Simms is writing as fast as his quill can drive, and periodicals are dropping down about us like picked cotton in a whirlwind?" (22), Lisa reveals the tension between desiring fashionably constructed and aesthetically pleasing books and wanting to read more canonical works.

Many of Poe's reviews similarly focus on the book as an object. For example, in a review of "Birds and Flowers, and Other Country Things," by Mary Howitt, Poe states, "This is a very beautiful little book—regard it we will. Here we have good paper, good printing, good binding, well-executed wood-cuts from excellent drawings—and poems by Mary Howitt" (167). In this review, Poe clearly analyzes the book as an object. To some extent, this could be attributed to the type of book that Poe was reviewing. *Birds and Flowers, and Other Country Things* is a gift book, or the nineteenth-century version of a coffee table book. It makes sense that with such a book the focus would be on its appearance and construction rather than its ideas. The book is valuable because it is beautiful and conveys the specific economic status of the owner. At the same time, however, Poe is concerned that the material in the book has been plagiarized. He claims that the writer Miss Gould "has drawn much of her inspiration from a study of the fair quakeress of whom we speak [Howitt]. The two styles are nearly identical—the choice of themes is one and the same thing in both writers. They appear to echo and re-echo each other" (167). Even in reviewing this type of artistic book, Poe is concerned about originality. For Poe, economic and cultural capital are intertwined. The beauty of the book must be connected to its contents.

For Poe, as with Gilman, one of the primary functions of editorial work is imbuing readers with "taste." Poe, however, was more concerned about originality than about popularity or canonical status. For instance, in the "Review of New Books" in the June 1839 issue of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, Poe attacks several popular authors:

Prolific authors are frequently reduced to the necessity of repeating themselves—of giving a warmed-up hash of their best joints, trusting to some little difference in the cookery, some variety in the seasoning and tone of the same, to disguise the matter from their customers. Walter Scott was a painful evidence of this fact—his Meg Merrilies ran through several aliases, and always figured in his most hasty and immature productions. Boz delights in portraying fat, abrupt, rude old men.... (358)

In this passage Poe challenges attempts to use popularity and commercial success as a way of measuring the quality of a literary work, and he underlines the tension between commercial and artistic pursuits. He does this by using the metaphor of cooking, which suggests that Poe is interested in thinking about what literature accomplishes in the world. While Poe wanted to evaluate literature based on aesthetic principles, he seems to understand that texts provide a forum for the interaction of readers and authors. Prolific writers are to be criticized when, instead of providing readers with new experiences, they simply recirculate previous ideas. The problem with Scott's Meg Merrilies and Dickens's "rude old men" was not necessarily that they were stereotypes but rather that they were not original. As demonstrated in the Little Longfellow War discussed in Chapter Four, Poe valued originality perhaps to a fault.

For Edgar Allan Poe and the other editors of *The Broadway Journal*, the value of the periodical lies in how dynamic it is. In the "Introductory," the editors pledge to "make our paper entirely original,—and, instead of the effete vapors of English Magazines, which have heretofore been the chief filling of our weekly journals, give such homely thoughts as may be generated among us..." (1). The prospectus of *The Broadway Journal* similarly underscores the originality of this periodical as it directly states, "The Broadway Journal will differ from any of the weekly Periodicals now published in this

city, as it will be made up entirely of original matter, consisting of Essays, Criticisms on Art and Literature...” (16). Similar to Emerson’s call for an American scholar, Briggs, Poe, and Watson see the need for a uniquely American magazine. The call for a distinctly American magazine is certainly a call to political action. The editors write:

As we are entirely disconnected with any of the traders in literature, and have no personal friends among our literary producers,—saving an illustrious name or two, in Mr. Griswold’s Pantheon—we have no inducements to indulge in the luxury of puffing; but we entertain so kindly a feeling towards the whole brood of unfortunates, called American authors, that we can never find it in our hearts to utter an ill word of them, or to treat them otherwise than with honest candor. (1)

The editors outline a review policy that privileges American writers and embraces a nationalistic literary agenda, but simultaneously promises to be honest. The editors call attention to the plight of American writers who lack the protection of an international copyright, referring to them as “unfortunate,” while simultaneously underscoring the problems inherent to the intertwining of publicity and journalism. The editors position themselves as independent or “free” intellectuals who are in the position to facilitate the development of a national literature through productive criticism. At the same time, the editors suggest that the readers are in many ways the equals of these independent editors. The editors emphasize that they “shall chose rather to talk to the people than with them” (1). The editors do not want to fashion themselves in the guise of “reformer[s]” but do “hope to reform some of the abuses which we sometimes hear spoken of as existing among us” (1). This “Introductory” column affirms that editors are gatekeepers of both American literature and the American national character.

Economic and cultural changes in the 1830s and 1840s encouraged the development of a thriving periodical culture. In *Capital Letters: Authorship in the Antebellum Literary Market*, David Dowling analyzes the resulting tension between artists' individual desires and the demands of the marketplace. He contends, "Authors became entrepreneurs who faced reviewers, audiences, and publishing houses as independent agents, separated from the protective enclave of a wealthy network of patrons. The new competition in the literary world for financial success in the market encouraged writers to look to each other for support, as they often formed circles of peers and coteries of like minds" (5). The shift Dowling outlines, from writers-as-artists to artists-as-entrepreneurs advancing their own unique brands, accelerated in the 1850s but is rooted in the changes that occurred earlier in the century.

The next three chapters demonstrate the extent to which authors depended on social networks to establish and maintain their own reputation and to gain access to a wider audience.<sup>27</sup> While Dowling suggests that writers depended on other writers, the next several chapters show that writers depended on other writers who were functioning in the capacity of editors and publishers. The divide among editors, publishers, and writers is not quite as stark as is generally discussed. To the extent that Caroline Gilman, William Gilmore Simms, and Edgar Allan Poe impacted each other's careers, they did so primarily as editors and reviewers rather than as writers. But, of course, these three

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<sup>27</sup> John Nerone has demonstrated that periodicals, as a type of media, are inherently representative of networks of relationships that both explicitly and implicitly highlight power dynamics (17).

writers relied on a much more expansive network of editors and publishers to promote and circulate their work.

In the next three chapters I examine the professional connections that these three Southern editors—William Gilmore Simms, Edgar Allan Poe, and Caroline Gilman—forged (or, at least, attempted to forge) with some of their Northern colleagues. Caroline Gilman, for instance, used her affiliation with the Unitarian church to attempt to develop a distribution network for her publications. She tended to seek connections with Boston cliques. Simms and Poe, however, both engaged with the Young America movement and used those connections to New York to promote their own careers. Both William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe cultivated relationships with powerful New York editors, such as Evert Duyckinck, who was a leader in the Young America movement; Simms and Poe allied themselves with this literary and political movement and used their own publishing venues as a way of strengthening their relationship with members of the New York literati. These connections show the many ways in which Southern literature has always been enabled by the North.

These three editors deployed a variety of strategies to create and sustain their particular social networks. Gilman attempted to forge a network based on aligned *identities* while Simms and Poe developed connections based on aligned *interests*. To elaborate, as discussed in chapter two, Gilman took a very different approach to developing a social network. Instead of intentionally seeking out a community whose interests aligned with her own, she attempted to develop a community by promoting particular aspects of her identity. Simms and Poe, however, attempted to connect

themselves to already established networks. As discussed in chapter three, Simms, whose ideologies aligned fairly closely with those of Young America, was strongly invested in this movement and consistently supported it. Poe sought out the Young America movement only when doing so was in his best interest, and, as discussed in chapter four, he diversified his social network by developing a relationship with N.P. Willis, a scheming nineteenth-century New York editor with savvy marketing skills.

## CHAPTER III

### AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH: CAROLINE GILMAN'S SELF-RELIANCE

Born into a family that would become staunchly abolitionist, Caroline Gilman choose to embrace the complex identity of a Southern slave-holding Unitarian. Gilman's decision to adopt this identity strained her relationships with her Northern family and friends, and further removed her from influential networks of Northern publishers. In an attempt to overcome this distance and to cultivate productive professional relationships, Gilman addressed her branding issues by aggressively marketing her identity. While William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe attempted to develop networks around shared interests, Gilman tried to gain the attention of publishers and of a national audience by promoting an edited version of herself through semi-autobiographic novels and essays.

Gilman, who was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1794, moved to Charleston, South Carolina with her husband, Samuel Gilman, when he was appointed minister of Archdale Street Unitarian Church, a post he held for forty years.<sup>28</sup> In the introduction to *A Balcony in Charleston* (1941) Archibald Rutledge writes:

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<sup>28</sup> The fact that Samuel Gilman maintained his post for this length of time is a testament to his leadership skills. As John Allen Macaulay points out, "Out of seven Unitarian churches in the would-be Confederate states, only two, Charleston and New Orleans, managed to remain organizationally active on the eve of the Civil War" (3). Some of Gilman's success can be attributed to his vast intellectual gifts and his ability to forge productive relationships with those around him. Macaulay shares that for a period of time Gilman would spend an hour each morning reading German biblical criticism with Jasper Adams, the Episcopalian President of Charleston College (7) and emphasizes "Dr. Gilman's characteristic equanimity, not to mention literary eloquence, endeared him to both national and southern circles" (7).

Caroline Gilman, of the best New England stock, came as bridge to Charleston, where the better part of her life was spent. Rarely gifted, with an insight that might as well be called genius, sensitive alike to the reality and the mystery of life, she became a Southerner. Nor do I know where else to discover, as I do in her, the salient noble qualities of North and South combined. It need hardly be added that she holds a secure place in American letters. (xi)

While Caroline Gilman became a “Southerner,” many of her relatives remained Northerners and became heavily involved in the abolitionist movement.<sup>29</sup> For instance, her niece, Maria White Lowell, who married the popular New England poet James Russell Lowell, was a member of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. Gilman’s sister-in-law, Louisa Loring, who was married to Ellis Gray Loring, was herself an abolitionist and became a close friend of Lydia Maria Child.

At times, ideological differences made it difficult for Gilman to interact with her extended family. Louisa Loring, her sister-in-law, wrote a letter to Samuel on March 13, 1850 inviting him and his family to visit Massachusetts. In this letter, Loring wrote:

Will not this summer tempt some of you or all of you to come to us? I wish it may—I assure you it will give us all great pleasure to see you. We find it very comfortable here, except in the warmest weather, & that passes off while we are saying ‘how hot it is’! I wish you would come, for I do not see any immediate prospect of S. Carolina’s abolishing slavery and receiving us there.

Loring’s gracious invitation for her brother to visit demonstrates her love and concern for him. Yet, despite her desire to see her brother, their differing views on slavery limited her ability to interact with him.

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<sup>29</sup> Gilman’s brother, Samuel Howard, was a merchant in Savannah, Georgia. When Gilman was a teenager, she would frequently spend winters in the South with him. Macaulay argues, “During that time [the winters with her brother] she became accustomed to the Southern way of life, and although born a New Englander, she would, for the rest of her life, remain a Southerner by heart and by choice” (45).

The Loring family was very active in the anti-slavery movement. An obituary for Ellis Gray Loring from the *Liberator*, which Louisa pasted into a scrapbook, describes “his valuable service in the arduous struggle with the Slave Power, his moral intrepidity exhibited at a time when the Anti-Slavery cause had few to stand by it, and his philanthropic and charitable disposition alike toward the bond and the free...” As a further testament to Loring’s prominence in abolitionist circles, William Lloyd Garrison spoke at a tribute to Ellis Gray Loring at the New England Anti-Slavery Convention on May 27, 1858. In this tribute, Garrison reminded his audience that Loring, one of the founders of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, was one of the first lawyers to invite “a colored boy into his office, in order to train him up to the profession of the law.” Garrison also affirmed the various risks Loring faced in his crusade against slavery:

Our friend risked, it will be remembered, his professional success in thus early espousing the Anti-Slavery cause; he risked his social standing, which was one of great importance to himself; but he was willing to risk every thing—fortune, professional fame, success, reputation, life itself. He was eminently conscientious, and that made him morally courageous and independent; and wherever he felt that duty required him to stand, he had it in his nature to plant his feet, let the consequences be what they might.

Ellis Loring was not only involved in the abolitionist movement, he was a prominent member of the inner abolitionist circle. In fact, Lydia Maria Child dedicated *Fact and Fiction* to the Lorings’ daughter, Anna. Given Ellis’s personal convictions and professional connections, he was far more likely to write for the *Liberator* than the *Southern Rose*.

Yet, the Loring and Gilman families worked to maintain a supportive family connection. In the spring of 1852, Gilman traveled to Boston for an invasive operation during which she stayed with her sister-in-law, Louisa Loring, who wrote several letters to her immediate family showing both her affinity for her sister-in-law and the tension resulting from their different political views. On April 27, 1852 Louisa wrote her daughter, Anna, the following:

Caroline was unconscious through the operation & only said when she came to herself that she thought she had been a long & troubled journey. The first thing she said was the verse “Now I Lay Me” in a most slow and impressive manner, emphasizing the word Lord remarkably. “Mind the Lord must take my soul & nobody else.” It was funny and a little pathetic. But the poor dear creature has suffered terribly since. It is a week today & she has lived on Laudanum & Morphine finding no ease except in perfect stupification & today the Doctor informed us that the wound had ulcerated. She suffers indescribably—but is patient, grateful for all attentions and every now & then surprises us with some funny little remark. Eliza [Gilman’s daughter] too quite shines in this new phase of her character. She is very devoted and affectionate beside[s] showing a great deal of faculty & energy.

This letter, underscoring Caroline Gilman’s religious conviction and personal charm, demonstrates the degree to which Loring, who was willing to care for Gilman during her convalescence, was attached to the Southern editor and writer. Loring, in a letter to her family dated May 9, 1852, admits that she “was always fond of her [Gilman’s] society & now she reminds me of her young self say thirty years ago.” During Gilman’s illness, Loring seems to have been reminded of the personal connection existing between her and Gilman.

Despite Loring's fondness for Gilman, the two women still held very different political views, which had the potential to strain family interactions. In an undated letter from the fall of 1852, Louisa Loring wrote to Ellis:

Mrs. Gilman departed about a week ago very much satisfied with her visit & very thoughtful for our kindness. She was much delighted with your letters & those of Anna which I read to her. As a sympathiser she is perfect. I found her very sweet & patient & agreeable in all respects. We generally avoided exciting topics, she always did but I felt bound to bear a testimony sometimes. By the way, I hear that some Southerner is writing an answer to Uncle Tom under the title of Uncle Tom's Cabin As It Is.

This letter very neatly captures the issues Louisa faced in trying to develop a connection with her sister-in-law. On the one hand, Loring and Gilman were highly compatible at a personal level. On the other hand, the two women embraced such different political views and were enmeshed in such different societies that it was extremely difficult to forge a closer relationship. There were simply too many "exciting" topics with which to contend.

The difficulties that Gilman faced in developing close and productive relationships with her extended family mirror the challenges that she experienced in cultivating professional connections with Northern editors and publishers. While William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe promoted their careers by forging connections with the New York literati, Caroline Gilman tried to establish relationships with Boston publishers and editors.<sup>30</sup> Although Gilman's religious affiliation aided her attempts to

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<sup>30</sup> Gilman's decision to pursue connections to Boston publishers was primarily the result of her personal ties to the city, but this choice made it more difficult for her writing career to progress. Overall, Boston was much less friendly and hospitable to Southern writers than New York. In *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City*, Edward Widmer attributes Boston and New York's different attitudes toward regional writers to the two cities' respective distances to the American capital. He writes, "Closer than Bostonians to the national government and the leaders of the Democracy, New York thinkers were

maintain close ties with her Northern social network, she was often ostracized for her pro-slavery stance and the Southern sympathies that she expressed as the editor of the *Rose-Bud*, a juvenile magazine.

Although Caroline Gilman struggled to establish connections with Northern editors and publishers, she enjoyed a somewhat privileged social station as the wife of a prominent Unitarian minister, Samuel Gilman, and her writing was published, in part, because of her extensive Boston-based Unitarian network.<sup>31</sup> Gilman's first poems, for instance, were published by Jared Sparks, a prominent Unitarian minister and the editor of *The North-American Review and Miscellaneous Journal*.<sup>32</sup> Caroline Gilman sought to use the printed word in the reform efforts that were so important for her denomination, and, in turn, her literary ambitions were encouraged by her denomination.<sup>33</sup>

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sensitive to the fragility of the national coalition and the need to accommodate the South and West. Appropriately, the national culture they sought to promote was more panoramic than the single-minded vision of New England writ large." (12).

<sup>31</sup> In *Unitarianism in the Antebellum South: The Other Invisible Institution*, John Allen Macauley argues that Unitarians possessed a position of privilege in the urban antebellum South as members of this denomination "embarked on literary careers and endeavors, organized tract societies and intellectual forums, joined benevolent reform movements and voluntary associations, and assumed leadership roles in both civic and professional organizations. In doing so, they forged a place within Southern orthodoxy in which other Southerners would join, and in the process, created a haven for retreat for themselves in the event of institutional decline" (5).

<sup>32</sup> Sparks believed that literature should morally benefit readers. In a letter to John Dawson Shea, Sparks praises Shea's volume pertaining to the discovery and exploration of the Mississippi and suggests that the historian write an account of the first missionaries to Canada stating, "I hope you will now engage in a larger enterprize; the History of the Early Catholic Missions in Canada and the West. It is a noble subject. The annals of the world afford few examples of self-sacrifice, and conscientious devotion to a great cause in the midst of privations, difficulties, and dangers, which can be compared with those exhibited by the early Missionaries in Canada." For Sparks, the topic of Early Catholic Missions in Canada and the West is appealing because of the example that it would set for readers.

<sup>33</sup> The importance of Caroline Gilman's religious affiliation is often lost in discussions of regional identity. For example, Kenny reads Caroline Gilman as "a white southern woman [who] struggled both to reform her own society and represent a positive rendering of the South to northerners" without necessarily acknowledging that Gilman's religious conventions deeply connected her to some Northerners.

Gilman's denomination encouraged her work, but Gilman seemed to struggle to forge connections with other editors, publishers, and writers. As I argue in the first chapter of this dissertation, Caroline Gilman initially attempted to establish a relationship with Lydia Maria Child, an editor of the *Juvenile Miscellany*. The political and geographical distances between the two proved prohibitive, and the two did not form a productive professional connection. In many ways, Gilman's unique identity and ideological markers made it increasingly difficult for her to engage with various professional networks. Among professional Southern writers, Gilman was in the minority as a Unitarian and as a professional middle-class woman. Among Northern editors, Gilman was in the minority as a slave-holder. Gilman's more liberal theological beliefs, her conservative social views, and her (occasional) progressive personal choices made it difficult for her to find professional editors with goals similar to her own.

The way that Gilman's complex and nuanced identity markers impacted her life can be illustrated by examining the way that the income from her writings is discussed by scholars. While some women writers used their income to purchase necessities, Gale Kenny points out that Gilman's income allowed her family to purchase a summer home on Sullivan Island (67). The focus on how Gilman's income impacted her family makes it seem as though Gilman's work was only justified if somehow necessary to her family's financial stability. Furthermore, according to Gale Kenny, "Caroline's salary also enabled the couple to own domestic slaves to do the housework, which allowed Caroline the time to write and to produce her weekly children's magazine....Perhaps her career as a writer and her need to justify her position as a slave owner led her to embrace the ideology of

slavery in a way her husband never could” (67). Kenny is here getting at one of the significant paradoxes in Gilman’s life: her relatively progressive choice to edit a magazine is offset by her identity as a slaveholder. In some ways, Gilman challenged nineteenth-century Southern conventions by deciding, as a middle-class woman, to work outside the home. However, in other ways, Gilman’s work enabled her and her family to fit more securely in the middle class as her income allowed them to purchase slaves and a vacation home.

Gilman’s divergent religious and social views made it difficult for her to establish the type of cross-sectional audience she imagined for her magazine. Adhering to the principles of her faith, Caroline Gilman initially prohibited partisan politics in her magazine. However, as Kenny observes, “the political crisis of sectionalism expressed the difference of the North and South through competing rhetorics of the home and family” (69). The way that Gilman presented the South and Southern home in the *Southern Rosebud* was inherently political. Furthermore, Gilman’s attempts at neutrality were futile by the 1850s as domestic fiction writers became increasingly defensive of their respective sections.

Since Gilman struggled to connect with other editors and to establish a geographically-diverse audience, she shifted her focus from creating a professional network to crafting a unified (and more marketable) self-image. Simms and Poe were, for

the most part,<sup>34</sup> able to focus on circulating their ideas, but Gilman was forced to try to circulate a palatable version of herself as a writer.

Gilman devoted a substantial amount of effort to crafting an authorial ethos as can be seen by examining her autobiographical notice in Hart's *Female Prose Writers of America*. It is important to note that Hart's edited volume was composed primarily of biographical material; as Hart states, "The work contains two charming pieces of autobiography, now appearing for the first time, from two long-established favourites with the public, Miss Leslie and Mrs. Gilman" (sic 6). Gilman, by simply writing and providing an account of her life, demonstrates a commitment to cultivating celebrity.

The text, titled "My Autobiography," suggests a divide between Gilman-as-self and Gilman-as-author. The first paragraph of Gilman's condensed autobiography establishes a sense of play:

I am asked for some 'particulars of my literary and domestic life.' It seems to me, and I suppose at first thought, it seems to all, a vain and awkward egotism to sit down and inform the world who you are. But if I, like the Petrarchs, and Byrons, and Hemanses, greater or less, have opened my heart to the public for a series of years, with all the pulses of love and hatred and sorrow so transparently unveiled, that the throbs may be almost counted, why should I or they feel embarrassed in responding to this request? (49-50)

Emphasizing that her autobiography has been requested, Gilman appears to be reinscribing the trope of the demure female writer.<sup>35</sup> Yet, in the next sentence Gilman

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<sup>34</sup> Arguably, Poe could have benefited from devoting more time and attention to creating a more positive public persona. However, Poe was often able to benefit from his image as the "mad genius." For instance, his infamous attempts to present some of his juvenilia as more mature works at a Boston lecture gained him quite a lot of press. Gilman's gender made such a maneuver much more risky. Also, to some extent, she had to consider her husband's role as a minister in making choices about the type of public image she would construct.

universalizes the inherently female position she just assumed. Rather than writing from the position of “I,” she asserts that she has the potential to express the feelings of “all” people. Comparing herself to highly celebrated canonical male writers, Gilman destabilizes the sense that as a female she is unique in her desire for privacy and she implicitly challenges the idea that she is more self-revealing than male writers. Listing hyper-romantic writers, Gilman underscores the comparatively realistic elements of her own novels, such as *The New England Housekeeper* and *The Southern Matron*, which are frequently read as attempts to promote sectional harmony by revealing the relatively similar domestic problems arising in the North and South. Asserting that she has established a transparent relationship with her readers and then challenging the assumption that she should feel embarrassed, Gilman implicitly raises the question, “What remains to be revealed?” If Gilman has been so transparent, why is the autobiography needed? What could possibly remain to be unveiled? The last sentence of the first paragraph of this autobiography asks, “Is there not some inconsistency in this shyness about autobiography?” (50). Gilman continues to challenge a gendered inconsistency in approaches to autobiography by identifying herself as “...somewhat of a patriarch in the line of American female authors—a kind of Past Master in the order” (50). With this statement Gilman adopts a role inherently defined as male—patriarch—and she invites female authors into a tradition dominated by Byrons.

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<sup>35</sup> Jane H. Pease and William H. Pease reflect on Gilman’s reaction to seeing her first poem in print and they argue that “she fretted about her gender image for the rest of her life” (164). Pease and Pease point out Gilman “asked her sister to keep a letter private because it was ‘too womanish, & wifelike & mother-ish.’ She enjoyed riding because being on horseback gave her a sense of independence. Yet, ironically, in what was undoubtedly her most striking fictional description of a woman on horseback, she portrayed Mrs. Alwyn as a person ‘masculine in her proportions,’ domineering, and loud” (164). Gilman had a very nuanced relationship with her own gender and cultural representations of it.

In the introduction to her autobiography Gilman plays with language in an attempt to establish her identity as an author and to create a distinction between Gilman-as-self and Gilman-as-author. Beginning with an explanation that her history has been requested—"I am asked for some 'particulars of my literary and domestic life'" (49)—Gilman, including quotation marks to emphasize the point that her narrative has been solicited, conflates her professional and familial lives in a manner that allows her to elide the distinction between the two roles. Mentioning her domestic life in this first line serves as an acknowledgement that readers desire to establish a connection with Gilman-as-self. Yet, Gilman privileges and emphasizes her professional identity over her private one by comparing herself to the "Petrarchs, and Byrons, and Hemanses" whose names are pluralized to privilege their author-functions—instead of being hailed as unique geniuses, these writers are treated as types. On the one hand, Gilman maintains an illusion of vulnerability by acknowledging that she has already been performing a public role. She admits to having "opened...[her] heart to the public" and uses that illusion of previous vulnerability to justify the creation of a literary persona.

The purpose of this autobiographical essay is to present a version of Gilman's identity that is marketable; the text is focused on creating a mythical literary persona whose work audiences will want to read. For example, in this essay Gilman stages her childhood against the backdrop of two traditional New England scenes. She writes:

It appears to me, that I remember my baptism on a cold November morning, in the aisle of the old North, and how my minister bent over me with one of the last bush-wigs of that century, and touched his finger to my befrilled little forehead: but being only five weeks old, and not a very precocious babe, I suppose I must have learned it from oral tradition. I presume, also, I am under the same

hallucination, when I see myself, at two years of age, sitting on a little elevated triangular seat, in the corner of the pew, with red morocco shoes, clasped with silver buckles, turning the movable balusters, which modern architects have so unkindly taken away from children in churches. (50-51).

It is also important to note that these narratives are not necessarily specific to Gilman. Many children have been told of their baptism, and many children have been told of their impish behavior during church. Gilman is allowing her readers the opportunity to recognize their own experiences in hers. Furthermore, Gilman qualifies these two particular memories with “It appears to me” and “I suppose,” which destabilize the veracity of her own memories. Gilman positions an unspecified other—those participating in oral tradition—as being the source of her own knowledge about herself. While Gilman knows that it is impossible for her to remember these events, the images and experiences are imprinted in her mind through narrative. Words have called into existence her ways of being in the world, demonstrating that Gilman sees her identity being created through cultural narratives and through her own writing.

As the autobiography continues, Gilman begins performing her identity by affiliating herself with a novel heroine. She discusses the death of her father, her mother’s frequent moves, and her own physical pain in terms that would resonate well with Maria Cummin’s Gertie and Susan Warner’s Ellen Montgomery. Specifically, Gilman writes, “Either childhood is not the thoughtless period for which it is famed, or my susceptibility to suffering was peculiar” (51). While Gilman’s references to her childhood would seem appropriate in almost any nineteenth-century coming-of-age novel, she frames her experiences in terms of *Pilgrim’s Progress*, which highlights the way that she constructs

her identity and her own sense of self in relation to literature. The purpose of Gilman's autobiographical entry is to help readers understand and appreciate her professional role.

In her autobiography she reflects on her history and then imbues it with self-determined meanings. She gains some control over the narrative of her life by writing it herself. (Readers, of course, complicate her control over her own story, but throughout her career she tries to mitigate this by providing readers with lessons in literacy.) Specifically, Gilman is able to present herself as both respectable and a writer; she is able to shellac her career with the veneer of respectability by performing humility and meekness. Rather than viewing this autobiographical narrative as a historically accurate account of Gilman's experiences, scholars should consider the account an expression of Gilman's savvy marketing skills. Gilman uses print to create an identity for herself—an identity that will sell and will promote a positive legacy.

As Gilman aged, she became increasingly concerned about preserving and protecting her literary reputation. In a letter dated April 5 and addressed to her nephew, Story, Gilman requests that he provide the financial support necessary for her to have more aesthetically pleasing editions of her novels printed. Since the letter states that *Recollections of a New England Housekeeper* has been in circulation for twenty years and that Harper Brothers had recently published a new edition of *Recollections of a Southern Matron*, this letter was most likely written around 1854—when Gilman was writing her autobiography for Hart's *Female Prose Writers of America*. Lamenting that

the Harpers are “satisfied with their profits, and care nothing about their [the novel’s] shabby appearance,” Gilman explains:

In the lapse of twenty years, the Recollections of a NE Housekeeper, with a steady sale, has not shared in a single modern external improvement. Now, my wish is, to have the Poetry of Travelling and a vol. of Tales both out of print, added to those publications of the Harpers, making three or four neat vols. I have some pride in leaving for my family and connections a collection which shall not shame their libraries.

She asks, “Now, my dear nephew, how much can you risk for the honor of the family...”

One of the most salient features of this letter is the emphasis Gilman places on honor and pride. Her desire to leave a literary legacy for her family and connections suggests that her views on literary fame have shifted considerably since she mourned the publication of one of her poems as a teenager.

In this letter Gilman is once again performing, but this time she is in the role of the taken-advantage of female author. While Gilman suggests that her work is selling well, she also implies that her publisher, Harper Brothers, is not recognizing the full potential that her writing has to make a profit, enriching both the company and her own family. Gilman is concerned about profits—as the mention of “selling” and “profits” indicates—but, rather than address her desire to benefit financially from her work, Gilman suggests that her primary desire is style. In many ways, this letter can be read as Gilman couching a desire to achieve greater financial rewards for her writing in terms of fashion. Trying to convince her nephew to support her efforts, Gilman explains that unfashionable publications are embarrassing to the entire family; Gilman argues that her work reflects on them all.

Gilman, in the letter to her nephew, expresses a great deal of interest in the appearance of her works. Aware of technological advances in publishing, Gilman remarks that her work has not benefitted from this progress in the printing industry. While Gilman emphasizes the technological issues involved in her desire for a new edition of her works, she is obviously aware of the business aspect of circulating shiny new versions of her prose. She seeks to couple the best-seller *Recollections of a New England Housekeeper* with the out-of-print *Poetry of Traveling and Tales* in hopes that the popularity of the novel will garner recognition for the prose and short stories. Most likely, she also hopes matching covers will encourage readers to purchase both volumes. Again, Gilman was a very savvy marketer. Throughout her life, she rarely published new materials. Rather, she repackaged and recirculated previously written materials. This repurposing of text provides useful opportunities for considering the ways in which context impacts the meaning of the written word.

Gilman needed to expand her audience in order to preserve her legacy as a relevant author. On March 22, 1878, Gilman mailed the 1840 edition of *The Ladies' Almanac*, which she had edited, to "Mrs. Slade," the editor of *Good Times*. Asking Slade to reprint poems from the thirty-eight year old publication, Gilman wrote, "In coming across an old copy of The Ladies Almanac that I published very successfully for four years, terminating in 1840, in Charleston, S.C., I thought it possible you might accept or work up something from the enclosed verses, which have never been republished & are at your service" (SC). Coming of age during the era of reprinting, Gilman expresses a faith that merely circulating material would acquaint a younger generation with her work. She

seems particularly interested in the reception of *Good Times* among younger people. She explicitly asks, “Do the young people enter into your ideas & act upon them?” (SC).

Viewing periodicals as an educational resource, Gilman states, “Now in my 84<sup>th</sup> year, when I think of the few intellectual resources of my girlhood, it seems to me, in contrast, all this culture should bred mental giants in later days.”

Read in light of Gilman’s letter to her nephew, Gilman’s desire to acquaint younger generations with her work can be interpreted as an effort to improve her own financial stability. Yet, Gilman’s question—“Do the young people enter into your ideas & act upon them?”—suggests that she is interested in expanding her ideological reach. Gilman carefully crafts a public person that gives her the authority and credibility necessary to gain access to the homes of children, and then she uses this expanded sphere of influence to inculcate specific ideological positions. Specifically, Gilman develops an ideological stance that becomes synonymous with a Southern identity.

When Caroline Gilman’s *Recollections of a Southern Matron* was first published by Harper & Brothers in 1838, the title page advertised Gilman as the author of *Recollections of a New-England Housekeeper*, which had been published by the same firm in 1834. *Recollections of a New-England Housekeeper* is written from the perspective of Clarissa Packard, a recent middle-class bride who is settling into her marital home in Boston. As Packard learns to negotiate the demands of her new role, she must deal with incompetent help and overcome other obstacles to domestic order. In many ways, this novel reads like a series of short stories with a common character. Conversely, *Recollections of a Southern Matron* reads like a serialized sentimental novel

with numerous improbable plot twists and convenient character deaths. The primary narrative explores the romantic relationship of Anna and Arthur, but the emphasis of the text is really Southern life. The story provides a reason for Gilman to explain Southern life and traditions. While it might seem that these two novels would appeal to disparate regional audiences, the publishers apparently believed the same readers would be interested in both works. The publishers obviously thought that informing readers of Gilman's prior work would help them sell copies of her newer books, suggesting the advent of a national audience.

The publishers and Gilman also gesture toward a national audience by including a "Note" at the end of the text. Gilman introduces this note in the following manner: "It seems a favorable opportunity to insert, rather in the form of a note than as connected with the narrative, the following sketch, which describes, among other points connected with negroes in Charleston, their funeral solemnities" (269). By recognizing that members of her audience might not be familiar with African American cultural practices, Gilman suggests a broader white audience for her work. Physically separating African American experiences from the narrative of the Southern matron, Gilman creates an exclusionary Southern identity revolving around ideological, rather than geographical, positions. Furthermore, Gilman implies that the most significant element of African American life is death. While the note describes the religious training available to African Americans, the introduction instructs the reader to focus on African American death.

A review appearing in *The American Monthly Magazine* in January 1838 critiques the novel for being excessively focused on death. Specifically, the review begins with the

statement, “A list of the killed and wounded in this book would be a satisfactory appendix. We no sooner make this remark, than it sounds unkindly; but we are provoked at the constant deaths of very nice people, which are made to take place in rapid succession” (92). The deaths are problematic because “The reader’s sensibilities become completely wearied by these calamities, till at last no sympathetic emotion is excited, and no interest is felt in the narrative” (92). Referring to the main character as “Southern Matron” rather than by her name, the reviewer begins describing the deaths of particular characters. The reviewer states, “...two very charming young persons, who had been recently married, are killed off barbarously, although they were the author’s particular friends” (92), which suggests that the reviewer is conflating the author and narrator. At times, Gilman implies that she is the speaker and encourages her readers to approach the text as personal narrative. The reviewer reinforces this reading of the text by asking why the title uses “of” instead of “by” suggesting that a Southern matron did in fact create the text (93). The reviewer also critiques Gilman for her “constant endeavor to instruct us, by an amplification of the inferences to be deduced from various points of her story” (93). While the reviewer believes that Gilman is too didactic, the reviewer lauds “Miss Sedgwick” (93). The reviewer then reprints long passages of the novel pertaining to Joseph Bates, a poorly educated Connecticut school teacher.

A more positive review of the text in *The Southern Literary Journal and Magazine of the Arts*, which was also published in January 1838, praises the text for its beauty. Specifically, the reviewer states, “...we feel no inclination to analyze, but are content with the ejaculation, ‘beautiful, beautiful.’ If we thought it necessary to provoke

the public to read it, we would take pleasure in giving it an extended notice, and furnishing choice extracts—but the name of the gifted authoress, and the ‘home’ character its of theme, will ensure it an universal perusal, as a matter of course” (78, sic). According to the reviewer, the text is “cheerful” and possesses a “wholesome moral aliment—the heart is elevated and softened, whilst the imagination is taken captive and charmed” (79). The reviewer then places Gilman in the company of Kennedy, Cooper, and Simms.

Although reviewers approached the texts as novels, the publishers tried to deemphasize the fictional aspects of the works. For example, the note on African American funeral practices, which foreshadows twentieth-century ethnographic studies, challenges the reader to rethink the approach to the body of the novel. Including such a fact-based appendix forces the reader to reevaluate the ways in which the novel is constructing truth and encourages the reader to assume that Gilman is writing from her own experiences in the South. Furthermore, opposite the note are advertisements for “Important Works Just Published By Harper & Brothers, New-York.” The first page of advertisements list nonfiction works such as *Memoirs of Aaron Burr*, and *The Economy of Health; or, the Stream of Human Life from the Cradle to the Grave*. The publishers are implying that readers of this text will mainly be interested in (other) nonfiction works.

The marketing of Gilman’s text relied on identifying her with the protagonists of her novels; Gilman’s public persona directly impacted the reception of her writing. In 1852, the same year that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was published, G.P. Putnam released an edition of Gilman’s work titled *Recollections of a New England Bride and of a Southern*

*Matron* that contained both novels. Although Putnam promoted the volume as a “New Edition, Revised,” the most significant changes were to elements of the paratext. In this later edition, opposite the title page is an image of Gilman’s summer residence on Sullivan’s Island, a Georgia landmark. By including this image, the publishers are marketing Gilman’s geo-political identity. This image strengthens Gilman’s identification with the South as well as with a specific class. Further emphasizing Gilman’s status as a “lady” is the arrangement of the image: the home is in the background while a sailboat is in the foreground. Beginning the text with this particular visual renders Gilman as, not just a well-known author, but a gentrified Southern writer.

A notice of the revised edition was published in *Littell’s Living Age* on December 25, 1852. The description reads, “This is a new edition of works published a number of years ago, and received very favorably. The view of Southern life and manners was drawn without any reference to the agitation of the Slavery Question. The New England Bride gives a view of housekeeping in the north, a good while ago, but still having a likeness in real life.” In many ways this notice advertises Gilman’s failure. Although Gilman had attempted to cultivate an identity as a conservative (slave-holding) Southerner, this notice suggests that Northerners will find the *Charlestonian*’s version of the South palatable and innocuous. Furthermore, this notice suggests that Gilman’s writing about the South is no longer relevant to political and social conversations; it is too sanitized.

The extent to which Gilman succeeded as a writer and editor is debatable. In many ways, she clearly failed. She was unable to gain the support of Lydia Marie Child, and she failed to cultivate and circulate the identity she desired for herself. At the same time, it is unclear to what degree Gilman wanted to establish a career as a writer and editor. As early as 1841, Gilman was suggesting that she was tired of writing and editing. In a letter to D.H. Williams, a Boston publisher, she states, "It would give me great pleasure to contribute to the annual for 1842 if my ability were equal to it, but I have labored of late under great disinclination to literary effort." This letter suggests that Gilman had the connections and talent necessary to establish a profitable literary career, but was simply not interested.

Writing in a period of heightened conflict between authors and publishers, Gilman does, however, seem increasingly interested in profits. In a letter to Williams dated October 6, 1849, Gilman writes, "I shall esteem it a favor if you can spare me some copies of the Sibyl this autumn. I hope the sale has realized your wishes. I shall be interested in having some account of sales in Europe & this country." In the postscript, she encourages Williams to purchase more of her work. She explicitly writes, "I am desirous to publish my prose works, several of which are out of print. They will comprise about three volumes 12 mo. Can you make me an offer?" The body of this letter suggests that Gilman is struggling in her business negotiations as her publisher is not even providing her with sales figures. While Gilman's arrangement with Williams is unknown, it was common for authors to be paid a percentage of the profits. Without access to her sales figures, Gilman would have no way of knowing if her payments were accurate.

Another of Gilman's correspondents, the author Elizabeth Fries Ellet, wrote in a letter dated February 11, 1875, "You [Gilman] must not go and give away your next volume of Oracles, as you did the last! Apropos des publishers—what think you of the Harpers publishing a 'corrected and revised edition' of a volume of mine—with disdain to consult with me on the subject!" While Ellet chastises Gilman for her failed business negotiations, Ellet also acknowledges the difficulties that authors have in establishing favorable contracts with publishers. For authors without coteries and contacts in publishing houses, it was increasingly difficult to negotiate with publishers.

Later in life, Gilman seemed to accept her diminishing influence. In a letter dated April 14, 1875, to Mrs. Thomas P. James, Gilman writes, "My daughter...has mentioned you to me, as one, who from disposition and influence may take an interest in the enclosed letter. My seclusion in this little town, where, at my advanced age, I wait the great change, will debar me from taking any future action in "social & public enterprise." This letter is a mystery as it is unknown what Gilman enclosed. However, this letter does make it clear that near the end of her life Gilman remained just as interested in political and social affairs as she was committed to focusing on her family connections.

## CHAPTER IV

### TOWARD A NATIONAL SOUTHERN LITERATURE: THE YOUNG AMERICA MOVEMENT AND SOUTHERN EDITORS

The lives of nineteenth-century editors were marked by conflict as they competed to accumulate social capital by establishing extensive and powerful professional networks. David Dowling describes these networks as “career-building relationships... designed to sustain a professional career with monetary rewards, or economic capital” (20). As editors began to develop a collective professional identity, their need to cultivate productive relationships with one another only increased. The nineteenth-century movement toward professionalism encouraged literary networks and expanded their influence.

One particularly powerful and divisive coterie was Young America, a New York group who supported the development of a national literature by promoting expanded legal protections for American authors. Young America’s vision of an inclusive national literature meant that the group welcomed regional writers. While Southern writers could find publishing opportunities with this coterie, publishing with Young America (as with most literary coteries) involved embracing the group’s political vision. Identifying with Young America made it easier for Southern writers to access a national literary market, while simultaneously making it more difficult for them to express divergent political commitments. For the Southern writers who genuinely supported literary nationalism, such as William Gilmore Simms, involvement with Young America only solidified their

existing positions, but for those Southern writers who had more nuanced perspectives, such as Edgar Allan Poe, engaging with *Young America* curtailed the opportunities they had to communicate their views. The political climate of New York City's publishing scene meant that the majority of Southern writers who gained a national audience were willing to advocate for literary nationalism. As *Young America's* prominence suggests, the issue of literary nationalism came to define nineteenth-century publishing networks.

Scholars often understand nineteenth-century social networks to be based primarily on regional identities, which leads them to assume that conflicts between coteries and literary groups were rooted in sectional differences.<sup>36</sup> For instance, Sidney Moss argues:

Though the coterie[s] in New York, not to mention those in Boston and Philadelphia, also called for a national literature, its members tended to be sectionalist and were continually accused of sectional bias by Southern and Western journals. Sectionalism was the inevitable tendency of the striving for fame and the struggle for sales of books and magazines in an extremely competitive market; and such accusations and counter-accusations only served to intensify sectional loyalties. (81)

To some extent, Moss accurately depicts the biases Southern and Western writers encountered when attempting to find Northern publishing opportunities. As previously mentioned, the North was the center of publishing in the United States and controlled

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<sup>36</sup> David Dowling, for instance, claims that regional identity influenced the networks and, therefore, the cultural capital accessible to writers. He states, "Linked to regional authorial identity, coterie identity directly shaped an author's reputation in the market. The coterie name alone represented a form of symbolic capital by which the author might be associated with the prestige of the circle, and as cultural capital, reflected in the specialized knowledge and skill one was assumed to possess as a member of that group." (20).

access to national distribution chains.<sup>37</sup> Sectionalism certainly did matter, but sectionalism was not the only factor in the development of social networks.

There are two primary problems with Moss's stance. First, writers from one section were not necessarily and inherently part of the same social network. Sections and regions were not monolithic and Southern writers did not necessarily support and encourage one another. For example, in the September 1839 issue of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, Edgar Allan Poe negatively reviewed the *Letters of Eliza Wilkinson*, edited by the Southerner Caroline Gilman, complaining that the reported incidents are too mundane. He writes, "[Eliza Wilkinson's letters are] occupied in part with minute details of such atrocities on the part of the British during their sojourn in Charleston, as the quizzing of Mrs. Wilkinson and the pilfering of her shoe-buckles..." (167). While Poe's most direct and obvious complaint is that the letters are dull, his criticism also points to more significant class and gender issues as he implies that Wilkinson's privileged position enabled her and her family to endure the Revolutionary War with much less deprivation and hardship than others. Poe's negative review concludes, "The whole book is exceedingly silly, and we cannot conceive why Miss Caroline Gilman thought the public wanted to read it. As for Mrs. Wilkinson, she deserved to lose her shoe-buckles" (167). Poe, personally alienated from the Southern aristocracy, attacks that class by presenting Wilkinson as narcissistic and her experiences

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<sup>37</sup> In *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public*, Ronald Zboray explains some of the difficulties involved in distributing the works produced in Northeast publishing centers to other parts of the nation. He argues, "...the railroad did indeed nationalize literary distribution, but not in a simple and predictable way....The uneven development of the national rail system introduced strong geographical biases into the distribution system, cultivating in depth the urban markets of the Northeast served by rail while leaving those of the West and South to evolve more slowly" (66).

as trivial. Through denigrating domestic wartime experiences, he contends that Gilman's efforts to recover a woman's perspective on the Revolutionary War are misguided since that account cannot contribute in a meaningful way to an understanding of the historical narrative. For Poe, the phrase "wartime experiences" seems to be synonymous with "military experiences."<sup>38</sup> Poe's allegiances in this review are based on literary beliefs, class divisions, and gender differences rather than shared geographical space.

Second, just as shared regional identities were not enough to create a productive professional connection, different regional identities were not enough to prohibit such a connection. Poe, once again, provides an example of this. As Moss points out, Poe frequently found himself at odds with Northern editors such as Lewis Gaylord Clark and New England writers such as Longfellow. However, as Moss himself also acknowledges, Poe had productive working relationships with other Northern editors including N. P. Willis and Evert Duyckinck. As Poe and Duyckinck's relationship demonstrates, Southern writers and Northern editors could develop a somewhat symbiotic relationship. Southern writers frequently struggled to gain the attention of even local readers, and working with Northern editors and publishers enabled them to reach a national audience. In return, these Southern writers were able to introduce Northern editors and writers to a Southern audience, and, even more importantly, increase the social capital of Northern editors and writers by serving as evidence that they had the influence and ability necessary to sustain a national, or, at least, interregional coterie. The relationships between William Gilmore Simms and the *Young America* as well as between Edgar A.

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<sup>38</sup> For a more detailed account of Poe's relationships with contemporary female poets and writers, see Eliza Richards's *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*.

Poe and Evert Duyckinck demonstrate the ways that cross-regional connections could benefit both Northern and Southern editors.

### The Young America Movement

During the antebellum period, the Northeastern United States, specifically New York, was the center of the nation's publishing trade and even, in a broader sense, the country's communication system.<sup>39</sup> In *News in the Mail*, Richard Kielbowicz outlines a variety of reasons for this phenomenon including: the region's high population density, a variety of commercial ventures, the number of newspapers, convenient postal schedules, and access to transportation (74). The organization of the national infrastructure enabled Northeastern cities to communicate easily with other areas of the country, resulting in a network centered on New York City. As Kielbowicz observes, "The major commercial cities of the South...remained relatively isolated from one another, but interacted frequently with New York City" (74). It was often easier for Southern writers to communicate with Northern members of the book trade than with other Southern writers, publishers, or printers. As a result of this infrastructure, many Southern editors relied on

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<sup>39</sup> Edward Widmer, in *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City*, emphasizes that by the mid-1840s "New York was not only ahead of Boston in technological development (stereotyping, electrotyping, bookbinding, papermaking, etc.), but in every category of commercial development, including advertising and distribution to the hinterland" (75). In the "Introduction" to *The Industrial Book, 1840-1880*, Scott Casper argues that "improved mechanisms of transportation, credit, and marketing" made New York the center of the American book trade (4). For instance, the Erie Canal, which opened on October 26, 1825, made it much easier for goods to be transported to the West from New York than from Boston.

Northern editors and publishers to promote their works. The division of New York into two literary factions in the 1840s, therefore, significantly impacted Southern writers.<sup>40</sup>

The 1840s witnessed a cataclysmic divide of the New York literati into two distinct factions. On the one side were those Perry Miller refers to as “The Knickerbocker Set.” The Knickerbockers, a loosely-united group that included such prominent figures as Lewis Clark, N.P. Willis, and Richard Kimball, tended to publish in the *North American Review* and the *Knickerbocker Magazine*. This group was primarily composed of Whigs who promoted, as expressed in the *Knickerbocker* literary magazine itself, “a conservative and redeeming influence.” On the other side were the Young Americans who tended to publish in the *New York Review* and *Arcturus*. To support the development of a national literature, this exclusively male group advocated the establishment of more stringent copyright laws.

Young America was not necessarily a stable and consistent group. In *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City*, Edward Widmer recognizes two distinct Young America movements linked by the charismatic John O’Sullivan, who founded and edited the *Democratic Review*. The first movement, aptly labeled Young

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<sup>40</sup> David Dowling argues, “The two major Knickerbocker Circles [the groups I refer to as the Knickerbockers and Young America] were more cohesive and collaborative than [Perry] Miller and others after him...have posited partially in pursuit of a more captivating historical narrative yarn” (15). Dowling goes on to say, “Further, Miller’s *Raven and the Whale*, while a defining and pioneering literary historical narrative of New York literary circles nonetheless would make it appear that the only categories of authorship at the time might be defined by these two circles, which he forces into opposite camps thus obscuring their considerable overlap and mutual exchange of literary ideas and business leads, which were often one and the same” (16). I agree with Dowling that the Knickerbockers and Young America shared ideas and would occasionally publish one another, and that not all New York editors and authors fit comfortably into one of these camps. N.P. Willis, for instance, seems to move fluidly between groups as his own self-interest demands. However, these two groups did have very different understandings of American literary nationalism and represent a significant schism in the New York literary world, a schism that it is productive for scholars to acknowledge.

America I, was primarily active during the 1840s and was “far more intellectual than political” and “strongly believed their generation deserved expression in the republic of letters” (14-15). Many of the literary figures associated with the first movement, such as Evert Duyckinck and Cornelius Mathews, had disengaged from Young America by the beginning of the second movement, conveniently referred to by Widmer as Young America II, which became more vocal during the 1850s and had more overtly political objectives. The first movement, which focused on using literature to cultivate and promote a distinctly American and democratic mode of thought, is the one that is relevant to my current argument.

John Stafford traces the origins of this movement, which was closely allied with the Locofoco and Jacksonian Democrats, to the earlier New York Workingmen’s Party. Stafford suggests, “The Locofoco and Jacksonian Democrats went back to the earlier Jeffersonian doctrines for the basis of their beliefs. Their philosophy of Equal Rights was one which permitted them to discern a fundamental conflict between the business community and farmers and laborers” (3). Rooted in agrarian concepts, the ideologies of Young America and the Locofoco Democrats certainly had the potential to appeal to Southerners.

The Young America movement began to develop and articulate a unique ideological identity through the *Democratic Review*, which was founded in 1837 by two Irishmen: John O’Sullivan and his brother-in-law Samuel D. Langtree.<sup>41</sup> Stafford

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<sup>41</sup> John O’Sullivan and Samuel D. Langtree edited the *Democratic Review* from 1837 to 1841 when O’Sullivan became the sole editor. In 1845 O’Sullivan traveled to London on a diplomatic mission and it is likely that Evert A. Duyckinck and William A. Jones, two other Young Americans, served as acting editors.

suggests that the *Democratic Review* was financially stable enough to adequately pay both its editors and authors. According to Stafford, "...since it [the *Democratic Review*] was paying for creative works, the critics and editors were less tempted than many of the time to pay its writers in critical praise" (7). At the same time, the *Democratic Review* certainly had a specific agenda that is reflected in its literary department—a department full of praises for American writers. The critics writing for the *Democratic Review*, as Stafford himself observes, tended to find "American authors and American books to praise" and to "appeal to the 'reading democracy' on their behalf" (12). Widmer suggests, "The *Review* saw no disjuncture between the struggles to advance partisan interest and foster a new style of writing. The two causes, part and parcel of the umbrella concept of the 'democratic principle,' were seen to be in perfect harmony" (42). The *Review* embraced a "populistic vision of citizens pulling together, sharing responsibility, and refusing the special privileges attached to extreme individualism" (62).

The *Review's* formula for success is articulated by Edward Widmer as: "high-quality articles by authors with Democratic leanings, deep sympathy with popular movements around the world, antipathy toward elitism and exclusionary culture, an eclectic mix of political and literary articles, and overblown editorials calling attention to the importance of it all" (65). The *Democratic Review* remained under the control of the Young America movement until 1846, and it provided ample opportunities for members of the group to express their beliefs and to work for the establishment of a published

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Until John O'Sullivan founded the *Democratic Review*, the Democratic Party had lacked the means for articulating its party platform.

democratic national literature. The Young America movement became a network that promoted writers who espoused nationalistic views.

The major figures in Young America I, or what I will be referring to simply as Young America, were John O'Sullivan, Cornelius Mathews, William A. Jones, and Evert Duyckinck. O'Sullivan primarily focused on overtly political matters and, as the editor of the *Democratic Review*, provided other members of the group opportunities to publish their ideas. Mathews is most widely recognized for advocating for an international copyright law, as well as his forays into writing drama and fiction. Jones wrote fiction as well as criticism, while Duyckinck focused primarily on creating a literary criticism that could foster and sustain a nationalist literature. Mathews and Duyckinck most directly impacted the careers of William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe.

Cornelius Mathews, who appears in current scholarship as “an albatross” to Evert Duyckinck (Widmer 98), has always been a controversial figure, even among those involved in the Young America movement. The November 1845 issue of *Simms's Monthly Magazine* contains an article, most likely by Simms, reviewing Mathews's *Big Abel and Little Manhattan*. This article begins by pointing to John Neal's favorable review of Mathews's *Poems on Man*, but then moves to a critique of the Young American's more recent novel:

Now, Mr. Mathews sits down to write a novel, and his misfortune, to use the word in the Websterian sense, is that he differs in his mode of going to work, from the every day writers of works of his class. He lacks the plausible ground of imitation, the easy insinuating arts of commonplace, by pursuing which he would be praised and forgotten, by avoiding which it is his destiny to be damned and live. He writes from his own feeling and his own experience, uses novel combinations,

starts odd unaccustomed illustrations, is undoubtedly very rash and faulty, but at the same time somewhat original. (315)

Simms first critiques Mathews's process and complains that he writes from his own experiences and feeling. To some extent, Simms is implying that Mathews might harbor some Transcendentalist understandings of the writing process. Simms also complains about Mathews's illustrations and content. While Simms finds substantial fault with the novel, he praises its originality. Simms applauds Mathews for providing a much broader vision of New York and city life than other nineteenth-century works.<sup>42</sup> Simms argues:

He [Mathews] has broken new ground in all his writings, and has already had the testimony to his work, of seeing his ideas bringing forth fruit in the minds of others. He is particularly the cultivator of New-York, as a field for a future ripe literary harvest. He has done something to familiarize the localities of the names of streets, the peculiarities of classes. The present work will show something of the fruits of his previous labors. (322)

In this article Simms acknowledges the influence of New York and celebrates the fact that other Americans can now learn more about this emerging commercial capital.

Poe privately disdained Mathews's writings, but publicly, once Poe joined the Young America movement in the 1840s, he more or less praised Mathews's work. In "An Appendix of Autographs," published in the January 1842 issue of *Graham's Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine*, Poe includes a brief blurb about Mathews. Poe states, "He is a gentleman of taste and judgment, unquestionably" and describes Mathews's signatures as

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<sup>42</sup> A critical notice in the September 1850 issue of *The Southern Quarterly* echoes the earlier sentiments of Simms. The notice, which focused on the novel *Money Penny, or the Heart of the World*, states, "Mr. Mathews has been frequently a subject in our pages, and usually of equal praise and censure. He is one of those perverse men of talent, who vex the critic and criticism, by the exhibition of unquestionable powers, usually applied to ill uses" (266). As Simms stated in the earlier review, this notice focuses on the fact that Mathews chooses his subject matter poorly.

“bold, distinct and picturesque” (45). For the most part, however, the brief statements about Mathews in this article focus on his character rather than his writing.

As a member of the Young America movement, Poe dutifully provided notices of Mathews’s projects. For instance, in the July 19, 1845 issue of *The Broadway Journal*, Poe includes a rather lengthy extract from a paper Mathews read at a meeting of the Eucleian Society (26). Similarly, the “Editorial Miscellany” of August 2, 1845, includes some positive statements about Mathews. Poe states, “Few American writers have been received with more favor than Mr. Mathews in England” (60) and reprints portions of an illustrative review of *Poems on Man*. In both of these cases, Poe presents Mathews in a positive manner without needing to praise his work directly. While Poe’s speech is limited by his dependence on members of the Young America movement for publishing opportunities, he successfully navigates honestly appraising his peer’s work and supporting him.

Although Poe understood the importance of networks and aligned himself with Young America, he struggled to gain full acceptance into any coterie, and frequently seemed annoyed by the attention that Mathews received. It was as clear to Poe as it is to the modern reader that Poe possessed the greater literary talent; yet, due to the social capital Mathews had accumulated through his extensive involvement in Young America, the Northern writer was often more extensively praised than the Southern Poe. For instance, in the “Literary Notices” section of the January 25, 1845 issue of *The Broadway Journal*, Poe reviews the *Southern Quarterly Review* and complains “The longest article in the Review is devoted to the writings of Cornelius Mathews. While the reviewer

complains in no moderate terms of the hardships of American authors, arising from lack of sympathy among their own countrymen, he does not, himself, appear to be aware that there are any other American writers beside the subject of his paper and Judge Longstreet” (61). Frustrated that Mathews, whose literary works lack unity was gaining so much critical attention simply because of his social networks, Poe alienated himself from Young America through caustic reviews of this well-connected hack.

Ironically, however, *The Southern Quarterly Review* article that irritated Poe, “Writings of Cornelius Mathews,” does not present Mathews in a very flattering light. In this article Simms argues that authors should pursue excellence in one literary genre rather than attempt to obtain excellence in all of them.<sup>43</sup> At the same time, Simms acknowledges the unique position of the American writer. Simms writes:

Until literature shall arrive at the dignity of a profession among us, our writers must continue to work under disadvantages, which will impair their confidence in themselves, lessen the strength of their conceptions, and materially diminish the force and beauty of their productions. How long this state of things is to continue, is beyond present speculation; since the genius of the country, unlike that of any other known land, labors under the paralysis occasioned by its indebtedness to other regions, for the largest portion of its thought and literature. Until we can untrammel the nation in this respect, gain our intellectual freedom, and set up wholly for ourselves, the struggles of the native mind must be equally painful and unpromising. (310)

Simms acknowledges that Mathews is attempting to promote a national literature—in all of the genres in which he works—but that the New Yorker is laboring under disadvantages. For Simms, the primary disadvantage was the necessity of relying on

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<sup>43</sup> While this article is unsigned, Simms included a version of these comments in *Views and Reviews in American Literature*, which was published by Wiley & Putnam as part of the Library of American Books series.

income derived from magazine contributions. Since writers must rely on income from periodicals, they are unable to focus on developing their skills in one particular genre. Simms would like to see more opportunities for writers to specialize.<sup>44</sup>

Mathews certainly attempted to change the conditions of the American writer in both his fiction and nonfiction work. In the preface to *The Career of Puffer Hopkins*, a fictional piece about the development of a politician published in 1842, Mathews asserts, “It was the hope of the author when he began the following work, that he might be able to produce a book, in some slight degree, characteristic and national in its features” (iii). Another one of Mathews’s novels, *Big Abel and Little Manhattan*, published in 1845 as part of Wiley & Putnam’s Library of American Books Series, includes a subplot about William, a poor scholar, and his love, Mary. William and Mary celebrate William’s completion of his book and imagine that proceeds from the book will enable them to get married. Unfortunately, just as William’s book is about to be published, books from other countries arrive and need to be quickly published. Referring to a book recently arrived in the United States from England, Williams exclaims, “It must be printed; it must be circulated; and all for the benefit of the people of the United States, who’d complain if they were neglected” (43). A book from France and then one from Germany arrive and are also printed while William waits for the appearance of his book. At one point, the

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<sup>44</sup> Ironically and understandably, market forces impacted Simms’s genre choices as much as they influenced Mathews’s publishing decisions. As Edd Winfield Parks highlights in *William Gilmore Simms as Literary Critic*, after the panic of 1837, the lack of an international copyright, and the proliferation of mammoth weeklies made it difficult for the Southerner to support himself by writing novels, Simms decided to focus on writing nonfiction texts. Between 1842 and 1851, Park argues that Simms “neglected fiction to concentrate heavily on writing history, geography, and especially biography; he devoted an inordinate amount of time and thought to politics, military strategy, and the defense of slavery; he yielded easily to requests for occasional poems and orations; he edited too many impecunious magazines and filled far too many of their pages with hasty hack work” (10).

scholar is spotted on the docks hoping that winds keep a ship from coming to port for another day. The narrator suggests, “A day is all he asks. Another day, and he will have his little hope embarked; then come, as sharply as you will! Good Wind—another day!” (69). Mathews is clearly using the experiences of William and Mary to argue for the necessity of an international copyright.

An outspoken advocate of an international copyright in order to increase the market value of American literary works, Mathews was active in the American Copyright Club, which was established on August 23, 1843. The constitution and bylaws of the club, preserved in the Duyckinck Family Papers at the New York Public Library, describe the purpose of the club as “to procure the enactment of such law or laws as shall place the literary relations of the United States and foreign countries, in reference to copyright, on just, equitable and proper grounds.” While the aim of the club was to create a national movement in support of copyright reform, the organization of the club ensured the New Yorkers founding the organization maintained control over it. The bylaws state that the club will “consist of Twenty five stated members, having a vote in all its meetings and Associate Members in New York and elsewhere in correspondence and cooperating with the club, with no part in its elections....” The American Copyright Club reflects the embedded metropole/periphery relationship between New York and Southern locations.

The New York members of the club were powerful men who maintained a significant amount of control over print production in the United States, and involvement with the American Copyright Club linked Mathews to many prominent American writers,

editors, and publishers. The membership of the Club included William Appleton (the publisher), Charles Hoffman, Parke Godwin, and James Lawson (who is most widely recognized for serving as Simms's literary agent). Mathews, the secretary of the club, was a member of a three-person committee appointed to draft "a manifesto to the friends of International Copyright throughout the United States." William C. Bryant and Fitz Greene Halleck were both nominated to the committee, but Halleck declined the appointment. Simms, an Associate Member of the club, was entrusted with distributing material in Charleston.

Mathews's participation in the activities of the American Copyright Club helped establish his own prominence in New York social circles, but he was passionately dedicated to the cause of International Copyright. *The Various Writings of Cornelius Mathews*, published in 1843 by Harper & Brothers, contains an entire section of essays and materials devoted to the issue of an international copyright. One of these pieces, "A Speech on International Copyright, Delivered at the Dinner to Charles Dickens, at the City Hotel, New York," describes an international copyright as "the only honest turnpike between the readers of two great nations" (357-358). In advancing to this conclusion, however, Mathews indirectly indicts some of his fellow American readers. Mathews states:

The public taste is so deeply affected by the interested laudations of inferior authors by the republishers, that the value of literary reputation, as well as literary property, is greatly impaired. No distinction is made between good writers and bad; they all appear in the same dress, under the same introduction; and the judgment of the general reader is so perplexed that he can not choose between Mr. Dickens and Mr. Harrison Ainsworth—between the classical drama of Talfourd and the vapid farce of Boucicault. (357)

Mathews implies that the general American reader, in the face of overwhelming advertising, is unable to form his or her own opinion on a work. While Mathews's assessment of the situation might have been true, his suggestion that the American masses are to blame for the lack of an American literature is highly controversial and diverges from the general Young America movement's attitude toward the public. For the most part, the Young America movement expressed substantial faith in the public and thought that the public would support an American literature if given the opportunity. In this speech, Mathews seems more interested in appealing to British authors than the American public, which is an oddity in the Young America canon. Despite the unique rhetoric Mathews employs, his insistence on the need for an international copyright law remained consistent and is seen in a variety of Young America publications and essays.

Although Mathews frequently voiced his unique views, his strong personality created some problems for Young America. At times, Mathews's abrasive demeanor and aggressive actions made it difficult for Evert Duyckinck to establish himself in the New York publishing world. While Wiley and Appleton entered into a contract with Duyckinck for him to edit *The Literary World*, they broke the contract when he hired Mathews to be a regular contributor to the weekly journal. Wiley, with his partner George Putnam, had published one of Mathews's books, *Big Abel and the Little Manhattan*, in the Library of American Books series, a series edited by Evert Duyckinck. Unfortunately, however, Mathews was unhappy with way this book was promoted. On Nov. 7, 1845, George Putnam wrote a letter to Evert reassuring him that the work was being treated

with the same respect as any other book published by the house. In a letter dated Dec. 19, 1845, Putnam reminds Duyckinck of the publisher's vested interest in the success of Mathews's title, writing, "Mr. Mathews has always treated me with great courtesy & I have no motive whatever for any prejudice & want of good feeling towards him. Whether I admire his writings or not matters little—I should certainly be as glad as yourself to have them made as popular as the best of Dickens." Despite Putnam's investment in Mathews's success, the writer's continual complaints about the treatment of his poorly written and poorly received books earned him a negative reputation among the New York literati.

While Mathews was critiqued from within his circle, those outside Young America attacked his work even more aggressively. In 1847 Rufus Griswold severely critiques Mathews in *The Prose Writers of America*. He accuses Mathews of having an "unnatural" style and of being "vulgar" (543). Griswold, however, attributes Mathews's writing difficulties to his involvement with the Young America movement rather than, like Simms, to the novelist's dedication to originality. Griswold argues, "Mr. Mathews...wrote very good English and very good sense until he was infected with the disease of building up a national literature" (544). Griswold's primary complaint is that the Young America movement too narrowly defines American literature. As Griswold writes, "Of genuine nationality they seem to have no just apprehension. It has little to do with any peculiar collocation of words, but is the pervading feeling and opinion of a country, leavening all its written thought" (544). Griswold is concerned that American is being defined by sentiment rather than nationality. The Young America movement was

concerned with promoting native authors, but that was mainly because of the unfair market practices that emerged in the absence of international copyright.

Mathews was perhaps the loudest and most controversial member of Young America, but Evert Duyckinck, the literary editor of the *Democratic Review*, was the center of this network. Duyckinck envisioned an America united through literature and used the *Review* to work toward this reality. Evert Duyckinck significantly expanded the role and function of the American editor, yet his numerous contributions to American literature have not received the attention that they deserve. Duyckinck's editorial career can be traced to 1836 when he formed the Tetractys Club with three of his friends: William A. Jones, Jedediah B. Auld, and Russell Trevett. Cornelius Mathews, George Duyckinck (Evert's brother), and William Butler frequently attended club meetings and heavily influenced Duyckinck's emerging literary sensibilities. While the group published only thirty copies of one issue of a journal, *The Literary: A Miscellany for the Town* (Roche 9), in 1840 Evert Duyckinck became one of the editors of *Arcturus: A Journal of Books and Opinion*. This journal appeared for approximately two years—from December 1840 to May 1842—and established Duyckinck as a significant player in the New York publishing world. Poe famously said that *Arcturus* was a “little too good to enjoy extensive popularity” (Butler 7).

After Evert Duyckinck's death, his close friend William Butler briefly referenced Poe's pithy appraisal of *Arcturus* as a way of implying that the Southerner held the work in high esteem; however, a closer examination of Poe's statement in its original context suggests that he had a much more negative view of the periodical. Volume III of the 1850

edition of *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by N.P. Willis and R.W. Griswold, includes an essay by Poe on Evert A. Duyckinck. In this essay Poe writes, “The magazine was, upon the whole, a little too good to enjoy extensive popularity—although I am here using an equivocal phrase, for a *better* journal might have been far more acceptable to the public” (64). As Poe continues to analyze the failure of this magazine, he argues that “‘Arcturus’ looked ‘dull’ even though it wasn’t...” (64). He explains, “It cannot be said of ‘Arcturus’ exactly that it wanted force. It was deficient in power of impression, and this deficiency is to be attributed mainly to the exceeding brevity of its articles—a brevity that degenerated into mere paragraphism, precluding dissertation or argument, and thus all permanent effect. The magazine, in fact, had some of the worst or most inconvenient features without any of the compensating advantages of a weekly literary newspaper” (64). This critical statement suggests that *Arcturus* struggled because of genre problems as its format did not correspond closely enough to its purpose. Yet, by focusing on the genre issues, Poe is couching the failure of *Arcturus* as the periodical experiment that eventually allowed the Duyckinck brothers to experience great success as the editors of the very successful weekly *Literary World*. At the same time, Poe’s criticism of *Arcturus* points to his evolving relationship with the Young America movement.

*Arcturus*, a monthly literary magazine-review hybrid with the motto “Sound Opinions in a Cheerful Frame,” was edited by the Young Americans Evert Duyckinck and Cornelius Mathews. In the preface to the first issue the two editors joke, “The late James Smith in one of his humorous sketches, said of his hero, that he was accustomed to

lie like the prospectus of a new magazine.” While Duyckinck and Mathews recognize the limitations of the genre of the magazine prospectus, they promise, “In mutual good faith and understanding we shall continue the journey with the reader while the route is an agreeable one, and our courier, the publisher, still satisfies us there is enough in the pouch to pay the travelling expenses.” By treating the reader as an equal and by focusing on the various roles that impact the success of a journal, the two editors indirectly reveal their deeply engrained democratic beliefs. The theme of writing as inherently social continues in the “Prologue” of the same issue. In this part of the magazine the editors state, “Writing has become quite as common, in its way, as talking: still, the best talker has no right to obtrude himself upon others without an introduction, a law of good society which applies with equal force to a periodical writer who desires for himself the honor of familiarity with his readers” (1). By comparing writing to talking, the editors invite their audience into a conversation. Of course, this conversation is more of a monologue as the editors are the only ones actually “speaking” and their readers are cast as perpetual listeners. Alternatively, the role of the reader can be understood as that of spectator. *Arcturus* was a product of the rise of the celebrity author, and readers were invited to gaze on the developing literary social scene.

Duyckinck had substantial social capital that he leveraged to develop *Arcturus* by appealing to the most popular writers of the day.<sup>45</sup> For instance, Duyckinck took

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<sup>45</sup> Of course, Evert Duyckinck’s social capital and professional contacts also increased through his involvement with *Arcturus*. For instance, Frederick Norton wrote a letter to Duyckinck on June 19, 1841, asking for help finding employment. In his appeal, Norton points out, “I think I may be permitted to refer you, for any information in regards to my character, &c., to ...C.G. Dean, one of the publishers of ‘Arcturus,’ in whose offices I am occasionally employed.” Norton actually underlines the title of the periodical twice, underscoring his connection to Duyckinck.

advantage of his professional and social connections to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to ask the famous poet to contribute to *Arcturus*. In a letter dated November 24, 1840, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow discussed the magazine:

I like very much the plan of your work, and its title; and I feel confident that it will be a very gentlemanly and scholar-like affair. But as the poem, you speak of, I cannot provide it; because I rely somewhat on my pen to stretch out the ends of my moderate income. You shall, however, find my name among your subscribers, and I will do what I can here to advance your interests.

Although Longfellow initially refused to donate his intellectual labors, he did subscribe to the publication and committed himself to promoting the magazine. Eventually Longfellow provided a poem for the periodical. In a letter dated November 9, 1841, Longfellow states, “I send you the foregoing lines for *Arcturus*. You will see at a glance, that it is a piece not to be bought and sold, but to be given where it will be understood.” Exchanged between colleagues as an expression of good will, the poem is meant for those who can understand it or read it sympathetically. The transfer of the poem suggests that Duyckinck, as an editor, had cultivated a relationship between himself and Longfellow and, in turn, Longfellow trusts Duyckinck to curate the relationship between the poet and the general public. Nineteenth-century editors constantly negotiated a wide variety of relationships between themselves, other writers, and the general public.

In the “Prologue” to the first issue of *Arcturus*, Duyckinck and Mathews move from a discussing the relationships created among writers, editors, and readers to advocating for a national literature. This portion of the preface neatly captures several

tenets of the Young America movement. First, echoing sentiments expressed by Ralph Waldo Emerson in “The American Scholar” and “Divinity School Address,” Duyckinck and Mathews contend that every generation needs the opportunity to express itself in its own books: “But every age, nay every year, needs its own writers; there is no more an end of writing than of thinking, new topics are always occurring which require new arrangements of thought to meet them....The demand for new periodical literature is perpetual, always fresh, always eager” (2). Second, the two editors express the need for a distinctly American literature. They write, “Books are our sole world of thought out of ourselves. Yet from various causes few of these books are of native origins. In view of the well-known paucity of home literature, it certainly cannot appear unreasonable to ask encouragement for the production of at least one volume more which shall bear the impress of a true American spirit” (3). In this passage the two editors argue that literature provides a point of connection with others and, by extension, imply that texts can help establish a community. They also suggest that it is a duty to encourage the development of a national literature. Interestingly, on multiple occasions these arguments are directly adapted by Simms to argue for the necessity of a Southern literature. The American nationalism developed by Young America could easily be used to argue for Southern literary nationalism.

The articles in *Arcturus* tend to express opinions that would be agreeable to most people embracing a Southern identity. For instance, echoing the stance of conservative Southerners such as Simms, *Arcturus* expresses various concerns about the Transcendentalists. In the article aptly titled “Ralph Waldo Emerson,” William A. Jones

describes Emerson as “the leader of the new Boston school of philosophy—the sect of wise men from the east; a school which has a certain daring, transcendental spirit of its own, but (so far as we can discover) holding no very precise doctrines, and without any one bond of union” (279). He expresses disdain for the group’s lack of a clear and logical system of thought and suggests that “In treating with them, you must have a large share of faith, or rather credulity” (279). Jones clearly indicates skepticism of the Transcendentalist’s lack of a coherent ideology, but Duyckinck, who tended to be more tolerant, might have had a different understanding of the group. Ezra Greenspan argues that Duyckinck “had known Emerson’s writings for years and regarded them, even when he disagreed with their philosophical conclusions, as occupying the foremost position in American thought and expression” (683). Obviously, those involved in the Young America movement had differences of opinions about literary matters. At the same time, Young America tended to be very welcoming to Southern writers and intellectuals.

Many articles in *Arcturus* illustrate the Young America emphasis on preserving the Union and recognizing the interests of different sections. One such pro-Southern article, signed by J.M. Van Cott, Esq., is devoted to the Virginia Controversy and centers around the issue of returning fugitive slaves. In July 1839, a Virginian charged three New Yorkers with stealing an enslaved person, Isaac, and demanded that the three criminals face trial in the South. The article explains that the Governor of New York, Seward, does not think that the fugitives should be returned because, according to New York statutes, they did not commit a crime in aiding the slave. In this article Cott argues that “...the federal constitution recognizes slaves as property, wherever State laws so regard them”

(364) and that “For certain purposes, the several States are independent sovereignties” (365). These premises allow the author to construct an argument demanding that the New Yorkers be tried for stealing the property of the Virginian. The conclusion of the article asserts, “The Constitution cannot be violated with impunity. It is the great ligament which binds the free States of our noble Union into a mighty brotherhood. And yet we have seen it sported with as though it were a mere stake for gamblers. Accursed be the political Judas that would betray it,—accursed the political Ishmael who would lay his hands upon it with violence” (371). Emphasizing the importance of preserving individuality and freedom within the Union, Cott interprets several of the most controversial aspects of the constitution in a manner that favors the typical Southern view and then presents those interpretations as sacred.

This article illustrates the establishment of what Terence Whalen refers to in *Edgar Allan Poe and the Masses* as “average” racism, the type of racism that resulted from publishers and editors attempting to develop a stance on slavery-related issues that would appeal to the masses. As Whalen argues, “In order to understand the complex relation between race and literature, moreover, it is also necessary to account for the pressures of literary nationalism and a national literary market, because these pressures put constraints on commercial writers in all regions and contributed to the always unfinished formation of what might be called average racism” (111). Whalen uses the idea of average racism to explain Thomas White’s editorial position in the *Southern Literary Messenger*. Whalen writes:

...the slavery question also exposed internal divisions within the *Messenger's* Southern audience. In such a market, economic and ideological forces became fused, and White accordingly attempted to cultivate an average racism that would appeal to a majority of his subscribers. Average racism, however, was easier said than done. White could safely defend the South from the attacks of Northern 'fanatics,' but he was less certain about whether he should represent slavery as a positive good or a necessary evil, or whether he should take a position on African colonization, that is, on plans to deport American blacks to the African colony of Liberia. (124)

According to Whalen, White struggled to articulate a racism that would appeal to a divergent group of Southern readers. In *Arcturus* we see Young America trying to articulate a policy on slavery and abolition that would appeal to an even more fragmented national audience. Obviously, the position articulated in Cott's article would not have appealed to abolitionists, but, at this point, the abolitionist movement was still in its early stages and the abolitionists were as yet only a vocal minority. In Young America's efforts to include Southerners in the development of a national literature, the group tended to adopt racist stances. Of course, there was diversity of opinion among the members of Young America on this topic. For instance, Evert Duyckinck's and William Gilmore Simms's disagreements surrounding the issues of slavery lead them to stop corresponding with one another during the Civil War.

Evert Duyckinck was committed to promoting the literature of each section of America, a commitment that he maintained throughout his involvement with the Young America movement. After *Arcturus* failed,<sup>46</sup> Duyckinck became the editor of Wiley &

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<sup>46</sup> William Allen Butler, who delivered a memorial upon Evert Duyckinck's death, argues, "There is this difference between the failures of ventures in journalism and ordinary business reverses, that while the types and presses and mechanical appliances by which they are carried on may figure in a bankruptcy schedule as very unavailable assets, the written words to which they have given permanent form and expression on the printed page remain and become a part of the great body of literature to survive and to

Putnam's Library of Choice Reading and Library of American Books. As the editor of this collection, Duyckinck supported the publication of such Southern writers as Simms and Poe. In fact, Simms's connection to *Young America* was solidified by having two volumes of his work (*The Wigwam and the Cabin* and *Views and Reviews of American Literature*) included in this series. There are two very useful resources on Duyckinck's involvement with these publishing projects: Arthur Roche's 1973 dissertation, "A Literary Gentleman in New York: Evert Duyckinck's Relationship with Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, and William Gilmore Simms," and Ezra Greenspan's 1992 article, "Evert Duyckinck and the History of Wiley and Putnam's Library of American Books, 1845-1847." Roche points out that Duyckinck's decision to work with Wiley & Putnam indicated a commitment to the development of a democratic American literature as this publishing firm was the first to treat authors as professionals whose work deserved fair compensation. According to Roche, "If a writer published a work in the Library of American Books, he received ten percent of the profits after the cost of the edition had been paid" (39-40). Just as important as Duyckinck's decision to work with a publisher friendly to native authors are the authors he included in the Library of American Books.

Duyckinck demonstrates his critical acumen by the impressive array of authors he included in the Library of American Books. Some of the original works published as part of this series include Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* and Edgar A.

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find their permanent place and value if they are intrinsically worthy of preservation. Many a famous or well-deserving poem, essay or article has first seen the light as a contribution to some short-lived magazine or journal which may have served as a kind of fire-escape for the genius imperilled by its destruction" (9). I tend to agree with him.

Poe's *The Raven and Other Poems* as well as Poe's *Tales*. As Greenspan emphasizes, the breadth of nineteenth-century American literature can also be seen in this series:

Duyckinck was able to publish writers who "took American literature in new directions, whether of geography, philosophy, or genre" (690).

In general, the Library of American Books received positive press and reviews, but the review of the Library in *Simms's Monthly Magazine* was oddly ambivalent. In "Library of American Books," Simms complains:

It will do the books no good which they put forth in this series. Better far had they been put forth without a beat of drum, unpretendingly, to take their chance without name or advertisement. There is another presumption in the popular mind, and not the least significant, which will be likely to work against the success of this Library. It is that the books will be more costly than those of foreign origin. They are copy-righted, and such have been the pains taken by rascally and interested parties to persuade the public of the exorbitance of native authorship, that, to name them as domestic productions, is at once to discourage their sale—and this, too, without inquiry. (129)

While Simms does not directly critique the Library or the works in it, he doubts that the series will accomplish its aims. He also seems concerned about the way that the press was used to promote the books. But he quickly moves from these general qualms about the success of the series to focusing on issues of copyright and to examining two specific books: *Journal of an African Cruiser*, edited by Nathaniel Hawthorne,<sup>47</sup> and *Tales* by

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<sup>47</sup> For more information about Hawthorne's involvement in the publication of this work, see Patrick Brancaccio's "'The Black Man's Paradise': Hawthorne's Editing of the *Journal of an African Cruiser*." Brancaccio contends that Hawthorne became involved in arranging and creating this text as a way of aligning himself with the Democratic Party. Brancaccio writes, "Through the editing of the *Journal of an African Cruiser*, Hawthorne was able to identify himself with Bridge's qualified support for colonization based on the belief that blacks and white could not live on equal and peaceful terms in the United States. This position helped to reassure influential Democrats about the former Brook Farmer and may have helped clear the way to his appointment as Surveyor of the Custom House at Salem in 1846" (23-24).

Poe. Simms admits that he has not yet received his copy of Poe's work, but he still laments that these two books "are not great books...There is nothing wonderful about them, nothing very startling, very brilliant or very original" (130). Simultaneously, Simms praises Poe's past work. Simms writes, "...we venture to assert that his book possesses more sterling genius, more genuine imaginative power, more art, and more analysis, than can be found in five-eighths of the tale writers of Great Britain put together" (130). The seemingly incompatible views contained in this one volume might reveal more about the pressures Simms was under as editor of his fledgling periodical than about what he actually thought about the texts at hand.

Although the Library was not financially successful, it highlights the shifting culture surrounding publishing and points to Duyckinck's increasing literary power.<sup>48</sup> During the 1840s, Duyckinck found himself at the center of the New York publishing work. As Greenspan writes:

With a major publishing supporting his ideas and committing its resources to his plan, with a far-flung network of personal and professional connections among writers and editors, and with literary editorial control over the prestigious *Democratic Review* and *New York Morning News* as well as influence with numerous periodical editors in New York and elsewhere, Duyckinck had maneuvered himself into a situation of editorial influence unprecedented in American literary history.

Duyckinck was at the height of his power, and he used his capital to foster the development of the professional literary critic as well as a national literature. Duyckinck

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<sup>48</sup> As Roche explains, "Although culturally significant and personally rewarding to Duyckinck, the Library of Choice Reading and the Library of American Books were financially disappointing. The prices for the volumes varied according to size from thirty-seven and a half cents to seventy-five cents for books in wrappers, to the maximum of a dollar and twenty-five cents for a volume in cloth. Even at these low prices, the series could not compete without the protection of better international copyright regulation" (45).

understood the editor as a critic who educated the public on literary matters. As Arthur Roche claims, Duyckinck viewed the critic as “a kind of priest or prophet whose duty was the cultivation of the public taste” (22). When the *New Yorker* had access to periodicals and other such platforms, he touted the importance of the objective or independent reviewer. Once his accumulated social and cultural capital dispersed, however, he primarily focused on advocating for an American national literature.

Although Duyckinck’s influence declined during the 1850s, he still worked tirelessly to promote an American literature inclusive of both the North and the South.<sup>49</sup> He is probably best known now for his work with his brother, George, on the *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, which was published by Charles Scribner in 1855. In the preface to this tome Duyckinck announces:

The design of the *Cyclopedia* is to bring together as far as possible in one book convenient for perusal and reference, memorials and records of the various writers of the country and their works, from the earliest period to the present day. In the public and private library it is desirable to have at hand the means of information on a number of topics which associate themselves with the lives of persons connected with literature. (iii)

The *Cyclopedia of American Literature* endeavors to create a comprehensive and inclusive history of United States literature. Even though the political tension between the North and South was increasing, Duyckinck remained committed to including representative Southern writers in this reference guide. He himself underscores this point in the preface to the work stating, “It has been an object in this work to exhibit fairly and

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<sup>49</sup> John Stafford points out that “...the Young Americans of New York—all still only in their thirties—could in 1850 look back on certain solid achievements as literary critics. They added new dimensions to American literary criticism” (124).

amply all portions of the country. The literature of the South is here more fully displayed than ever before” (vii). As Edward Widmer acknowledges, the geographical diversity of Duyckinck’s work in the midst of such politically turbulent times points to the depth of his commitment to the idea of “Americanism in Literature” (120). As David Dowling suggests, the *Cyclopedia of American Literature* was Duyckinck’s “love letter to the profession, a chronicling of the authors of his time commonly underestimated in terms of its inclusiveness...” (7). The *Cyclopedia of American Literature* achieves in book form what Duyckinck accomplished through periodicals and personal correspondence during the previous decade.

To edit the *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, Duyckinck depended on his substantial social and professional capital. To solicit information from writers, he distributed a circular; many well-known writers responded positively to this letter. In a letter dated December 4, 1854, Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney replies to Duyckinck brothers’ request for information by pointing them to previously published reference material. Yet, she also writes, “Any article from such a source as the Mess. Duyckinck will of course possess literary excellence, and I shall esteem it a great favor if they would permit me to see it in manuscript, ere its publication...I might be able to suggest something of interest, omitted in the previously mentioned sketches.” Sigourney stresses that she would like Evert and George Duyckinck to use available information to draft a biographical account of her life and then to show her the sketch so that she would have the option to revise it. While the celebrated poet clearly desires to control her image, she also acknowledges the status of the brothers in this letter. Nineteenth-century publishing

involved a substantial amount of networking. David Dowling argues, “The history of American literary circles exposes the networks through which authors moved, and how each writer’s currency as they circulated throughout the literary market was largely attributed to their coterie affiliation” (9). Duyckinck cultivated an extensive network of writers and editors.

Although Duyckinck was generally highly regarded, his work was occasionally criticized by those outside his coterie. Even the celebrated *Cyclopedia of American Literature* had its detractors. In *The Cyclopedia of American Literature: A Review*, Rufus W. Griswold, a Whig, complains that the text does not adhere to chronological order, misrepresents New England, is riddled with grammatical and factual errors, does not include Native American writers, does include foreign writers, and plagiarizes from his own reference volumes.

While Duyckinck’s work might have been criticized, he was rarely personally attacked. In “The Literati of New York City,” Poe asserts that Duyckinck “...seems in perpetual good humor with all things, and I have no doubt that in his secret heart he is an optimist” (16). The commercial value of an untarnished public persona is evident in the fact that Rufus Griswold tirelessly worked to protect his brand. In a July 24, 1846, letter to Duyckinck, Griswold writes:

Speaking of Poe reminds me of the brutal article in the Mirror which it is impossible on any grounds whatever to justify in the slightest degree. I, who have as much cause of any man to quarrel with Poe, would sooner have cut off my hand than used it to write such an ungentlemanly card, though every word were true. But my indignation in this treatment even of an enemy exceeds my power of expression.

These remarks allow Griswold to establish himself as a gentleman who treats his enemies fairly while simultaneously expressing his disdain for Poe. It was challenging to safely navigating the coteries and the social politics of nineteenth-century print culture. Yet, Duyckinck's personal character, in addition to his editorial and publishing positions, enabled him to cultivate a professional network of literary people who used that network to advance an American literary nationalism. Due to his professional demeanor, Duyckinck was able to create productive relationships with writers and editors from across the country. Duyckinck's alliance with Simms, for example, strengthened both editors' commitment to nationalism, and, inadvertently, encouraged the rise of pro-Confederate rhetoric.

#### Acts of Allegiance: Simms and Young America

Nineteenth-century print culture was divided along multiple axes including class, gender, political, and sectional lines. Building relationships across these divisions was a difficult endeavor, and, even though Duyckinck was exceptionally tactful and eloquent, he still sometimes struggled. By all accounts, Duyckinck was confident in his editorial abilities, which occasionally caused difficulties between him and Simms. As Roche argues, "Throughout this literary relationship between Simms and Duyckinck there occurred, not overtly but subtly, a desire by Simms to make Duyckinck aware that he was the literary artist, and that Duyckinck was the editor. Yet Duyckinck was sure of his position and abilities, limited as they were, and by his very nature felt no urge to be continually proving his authority. Simms, on the other hand, felt this urge" (146). Some

of the conflict between Duyckinck and Simms can be attributed to differences in their ages and career trajectory. Simms was ten years older than Duyckinck. When the two met, Simms was already the celebrated (Southern) author of fourteen novels, nine poetry volumes, and four nonfiction texts. Furthermore, Simms had edited four periodicals. At the same time, as Edd Parks suggests, “His [Simms’s] reputation had suffered from the prejudice against a native writer, and his sales had suffered from the competition of cheaply-priced imports” (93). Simms’s career was at a vulnerable point, and he needed to build professional connections. Although Simms was older than Duyckinck, Duyckinck was often in positions to make the final decisions about fraught literary-political matters. For instance, when Duyckinck was compiling the *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, Simms contributed a substantial amount of information about Southern writers. According to Roche, Simms suggested that Duyckinck include approximately seventy Southern writers but Duyckinck rejected about twenty-six of those names (148).

Despite the occasional power struggle, Evert Duyckinck and William Gilmore Simms generally enjoyed a close, and symbiotic, professional relationship.<sup>50</sup> Living in South Carolina, Simms desperately needed a connection to New York, the nation’s publishing center, and Duyckinck fulfilled this function. For twenty-seven years, Duyckinck, much like James Lawson, acted as Simms’s literary agent by keeping Simms

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<sup>50</sup> For the most part, Simms and Evert Duyckinck had a relatively collegial relationship, although their relationship became strained when Duyckinck edited the *Literary World* and Simms edited the *Southern Quarterly Review*. The two primary topics of disagreement were Cornelius Mathews and sectional politics. William Jones helped restore the friendship of the two men in 1850, but the war disrupted their correspondence. After the Civil War, however, Duyckinck helped move Simms’s manuscript collection of Revolutionary War documents to the Long Island Historical Society and continued to promote Simms’s work in the North. As Roche reports, Duyckinck would peddle Simms’s reviews and articles among various publishers.

abreast of the literary action in New York and circulating Simms's manuscripts to potential publishers.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Duyckinck, who believed that American literature should inherently be a regional literature, needed a Southern writer like Simms to articulate Southern culture within a Young America ideological framework. Just as Simms needed a connection to the North, Duyckinck needed a connection to the South.

The relationship between Duyckinck and Simms primarily served a professional function as it was in the interest of each editor to collaborate. From Simms's perspective, his goals and objectives generally aligned with those of Young America; he therefore was willing to invest a substantial amount of time and energy in maintaining this particular social network. However, Simms's allegiance to the Young America movement came with a cost as it caused him difficulties with members of other New York groups such as the Knickerbockers.

Unfortunately, few scholarly sources focus on Simms's strained relationship with members of the Knickerbocker faction. In fact, John Gibbs's thesis, "William Gilmore Simms and *The Magnolia*," remains one of the few works that delves into Simms's fraught interactions with the "Knickerbocker set." To analyze this relationship, Gibbs examines the tense exchanges between the two factions that occurred in the pages of *The Magnolia* and the *Knickerbocker*. Revisiting these understudied primary sources reveals

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<sup>51</sup> Much has been written about the relationship between Simms and Lawson (for instance, see John Guilds's *Simms: A Literary Life*), and Lawson certainly played a pivotal role in Simms's career. Lawson introduced Simms to the influential Harper family, who published his first two novels, *Martin Faber* (September 1833) and *Guy Rivers* (June/July 1834). Essentially, it was through Lawson that Simms gained access to a national audience. However, the critical emphasis placed on Simms's relationship with Lawson has inadvertently minimized the significance of Simms's relationship with other prominent New Yorkers, such as Evert Duyckinck, who is of paramount importance when examining Simms's editorial and periodical work. Simms's nascent commitment to the development of a distinctly Southern literature was reinforced by his contact with Young America.

that Simms's relationship with Evert Duyckinck not only impacted the practical contours of his career but influenced his ideological development. To elaborate, Young America's commitment to a nationalistic literature encouraged and shaped Simms's desire for a Southern literature.

As the editor of the Southern periodical *The Magnolia*, Simms, firmly on the side of Young America, became embroiled in controversy with the Northern literary magazine the *Knickerbocker*, edited in its heyday and at the time of the controversy by Lewis Gaylord Clark. Prior to Simms's increased involvement with Young America, Simms and the *Knickerbocker* had enjoyed a relatively positive relationship from 1833 until 1842. During this period, the New York magazine reviewed a wide assortment of his work, including an individual poem, a poetry collection, eight short stories, and a short story collection. The tone of these reviews is somewhat patronizing. For instance, the *Knickerbocker's* 1833 review of the poem "Atalantis; A story of the Sea" suggests that the poem was difficult to parse with the exclamation that, "Those who sifted well through it, were sure to attain eminence." Amidst such sarcastic barbs, however, the review also remarks that "There is pregnant matter" in Simms and acknowledges his "nimble wit" (311). The *Knickerbocker's* reviews of "Atalantis: A Story of the Sea" must have been particularly difficult to receive as this poem is often cited as being the work that garnered Simms attention in the literary circles of New York. The majority of the *Knickerbocker's* reviews of his work discuss Simms as possessing potential. In addition to reviews of Simms's own writings, the *Knickerbocker* published two notices recommending and

supporting *The Magnolia*. The proprietors of *The Magnolia* were so pleased with these that they reprinted one of the notices in promotional materials. Yet, as Edd Parks observes, "...Simms invariably allied himself either with unpopular causes or with losing factions" (3). The exchanges between these two periodicals support this narrative of Simms as the perennial underdog.

The brief, but intense, controversy between *The Magnolia* and the *Knickerbocker* surrounding the relationship between regional and national literature(s) lasted eleven months, from November 1841 to September 1842. The dispute arose when *The Magnolia* articulated the need for a Southern literature in a way that the *Knickerbocker* read as aggressive and offensive. In September 1841, an article in *The Magnolia* stated, "the Northern Press cannot supply the South with such periodicals as the wants of a Southern community demand" (431). This issue of *The Magnolia* also included statements indicating that the magazine wants to "support our own literature, and our own writers" (431). Gibbs suggests that the issues between the two periodicals arose from miscommunication, but clearly *The Magnolia* was declaring that the South was a distinct community deserving (and needing) specific types of periodicals. When the role of periodicals in the formation of national identities is acknowledged, it becomes more obvious that through this periodical, Southern writers were attempting to declare a type of intellectual and cultural independence from the North. Simms, as editor of *The Magnolia*, was aggressively advocating for the formation of a unique Southern culture.

While Simms understood national literature as involving a plurality of ideological views, those in the *Knickerbocker* group tended to define national literature as a unified

and cohesive entity. In November 1841 the *Knickerbocker* emphasized this view by publishing the article “Southern and Western Periodical Literature,” a direct reaction to *The Magnolia*’s call for a distinctly Southern literature. The anonymous author of this article asserts, “American talent is not local or provincial....For our own parts, we would know no sectional literature” (461). Furthermore, the writer asserts that “the pages of a single number of the *Knickerbocker* have contained communications from every section of our noble and beloved country” (461). In this article representative geographical coverage is privileged over ideological pluralism and the author uses geographical coverage to argue that the *Knickerbocker* as a national—rather than regional—periodical. Furthermore, the article implies that Northeastern literature is representative of American literature while Southern publications are inherently provincial. The *Knickerbocker* is positioning itself as a catalyst for national communication and nation-building as it claims that the views of different regions are collated in this one publication. The regions become a nation by being published together in one nationally distributed magazine.

*The Magnolia* replied to the *Knickerbocker*’s call for a national, rather than a sectional, literature by foreshadowing Walt Whitman in expressing a pluralistic understanding of America. Asserting that the publication is merely trying to “foster the youthful” and “draw out the talent of one writer and open before him the means and opportunities of improvement” in the South (524), the article asserts that the talents of Southern writers need to be encouraged as a way of promoting the development of a national literature that does indeed represent the different regions. The article underscores that there is a difference in writing from and for a people as the author suggests that

Southern literature bears the marks of Southern society and geography and does not necessarily need to be vetted through a centralized publishing venue. This article expresses Simms's view that a national literature should be composed of various local literatures.

*The Magnolia* published the next public jab in this debate regarding the value of a sectional literature. The April 1842 issue, the first issue edited by Simms, includes an article discussing the privilege afforded Northern periodicals. It states, "there is some little arrogance in the assumption that our magazine is the sectional magazine, and yours the national one. The truly, and only national magazine is that which asserts the character of its people, speaks to their wants and represents their honorable interests" (251). Furthermore, the author states, "If we do not make our work national, it will be because we fail in making it sectional" (251). In this remark the author is clearly expressing an ideology in line with that of the Young Americans who also asserted that the national is in many ways a composite of the sectional or the regional.

The next month, the *Knickerbocker* published a paragraph praising certain Southern periodicals—including the *Southern Messenger* and the *Orion*—for being "found too sensible to indulge in invective against the literature of the North and East in contradistinction to that of the South; a matter always sufficiently harmless, certainly, and sometimes particularly amusing, especially to those who are in the secret, and know why 'the grumblers grumble'" (496). This implicit condemnation of *The Magnolia* was noticed by Simms, who directly addressed the slur in the next issue of his periodical. Defending *The Magnolia*, Simms writes, "The close of this *Knickerbocker* paragraph will

need but few words. There is something meant to be very sly and very significant in the last sentence. Our readers have remarked how completely the Editor, in all this article speaks by innuendo. He seeks to disparage magazines which he does not name, by lauding others which he has never seen” (496).

After this issue, the conflict shifts from issues of nationalism and sectionalism to the more personal, with Simms accusing the *Knickerbocker* of plagiarizing a poem that he had written on the occasion of the death of one of his children. While the debate surrounding the relationship of sectional (or Southern) literature to national literature is not resolved in exchanges between these two publications, the *Knickerbocker* does work toward a truce. In August 1842 the *Knickerbocker* published a statement, “Let the South support her periodicals. She owes it to herself to do so. Let Southern writers make them the medium of their contributions; for such is their duty. All this, however, as we have before remarked, is not incompatible with a wide and general literary intercommunication in a Republic of Letters” (199). For the *Knickerbocker*, Southern literature was valuable to the extent that it reflected American ideas—the South remained regional and the North remained universal. The essay concludes, “this touching record of his domestic affliction shall obliterate from our mind all remembrance of the ungracious words which reach us between the same covers; nor shall we hereafter permit ourselves to peruse a line from the writer’s pen that may be calculated to change the kindly impressions with which we close these hurried and interpolated thoughts” (199). While the *Knickerbocker* had the last word in this series of exchanges, *The Magnolia’s* contributions are perhaps the more interesting. By looking at *The Magnolia’s* articulation of the differences between a

sectional and a Southern literature, we see the development of a more pluralistic model of literary achievement.

For Simms, a national literature, rather than being a unifying cultural entity, is a collection of local or sectional literatures. In other words, Simms believed that a national literature should aspire to be geographically diverse rather than universal. To support the development of such a wide-ranging American literature, Simms turned to periodicals where he had the opportunity to encourage young writers to speak from the margins. Simms acted as a liaison between the Northern literati and Southern writers by articulating to Northern editors the importance of publishing diverse groups of writers while explaining the business of publishing to young writers. Including Simms in discussions of antebellum book history shifts our understanding of the geographic boundaries of regional literature by demonstrating that Southern writers were intricately connected to Northern publishing centers.

#### An Act: Edgar A. Poe and His Social Networks

While Simms was a popular antebellum Southern writer heavily invested in nationalism, Poe was a struggling artist more interested in cosmopolitanism. Simms and Poe cultivated very different public personas, yet they surprisingly found themselves in similar professional networks. As already mentioned, both authors were published in the Library of American Books. Both were also published in the 1840 edition of *The Gift*, published in Philadelphia by E.L. Carey and A. Hart, which contains “The Lazy Cow” by

Simms and “William Wilson” by Poe.<sup>52</sup> Although these two authors traveled in similar circles and had significant connections to the Young America movement, each had very different strategies for managing his respective networks. As a wealthy planter, Simms had the luxury of organizing his professional ties around his ideological commitments and, therefore, tended to be much more firmly committed to his network. (As previously discussed, he demonstrated his loyalty to the Young America movement through his unwavering commitment to the group’s ideology in his public argument with the Knickerbocker set.) Simms intentionally developed a unified and coherent professional network centered on Young America, but Poe, who faced significant financial difficulties, elected to diversify his network and connections by establishing relationships with both the Young America movement and the editor N.P. Willis, who tended to associate more with the Knickerbocker set.

While Poe was not a member of Young America, his tangential affiliation with this coterie significantly impacted his career. Poe’s relationship with the Young America movement, as would be expected, had a difficult beginning. First, he developed a strained relationship with John O’Sullivan, the editor of the *Democrat*. It is unclear exactly why there was so much discord between Poe and O’Sullivan. John Stafford suggests that Poe “could not agree with its [the *Democrat*’s] policies” (11). However, another scholar, Widmer, suggests that Poe was insulted when O’Sullivan rejected some of the author’s manuscripts.

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<sup>52</sup> It also includes a tale, “Ellen Ramsay,” that is noted as being by the author of “Richard Hurdis,” which was written by Simms.

Second, in the early part of the 1840s, Poe initiated a mild quarrel with the Young America movement when he critiqued Mathews's preface to *Arcturus*. In the "Review of New Books" in the January 1842 issue of *Graham's Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine*, Poe reprints some of Mathews's remarks and writes, "We respect the talents of Mr. Mathews, but must dissent from nearly all that he here says" (69). Poe suggests that Mathews is too focused on British models of reviewing and posits that "Criticism *is not*, we think, an essay, nor a sermon, nor an oration, nor a chapter in history, nor a philosophical speculation, nor a prose-poem, nor an art novel, nor a dialogue. In fact, it *can be* nothing in the world but—a criticism" (69). Poe believes that Mathews's understanding of criticism is too broad and argues for a more refined definition of what criticism itself can accomplish. Poe sees one way of defining criticism as limiting it to "comment upon *Art*" (69). Poe elaborates, "A book is written—and it is only as the book that we subject it to review. With the opinions of the work, considered otherwise than in their relation to the work itself, the critic really has nothing to do. It is his part simply to decide upon the mode in which these opinions are brought to bear. Criticism is no 'test of opinion'" (69). In this passage Poe is arguing against labeling as "criticism" the popular review essays that use various texts as a point of departure for reflection on a given topic. Poe asserts that the role of criticism is to consider how a text functions and makes meaning. While Poe here uses the comments in *Arcturus* to make his own point, the Young America movement and Poe actually shared concerns about excessive didacticism. Both Poe and the Young America movement wanted to distinguish between aesthetic and ethical achievement.

Poe and the Young America movement shared many convictions, but, perhaps more importantly, the interests of the two often intersected. Both Poe and the New York-based Young America movement were ostensibly opposed to literary cliques in general, but seemed particularly concerned about those established in Boston. These similarities become increasingly apparent when Poe infamously accused Harvard Professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow of plagiarism during the Little Longfellow War, and members of the Young America movement publicly defended Poe against attacks from Boston's literary elite.

Duyckinck, who was at the height of his literary influence in 1840,<sup>53</sup> expended a significant amount of social capital defending and encouraging Poe; in turn, Poe cultivated a much closer affiliation with the Young Americans. Poe's involvement with the Young America movement increased as Evert Duyckinck gained more influence in the group. However, Duyckinck's relationship with Poe was somewhat detrimental for the New Yorker. For instance, according to Stafford, the *Knickerbocker* and *North American Review* condemned the Library of American Books, and, by extension, Duyckinck for publishing Simms, Poe, and Mathews (24).

Regardless of the criticism he faced, Duyckinck continued to support and encourage Poe.<sup>54</sup> A series of letters from Poe to Duyckinck from 1845 to 1849

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<sup>53</sup> This was the period in which Duyckinck published Poe in the Library of American Books.

<sup>54</sup> Poe benefited from Duyckinck's considerable social capital, but he also benefited from Duyckinck's material generosity. Duyckinck gave Poe access to his extensive library and often loaned the poverty-stricken author books. According to William Allen Butler, Duyckinck's eulogist, "His collection of books and his use of them was characteristic of the man and indicated at once his Catholic and conservative taste, embracing rare and particular editions of books of which he knew the history and contents, special volumes to be prized for their peculiar place in literary annals, illustrated works, selected not so much for their artistic merit as with reference to the aid which the pencil brought to the text of the author....nothing in his

demonstrates the degree to which Poe relied on this particular New York editor. In one of the first of these letters, written on a Thursday morning in 1845, Poe acknowledges that he has not quite been himself. He writes, “I seem to have just awakened from some horrible dream, in which all was confusion, and suffering—relieved only by the constant sense of your kindness, and that of one or two other considerate friends. I really believe that I have been mad—but indeed I have had abundant reason to be so.” After this brief explanation of his altered behavior and acknowledgment of Duyckinck’s help, Poe proceeds to ask the editor for additional assistance. Poe writes, “Of course I need not say to you that my most urgent trouble is the want of ready money” and then asks Duyckinck to approach Wiley and Putnam to request a premature settlement. In Poe’s words:

Now, you will already have anticipated my request. It is that you would ask Mr. W. to give me, today, in lieu of all farther claim, a certain sum whatever he may think advisable. So dreadfully am I pressed, that I would willingly take even the \$60 actually due (in lieu of all farther demand) than wait until February:—but I am sure that you will do the best for me that you can.

A few points need to be made here. First, Poe trusted Duyckinck to intercede on his behalf with the publishers, Wiley & Putnam. Second, the favor that Poe asks pertains more to Duyckinck’s social capital than his financial capital. Poe wants Duyckinck to use his connections to negotiate Poe’s desired financial arrangement.

In this series of letters Poe frequently appeals to Duyckinck to use his social connections and cultural capital to promote Poe’s own career. For example, in a letter

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library was for show. In fact no one but an intimate friend knew the number of his books or their value. They were kept in various rooms of his house, and many of them were out of sight; but they were always at hand when needed for reference, or in aid of any theme of discussion or of the offices of friendship....” (10).

dated April 18, 1846, Poe asks Duyckinck to publish a paragraph about an honor bestowed upon Poe by a literary society of the University of Vermont. It is important to note that Poe provides Duyckinck with the specific paragraph he would like inserted. In another letter dated December 30, 1846, Poe asks Duyckinck to write a paragraph or two about “Murders in the Rue Morgue.” Poe points out “Willis or Morris will put in anything you may be kind enough to write; but as ‘The Home Journal’ has already said a good deal about me, some other paper would be preferable.” This letter also reveals that Poe was starting to build some social capital of his own. Poe has already established connections with Willis and Morris, and has already benefited from these connections. The letter itself points to the many ways that Poe has the potential to benefit from his relationship with Duyckinck.

Poe, to the extent possible given his limited means, attempted to make his relationship with Duyckinck mutually beneficial. In a letter from 1849 Poe writes:

I had prepared the hoax for a Boston weekly called “The Flag”—where it will be quite thrown away. The proprietor will give me \$15 for it.... My object in referring the article to you is simply to see if you could not venture to take it for the “World.” If so, I am willing to take for it \$10—or, in fact, whatever you think that you can afford.

It appears here as though Poe is giving Duyckinck a potentially beneficial opportunity to publish a piece at a discount. Of course, Poe would, once again, be benefiting from Duyckinck as his paper enjoyed a greater circulation and reputation than *The Flag*.

A more concrete way that Poe supported the Young America movement and Duyckinck was through reviews. For instance, in the February 7, 1845, issue of the *New*

*York Mirror*, Poe praised Duyckinck's article, "Literary Prospects," which had been published in the *American Review*. Poe's statements about Young America in *The Broadway Journal* are even more potentially useful to the movement. In the issue published on July 19, 1845, Poe emphasizes the Young America movement in a passage aptly titled "Young America." Poe writes:

Regretting the necessity of employing a phrase which is not only borrowed, but redolent of affectation, we still have the most earnest sympathy in all the hopes, and the firmest faith in the capabilities of 'Young America.' We look upon its interests as our own, and shall uniformly uphold them in this Journal. What these interests are—what should be the aspirations of the new men of the country, and of the country through them in especial, it has been our intention to express fully in our words, at the first convenient opportunity—but we are now lying before us an address which embodies all that there is any necessity for saying. (26)

At the height of his own literary influence, Poe allies himself with the generous Evert Duyckinck and the Young America movement. At the same time, however, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter, Poe cultivated a relationship with N.P. Willis, who, like Poe, tended to refrain from allying too closely with one particular social group.

Antebellum communication structures often made it easier for Southern writers to engage with Northern members of the book trade than with their Southern colleagues—a circumstance that editors such as William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe used to gain access to a national audience and further their own careers. Both of these editors diligently worked to establish professional connections with members of the Young America movement. For Simms, establishing an allegiance with the Young America movement was rather natural given their shared ideological commitments. His participation in New York based literary wars only increased his desire to promote an

inclusive national literature and to create a larger audience for sectional materials. For Poe, however, becoming a member of Young America was more self-serving; Poe and Young America were united more by a shared enemy than by shared literary ideas. Navigating his relationship with Young America introduced Poe to the politics of literary fame and achievement; unfortunately, as discussed in the next chapter, Poe would struggle to implement the insights he gained from this experience in his relationship with N.P. Willis.

## CHAPTER V

### AN EXPANDING NETWORK: EDGAR ALLAN POE AND NATHANIEL P. WILLIS

Nathaniel Parker Willis seldom receives the consideration he deserves from literary scholars. Shrewd, sophisticated, and strategic, Willis was at the center of an emerging network in New York that would challenge the educated Bostonian elite for dominance of the American literary world. N.P. Willis would become one of Edgar Allan Poe's closest collaborators and certainly his slyest rival. Willis recognized Poe's superior literary skill and critical acumen, being the first to publish "The Raven," and facilitated Poe's access to emerging literary networks by hiring Poe as his assistant editor. Yet, upon Poe's death, Willis was one of the first to turn on his former colleague, giving credence to the rumors that Poe was erratic, unreliable, and unprofessional before his body was even cold. In typical self-serving fashion, Willis used the opportunity to gossip about his dead employee to cement his own position in the New York literary world. What Willis lacked in literary talent, he made up for in social networking abilities. Unfortunately for Poe, entrance to the New York literary scene was predicated more upon social capital than literary skills and this network remained relatively impermeable for the Southern writer even as he became involved in "the Little Longfellow War," a bitter conflict between New York and Boston coteries.

Despite the limited attention Willis has received from literary scholars, in both *The Magazine in America, 1741-1990* and *The American Magazine: A Compact History*,

John Tebbel, a history of the book scholar, acknowledges that the New Yorker was “the first successful, professional free-lance writer” (68). Tebbel’s description of this dynamic author continues:

Willis wrote for both *Graham’s* and *Godey’s*, and for a good many other magazines as well. He had the essential characteristics of a good free-lance writer today: he was an excellent reporter, able to work in a variety of fields, and the possessor of a light, smooth, readable style that was a refreshing contrast to the pretentious prose of the day. He wrote both prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction; it seemed there was nothing he could not make at least a credible attempt to do. Willis readily acknowledged that he was the leader in his field; modesty was no part of his nature. In dress and manner, he seemed a dandy, and he annoyed even his friends by his excellent opinion of himself. Nevertheless, he was not the highest paid magazine writer in the country without reason and his exuberant personality overflowed into his lively prose style. (68)

Tebbel’s assessment of Willis as a braggart and a dandy has some merit, and more recent scholars such as Thomas N. Baker have described him as one of the first celebrities. On the rare occasions when Willis is mentioned in scholarly literature, the focus is often on his appearance in either Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* as the controversial figure Mr. Bruce or in Fanny Fern’s *Ruth Hall* as the callous editor Hyacinth Ellet.

The published version of Jacobs’s text presents Willis in a relatively favorable light, but the manuscript version of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* more clearly expresses Jacobs’s frustrations with him. Although Jacobs, who worked in the Willis household from 1842 to 1861, was eventually freed, Jean Yellin reports that Jacobs’s letters “express her conviction that, unlike both his first and his second wife, Nathaniel P. Willis was ‘pro-slavery’” (481). To be sure, Willis did publish a picturesque description

of slave life in Virginia in 1859 titled “Negro Happiness in Virginia.” Yellin suggests that due to Willis’s ideological and political stance, “...although [Jacobs] repeatedly sought help to win the time and privacy to write, and even requested introduction to public figures in hope that they would effect the publication of her book—Jacobs consistently refused to ask for Willis’ aid. She did not even want him to know that she was writing. For years, while living under his roof, she worked on her book secretly and at night” (482).

Yellin views the relationship between Jacobs and Willis as strained, but one of Willis’s earliest biographers, Henry Beers, represents the relationship between the two as more cordial. For instance, he justifies Willis’s purchase of her as merely a matter of convenience, writing: “Several times she [Jacobs] had to leave the Willises and go into hiding at Boston and elsewhere. At last, tired of these alarms, Willis sacrificed whatever scruples he might have had against such a step, and bought her freedom out and out” (285). Interestingly, even in Beers’s relatively neutral account of the transaction, Willis purchases Jacobs because of his convenience—he is tired of the alarms. Also, Beers underscores that Willis had to sacrifice “whatever scruples he might have had” in order to take this step. In his biography of Willis, Beers depicts Jacobs as a loyal and loving servant and minimizes any conflict that might have occurred between the two.

The other well-known literary depiction of Willis occurs in Fanny Fern’s *Ruth Hall* (1854) where he makes an appearance as the selfish Hyacinth Ellet, the brother of the heroine Ruth Hall. Sarah Payson Willis, Nathaniel’s younger sister who wrote under the pen name Fanny Fern, scourged her brother in this semi-autobiographical novel for

being narcissistic and materialistic. For instance, when Ruth Hall, a character modeled after Sarah Payson Willis, approaches her financially secure brother, Ellet, for help, he encourages her to find “unobtrusive employment.” David Dowling states, “*Ruth Hall* indicts Willis for breaching codes of sibling sympathy and succor, loyalty and protection, virtually unpardonable transgressions by antebellum standards” (210). Beers, of course, defends Willis’s interactions with his sister. Beers emphasizes that Willis “had helped his sister in the early days of her widowhood, but that after her second marriage and divorce he had ceased to have any communication with her, and felt justified in letting her alone” (337). Admitting that Willis “was doubtless a man who took his responsibilities lightly,” Beers argues that “it is easy to see how his hands were tied in various ways” (337). Namely, Beers argues that Willis had his own “expensive” family to support and that the editors of the *Home Journal* “were constantly reiterating that the paper did not, as a rule, pay its contributors anything, and could not afford to do so” (337). Beers basically asserts that Willis lacked the means to help his sister.

As these two literary representations of Willis suggest, he is—to say the least—a controversial figure.<sup>55</sup> These controversies, however, should not distract from his contributions to the development of American literature. Although Willis had many moral failings, he worked to establish the professional standing of the editor. During the

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<sup>55</sup> Willis was also notorious for his role in Edwin Forrest’s divorce case. Forrest, who accused his wife and Willis of having had an affair, attacked Willis on a public street. Henry Beers, one of Willis’s biographers, describes the encounter this way: “On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, while Willis was walking in Washington Square, near his own residence in Fourth Street, Forrest came up to him quickly and knocked him down with a blow from his fist. He then stood over him, and, holding him down by the coat collar with one hand, beat him with a gutta-percha whip till the police came up and interfered” (312). Willis accused Forrest of assault, and the case dragged on for eighteen years. Eventually, Willis won and Forrest had to pay the New York editor \$64,000.

nineteenth century, most editors moved fluidly between their roles as managers and writers. As John Tebbel suggests, “As a working individual, the magazine editor was still inclined to vacillate between writing and editing, as we have seen, and the concept of his job as generating and carrying out ideas was not yet developed. Yet the basic job of planning the magazine and working with writers was established, as was the task of dealing with business problems” (83). Tebbel emphasizes that the nineteenth-century editor can be understood as a writer combined with a manager, but the role of the editor was not viewed as particularly visionary as editors were not yet tasked with “generating and carrying out ideas” (83).

Yet, for Willis, the editor was primarily a creator of content; he underscored this view of editors as writers in a reply he sent to the autograph-seeker Charles Odgen. In a response to a request for an autograph of Poe, Willis provided a printed form letter that mediates on the function of the editor and reads:

Men in this land of never-let-up, are over laden with labor in as many different ways as there are different vocations by which they get a living; but, to an Editor, the “last ounce which breaks the camel's back,” is the writing of a private letter. Not that his brain is drudged beyond a sense of the luxury of writing for one reader only, (for, on the contrary, the value of it is enhanced by rarity,) but he looks upon it as the leg-weary postman looks upon the luxury of an evening walk. Now, here is your letter to answer. Either a cheerful and appropriate letter to you or an article for my paper, would be as much of a morning's pen-work as would be agreeable—but both together would dwindle the latter of the two into flat-footed plodding. In choosing between these, which to neglect, you see, of course, that it is a choice between 'minding my business' and writing to you; and you will forgive me, therefore, if in the fewest words possible, I jot down what must be said, and trust to this printed explanation to apologise for my brevity.

This printed reply asserts that editors are professionals who are working in publishing in an attempt to support themselves. It underscores the fact that editors write for multiple readers and must make challenging choices about what to write and, implicitly, about the direction of their respective publications. According to this form letter, the business of letters is directing the development of American letters.

Furthermore, Willis promoted the professionalization of the editor by carefully crafting specific social networks. Even Tebbel overlooks the important connections Willis developed with other editors. For instance, Tebbel moves from his description of Willis to a discussion of Edgar Allan Poe, whom Tebbel suggests was “a magazinist of far greater ability and much less income [than Willis]” (68), without discussing the various ways the two editors impacted each other’s career.<sup>56</sup> As Tebbel suggests, Willis defined and created the profession known in the nineteenth century as “magazinist,” but Willis did this through cultivating a productive professional network, as we can see by examining his relationship with Edgar Allan Poe.

N.P. Willis and Edgar Allan Poe encountered each other fairly early in their respective careers. In 1829 Poe, who was recently released from the Army, submitted his poem “Fairyland,” to N.P. Willis, who was editing his first magazine, *The American*

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<sup>56</sup> Cortland Auser, in the biography *Nathaniel Parker Willis*, defines the term “magazinist” in a discussion of Willis’s ability to cultivate professional networks: “The *Home Journal* used the writing talents of many able young writers and aided them in establishing themselves as magazinists—men whose profession was the preparation of periodicals” (148). This statement shows that the term magazinist is more related to the term journalist than editor; it pertains to those who writing appears in a periodical. John Tebbel, in *The American Magazine: A Compact History*, creates a more restrictive definition of the magazinist: “Nathaniel Parker Willis has long been regarded as the first successful, professional free-lance writer—or ‘magazinist,’ as he was called in the nineteenth-century idiom” (148). This term calls attention to intellectuals such as Willis and Poe as writers while, at times, minimizing other aspects of their editorial work.

*Monthly*. Willis publicly rejected the poem, writing in the “Editor’s Table,” “It is quite exciting to lean over eagerly as the flame eats in upon the letters, and make out the imperfect sentences and trace the faint strokes in the tinder as it trembles in the ascending air of the chimney” (586-587). Although Willis did not explicitly name Poe as the writer, the *New Yorker* included some stanzas of the poem which provided enough evidence for literary insiders to identify the poet. Through these various comments, Willis emphasizes his view of Poe’s poetic ability as limited; Willis also stresses that he sees this particular poem not only unpublishable but unworthy of existing.

It is unclear exactly why Willis reacted so strongly and violently to Poe’s poem, but one reasonable explanation is that he was merely responding to popular sentiment. Before Willis rejected “Fairyland,” John Neal, an important figure in Baltimore’s literary scene, addressed Poe in the “To Correspondents” column of the *Yankee; and Boston Literary Gazette*. Neal wrote:

If E.A.P. of Baltimore—whose lines about Heaven, though he professes to regard them as altogether superior to any thing in the whole range of American poetry, save two or three trifles referred to, are, though nonsense, rather exquisite nonsense—would but do himself justice, might make a beautiful and perhaps magnificent poem. There is a good deal here to justify such a hope. (qtd. in Thomas 98)

Neal, although commonly acknowledged as one of the first American writers to recognize Poe’s talent, here presents the young poet as pretentious and as not yet fulfilling his potential. Given Neal’s involvement in the Delphian Club, which was

formed in 1816 and whose membership was limited to nine people at a time,<sup>57</sup> this publicity would certainly have put Poe on the literary map. Willis could have been following the popular current but taking a more extreme position in order to create readership for his magazine. If so, it certainly would not be the last time that Willis used Poe to generate publicity for a periodical.

Another possible reason for Willis's strong reaction to the poem is that he viewed Poe as a competitor. Willis, who was born in Portland, Maine on January 20, 1806, and Poe, who was born in Boston on January 19, 1809, had similar relationships with cities and people. For instance, both Willis and Poe had complicated relationships with Boston. After leaving the city in 1831, Willis wrote a letter to his mother explaining how he felt as though the city had abandoned him, and Poe's disdain of the Boston literati is well documented.<sup>58</sup> Also, Willis and Poe both had disapproving parental figures. Poe's problems with John Allan are well known; Willis was excommunicated from Park Street Church where his father was a deacon.<sup>59</sup> But more striking than these shared circumstances is how Willis and Poe develop similar approaches to navigating the literary world and interacting with one another. Both Poe and Willis published their first books of poetry—*Tamerlane and Other Poems* and *Sketches*, respectively—in Boston in 1827. According to Thomas Baker, Willis's *Sketches* "...sold well, generating considerable

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<sup>57</sup> Although the Delphian Club was limited to nine members, non-members were welcomed and many prominent literary men (such as John P. Kennedy and William Wirt) did attend meetings (Hayes 36).

<sup>58</sup> For more information about Poe's difficulties with the Boston literati, see Michael Allen's *Poe and the British Magazine Tradition*.

<sup>59</sup> In *Edgar Allan Poe and the Masses*, Terence Whalen contends that John Allan's relationship with Poe lead the writer to see the ways that information impacted economic development; for a detailed discussion of Willis's relationship with his father see Thomas Baker's *Sentiment and Celebrity: Nathaniel Parker Willis and the Trials of Literary Fame*.

enthusiasm around New England and as far south as Athens, Georgia” (13). Poe’s first book did not meet with much popular success—only around fifty copies of the work were printed—but it did generate some attention for Poe. The prestigious *North American Review*, for instance, listed Poe’s book as a new publication. By the fall of 1829, however, Willis had already published a second volume of poetry, *Fugitive Poetry*.

Willis’s reaction to Poe’s “Fairyland” seems to have occurred at a time when he was more established in a career path than Poe, and it is hard to imagine him feeling threatened by the poet. Without additional documentary evidence, it is impossible to know exactly why Willis reacted so strongly to this particular poem. However, publicly rejecting Poe’s work was certainly not the most auspicious beginning to a collaboration, and Willis and Poe had several more tense encounters before they developed a productive working relationship.

The next incident occurred in 1836. At this time, Edgar Allan Poe was working with the *Southern Literary Messenger*.<sup>60</sup> According to Kevin Hayes, “Poe’s stint with the *Southern Literary Messenger* had established his reputation as a tough-minded book reviewer and, to a lesser extent, as an author of weird tales, he had yet to make any significant contacts among New York’s literati” (48). While Poe did not develop any significant personal relationships with New Yorkers at this point, he was cultivating professional relationships through print. For instance, in his position as literary editor he negatively reviewed *Norman Leslie*, a novel written by Theodore Fay, who was an editor at the *New York Mirror* with Willis. In the first paragraph of this review, Poe directly

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<sup>60</sup> Poe was a member of the editorial staff of Richmond’s *Southern Literary Messenger* from 1835 to 1837.

attacks the *Evening Mirror* by writing, “This is the book—the book par excellence—the book bebuffed, beplastered, and be*Mirrored*...” (54). By framing his review as a response to the unfair puffing supported by the *Mirror*, Poe represents himself as an autonomous reviewer and critic attempting to combat the injustices of a publishing system based on social connections.

With this review, Poe started his work as a “tomahawk critic.” Throughout the review, Poe sarcastically and cleverly attacks Fay. For example, Poe writes, “We do not mean to say that there is positively nothing in Mr. Fay’s novel to commend—but there is indeed very little” (56). Poe continues by arguing that the best scene is unoriginal, the plot is absurd, and the characters lack “individualization” (56). After attacking the structure of the text, Poe attacks Fay’s style. Poe contends, “The ‘Editor of the New York Mirror’ has either never seen an edition of Murray’s Grammar, or he has been a-Willising so long as to have forgotten his vernacular language” (56).<sup>61</sup> Poe is clearly attacking Fay as part of a coterie and simultaneously attempting to draw attention to the institutional problems associated with such tightly knit social networks.

Poe’s review of *Norman Leslie* is one of his most well-known reviews, and throughout the review he clearly presents himself as the antithesis of all that the *New York Mirror* represents. As can be imagined, the variety of responses to this review underscore the different types of relationships that editors and writers had with the *New York Mirror*. The July supplement of the *Southern Literary Messenger* contained excerpts

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<sup>61</sup> Using the term “a-Willising” allows Poe to insinuate that Fay is writing in the same style as Willis and to also concisely attack that style. In “The Literati of New York City,” published in *Godey’s Magazine and Lady’s Book* in May 1846, the tomahawk provides a more elaborate critique, describing Willis’s style as “extravagant, bizarre, pointed, epigrammatic without being antithetical...” (198).

from many different periodicals promoting the *Messenger*. One of these excerpts, written by Hiram Haines, the editor of the *Petersburg Constellation*, states, “Let the New York Mirror snarl if it will; there are papers in each Messenger which will outlive all the Norman Leslies, [Willis’s] ‘Pencilings by the Way,’ and [Morris’s] ‘Wearies my Love of Letters?’ of its erudite editors. Kennel a staghound with a cur, and the latter will yelp in very fear.” Haines’s comment shows that Fay was closely associated with Willis in the public imagination and that informed readers were beginning to see Poe and Willis as similar enough to be in direct competition with one another.

As previously mentioned, the idea of being simultaneously attracted to and repulsed by a double is common in Edgar Allan Poe’s work. As Scott Peeples points out, “in such renowned tales as ‘The Fall of the House of Usher,’ ‘The Tell-Tale Heart,’ ‘The Black Cat,’ ‘The Purloined Letter,’ and ‘The Cask of the Amontillado,’ the double does little or nothing to harm the protagonist, and yet his or her very presence inspires jealousy or loathing, a hostility or rivalry that exists largely if not entirely in the mind of the protagonist” (125). One of Edgar Allan Poe’s well-known stories of doubling, “William Wilson,” provides a particularly productive framework for thinking about the relationship between Poe and Willis. Poe’s fiction is often read through the lens of his life. While I do not want to reinforce that tendency, the figure of the double in “William Wilson” offers a useful trope for thinking through Poe’s tense relationship with Willis.

During the rise of psychoanalytical criticism, “William Wilson” was primarily interpreted as a story about a fractured self or a deformed psyche, but more recent criticism has suggested that William Wilson could be a twin. For instance, Lynn

Langmade argues, “‘William Wilson’ is not a story about the anxiety provoked by the Double as many have argued, but about the fear that the body, and perhaps even the Self, has always been multiple” (7). Tracy Ware contends that “‘William Wilson’” operates as both a figurative and allegorical story. She suggests that the tension between these two readings is unresolvable and that the story is purposefully ambiguous. This story is ambiguous, but considering the possibility of a material, instead of ephemeral, double or twin opens up a host of interpretative possibilities that consider the socio-historical context of the tale.

Theron Britt is one scholar who engages with the material conditions surrounding the publication of “William Wilson;” he connects the story to the tense 1840 election. Britt interprets William Wilson’s experiences to be “the hopeless search for identity outside of interdependence with others” (206). Pointing out that Wilson’s double appears primarily as a moral presence when the narrator is engaged in questionable acts such as cheating at cards or treating others cruelly, Britt sees the type and timing of the double’s appearances as suggesting that conscience “involves the ultimate social and ethical acts of language” (207). Britt concludes, “He [Poe] shows us, then, the internal consequences of the external social world. He shows us that the dangerous mob impulse in a democracy isolates individuals, throws them back on themselves, and eventually undermines their very identities” (210). This interpretation of “William Wilson” suggests that the self is created in relationship to others and thus interdependence is key to the development of the self.

These more recent interpretations of “William Wilson” allow for the trope of the double to be productively applied to the relationship between Poe and Willis because they create space for viewing these two as professional colleagues, rather than as friends. And, surprisingly, Poe and Willis are more often than not described as friends. Even Peeples uses the phrase “friend” in making an argument about how the mirror scene in “William Wilson” might be applied to the relationship between Poe and Willis: “Poe’s complicated relationship with his friend and rival Nathaniel Parker Willis” (125). While I see Peeples’s point about the competition existing between Poe and Willis, there is something inherently contradictory about a “friendly rivalry.” Nineteenth-century ideas of friendship involved a deep sympathy and a certain melding of interests. With the nineteenth-century rise of the middle-class professional, relationships with colleagues became increasingly important. At times, Poe and Willis were interdependent, but, as Brit suggests about the doubles in “William Wilson,” the origins of this interdependence were primarily socio-political rather than psychological.

To some extent, the relationship between Poe and Willis originated from others recognizing their similarity and putting them into a professional relationship with each other. In addition to the Hiram Haines observation mentioned earlier, a comment published in the September 1839 issue of the *Saint Louis Commercial Bulletin* underscores the similarities between Poe and Willis. A favorable notice of Poe’s editorship of *Burton’s* states, “there are few writers in this country—take Neal, Irving, & Willis away and we would say none—who can compete successfully, in many respects, with Poe. With an acuteness of observation, a vigorous and effective style, and an

independence that defies control, he unites a fervid fancy and a most beautiful enthusiasm. His is a high destiny” (qtd. in Thomas). During the magazine age, as the figure of the editor and of the magazinist was ascending, Poe and Willis were positioned to define that role.

Poe and Willis often articulated their own views of literature and editorial work as a response to the other’s work. In the August 1836 *Messenger* Poe reviewed Willis’s *Inklings of Adventure*, which had been published earlier that year first in London and then in New York. This book consisted of thirteen stories and sketches reprinted from a wide variety of periodicals including the *New Monthly*, *The Metropolitan*, the *Court Magazine*, and the *Mirror*. According to Henry Beers, an early biographer of Willis, “For an edition of 1,200 copies, Willis was paid 300 pounds, reserving to himself the copyright; and as he had received a guinea a page for the original articles, besides what Morris gave him for their republication in the ‘Mirror,’ they may be said to have been fairly profitable” (206). Willis was paid three different times for the stories and retained the right to publish them yet again. While the stories might have been a commercial success, Poe was not entirely convinced of their literary value.

For Poe, this review represented an important articulation of his literary theory, and he frequently reprinted it. Poe included portions of this review in his profile of N. P. Willis in the January 18, 1845, issue of *The Broadway Journal*. Poe also included his discussion of Willis’s understanding of wit, humor, fancy, and imagination in a critical notice of Thomas Hood’s *Prose and Verse* published in the same journal in August. Poe appears to have recognized the importance of this review in allowing him to define his

understanding of literature. Willis's work provided an important opportunity for Poe to think through his own literary theories; Poe used his review of *Inklings of Adventure* to explain his theory of the four faculties of the creative process: imagination, fancy, fantasy, and humor.

In these documents Poe asserts that Willis's key stylistic element is fancy. For Poe, fancy and imagination both involve novel combinations. Fancy, however, includes more unexpected and "less harmonious" combinations than imagination ("American Prose Writers" 38). Poe certainly acknowledges Willis's masterful use of fancy, writing:

...the market idiosyncrasy of the *prose style* of Mr. Willis—that the charm which has wrought for it so vast and so well-merited a popularity—is traceable, in the last result, to the brilliant Fancy with which it perpetually scintillates or glows—a fancy possessed...to an extent *altogether unparalleled*, and of a kind both relatively and intrinsically the most valuable, because at once the most radiant and the most rare. (38)

This statement, however, is difficult to interpret as Poe hides his critique of Willis behind lavish praise of a relatively unappealing skill. On the one hand, Poe acknowledges that Willis's ability to use fancy to attract readers is unique. On the other hand, Poe explains Willis's popularity as based on this skill. Poe praises Willis's use of fancy because it is marketable rather than aesthetically pleasing. To some extent, Poe positions Willis as a savvy editor who knows what will sell a publication rather than recognizing Willis as an accomplished writer who has the ability to create a particular effect; being positioned in this way, of course, has both positive and negative elements.

Overall, Poe's reviews of Willis's texts are ambiguous and point to Poe's understanding that Willis diligently worked to secure his status as a celebrity.<sup>62</sup> Consider, for instance, Poe's review of Willis's play *Tortesa, the Usurer*. In July of 1839, this play opened at the Walnut Street Theater. Poe reviewed the play in the July issue of the *Examiner* and the August issue of *Burton's* calling it "the best play from the pen of an American author" (117). Poe initially praised the play claiming:

Its merits lie among the higher and most difficult dramatic qualities, and, although few in number, are extensive in their influence upon the whole work; pervading it, and fully redeeming it from the sin of its multitudinous minor defects. These merits are naturalness, truthfulness, and appropriateness, upon all occasions, of sentiment and language; a manly vigor and breadth in the conception of character; and a fine ideal elevation or exaggeration throughout—a matter forgotten or avoided by those who, with true Flemish perception of truth, wish to copy her peculiarities in disarray. Mr. Willis has not lost sight of the important consideration that the perfection of dramatic, as well as of plastic skill, is found not in the imitation of Nature, but in the artistical adjustment and amplification of her features. We recognize a refined taste upon every page of "Tortesa." (117)

In this review Poe sees Willis as Willis sees himself. In Willis's semi-autobiographical novel, *Paul Fane*, Willis suggests that his protagonist's genius lies in the ability to see behind the various masks people use to hide their authentic selves. Fane, who creates portraits, is able to capture the essence of his subject rather than simply rendering the subject's features. Poe recognizes that the value of *Tortesa* lies in manipulating nature in a way that allows the play to remain truthful.

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<sup>62</sup> Thomas Baker, in *Sentiment and Celebrity*, defines culture of celebrity as "that self-sustaining conjuncture of social, commercial, and emotional impulses and interests that since Willis's day has increasingly directed our attention toward a kaleidoscopic spectacle of storied personality" (4).

Poe faintly praises Willis for his taste, but severely critiques his craftsmanship. The second sentence of the review prepares the reader for a discussion of the play's "minor defects," which include an "inconsequential" plot, inconsistent characters, and lack of originality. Although Poe spends quite a bit of space explaining exactly how certain elements of the play fail, he concludes his review by emphasizing that the work is still the "best American play" and that "Mr. Willis, we are happy to perceive, has nearly altogether thrown aside the besetting sin of his earlier days—the sin of affectation" (117). The phrase "nearly altogether" qualifies Poe's praise and highlights the ambiguity of this review. In this faint praise Poe acknowledges that Willis has written something very "American" by drawing on his extensive knowledge of literary and print culture. Thomas Baker states, "In modeling the progress of his personal sensibilities for a large and appreciative readership centered on the nation's genteel domestic circles, Willis was able to compound the rewards he was already reaping from his trade in celebrity with the equally lucrative wages of sentiment" (11). Poe would have agreed with Baker; Poe was one of the first critics to recognize that Willis was popular because of his celebrity status and his ability to give the reading public the types of materials they wanted.

In the next decade, Poe's reviews suggest that he learned how to more tactfully insult the more powerful members of the New York literati. For instance, in the March 1840 issue of *Burton's*, Poe harshly reviewed Willis's *Romance of Travel*.<sup>63</sup> In this

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<sup>63</sup> Poe moved to Philadelphia in 1838, but had some difficulty finding an editorial position. Finally, in 1839, he became the assistant editor of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*. In *Poe and the Printed Word*, Kevin Hayes states, "Burton respected Poe's editorial skill and agreed to take him on at ten dollars a week, the same money Poe had made and complained about three years earlier with the *Southern Literary Messenger*" (69). This assistant editorial position, however, proved unsatisfactory and Poe left the periodical in 1840. Hayes points out, "Writing for *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, Poe was under pressure

negative review Poe issued a disclaimer that Willis most likely did not authorize this particular edition of his work since the edition lacks a preface and that the edition “abounds in gross errors of either haste or typography” (153). This disclaimer minimizes the sense that Willis has any particular interest in the matter, allowing Poe the appearance of critical distance and affording him the ability to deny any type of vendetta against the New York editor. Tongue-in-cheek, Poe praises Willis’s style: “In the minor morals of literature our author has scarcely a superior in America” (155). Of course, the phrasing of this compliment serves as a reminder of the many other morals that Willis, suspected of being a womanizer, is rumored to lack.

After suggesting that the collection of tales was not authorized by Willis, Poe again critiques Willis’s aesthetics and lambasts the work for lacking a plot. Poe argues, “As for plot, properly conceived, of that our poet never should be accused—and certainly not in the case of the ‘Picker and Piler’” (153). Poe provides a brief summary of this tale involving a sleeper being buried. While Poe admits that the premise of the story is original, he finds that the intrusive narration frustrating, stating “...we are perpetually reminded of the writer of the story—whose image is sure to jump up every now and then before us, in an embroidered morning gown and slippers, with a pen in one hand, and a bottle of eau de Cologne in the other” (153). The manner of narration obviously bothers Poe, but it also seems as though the narrator himself annoys the reviewer. Poe presents an image of the narrator as very affected—the besetting sin that Poe, in the review of

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to fill its columns, yet Burton, unlike Thomas White, did not allow Poe to fill the pages of his magazine with long critical notices” (70). This suggests that Poe was looking for a position that would allow him to use the printed page to cultivate professional and social networks.

*Tortesa*, suggested Willis had “nearly altogether” overcome. Poe underscores his disdain for the narrator’s narcissism in an examination of the ending of “Picker and Piler.” Poe claims, “The catastrophe is over—the story is ended. No—the writer has yet five words, as usual, to say of himself. *I felt my brain's reel!*” Body of Bacchus!—we were talking about the crushing of a fellow creature to death, and not about those everlasting brains of Mr. Willis. Who cares the matter of two pence halfpenny whether that gentleman has any brains at all?” (154). Poe obviously feels like the speaker and perspective limit the impact of the story.

In these reviews of *Tortesa* and *Romance of Travel* Poe emphasizes the American context of Willis’s work. By highlighting that *Tortesa* is the “best American play” and that Willis “In the minor morals of literature...has scarcely a superior in America” (155), Poe suggests that Willis is writing for a national and an immediate audience. Although Poe frequently condemns Willis’s craftsmanship or aesthetic choices, Poe recognizes Willis’s success at cultivating a particular type of public persona and developing a national audience.

Despite Poe’s sometimes caustic reviews of Willis’s work, the relationship between the two men became somewhat more positive as they began publishing—or seeking opportunities to publish—each other’s work in an cross-magazine collaboration. On February 20, 1841, Graham announced that Poe would be one of the editors of *Graham’s Magazine* in the *Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post*. Just six months after accepting this post, in November of that year, Poe wrote to Willis asking him to contribute to the publication. Willis was engaged to write exclusively for *Godey’s*, but he

promised to find a way to write for *Graham's*. In his November 13, 1841, letter to Poe, Willis explains that Mr. Graham and Mr. Godey are friends, so perhaps Willis would be granted an exemption. Willis demonstrates a clear understanding of the importance of networks in this letter as he also shows his willingness to try to help Poe by writing poetry for *Graham's* (qtd. in Thomas 348-49).

Willis was obviously eager to contribute to *Graham's Magazine*. Although similarly excited about contributing to Willis's *New Mirror*, Poe expressed some concerns about possible financial arrangements. In April 1843, Willis and George Morris issued the first number of the *New Mirror*, a revival of the old *New-York Mirror*, which had expired in December 1842. In September of that year, Morris and Willis praised Poe; they write, "...few writers of fiction are at all comparable with this fine author for clearness of plot and individuality of character." In this same issue they published Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Man that was Used Up." Willis and Poe developed a close working relationship, and Poe began to submit manuscripts for publication in the periodicals Willis edited. Willis, however, was unable to pay Poe for his contributions and Poe, having left the editorship of *Graham's* in 1842, needed a source of income.

Understanding Poe's financial situation, Willis used his connections to find suitable publication outlets for Poe. Willis's professional support enabled Poe to expand his own network, and made Willis a central node in New York's developing and growing literary scene. In May 1844, Poe sent Willis "The Oblong Box" and stated, "If you could afford me anything for them, or for either of them, I would feel highly honored by their

appearance in your paper” (qtd in Thomas 462). Poe bragged to Sarah J. Hale that Willis praised the tale but reiterated that the *Mirror* cannot pay for contributions (qtd in Thomas 462). Willis apparently suggested that Poe publish the work in *The Opal*, so Poe contacted the publisher, John C. Riker, who referred him to Mrs. Hale, the new editor. Poe wrote Hale and said, “Under these circumstances, I have thought it best to write you this letter, and to ask you if you could accept an article from me—whether you would wish to see the one in question—or whether you could be so kind as to take it, unseen, upon Mr. Willis’ testimony in its favor” (qtd. in Thomas 463). As can be seen from this correspondence, Poe uses his connection with Willis to gain access to other editors and obtain publishing opportunities. Like many other editors and writers, Poe depended on Willis, a cultural broker, for access to other celebrities, and this power dynamic only increased Willis’s cultural capital.

Poe challenged this power differential by attempting to return the favors, but Poe’s career was simply not as stable as that of the New Yorker. Poe, does, however, quote Willis’s poem, “Unseen Spirits” in the July 1844 issue of the *Spy* (qtd. in Thomas 466). Despite Poe’s efforts, his material needs prohibited him from entering into a relationship with Willis on more equal footing. Recognizing Poe’s financial difficulties,<sup>64</sup> Willis hired Poe as an editorial assistant in October 1844 for \$15 a week, and Poe worked for Willis until February 1845. As an employer, Willis obviously maintained a significant amount of influence over Poe.

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<sup>64</sup> According to Willis, Mrs. Clemm visited him in September of 1844 to seek employment for Poe.

Willis (and his co-owner George Pope Morris) retained control over what was printed in their paper; however, Poe had a lot of leeway in discussing issues surrounding American print culture because both he and Willis supported expanding the rights and increasing the pay of authors. During Poe's time as an editorial assistant or "paragraphist," several articles appeared in the *Mirror* pertaining to authorship: on October 10, 1844 "Author's Pay in America" was printed and on October 12, 1844, "The Pay for Periodical Writing" was published. Both of these articles gesture toward the work Poe and Willis were doing together to advance the cause of the magazinist. "The Pay for Periodical Writing" highlights that editors are paid, while contributors usually are not. Poe writes, "...newspaper editors need pay for little aid except eye-water and scissors, and they get credit for a world of zeal in good causes by articles they neither write nor pay for." Poe suggests that newspaper editors are unfairly benefiting from people's desire to see their thoughts in print, and he draws a parallel between the author's relationship to the nineteenth-century print market and a butcher trying to earn a profit in a market where "everybody had an ambition to raise calves *to give away*." Poe and Willis both adopted views on copyright and pay that reflected the ideas of the Young America movement.

While Willis and Poe are frequently discussed as Whigs, their views on issues pertaining to print culture frequently led them to cooperate with Evert Duyckinck and those connected to him. At the same time, these views led Willis and Poe into a conflict with Henry W. Longfellow, a Harvard professor and popular poet entrenched in a very particular Boston literary clique. As Paul Giles states in *The Global Remapping of*

*American Literature*, Longfellow “took issue with the cultural nationalists of his own day in the Young America movement who campaigned vociferously for confining the idea of American literature to a domestic provenance” (81). Poe, and to some extent Willis, were advocating for changes to a system that had benefited Longfellow, who was only one year younger than Willis and two years older than Poe. This dispute, which led to a literary conflict that would come to be called the Little Longfellow War, cemented Poe’s connection to the Young America movement and highlighted Willis’s commitment to (his own) celebrity.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a popular and well respected antebellum poet. He had a national following, as shown by the fact that an article in the *Southern Quarterly Review*, “American Poetry,” praised both Longfellow’s *Voices of the Night* and *Ballads and other Poems*. The author of this unsigned article acknowledges the common complaint that “this magnificent nation is comparatively destitute of a poetical literature” (493), but suggests that the focus has been so exclusively on America’s literary lack that periodicals such as *Brother Jonathan* and the *New World* remain blind to the existence of an American literature (494). The writer proceeds to claim that:

...when Republican America was spoken into existence, poetry descended into the hearts of men, and became a part of the life and breath of all. It was no longer an art: it was a feeling;—an impulse,—which animated alike all bosoms, and led to deeds which were, of themselves, immortal. Poetry was no longer to be written, and sealed up in precious tombs; it was to be lived and acted. (495)

The writer then exclaims, as Walt Whitman later would, “Poetry! Why, America is *all* poetry” (496). After suggesting that the life of the common American is poetry, the author affirms the literary endeavors of the nation. As this article implies, Longfellow was established as both the spokesman for the everyday man and a poetical genius, which promoted his widespread appeal and his critical acclaim. He had both social and economic capital; he was the center of the Boston literary world, which was one of the prominent centers of national print culture.

Both Willis and Poe had tumultuous relationships with the Boston literati. Willis’s estrangement from the Boston crowd is fairly easily explained. In a relatively famous letter to his mother, N.P. Willis blamed Boston for the failure of his first periodical, the *American Monthly* (1829-1831). In the letter, dated September 12, 1835, Willis states, “They [Bostonians] have denied me patronage, abused me, misrepresented me, refused me both character and genius, and I feel that I owe them nothing” (qtd. in Beers 99). As this letter clearly suggests, Willis felt rejected by various Boston social circles. Willis, who was only six when his family moved to Boston, found himself in theologically conservative circles. Willis’s father, Nathaniel Willis, edited the religious publications the *Boston Recorder* and *Youth’s Companion*, and he also served for twenty years as a deacon at Park Street Church. As a young adult, N.P. Willis wrote sacred poems for his father’s publication and attended Trinitarian educational institutions. But as Willis matured, he became much more enamored with secular life and was eventually excommunicated from Park Street for attending the theater and not participating in

communion. At the same time, however, Willis lacked the social standing to gain admittance to the elite Unitarian circles.

Willis felt comfortable with the Boston Unitarians, but many Boston Unitarians only felt comfortable with the financially successful. As one of Willis's biographers, Cortland Auser, says, Willis was "not a member of one of Boston's first families" (20). Auser also claims, "Boston...was to be the city which provided Willis with experience and a reputation; New York was later to give him the fame and congenial professional associations which he sought. Early in his adult career, he refused completely to become a 'proper Bostonian' and became instead an errant Knickerbocker" (19). Henry Beers, another Willis biographer, is a bit more sympathetic to Willis and argues that his "position in Boston was in some respects a difficult one. His family connections were plain, good folks, not 'in society,'—not, at least, in the literary society, which was Unitarian, or in the so-called aristocratic society, which was mainly either Unitarian or Episcopalian. He himself was socially ambitious, and these were the circles which he wished to frequent" (93). Socially, Willis occupied a liminal space in Boston. He did not share the theological views of the Trinitarians but he also did not have either the cultural or financial capital to join the Unitarian and Episcopalian spheres. His lack of social standing certainly influenced the result of his experiment editing the *American Monthly*. When Willis moved from Boston, he left behind \$3,000 of debt. Beers claims that Willis "never quite forgave Boston" (99), a claim that could also be applied to Poe.

Due to the notorious difficulties existing between Poe and the “Frogpondians,” many scholars assume that Poe individually initiated the Little Longfellow War.<sup>65</sup> The most common interpretation of this conflict is that Poe (falsely) accused Longfellow of plagiarizing poems in *The Waif*, an anthology including some of the Boston poet’s (allegedly) original works. Although Poe was one of, if not the, primary actor in this situation, other editors and writers were certainly involved. For instance, Edgar Allan Poe wrote to Evert Duyckinck on December 24, 1846, requesting some books. In this letter Poe writes:

You remember showing me about a year ago, at your house, some English stanzas—by a lady I think—from the rhythm of which Longfellow had imitated the rhythm of the Poem to his ‘Waif.’ I wish very much to see the poem—do you think you could loan me the book, or (which will answer as well) give me the title of the book in full, and copy me the 2 first stanzas? I will be greatly obliged if you can.

The wording of this letter suggests that Duyckinck was the first to recognize the alleged plagiarism by noticing similarities between the American “Waif” and an English poem. In other words, this letter implies that Duyckinck validated Poe’s perceptions of Longfellow’s plagiarism before Poe published them. Duyckinck also seems to have provided Poe with the primary materials he needed to support his claims that Longfellow plagiarized. Furthermore, Duyckinck and other members of Young America used the *Democratic Review* to publicly defend Poe. As Edward Widmer points out, writers for the *Democratic Review* praised “his [Poe’s] courage in attacking the Longfellow clique”

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<sup>65</sup> See Jonathan Elmer’s *Reading at the Social Limit: Affect, Mass Culture, and Edgar Allan Poe* and Terence Whalen’s *Edgar Allan Poe and the Masses* for more information about Poe’s relationship with the Boston literati.

(70). Widmer's phrasing is important here as it underscores that, just as Poe was not simply articulating his own views, Longfellow was not simply a poet.

This dispute was really a conflict between two different social networks who wanted control over the development of American print culture. Poe represented the views of one group, Young America, and Longfellow was the figurehead for the work and ideologies of another, the Bostonian literati. Meredith McGill argues that "Longfellow was not only a key member of the Boston literary elite, he had become the standard-bearer for a literary culture that rejected the proposals of the Young Americas" (207). As McGill argues, Poe's decision to attack Longfellow "constitutes the strongest proof of his loyalty to the Young Americans: it represents both a strategic strike on behalf of their critical authority, and an act of courageous discrimination" (208). While Poe's involvement in the Little Longfellow War certainly aligned him with Young America, it is important to remember that Willis, a Whig, was also involved in this literary quarrel.

In fact, to some extent, the Little Longfellow War was significant because of the ways that Poe's charges against Longfellow made the alliances of the New York literati increasingly clear. After all, Poe had previously criticized Longfellow. For instance, in the October 1839 issue of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, Poe negatively reviewed Longfellow's *Hyperion, a Romance*, which is noted as "By the author of *Outre-Mer*" (227). Poe complains that "Works like this of Professor Longfellow, are the triumphs of Tom O'Bedlam, and the grief of all true criticism. They are potent in unsettling the popular faith in Art—a faith which, at no day more than the present, needed the support of men of letters" (227). According to Poe, popular faith should be in Art rather than in

Longfellow; the Boston poet's popularity was merely an idolatrous distraction from Art. In this review Poe suggests that Longfellow has talent, but is willing to "demur at the great labor requisite for the stern demands of high art" and emphasizes "We grant him [Longfellow] high qualities, but deny him *the Future*" (227). Longfellow is understood here as a distraction for the masses waiting for their literary savior; he is certainly not the future of American literature.

Poe criticized Longfellow frequently throughout his career, but the Little Longfellow War is a much more dynamic conflict that points to larger issues. Meredith McGill suggests that Poe's writings during the Little Longfellow War point to "the struggles of the author to emerge in the first place, to distinguish himself out of an indistinguishable mass of text" (211). McGill contends that the Longfellow War underscores Poe's anxiety about the role and function of the author. She argues, "Poe's concern with the vulnerability of the authorial subject to the circulation of texts is most evident at the moments when he invokes the act of plagiarism and the accusation of plagiarism as intersubjective struggles" (211). For McGill, one of Poe's primary motivations for engaging in the Little Longfellow War is his desire to protect the authorial subject from erasure by arguing that the author should have more control over the circulation of texts.

While McGill sees Poe as anxious about the precarious position of the authorial subject, Jonathan Elmer views Poe as concerned about the hardening of criticism as a genre. Elmer suggests that Poe's involvement in the Little Longfellow War pointed to his concerns about what could be termed character, conscience, or the self-critical faculty,

and he argues that Poe's attempts to keep charges of plagiarism circulating were a way of destabilizing criticism as a genre (69). As Elmer contends, Poe's argument that "plagiarism can never be finally decided because it is always a priori possible" makes it difficult for critics to make claims about the relationship between texts and arguments (Elmer 69). Both McGill and Elmer raise important points about the stakes of the Little Longfellow War, yet, at its core, the Little Longfellow War is about the cultural and social capital embedded in professional networks.

As Poe advocated for authors without a productive social network, he simultaneously worked to strengthen his own connections to other editors. This controversy allowed Poe to align himself with certain members of the New York literati while simultaneously distancing himself from others. In the Little Longfellow War Poe seized the opportunity to once again attack an established literary foe for receiving attention due others. By charging Longfellow with plagiarism, Poe brought attention to the work of a lesser known poet and made the case that well-connected authors have the opportunity to circulate manuscripts that other writers lack. While making these arguments, Poe asserted his own right to access (and criticize) New York literary circles. In other words, Poe inserted himself into a market while making it clear that certain authors with a national market (particularly those outside of his own circle) denied opportunities to other talented writers, to other writers who merited attention. As McGill argues, Poe was concerned about the erasure of the authorial subject. However, he was

concerned about a particular type of authorial subject: the subject who lacks social capital.<sup>66</sup>

The Little Longfellow War started when Willis published Poe's review of Longfellow's "The Waif" in the *Evening Mirror* in January 1845. The review begins, "Obviously, this volume is a collection of some few of the prettiest shells that have been thrown ashore by the poetic ocean; but, looking behind this idea, we see that Mr. Longfellow's real design has been to make a book of his 'waifs,' and his own late compositions conjointly; since these late compositions are not enough in number to make a book of themselves;—an ingenious thought, too, with which no one can possibly quarrel." Poe's critique of the book starts with the word "obviously." With this word, Poe suggests that Longfellow's poems and writings were inherently unoriginal, and that they articulated obvious thoughts in obvious ways. On the surface the poems might have appeared interesting, but the works lacked substance. Poe encourages the reader to look beyond the obvious and invites the reader to participate in deconstructing the poem by considering its publishing context. The bulk of the review focuses on the "Proem," which Poe calls "the worthiest composition in the volume." Poe discusses how the "slipshodness" of the rhythm, which would normally be considered "a gross demerit," contributed to the overall effect of the poem. Poe, as usual, focuses on the work's unity of effect and views the lack of a consistent rhythm as adding to that unity in this case. He writes, "The

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<sup>66</sup> Terence Whalen make the important point that Poe is concerned about fanaticism. Whalen writes, "In other words, fanaticism is a national problem which merely expresses itself differently in different regions. But...what most disturbs Poe is the power of fanaticism to aggravate the cultural division between North and South, for this effectively deprives Southern writers of access to the national literary market" (137). Poe sees that the concentration of publishing centers in the Northeast has effectively given Northerners the opportunity to bar Southerners from entering national discourse on ideological grounds.

partial prosaicism thus brought about, however, without any interference with the mere melody, becomes a beauty, solely through the nicety of its adaption to the whole tone of the poem, and of this tone to the matter at hand.” Poe praises the lack of rhythm as creating a beauty that will “enchant all who read.” Poe finds much to appreciate in this poem, but he also identifies some significant problems with the imagery. For example, the poem suggests night is a bird and darkness is like a falling feather. Poe complains that “The illustration is identical—that is to say null. It has no more force than an identical proposition in logic.” Poe’s primary critique of the poem echoes the beginning of the review: the poem lacks substance.

The conclusion of the review also echoes a concern mentioned in the introduction: the function of social relationships in creating a compilation. In the last paragraph of this review, Poe complains that “the name of each author in this volume is carefully omitted from its proper place, at the head of his poem, to be as carefully deposited in the index.” According to Poe, this arrangement places unnecessary demands on readers’ time. Poe claims not to understand why this particular structure was selected and states that he had given up the enigma. But in drawing attention to this problem, Poe highlights the ways in which Longfellow had subsumed the work of others. Longfellow’s involvement in the volume had been celebrated and promoted, but the identity of the other contributing authors had been somewhat obscured. This paragraph sets up the issues of authorial subjectivity and the politics of coteries that Poe explores in his claims that Longfellow plagiarized, which were published on January 14 in the *New York Mirror*.

On January 20, Willis publicly intervened in the Longfellow controversy, managing to create even more interest in the conflict while also minimizing the risk to his own reputation. He published a letter “from an able friend of Longfellow’s in Boston” as well as a response to that letter from Poe. Willis’s introduction to these materials bears further analysis. Willis writes:

We are willing to take any position to serve our friends, and if, by chance, we play the antagonist to shew another’s ‘skill of fence’ in his behalf, we trust not to be believed less his friend, after the joust is over. The criticisms on the ‘Waif’ which lately appeared in this paper, were written in our office by an able though very critical hand, and we give the following reply to them from as able a friend of Longfellow’s in Boston. We add also the reply to the ‘reply,’ and declare the field open. We judge the poet by ourself when we presume that he prefers rubbing to rust—sure of being more brightened than fretted.

This preface to the letter and Poe’s reply show Willis deftly presenting himself as a neutral party in this war. The first sentence, for instance, loosely uses the term “our friends,” which makes it rather ambiguous exactly whom Willis is supporting. At first, it seems as though Willis must be using the term to refer to Longfellow’s coterie as the editor subtly apologizes for possibly offending both the poet and his supporters. It appears that the editor must necessarily be on the side of others employed by the paper; the editorial “we” implies that Willis is speaking both for himself and Poe as he argues that any criticism of Longfellow is done in the spirit of a friend rather than an enemy. Yet the second sentence of the introduction distances Willis from the editorial “we” and clarifies that he is speaking from a different position. The second sentence creates ambiguity about whom exactly Willis is calling his friend. Willis is indirectly claiming to be “friends” with both Longfellow and Poe, and he directly suggests that the public

engage in the debate. As Willis states, he has “declare[d] the field open” and invites responses. This introduction implies that the Little Longfellow War was a publicity stunt orchestrated by Willis.

Around this time, Willis was becoming increasingly invested in Poe’s successes, and it makes sense that the editor would want to draw the public’s attention to his assistant. As the Longfellow War was unfolding, Willis published Poe’s most famous poem, “The Raven,” in the January 29, 1845, issue of the *Evening Mirror*. While Willis would naturally seek to promote his assistant editor, Willis was also savvy enough to avoid engaging directly with the Bostonian writer and his friends. Willis initially attempted to stay relatively aloof during the exchanges, but he ultimately favored Poe. A week later, on February 5, 1845, Willis printed a playful and insincere retraction of the plagiarism charges in order to satisfy George R. Graham, Poe’s former employer.

In this article, “Longfellow’s Waif,” Willis first works to distance himself from the controversy. He points out that he only hastily examined the proofs. He writes, “we looked up from a half-read proof to run our eye hastily over it...,” and “Notwithstanding the haste with which it passed through our attention....” Using these phrases, Willis stresses that Poe is responsible for his own sentiments. Willis distances himself from Poe’s charge that Longfellow plagiarized, but, at the same time, Willis explains that he decided to publish the piece based on the following argument: “Our critical friend [Poe] believes this, though we do not, Longfellow is asleep on velvet; it will do him good to rouse him; his friends will come out and fight his battle; the charge, (which to us would be a comparative pat on the back) will be openly disproved, and the acquittal of course

leaves his fame brighter than before—the injurious whisper, in Conversation-dom, killed into the bargain!” Willis justifies his publication of the piece by examining Longfellow’s professional position and the way celebrity functioned. According to Willis, Longfellow was an appropriate target for such an attack and charge because Longfellow was so privileged. Willis sees Longfellow’s privilege as inadvertently removing him from the sphere of action, and Willis asserts that the charge of plagiarism is a positive occurrence for the poet because it will bring him back in front of the public eye with a cleared name. In Willis’s calculations the charges of plagiarism will shed new light on Longfellow’s popularity as his friends rush to defend him.

As Willis is making this argument about the importance of gossip and drama in creating and sustaining a celebrity status, he also draws parallels to his own situation; he alleges that the charges levied in the *Evening Mirror* against Longfellow pale in comparison to the various accusations he had endured and survived. Willis also clearly envies Longfellow’s social station. Willis writes in a parenthetical phrase, “...with, perhaps, a little mischief in remembering how we have always been the football and he the nosegay of our contemporaries...”, suggesting that Willis’s decision to publish Poe’s charges is motivated in part by a sense of the different ways the two writers have been treated by the public. Willis and Longfellow both crafted an image calculated to appeal to the masses, but Willis’s image as a dandy would never allow him the critical acclaim that Longfellow’s image as an intellectual would create for him. Willis underscores this point by revealing that he expected a lot more mail from Boston than he has received, and he shares a letter written by someone [George Graham] who “has loved us these ten years,

that is to say, and never objected to our being a target, but thinks a fling at Longfellow is a very different matter.” Willis insinuates that Poe’s claims against Longfellow have created an occasion where literary alliances will be revealed and social capital will become increasingly apparent. In some ways, Willis’s comments about the lack of mail from Boston are more condemning than Poe’s original accusations. Through these comments, Willis is suggesting that Longfellow’s friends are not as deeply committed to protecting his reputation and implies that Longfellow has less social capital than previously imagined. Willis is also insinuating that the charges might be more accurate than even he originally thought: why else would Longfellow’s friends refuse to speak out on his behalf?

By drawing attention to the differences between Longfellow’s station and his own, Willis turns his retraction into a meditation on issues of social capital. Willis begins this mediation by considering national character. Willis argues:

...apart from the intrinsic policy of bringing all accusations to the light, where they can be encountered, we think that the peculiar temper of the country requires it. Our national character is utterly destitute of veneration. There is a hostility to all privileges, expect property in money—to all hedges about honors—to all reserves of character and reputation—to all accumulations of value not bankable. There is but one field considered fairly open,—money-making. Fame-making, character-making, position-making, power-making, are privileged arenas in which the ‘republican many’ have no share.

According to Willis, Americans are crass and those with social capital—or “accumulations of value not bankable”—are destined to be ostracized or, at least, attacked by the public. Based on this logic, Willis provides a valuable service to Longfellow by removing him from his pedestal and making him more personally

accessible to the public. Even more significantly, Willis reevaluates the value attached to different type of brands. While making it clear that the image of the popular writer is not actually worth pursuing as the public will simply attack that character, Willis foregrounds the value of pursuing the image of the artistic outcast. This, of course, happens to have been the image attached to both Poe and Willis—Poe had been painted as an outcast because of his lack of financial means, and Willis had been understood to be an outcast because of his dandified lifestyle. In this part of the article, Willis is arguing that he is helping Longfellow by giving him the opportunity to craft an edgier image. Furthermore, Willis reveals here that he sees social capital as inherently fluid unless it can be monetized.

Attacking Longfellow allows Willis to craft an image of himself and Poe as somehow outside the literary establishment while simultaneously exhibiting the power that he has as an editor. In a postscript to this editorial, Willis describes how editors are in a position to exchange social capital for cash. He writes, “We are trying to make a living by being foremost in riding on a coming turn of the tide in these matters. The country is at the lowest ebb of democracy consistent with its intelligence. The taste for refinements, for distinctions, for aristocratic entrenchments, is moving with the additional momentum of a recoil.” Editors are not to blame for the public’s fascination with scandal; rather editors are simply in a position to benefit financially from the new fascination with celebrity. Willis, who admits that as an editor he is part of the faceless public, acknowledges the flaws of the masses while also attacking Longfellow, the image of the literary aristocracy. Willis is an incredibly clever and shrewd public relations manager.

In the seminal work *Poe's Literary Battles*, published in 1963, Sidney P. Moss argues that Poe's antagonism toward the literary establishment stemmed from two goals. First, Poe wanted to dismantle the influential literary coteries in Boston and New York City to create room for the work of less well-known or well-connected writers. Second, as Moss writes, "He [Poe] wanted to establish conditions favorable for authorship and attractive to men of creative power" (3). According to Moss, Poe believed evaluating literary productions based on aesthetic standards would ensure books would "be literature, not merely literary wares" (3). To some extent, Willis seems to have shared in these goals. Willis seems to have promoted the Little Longfellow War as a way of showing the lack of value in the social circle Longfellow cultivated as few of his friends dared to defend him, and to show the ways in which the literary market was becoming increasingly driven by celebrity. Willis also used the Little Longfellow War to refine his own image as a literary outsider while exercising his power to label others. Willis and Poe seemed to have been united by a common set of goals and a common "enemy." Professional networks, while occasionally built around unifying ideological and shared commitments, were more commonly developed around shared interests. In other words, networks often functioned to promote the careers of individual writers and editors.

Willis and Poe appeared to be united at this point in the Little Longfellow War, yet on February 14, 1845, Willis published another retraction. In *The Poe Log*, Thomas refers to this retraction as "flippant," but the retraction has the potential to be read more sincerely. Willis writes, "To gratify a friend we say that if our playful notice of 'Longfellow's Waif,' a few days since, did not give the impression that we (Willis) fully

dissented from our assistant [Poe] as to the charge against Longfellow for enviously leaving out of his book such poets as competed with himself—dissented from all the disparagement of Longfellow...” Willis distances himself from Poe here and aligns himself with a “friend” who is obviously also a friend of Longfellow. Willis is attempting here to stay above the fray and to remain “friends” with multiple groups. Social capital waxes and wanes, and Willis shrewdly attempted to stay in the good graces of those in power. This proclivity lead Willis to collaborate with Poe when he was affiliated with influential groups such as Young America.

As can be seen by Willis’s calculating behavior during the Little Longfellow War, Willis’s and Poe’s relationship was founded primarily on shared professional interests, and it is more useful to think of them as colleagues than as friends. Of course, the two did extend each other certain professional courtesies. For instance, Willis notices Poe’s lecture “The Poets and Poetry of America” in the *Evening Mirror* on February 27, 1845.<sup>67</sup> Willis also introduced Poe to Francis Osgood. While these professional courtesies are important and useful, they do not necessarily indicate a friendship. Poe and Willis were both outsiders at the beginning of their careers, which limited the strategies available to them for gathering and developing social capital. Occasionally, Poe was able to use his writing abilities to gain some cultural currency, but, even more frequently, Willis was able to draw upon the same resource. In other words, Willis used Poe.

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<sup>67</sup> Evert Duyckinck also notices this lecture in the *Morning News* on Feb. 28

The year 1845 saw the peak of Poe and Willis's collaboration. At the end of the year, on December 31, Poe resigned from the editor's chair of *The Broadway Journal*. Shortly afterward, he published a controversial series, "The Literati of New York City," in *Godey's*. Poe begins this series by analyzing public opinion. According to Poe, the public adopts opinions from "the journals of the day," which represent the views of individual authors rather than representing a consensus of opinion. Poe argues, "In this way, ephemeral 'reputations' are manufactured which, for the most part, serve all the purposes designed—that is to say, the putting money into the purse of the quack and the quack's publisher..." (194). Poe goes on to say, "Now men of genius will not resort to these manoeuvres, because genius involves in its very essence a scorn of chicanery; and thus for a time the quacks always get the advantage of them, both in respect to pecuniary profit and what *appears* to be public esteem" (194). This series is Poe's attempt to rectify this situation; he claims that he will be revealing what editors actually think about specific writers.

In "The Literati of New York City," Poe discusses Willis in an ambivalent manner. Writing "Whatever may be thought of Mr. Willis's talents, there can be no doubt about the fact that both as an author and as a man, he has made a good deal of noise in the world—at least for an American" (196), Poe indicates that Willis's literary influence is due to his celebrity rather than his talent. Furthermore, Poe explicitly states that a significant amount of "his appreciation by the public should be attributed to those *adventures* which grew immediately out of his animal constitution" (196). After reminding the public of the many rumors of adultery that surrounding Willis, and again

suggesting that Willis is known because of his notorious behavior rather than his talents, Poe moves from analyzing Willis's talents in general, to thinking about Willis's editorial abilities. While Poe thinks that Willis lacks "the *readiness* which the editing a newspaper demands," Poe acknowledges that Willis has a great amount of tact and is good at the political maneuvering necessary for establishing a literary career (197). The last part of this evaluation stands out in comparison to Poe's writing about those he greatly admired, say someone like Evert Duyckinck. Poe, whose praise of Evert Duyckinck's work is unambiguous and unqualified,<sup>68</sup> emphasizes the New Yorker's editorial work with both the *Library of Choice Reading* and *Arcturus*. In comparison to Poe's ruminations on Evert Duyckinck's contributions to literature, Poe's thoughts on Willis seem even more negative than they do on their own. This series points to a subtle shift in Poe and Willis's relationship.

The year 1846 also brought important changes for Willis. Hiram Fuller, an enemy of Poe's, became the sole editor of the *Evening Mirror* when George Morris and N.P. Willis "retire[d]." On November 21, 1846, Willis and Morris joined the *Home Journal* and on December 26, 1846, Willis wrote an editorial encouraging people to financially support Poe. Poe, mortified by this appeal to the public on his behalf, responded in the journal on January 9, 1847. Throughout this debacle, Willis maintained that he was simply trying to help, and Poe refused to directly question Willis's intentions. However, Willis's representation of Poe as destitute later gave credence to Rufus Griswold's depiction of Poe as a financially ruined alcoholic. When Poe died, Willis publicly

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<sup>68</sup> However, Herman Melville, who found Duyckinck "timid," criticized Duyckinck very publicly in *Pierre* (Greenspan 677).

defended Poe in the *Home Journal* and these remarks were republished as part of *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe: With Notices of His Life and Genius* (1850). In his defense of Poe, Willis asserts:

Some four or five years since, when editing a daily paper in this city, Mr. Poe was employed by us, for several months, as critic and sub-editor. This was our first personal acquaintance with him. He resided with his wife and mother at Fordham, a few miles out of town, but was at his desk in the office, from nine in the morning till the evening paper went to press. With the highest admiration for his genius, and a willingness to let it atone for more than ordinary irregularity, we were led by common report to expect a very capricious attention to his duties, and occasionally a scene of violence and difficulty. Time went on, however, and he was invariably punctual and industrious. (xvi)

In this passage, Willis suggests that Poe is a devoted family man who balanced emotionally caring for his wife and mother-in-law with financially providing for them. While Willis does praise Poe's work ethic, Willis also suggests that this work ethic was not what gossip led him and Morris to expect from their new employee. In Willis's version of events, Willis and Morris are positioned as recognizing Poe's genius and giving him leniency; Willis implies that the two editors deserve praise for so kindly giving Poe an opportunity to disprove various rumors. Although Willis disputes the circulating rumors, he also acknowledges in print that they exist, which raises questions about Poe's reliability in other contexts.

Willis's defense of Poe reiterates and confirms some of Griswold's attacks on the deceased editor. For instance, Willis affirmed Poe's turbulent character by describing him as a "...sad-mannered, winning and refined gentleman" (xvii). Willis even begins his "defense" of Poe by stating, "The ancient fable of two antagonistic spirits imprisoned in

one body, equally powerful and having the complete mastery by turns—of one man, that is to say, inhabited by both a devil and an angel—seems to have been realized, if all we hear is true, in the character of the extraordinary man whose name we have written above” (xiv). Appealing to rumors, Willis here affirms the idea of Poe as a haunted genius poet with significant internal struggles. Originally published on the Saturday following Poe’s death (October 13, 1849), Willis’s depiction of Poe as having to acclimate himself to a regular work schedule and as constantly struggling against himself mirrors Griswold’s claims, which were first published on October 9, 1849.

Willis argues that his views of Poe differ from Griswold’s “in some important degree” (xiv), but it is difficult to determine the difference between the two views unless it is simply in the recognition of Poe’s genius. Willis concludes his “defense” with these words: “There are those who will be glad to know how the lamp, whose light of poetry has beamed on their far-away recognition, was watched over with care and pain—that they may send to her, who is more darkened than they by its extinction, some token of their sympathy. She is destitute, and alone” (xx). By suggesting that Poe was a lamp for, at least the literary, world, Willis reminds the public that they did not appreciate Poe’s genius during his lifetime, and he encourages them to atone for this by electing to financially support his mother-in-law. Simultaneously, Willis is indirectly supporting Griswold’s claims about Poe’s instability by arguing that Poe was unable to provide an inheritance for his family. Griswold, obviously, would not have painted Poe as a messianic figure. However, Griswold did emphasize Poe’s poverty and interpreted that

poverty as the result of a dissipated character. In reality, however, Poe's poverty resulted from his lack of social capital and his inability to cultivate productive social networks.

Willis's comments on Poe's life parallel in interesting ways Poe's comments on Willis in "The Literati of New York." Each recognized the significance of the other's work. Willis understood that Poe was an exceptionally talented writer. In his defense of Poe, Willis argues, "Mr. Poe wrote with fastidious difficult, and in a style too much above the popular level to be well paid" (xix). Willis recognizes that Poe's income is not a reliable measure of the value of his writings. Similarly, Poe understood that Willis's fame was more productively attributed to his celebrity and notorious behaviors than to his own literary genius. Poe acknowledged that Willis was an exceptionally gifted politician who possessed an abundance of tact. (To some degree, Willis's tact can be seen in his ambiguous defense of Poe.) While each recognized the gifts of the other, they were better colleagues than friends and had a significant impact on each other's careers. Willis promoted Poe's most famous poem, "The Raven," and provided Poe with opportunities to attack their shared antagonist, the Boston literati. Poe was one of the first critics to recognize the significance of Willis's celebrity, and Poe used Willis's work to demonstrate several important concepts. Poe's connection to Willis ensured that the *New Yorker* will be remembered in American letters: Willis's contemporary fame benefited Poe, and Poe's canonical status has the potential to posthumously benefit Willis. The relationship between Willis and Poe underscores the impact that editors and their social networks had on authors' careers; coteries and editors managed publication practices to provide clear direction to authors and their work.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

In the nineteenth century, much like in the current information age, the key to gaining an audience was developing social networks. Since antebellum communication and technology structures were organized around Northern metropolitan areas, the nodes of these social networks were also in cities such as Boston and New York. Southern editors, therefore, relied on their connections with their Northern colleagues to gain a national audience and to fulfill their career ambitions. However, editors navigated the politics of the literary world to varying degrees of success.

Ironically, Caroline Gilman, the editor in this study who most struggled to maintain ties to the North, was in some ways the most successful. She was able to keep her periodical—a publication she both owned and edited—in print for seven years and to use the proceeds from her work to buy a vacation home. Furthermore, due in part to her self-promotion in the *Rose-Bud*, she was able to strike a deal with Harper Brothers to publish her novel, *Recollections of a Southern Matron*. Despite these successes, Gilman was unable to cultivate a national audience because of her lack of Northern ties. As Gilman aged, she became increasingly worried about her literary reputation as well as her financial stability; with her limited regional reputation, she had a difficult time keeping her works in print. She was right to be concerned as contemporary critics, so intensely

focused on book-length works, overlook her successful editorial work and fail to notice the cultural significance of her novels.

William Gilmore Simms, one of the most successful antebellum Southern writers, was the most adept at forging relationships with Northern editors and publishers. After forming close professional ties with the New York editor Evert Duyckinck, Simms became increasingly involved in the Young America movement, which strengthened his commitment to literary nationalism (including Southern literary nationalism). Young America's commitment to American literary nationalism encouraged members of the group to support Southern writers and intellectuals, which meant that the group indirectly promoted an emerging Southern nationalism. Simms's involvement in Young America created friction between him and other New York literary factions, but it also gave him national attention as well as more publishing opportunities.

Similar to Simms, Edgar Allan Poe benefited from his participation in Young America; Duyckinck consistently promoted Poe's work and provided him with loans. While Poe successfully navigated his relationship with Young America, he struggled to engage productively with Nathaniel Parker Willis. Willis had the celebrity and capital to force Poe into public conflicts, such as the Little Longfellow War, that promoted the New Yorker's own interests and even further alienated Poe from influential literary coteries. Despite Poe's intelligence and awareness, he lacked the social and financial capital necessary to avoid becoming entrenched in Willis's schemes. Success in the literary marketplace involved much more than just intelligence or writing skills; it involved the ability to increase and multiply cultural and social capital.

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