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Kristin Boluch

We, the dissertation committee for the above candidate for the

Doctor of Philosophy degree, hereby recommend

acceptance of this dissertation.

Andrew Newman – Co-Advisor
Associate Professor, Department of English

Peter Manning - Chairperson of Defense
Professor, Department of English

Susan Scheckel – Co-Advisor
Associate Professor, Department of English

Nicholas Warner- Outside Member
Professor of Literature, Claremont McKenna College

This dissertation is accepted by the Graduate School

Charles Taber
Dean of the Graduate School

Abstract of the Dissertation

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Scholarship concerning alcohol representations in nineteenth-century American literature and culture has predominately focused on "temperance discourse" (meaning temperance ideology, an anti-alcohol moral culture, prohibitory laws and regulations, etc.). Generally, narratives understood to represent this discourse assume that the depicted consumers and producers of alcohol are excluded from the ideally imagined community. In Modern literature, by contrast, alcohol use is understood to represent cultural rebellion by individual characters (as seen in Hemingwayôs community of ex-patriots, or Fitzgeraldôs Jazz Age lost generation). The dissertation challenges assumptions of this chronological progression which begins in representations of alcoholôs social banishment. Though nineteenth-century American literature, and temperance fiction specifically, depicts the alcohol user as someone who shares neither the assumed values of narrators and readers, nor the sense of community that derives from shared ideological inclusions, on closer analysis such stories do not necessarily treat drinkersô and distributorsô antisocial status as a matter of course. Formal analyses of narrative constructs reveal a dramatic tension between criteria of social inclusion and exclusion surrounding the subjects of drink, drinkers and drinking establishments, a tension not always resolved, and sometimes not resolvable.

The mere representation of alcohol use does not automatically imply a "temperance discourse" as traditionally understood. This dissertation suggests that literature in the nineteenth century *invokes* but does not necessarily assume temperance discourse as a means of structuring narrative tension between individual characters and ideologically-defined communities. Whereas some stories stage a righteous condemnation of specific behaviors, others may probe community/national standards and assumptions, leading to entirely different results. Looking at a range of alcohol-themed works including texts by George Cheever, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass, Stephen Crane, Paul Laurence Dunbar and James Corrothers, this study argues that the representation of alcohol in nineteenth-century American literature does not automatically promote temperanceôs moral ideologies and the exclusion of drinking characters from narratively defined societies. Instead, alcohol-themed literary texts just as often question (and even challenge) temperance tropes in order to examine the nature of ideological inclusions and exclusions across a range of American communities.

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Introduction: Alcohol, Temperance and Community in Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Part I: Temperance, the Reader, and The Intoxicated Subject

The American Temperance movement gathered force through the nineteenth century to culminate in the Volstead Act (Prohibition) in 1919. A large body of auto/biographical and fictional story-telling expresses the movementôs ongoing political activism and moral assumptions. Many temperance fiction studies outline the nature of anti-liquor stories in disseminating Temperanceôs social message, with the movementôs goal to eradicate alcoholôs consumption and distribution. ñNo other single reform had so widespread an impact upon American literature as temperance, largely because of its extraordinary cultural prominence,ò writes David Reynolds in his overview of ñtemperance-related discourseò (22) in *The Serpent in the Cup: Temperance in American Literature*.

Because alcoholism and drinking problems concern urgent, ongoing social issues, criticism tends to assume sociological overtones, analyzing alcohol themes in literature as representing a social problem in need of reform. Textual representations of the temperance movement and its ideological assumptions have been well documented in cultural studies in these terms as well. More recently, cultural studies have turned in a new direction, one which balances temperanceôs overwhelming presence in the discussion. Works such as Ian Gatelyôs *Drink: A Culture of Alcohol* explores the history of alcohol culture, and a number of books

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exploring tavern culture have also appeared. These studies counter more temperance-centric analyses by focusing on populations carrying on despite temperanceôs messages urging sobriety.

What does it mean to be a good citizen? Who is considered ñinò and who is ñoutò? Temperanceôs assumptions concerning a sober population proposed an ideal, not a solution. This dissertation will argue that nineteenth-century American literature voiced concern with the social implications of reformist assumptions regarding matters of social inclusion and exclusion predicated on a solution ideal. The chapters to follow will point out literary works that either in theme or in cultural context provoke readers to question assumptions concerning the social status of alcohol-related characters. Beginning with a story of alcohol producers portrayed as in the company of literal demon figures, and moving through figurative descriptions of alcohol-related charactersô(anti)social statuses, the analyses to follow will examine the literary treatment of anti-alcohol ideology in terms of how it affects and effects the representation of social perception (without necessarily endorsing a reformist ideology through narrative decree). My study will focus on the debate temperance mobilized as fertile ground for literary meditations concerning socially assumed inclusions and exclusions of individual characters.

The alcohol debateôs concern with matters of good citizenry makes the narrator-reader relationship especially relevant to this subject. Alcohol themes suggest a particular social relation between speaker and listener; temperance narratives tend to be didactic, with an authoritative narrator setting commands for the reader to follow. Temperance tracts and stories can be traced to religious sermons, and an instructive style echoes in subsequent literary exhortations. After Benjamin Rush convinced national churches and religious leaders, beginning with the Presbyterians and specifically the Calvinist Lyman Beecher, directives boomed from pulpits across the countryside. ñIntemperance is the sin of our land, and, with our boundless prosperity,

is coming in upon us like a floodé ò (7). Beecher directs ñusò to protect a prosperous homeland from the invading tide of sinful boozers. A perfect harmony between speaker and listener forms the community of the sermon/text, adopted as a generic model to shape the subsequent temperance fictional genre.

The first chapter of my study examines the literary dimension of the interaction between authoritative narrator and reader, seen in George Cheeverôs *Deacon Giles's Distillery*. Cheeverôs narrator warns of distillers inviting Demon Rumôs devils to Salem, Massachusetts. This tale imagines the manufacture and distribution of alcohol as the communityôs gateway to a demonic playground. Villainous liquor manufacturers in league with Satanôs minions allow chaos to take over. Cheeverôs moralizing narrator equates a dystopian vision with the evils of material gain through alcohol distribution. Supposedly upstanding businessmen are imagined as wicked mercenaries responsible for chaos and immoral degeneration. In Cheeverôs story, Giles is lost to ñHell and Damnationò by choosing a demonic business over the townôs moral interests.

Deacon Giles's Distillery is composed with two assumptions: the individual alcohol user is lost to sin and death, and a sober ideal models a perfect agreement between narrator and reader. This agreeable relation between narrator and reader is essential to a vision of the harmonious, sober, temperance community. Umberto Eco refers to such an agreeable reader as the ñmodel readerò who willingly follows the ñgameò of textual strategies that define the limits of interpretation.[1] In temperance fiction, the model reader is essentially a passive consumer of the narratorôs assumed Utopian vision.

As I will later point out, Cheeverôs story was probably not the most suitable example to promote temperanceôs ideals of social harmony. Immediately following publication, Cheever was embroiled in a scandalous libel trial that threw Salem into an uproar. In addition,

temperanceôs emphasis on moral good in an allegorical framework of good versus evil is more apparent in Cheeverôs defense statement than it is in his short story. The story itself is mostly a satirical attack upon a rival church and condemnation of the distilling business. It certainly illustrates the wages of sin, as the narrator instructs the reader about the damnation ñDemon Rumò brings to his home town. Cheeverôs experience with temperance reform makes clear that the harmonious relation between narrator and reader was more the promise of temperance fiction, and less the practice of social ideology.

Temperanceôs Utopian solution was to come increasingly under question as the century wore on, and satirical depictions became more and more common. Twainôs *Huckleberry Finn* openly mocks reformersô naiveté. Early in the novel, a well-meaning judge attempts to reform Huckôs father by talking to him ñabout temperance and such things till the old man cried, and said he'd been a fool, and fooled away his life; but now he was a-going to turn over a new leaf and be a man nobody wouldn't be ashamed of... pap said he'd been a man that had always been misunderstood before, and the judge said he believed itò (24). Huckôs father signs the temperance Pledge and accepts the judgeôs material assistance, only to turn up the next day drunk on the money he received from bartering his new clothes.

While such a simplistic attitude toward temperance reform provides rich ground for Twainôs satire, other writers use the subject of alcohol, drunkenness and reformist ideology to consider the relationship between community perception and individually depicted social transgressions. Community perception of individual drunkenness was a particular problem for Edgar Allan Poe, who was maligned as a vindictive drunk. Likewise, Poeôs stories have been interpreted to represent the authorôs socially unacceptable behavior. As I will describe in Chapter Three, Poeôs narrator-reader construct brings into question social perceptions concerning the

alcoholic behaviors of individual characters. His stories comment on complacent reading as a means by which the reader may be taken off guard and forced to reconsider socially constructed expectations. Poe suggests that the actively engaged reader does not simply accept the narrative assumptions constructed in a given text.

My theoretical approach focuses on the manner in which narrative voice models a range of responses to the ongoing alcohol debate in nineteenth-century America. By focusing on the narrative address to the reader along with questions of audience/readership, this analysis borrows on cultural work that proposes a divergence between narratives invested in temperanceôs ideological outcome, and actual social drinking practice engaged in the American community. I take this examination one step further; it is not only a matter of who is writing/speaking, but also a matter of who is reading/listening. There is more nuance concerning the addressed reader than often assumed. Nineteenth-century literature describing alcohol use necessarily invokes the temperance debate, but narratives also provoke a reconsideration of temperance ideologyôs social implications, even in stories where sobriety is depicted as the best option. Alcohol-themed fiction does not simply pick a side in the temperance debate and argue it; narratives examine the social implications of the debate itself.

My line of inquiry necessarily invokes a reader response theory, such as Gary Saul Morson outlines in *Narrative and Freedom*. Morson proposes that the narrative construct of representative claims is mediated by engaged readers. He states that the reader engages in an ongoing compromise with historical conditions, allowing a variety of possible interpretations over time, so long as the reader reads: ñDo not fear compromise, however dull or unheroic it appears in contrast to utopian visions. Be prepared to balance competing values, to establish temporary priorities, and to adjust them in the face of contingency. Because solutions can only

be partial and temporary, cultivate the imagination of alternativesò (273). The textual negotiation with the reader is both situated within and continually freeing itself from a storyôs frames of meaning. Morsonôs approach represents a negotiation between the moment of narration and the moment of reading. This discursive situation depends not only on a historical/cultural frame, but upon a readerôs understanding of the frames of meaning brought to bear. The reader considers the narratorôs composed meaning as well as other voices represented in the text to which he or she may respond equally as strongly (to say nothing of oneôs personal inner commentary). Mikhael Bakhtinôs remark that ñverbal discourse is a social phenomenonò applies equally well now as it did almost a hundred years ago. ñThe separation of style and language from the question of genre has been largely responsible for a situation in which only individual and period-bound overtones of a style are the privileged subjects of study, while its basic social tone is ignoredé Stylistics [as opposed to the discursive subject matter] is concerned not with living discourse but with a histological specimen made from it, with abstract linguistic discourse in the service of an artistôs individual creative powersò (259). Narrative discourse depends upon our understanding of its ñsocial toneò composed by a range of competing, vital voices.[2] Bakhtinôs work seeks to rescue the art of discourse from an increasingly hegemonic interpretive authority, the ñovertonesò that limit interpretation to privileged positions.

While Bakhtin was writing at a moment when theories of the unifying form threatened to overwrite a heteroglossic history, the move to the other extreme is equally problematic. The objectives of cultural critics who see literary form as nothing more than an expression of socio-historically situated ideology discount literatureôs value as an aestheticizing mode of social enactment between the reader and narrative formulation. Literature does more than dictate social exigencies, writes Wolfgang Iser, who points out in *The Implied Reader* that literature provides

an object for contemplation; fiction does not simply sketch out regulations for the reader to follow. ñThough the novel deals with social and historical norms, this does not mean that it simply reproduces contemporary valuesé Norms are social regulations, and when they are transposed into the novel they are automatically deprived of their pragmatic nature. They are set in a new context which changes their function, insofar as they no longer act as social regulations but as the subject of a discussion which, more often than not, ends in a questioning rather than a confirmation of their validityò (xii).

The study to follow proposes that alcohol-themed texts question the very nature of the socialized frames of meaning brought to bear upon them. Literary presentation of alcohol themes will be explored via narrator-reader negotiations, as well as critical responses to these texts over time and across readers. The texts under question in the following study cover a broad range of subjects and issues, but all require a consideration of the readerôs role in composing the narrated vision of community and individual behavior in relation to the alcohol subject.

In Part II of this introduction, I will establish how and why a religious tradition of anti-alcohol values came to be represented and understood in nineteenth-century culture by sketching out the emergence and implications of temperance rhetoric. Understanding the codes and patterns involved in generic temperance stories will establish the foundation of moral assumptions germane to specific textual discussions. This will demonstrate temperanceôs narrative rhetoric as patterned on the minister/congregation relationship, accounting for temperance fictionôs moralizing tone and assumption of a complicit readership. Therefore, in Part II of the following introduction, I will present temperanceôs history and rhetorical constructs, analyzing how alcohol-themed texts have been read in the period prior to the Volstead Act. This section traces how temperance organizers worked to universalize temperance

values, and rhetorically incorporated ideas of a population unified through univocal temperance narratives and ideology. The discussion will center on the struggle between individual rights and choices, and the idea of the greater social good.

Part III of the introduction will lay out a history of critical approaches to the subject of drinking in America, including the key arguments that make up our current understanding of alcohol themes in American literature. This section will aim at putting in perspective the value of a reader-centric critical approach, which will guide the analysis of specific authors and texts in the chapters that follow.

My ultimate goal is to allow for a greater ambiguity in reading this periodôs alcohol-themed literary works, and for an expanded consideration of how perception and negotiation of this polarizing subject manifests across populations and communities. In addressing the socio-cultural assumptions as a matter of rhetoric as much as representation, this study is dedicated to highlighting the ongoing, controversial nature of alcohol as a subject and the range of responses it elicits.

Part II: Nineteenth Century America's Historical and Cultural Rhetoric in Alcohol-Themed Fiction

Traditional historical and sociological interpretations accept temperance reform as a culturally explanatory narrative. These interpretations assume a complicit audience for temperanceôs narrative rhetoric. For instance, writing in 1950, Herbert Asbury explains the Volstead Act as coming to pass when ñé the American people, 105,000,000 strong, began the joyous march into the never-never land of the Eighteenth Amendment.ò In Asburyôs interpretation, all functions of government along with ñthe Allied Citizens of America [a branch of the Anti-Saloon League] and the embattled members of the Christian Temperance Unionò

were poised to strike down ñthe faint whiffs of illegal hoochò (141). He adds, almost as an afterthought, ñThe brewers and the distillers, cowering among their barrels and bottles, said nothing, or at least nothing that was recorded for posterityò (143). Asbury disparages the belief in universal prohibition as fantasy-based, but he also states that it defines the cultural moment. Alcohol distributors have no voice in this picture, as Asbury locates the narrative voice within social institutions and organizations pushing for Prohibition.

Joseph Gusfieldôs work echoes the implication that temperance was a near univocal expression of the citizenry. In his studies of the period, Gusfield proposes that temperance quickly became an inclusive movement, when the dominance of an ñold elite of Federalists-Calvinistsò was eroded by democratic ideals following the American Revolution. Temperance changed at the end of the eighteenth century from an elitist reform aimed at the degraded democratic population, and emerged in the nineteenth century as a populist reform via moral suasion representing the middle classôs idealized hopes through an inclusive gospel of material prosperity.[3] Sobriety was a ñnecessary aspect of respectable, middle-class statusò (50) but the movementôs means were those of moral disinterest and inclusion. Rhetoric targeted lower-class drinkers for reform and incorporation into the great American way of material prosperity. Gusfield characterizes temperance as gathering of the masses under a sober ideal. Accounts that concede resistance more or less dismiss any real potential opposition to temperance and Prohibition. Martin and Lender, in *Drinking in America* note that ñBy the 1890sé While there would never be full national consensus, a majority ultimately agreed that the temperance ideal was desirable as a national policy goalò (125).

More recent studies have questioned temperanceôs inclusive empowerment. In particular, John J. Rumbarger challenges previous interpretations concerning temperanceôs power base.

According to Rumbarger, temperance does not represent an articulation of the American Dream to which the nation as a whole conceded before the push for Prohibition mobilized divisive politics. Instead, Rumbarger argues, temperance ideology from the beginning marked a ruling elite voicing a divisive strategy invested in entrenching its own socio-economic interests.[4]

While disagreeing over particulars, both Gusfield and Rumbarger agree that the rhetoric of the movement was unified. The question was, in whose interest?

From the beginning, the temperance movement sought to gain public consensus and speak to a united American interest. This unification project had to be done incrementally, however. At the end of the eighteenth century, the public was enthusiastically soaked in alcohol. Early leaders faced an almost overwhelming resistance simply in the sheer amount of drinking taking place. So many Americans were drunk. After the American Revolution, the overseas trade increased production and rum distribution as the American population grew. In addition, the expanding frontier led to whiskeyôs rise as a preferred drink over wine and even beer.[5] The increased alcohol content in hard liquor along with a positive perception of alcoholôs effects resulted in Americans drinking huge amounts per capita at the centuryôs end.[6] Statistics point out that by 1820, up to seven gallons of absolute alcohol was consumed annually per capita. This estimate factors in every American over the age of 15![7]

The task of building an anti-alcohol sentiment, then, was an onerous one. It began with Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, physician, and generally acknowledged father of the temperance movement.[8] Rush believed that the American republicôs success depended on individual citizen virtue, and moral health depended on physical health. Rush believed in abolition, railed against political corruption, and promoted temperance by warning of dire consequences should virtue fail.[9] His reformist values situated the Republicôs

foundation on what Robert Abzug describes as ñan ideology that he came close to equating with Christianityò (230). Close, but not identical: Abzug points out that Rushôs focus on non-denominational values both acknowledges and dismisses sectarian differences in favor of a tolerant ecumenism promoting personal virtue over institutional doctrine. Strong citizens make for strong institutions, and American democratic strength depended on majority compliance to a universal morality. Democratic institutions reflect the peopleôs will, and therefore the individual citizen had to take his intellectual, moral and physical health seriously.

These beliefs inform Rushôs most famous work, *An Inquiry into the Effects of Ardent Spirits Upon the Human Body and Mind*. In this tract, Rush specifically denigrates the use of ñardent spiritsò for their ñdemoralizing effects,ò producing ñnot only falsehood, but fraud, theft, uncleanliness, and murder. Like the demoniac mentioned in the New Testament, their name is ólegionô for they convey into the soul a host of vicesô and crimesò (11) Resisting the alcoholic horde is key to an ordered civil society. Echoing Increase Matherôs oft-cited remarks that ñDrink is in itself a good creature of Godé but the Drunkard is from the Devil,ò Rush established drunkenness as Satanôs work, anathema to the American virtue ideal.

Rush was careful, however, not to equate his readers with the demonic horde just because they imbibed. Like Mather, Rush did not define all alcoholic beverages as carrying potential evil. Rum was demonic, but not so wine. Fermented drinks such as cider, small beer and wine he proposed as acceptable, reasoning that they promoted ñCheerfulness, strength and nourishment, when taken only in small quantities, and at meals.ò The key to virtuous results lay in the temperate use of the right kinds of alcohol so as to promote strength of mind and body. Prohibition of *all* alcoholic drinks did not speak to the unified republican citizen Rush had in mind. But for the man drunk on ardent spirits, Rush emphasizes consequence in terms of the

community gaze, what ñweò all know. ñThus we see poverty and misery, crimes and infamy, diseases and death, are all the natural and usual consequences of intemperate use of ardent spiritsò (12-13). By casting the alcoholic evil in terms of excess, Rush defined a (relatively) sober, temperate norm.

This normôs limits were soon tested. Through his influence in The Philadelphia College of Physicians and his political connections, Rush pushed for the newly-formed federal governmentôs mandated excise tax on whiskey.[10] The tax was so unpopular that local farmers in western Pennsylvania flat-out refused to pay. Their armed resistance to the governmentôs attempt to regulate the alcohol trade was known as the Whiskey Rebellion, and it was fought over a so-called ñsin tax.ò[11] President Washington ultimately quelled the rebellion, but the farmers ï many of whom were former Revolutionary War soldiers ï had successfully framed their resistance as a fight for personal liberty. The rebels protested the governmentôs attempt to coerce behavior and reduce consumption of ardent spirits via federal law. Eventually, the tax was repealed under the Jefferson administration.[12]

The Whiskey Rebellion established two things germane to my purposes here. First, it clarified the debate between individual rights and a greater social/national good that the argument about alcohol use and distribution would take. Second, the urgent need to form a consensus in order to effect future laws reflecting reform principles became clear. There needed to be a correspondence between temperance ideology and a general public voice composed of a perceived majority of individual citizens choosing freely. Reformers sought consensus in the belief that ñalcohol use could constitute a major danger to the future success of the fledgling democracy.ò[13] On the other hand, naysayers argued that democracy depended on freedom from oppression and the right to freely express dissent: Donôt Tread On Me. From the beginning,

temperance triggered a classic debate concerning democracy between the right to personal freedom of expression and social welfare/preservation of the union.

Rush took the Whiskey Rebellionôs lessons to heart. There had to be a better way to build consensus, and he found it in a positive appeal to moral rectitude. In a 1789 letter to Jeremy Belknap, minister of Bostonôs Arlington Street Church, Rush wrote that religious conviction was the key to reforming individual behavior. ñFrom the influence of the Quakers & Methodists in checking this evil, I am disposed to believe that the business must be effected finally by religion alone. Human reason has been employed in vain, & the conduct of New England in Congress has furnished us with a melancholy proof that we have nothing to hope for from the influence of *law* in making men wise and sober.ò[14] In 1811, Rush sent a thousand copies of his *Inquiry* to the Presbyterian Churchôs annual general assembly in Philadelphia, urging the national gathering to stress proper moral conduct in relation to liquor.[15] The Assembly subsequently released a statement declaring that ñwe are ashamed but constrained to say that we have heard of the sin of drunkenness prevailing ï prevailing to a great degree ï prevailing even among some of the visible members of the household of faith. What a reflection on the Christian character is this, that theyé should debase themselves, by the gratification of appetite, to a level with the beasts that perish!ò[16] With the Christian soul at stake, a subsequent committee appointed to study the subject resolved to take ñmeasuresé in preventing some of the numerous and threatening mischiefs which are experienced throughout our country by the excessive and intemperate use of spirituous liquors.ò[17] Instead of American against American on a literal battleground, the Presbyterian church envisioned a metaphorical fight against Satan for mankindôs eternal soul.

The charge to ideological battle was avidly taken up by Lyman Beecher, Calvinist minister and father of Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Beginning

approximately 1810, Beecher began warning against alcoholôs soul-destroying effects, eventually publishing his work as ñSix Sermons on the Nature, Occasions, Signs, Evils, and Remedy of Intemperance.ò This popular and wide-selling tract piled on the fiery rhetoric. ñIntemperance is the sin of our land, and, with our boundless prosperity, is coming in upon us like a flood; and if anything shall defeat the hopes of the world, which hang upon our experiment of civil liberty, it is that river of fire, which is rolling through the land, destroying the vital air, and extending around an atmosphere of deathò (7). Like Rush, Beecher hangs his argument on the threat not just to individual citizens, but to the national enterprise, a ñfloodò of ñfireò against the American ñexperimentò whose outcome is by no means clear. While Rushôs tract primarily focused on alcoholôs debilitating physical effects leading to a consequent moral erosion, Beecherôs sermons focus on the moral ñsin of intemperanceò and the ñinevitable results of bodily and mental imbecility,ò and subsequent community demise. Intemperance is not only a ñdisease,ò affecting the individual body, but a ñcrime,ò affecting the social collective. ñé THE DAILY USE OF ARDENT SPIRITS, IN ANY FORM, OR IN ANY DEGREE, IS INTEMPERANCEò (8). Such use opens the gateway to disease, sin, crime and death.

Both Beecher and Rush picture alcohol as a tool of the Devil, descending on the community from without. The rhetoric is visionary and Apocalyptic, an extreme expression underscoring the situationôs urgency even as the demonic allegory is set off to a future point; the ñfloodò of crime and death ñis coming,ò should the citizenry relax in vigilance. These narratives direct the collective community gaze to an approaching external threat in order to repel the invading scourge which may attack the individual drinker at some later point. One could help oneôs neighbor protect himself (and the community) by eliminating Demon Rum.

At this point, the battlefield on which ñweò resist ñthemò (i.e., Satanôs minions in liquid form) was mostly imaginary. A temperance man symbolically engaged in the fight by signing the temperance pledge to swear off liquor. Again, this did not include all types of alcohol and all manner of drinking. Early temperance societies generally allowed fermented beverages such as beer or wine. Rushôs focus on ñardent spiritsò such as rum and whisky signaled only distilled liquor as the problematic culprit. Beer and wine, in fact, ñare, moreover, when taken in moderate quantity, generally innocent, and often have a friendly influence on life and healthò (5). The temperance pledge began as a promise to abstain from hard liquor, whereas beer and wine were mostly exempt, and even served at early temperance society meetings.[18] Continued indulgence was aided by a belief in alcoholôs social and physical benefits, as well as cultural tradition; drinking had long surrounded important political and religious community activity.[19]

Rush and Beecher both aligned their rhetoric with religious sentiment, using moral reasoning and scriptural logic to imagine an allegorical threat of demonic invasion. Their positions accorded with the audienceôs moral and religious beliefs, establishing collaborative resistance to an externalized threat. The vision of an embattled community was taken up as the temperance movement gained momentum. In ñAn Address, to the Churches and Congregations of the Western District of Fairfield Countyò (1813), for instance, Heman Humphrey, Congregationalist minister, temperance advocate, and President of Amherst College, notes the need to reform drinking habits. The target audience for the address is not the drunkard; his case is one of ñno hope.ò Instead, ñTo warn the temperate, to sound an alarm to the thinking; to stand between the living and the dead, and stay the plague, is the only hopeful courseò (4). Hope is generated by reminding his audience to hold fast to ideal values which resist the alcoholic, community-killing ñplague.ò Humphrey avoids specific examples of drunken behavior. Instead,

consequences are framed in general terms: ñDrunkenness has more or less infected every class of human society. It has appeared in the youth, the darling of his parents; blasting the bud of hopeé It has appeared in the husband, the father, andé has made him a bruteò (5). The universalizing article preceding the nominative (i.e., ñthe youthò or ñthe husbandò) creates a model waiting for anyone to step into, even as the speaker avoids describing any specific example to explain how the worst occurs. Temperance lecturers urged their listeners to keep from behavior that would reclassify the audience member/reader from one of ñusò to an imagined, drunken ñthem.ò This distinction was drawn quite clearly in some cases, such as when the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance (MSSI) limited its members to those ñof a fair moral reputation,ò in order to battle the ñlamentable excessò by which ñmany individuals are ruinedò (4), though not, apparently, the moral men of the Society. The charter does not identify ruined souls; instead, the mere idea of morally laxity gives the temperate community something to resist.

The call to battle against universal degeneration was well received. The national call to sober arms was articulated in Beecherôs sermon on ñThe Evils of Intemperance.ò These Evils attacked ñthe health and physical energies of a nationé the national intellecté the military prowess of the nationé the patriotism of a nationò (47-52). Beecher and Rush imagined an emerging American national identification defined through the moral behavior of individual citizens united in the common goal of a sober environment, battling against the potential threat of Satanôs ñLegionò infiltrating the citizenry through demon rum. This early rhetoric is the basis for an ongoing dialectic relationship between an individualôs physical and moral health and a successful American enterprise. If the Whiskey Rebellion was a fight for individual free will, then these men would transform the dialog to incorporate the sober individual as the building

block of national identity. From its inception, the nineteenth-century temperance argument equated the state of the individual and the state of the State; Beecher and Rush proposed to form a more perfect, sober union. Of course, this is true only insofar as all individuals consider sobriety the goal. As the Whiskey rebellion demonstrated, who ñweò are could not be enforced. Reformers instead mobilized their rhetoric to overcome objections via an allegory, demonizing alcoholôs extreme use. Dystopian visions posited a citizenry united in moderate behavior. The ñus versus themò framework worked so long as the battle was allegorical. In practice, prohibition divided communities.[20]

For a time, description of the sober citizenryôs enemy remained figurative. Virtueôs model was more allegorical than realistic. The enemy manifested through demonically-inspired behavior, but had no human face per se. Early temperance narrators distanced examples from a specific reality to implement universally applicable commandments. For instance, ñThe Drunkardôs Looking Glassò by M.L. Weems (1818) begins with the story of a monk promised great rewards by the Devil if he acts out one simple sin of his choosing. He decides on drunkenness, seeing ñnothing so very terrible upon that.ò In a drunken fit, he attempts to rape his sister and kills his father. Upon waking sober and realizing the previous eveningôs events, the monk hangs himself. The narrator then notes, ñNow whether this tragedy was acted in Spain or Japan; by a friar or a fiddler, it makes no odds to us ï though certain it is that it bears so clearly the image and ósuperscription of Caeser,ô i.e., of poor *human nature*, that for my part I have no manner of doubt that it happened a thousand and a thousand timesé ò (3). The narrator here clarifies the universalizing aspect of the storyôs specific time, place and involved characters. These circumstances are not specific to the social or historical context of the story, but could happen at any time and in any place. The narration purposefully distances the invoked depiction

from the reader, emphasizing, ñbut, be that as it may, all we have to do with the story is its *moral*é ò Specific behaviors are less the point than a general model of sinful behavior illustrating alcoholôs potentially disastrous effects. While illustrative models such as those found in the *Drunkard's Looking Glass* ñstruck a sensitive chordò in readers who ñusually had firsthand experience with the consequence of alcohol abuse,ò[21] these early narratives modeled general behavior that warned of trouble.

These early stories echo the generalizations temperance societies drew from broad descriptions of drunken behavior. The 1826 American Temperance Society (ATS) Executive Committee report[22] warned against ña person brought under the power of intoxicating liquorsò who ñseems to be proof against the influence of all the means of reformation.ò Generalized types are the focus of further warnings: ñMany persons, in all classes of society, have been destroyed by this vice; and no one is free from danger. A father has no securityé ò Anyone may succumb and be lost.[23] The response of the ATS to the possibility of alcohol ruin was to ñmake a vigorous, united, and persevering effort to produce a change of public sentiment and practice with regard to the use of intoxicating liquorsé to take into serious consideration the magnitude of the evil which this Society aims to prevent, and the immeasurable good which it aims to secureé ò (14).

While the identity of Satanôs victims was vague, early organizations such as the MSSI identified membership through fairly restrictive criteria. Only community leaders with a proven history could join. As temperance organizations continued to spring up, membership became a matter of moral and not material credit. The American Temperance Society (ATS) modeled its ideal member upon his potential for righteous resistance against future threats. Reform mentality was a matter of continual vigilance against ever-present, imagined temptations. Community support kept members to the abstinence pledge, and members promoted temperance value. In

American Temperance Movements, Jack S. Blocker notes that the ATSôs rigor responded more specifically to Rushôs addiction model and disease concept, emphasizing the need for social support, rather than moral suasion models relying on individual self-regulation. ñIndividuals were to exercise self-control, to be sure. But since they could not be consistently trusted to do so, the public commitment symbolized by the pledge and the watchful fellowship of the temperance society must be mobilized to support their resolutionò (16).

Regular meetings provided support, as did a sudden surge in temperance tracts and newspapers. In addition, a wave of religious reform fostering temperance sentiment swept through the country in the first part of the century.[24] The ATSôs Fourth Annual Report of 1832 noted that ñMany of the ecclesiastical bodies in the Northern and Middle States passed resolutions in favor of abstinence; and recommended to all the churches and congregations under their care, to cooperate with the friends of the American Temperance Society in extending its principles and operations throughout the landò (22). Community-supported abstinence decrees were so successful that the ATSôs Ninth Annual Report of 1836 was composed primarily of testimonies from prominent citizens, example after example of sobrietyôs mental, spiritual and intellectual benefits. These stories proved the didactic ideological modelôs validity. They also shifted temperance rhetoric from moral generalizations to specific stories illustrating the universal effectiveness of temperanceôs moral model. It was all very well to forecast trouble; examples of successfully resisted ruin proved temperanceôs argument in the negative.

While personal testimonies primarily related first-person experience (and often reduced the story-tellerôs inebriated history to vague allusions), there was a notable increase in what A.A. verbiage would later call ñtaking your neighborôs temperature.ò The testimony of John Speed, M.D., for example,[25] points to his neighborôs predilection for stimulants of all kinds. Only after

giving them up does the neighbor enjoy good health. The moral is typical; less typical is the doctorôs willingness to identify his drunken neighbor. This willingness exemplifies a shift to temperance narratives identifying specific drunkards. ñHere, Sir, is one case, among thousands, of the injurious effects of *stimulants*, and here is the simple cure. It matters not whether the stimulants be, distilled spirit, or fermented liquors; they all, without exception, endanger the health of man, produce diseases of the most fatal kind, and destroy more lives than sword, pestilence, and famine" (524). Examples became increasingly specific and located directly in a contemporaneous social context. Fiction, too, became more interested in stories of individuals, though these specifics were always wedded to the generalized temperance moral. In *Picnic Tales* (1842), for example, ñJohnò takes a job in a brewery simply because it is more ñlucrativeò than other offers. He is quickly tempted to sample the goods, and from there it is a slow slide to his final death in a bar brawl. The narrator notes the story is written ñfor the benefit of those who might be exposed to like temptations, with similar weakness of moral and religious principles to meet them, we are pledged, in all simplicity, to delineate the sad consequences of his delinquency, and hold them up to public reprobationò (46). The story specifically warns the weak (i.e., everyone), and ends with an admonishment for the ñpublicò (i.e., everyone) to act.[26] But ñJohnò also illustrates the danger of working in a brewery and the trouble found in a tavern; the story also luridly details his wifeôs suffering. Temperance narratives successfully tied a general call for action to specific experiences of suffering. For the first time since the failure of the whiskey tax, legislation to control alcohol distribution was again proposed, most successfully with Neal Dow and the Maine Law of 1851.[27]

By the mid-1840s, public attention was fixed on a proliferation of sensational stories of drunken ruin, both biographical and fictional. A widespread readership made possible by a

growing magazine and news culture voraciously consumed these sensational tales.[28] Stories increasingly emphasized the suffering of entire families and communities at the hands of individual drinkers. These stories were not simply a ñtawdry way of reaching the masses,ò[29] although they did bring public attention to alcoholism. For some, these stories provided the occasion of personal reform. An emergent support group for reformed working-class alcoholics, the Washingtonians, used so-called ñexperience narrativesò as a support tool. These personal testimonies allowed members to engage community-based rhetoric with stories of personal experience. Many members found support for a sober lifestyle.[30] For a few years, this society was extremely successful. It began in 1840, when six working men were drinking at a Baltimore bar. As a joke, they sent one of their group to reconnoiter a local temperance meeting, clearly anticipating a cheap guffaw. Instead, the man returned and persuaded his fellow drinkers to take the pledge of abstinence with him. Sober meetings replaced drinking sprees as these six men founded the Baltimore Washington Society promoting sobriety for working-class men. The centerpiece of these meetings was the testimonial narrative, stories that related and validated the membersô experiences and efforts toward sobriety. Though it only lasted a few years,[31] the Washingtonian movement garnered a great deal of public attention, in part because the membersô hopeful narratives of failure and redemption so captured the public imagination.

The breakout star of the Washingtonian movement was John Gough, an ex-Broadway actor who earned a living as spokesman for the movement. His *Autobiography*, published in 1845, emphasizes a painful social estrangement. ñAnd yet, at this time, I did not consider myself to be what in reality I was ï a drunkard. Well enough did I know, from bitter experience, that character, situations, and health, had been periled, in consequence of my love of ardent spirits. I felt, too, an aching void in my breast, and conscience frequently told me that I was on the broad

road to ruin; but that I was what all men despised, and I among them, detestedé ò (33-34).[32] Goughôs *Autobiography* proceeds through a typical temperance redemption arc: a young man eventually recovers with his fellowsô support, finds community approval and becomes a valuable social asset. Gough relates becoming a model of recovery and rectitude among men, lauded by women and children. The *Autobiography* proposes a utopian vision as the end result of Goughôs reform. He relates appreciative letters received for helping inebriants ñto return to the more quiet scenes of harmony and peaceò (103). In addition, reform promises harmony between the sexes and peace for families, as seen when the Cold Water Army of Gardiner, Massachusetts presents Gough with a Bible specifically on behalf of the young ladies and children, for ñthrowing around the rising generation that mantle of peace and security, which should guard, shield and protect them against all the evils that follow in the train of intemperanceò (108).

On the other side of temperanceôs domestic utopia lay stories of family ruin through Fatherôs intemperance. Countless stories detailing Fatherôs ruin and Motherôs heartbreak were published in magazines and pamphlets and eagerly read. These stories supplied wives and mothers with models for holding fast to loyalty and love, even while narrating a tortured experience at the hands of abusive fathers and drunks.[33] The family, and by extension the community, rises and falls on each individual memberôs strength.

The best-selling *Ten Nights in a Bar-room*, by T. S. Arthur (1855) covered all temperance literatureôs generic features. This dark temperance story warns against dastardly drunks, but also presents a model of reform and faith in the ex-drunk Joe and his family. The storyôs narrator is a traveling businessman who stops in the fictional Cedarville on his way through the country. The story unfolds over a number of years, beginning with his first stay at the ñSickle and Sheaf,ò Cedarvilleôs new tavern/inn. On one of the first eponymous nights, Joe,

the town drunk, takes exception to the bartenderôs insult and throws his beer mug, accidentally hitting his daughter, Mary, in the head. Mary subsequently dies while declaring love for her father and faith in his ability to reform. The narrator stays at the inn every year, with each chapter a new ñnightò of his check-in. He describes the townôs moral and economic decline concurrent with its ongoing and increasing consumption of booze. Following the townôs economic ruin, the local politicianôs arrest for corruption, and the tavern ownerôs murder, the reformed Joe reappears to pronounce the moral of the story at a town meeting: ñé óthere is but one remedyé The accursed traffic must cease among usé If you would save the young, the weak, and the innocent, on you God has laid the solemn duty of their protection ï you must cover them from the tempteré Let us resolve, this night, that from henceforth the traffic shall cease in Cedarvilleôò (141). Everyone in town acquiesces to this demand, but the narrative reminds the reader that ñThere were, in Cedarville, regularly constituted authorities, which alone had the power to determine public measuresé through these authorities they must act in an orderly wayò (142). Joe and his family may represent a moral model for every citizen to emulate, but that model must, in the end, follow proper legal channels. Temperance ideology manifest in narrative models told a story uniting sober citizen with successful state, an agreement reflected in the accord between eager narrator and avid reader. The stage was set for a push to national prohibition.

Outside of temperance rhetoric, however, a different story was taking shape.

To begin with, there was a notable gap between the temperance narratives forecasting a sober Eden, and the amount of drinking actually taking place, even among the reformed. One of the most spectacular illustrations of backsliding was John Goughôs relapse. In 1845, Gough was found inebriated in a New York City brothel. He conveniently claimed he had been served

drugged raspberry soda and did not remember the several days of his disappearance.[34] The resulting national scandal signaled the beginning of the end for the Washingtonian movement, which rested so heavily on a redemptive arc guaranteeing a future ideal. Continued drinking did not factor into the Utopian model.

Novelists responded by characterizing the hypocritical temperance advocate figure. One of the more notable hypocrites of this type is *Huckleberry Finn*ôs Dauphin, a con artist who introduces himself with a story of posturing as a reformer for profit, and using his profits to tipple. ñWell, I'd ben a-running' a little temperance revival thar 'bout a week, and was the pet of the women folks, big and little, for I was makin' it mighty warm for the rummies, I *tell* you, and takin' as much as five or six dollars a nightð ten cents a head, children and niggers freeð and business a-growin' all the time, when somehow or another a little report got around last night that I had a way of puttin' in my time with a private jug on the sly.ò Similar characters appear in the works of George Thompsonôs *Venus in Boston* (1849) and Bayard Taylorôs *Hannah Thurston* (1864), among others. This type of character tends to be more incidental than central to textual objectives, and is not so frequently studied because it does not contribute so much as detract from temperanceôs cultural narrative. David Reynolds characterizes this figure as central to an ñironic modeò in temperance literature,[35] which ñundercut the authority of temperance orators.ò Reynolds states that the increasing criticism these characters represent led the temperance community to turn away from the Washingtonians and toward the more ñrespectableò ATS, with its emphasis on prohibition and community regulation.

But the continued presence and even proliferation of this satiric commentary seems to point to a desire for a greater nuance on the alcohol subject. Increasing unease began to stir regarding the temperance movementôs tactics. This uneasiness counters the public success of

local and state-level prohibition laws voted in at mid-century.[36] Laws may have been on the books, but they were generally not enforced on the state or federal level. Others were subsequently judged unconstitutional. A rising skepticism met this shift from the Washingtonian approach of elective personal and community participation, to ñcoerciveò tactics imposing laws upon the non-compliant. Historians emphasize a hostile popular opinion regarding the push for legal prohibition,[37] although it is probably more accurate to say that the concerns of the Civil War put prohibitionôs urgency in perspective. For instance, much is made of Lincolnôs position on alcohol and the Army. During the Civil War, when asked to address General Grantôs infamous capacity for drink, Lincoln is said to have replied, ñTell me the brand of Whiskey that Grant drinks. I would like to send a barrel of it to my other generals.ò In reality, Lincoln had a well known track record in supporting temperance concerns, and his attention to practical matters during the national crisis did not suspend that support. The story is apocryphal, however, and reflects popular sentiment, though Lincoln later denied he said any such thing.[38] Lincolnôs position is best illustrated in his 1842 address to the Washingtonians. In this speech, he decries reformersô tactic of demonizing fellow human beings; later, he alludes to the ñdemon of intemperance,ò employing the allegoryôs original intent of condemning the sin without attacking the sinner.[39]

Temperanceôs ñcoerciveò tactics particularly focused on the tavern as the site of illegal and immoral activity. Stories such as *Ten Nights in a Bar-room* drew lurid attention to bars as theaters of debauchery and crime. These sites therefore came under particular censure. In addition, the influx of immigrants following the Civil War gave rise to taverns as neighborhood meeting sites for new Americans. Temperance organizations drew on a reactionary anti-immigrant sentiment to fuel arguments for regulating immigrant communities by shutting down

the pubs which served as community gathering spots. A strong desire for social order in the post-War period capitalized on fears concerning an intoxicated urban environment, particularly those spaces populated with Irish, Germans and recently freed African Americans. A new push for prohibition addressed the growing uneasiness concerning the shifting urban demographics, swelling with a rising immigrant population.[40] Temperance organizations shifted attention, from personally managed participatory behavior to socially required obedience. There was some resistance; during this period, the Brewersô and Distillersô Association launched its own political action committee (PAC) to fight the growing Anti-Saloon League; its ñNational Protective Associationò was later renamed the ñPersonal Liberty League of the United Statesò in 1882.[41] Temperance organizations predominated in the nationôs socio-political life, however. The Womenôs Christian Temperance Union successfully launched a campaign to incorporate anti-alcohol themed lessons into the public education system, publishing tales, poems and lessons specifically marked for children and implemented in the nationôs public schools.[42] And the Anti-Saloon League became one of the earliest instances of a PAC influencing national legislation.[43]

Temperance fiction continued to assume individual accordance with a moral middle class national interest, but other types of fiction began to question alcoholôs social status in more nuanced terms. In particular, fictional Realism drew drinking characters as objects of critical assessment, not as object lessons. While drunken figures continued to be depicted as degraded and socially isolated, narrative treatments of these characters were not necessarily condemnatory per se. For example, William Dean Howellsôs *The Lady of the Aroostook* (1879) features Hicks, a chronic tippler whose best intentions cannot restrain his worst impulses. The story emphasizes Hicksôs initial charm, and paints his drunken fall as offensive not only as a moral matter, but also as a social offense to the main character. Hicks serves to draw out complicated social interactions

even as he is banished from the social scene on which the narrative focuses. Nine years later, Howellsôs *Annie Kilburn* featured an even more nuanced drunk, the chronically intemperate Ralph, whose ideals cannot quite match his behavior. Ralph nonetheless remains an important moral influence on the community, particularly on Annie; ironically, Ralph is one of the novelôs least hypocritical figures.[44]

Temperanceôs failure to deal with intoxicationôs appeal is particularly highlighted in Stephen Craneôs *George's Mother* (1896), and will be analyzed in depth in Chapter 4 of this dissertation. This story details the disjunction between temperance rhetoric and alcoholôs social facilitation. George is a boy of the streets. He comes under the influence of drinking buddies who offer him a far more exciting time than does his home life with a temperance-minded mother. He drinks his nights away, as alcohol facilitates intense relations with other drinkers. George is in search of something outside the drudgery of his hard-scrabble world. Craneôs narrative implements typical temperance themes (in particular, the mother dies at the end of the story), but the narrative never condemns George for his desires; neither is Georgeôs mother censured for her narrow religious outlook. Instead, Craneôs narrative shifts between the motherôs and the sonôs points of view to illustrate the divergence in their perspectives. Entrenched in their respective delusions ï her faith, and his pursuit of the tavernôs ñglitteròï communication between them is impossible.[45]

The representative debate between George and his Mother, between intoxicated experience and temperance reform, between individual freedoms and social demands, informs my study of intoxication in American literary narratives. My study will examine the dialectic between the individual and the communal over the subject of alcohol and intoxication, not in

terms of historical progression, but of rhetorical narration, and specifically the narratorôs address to the reader.

Part III: ***Alcohol-Themed Narratives and Reader Response***

Part II of this introduction outlined how American literatureôs alcohol theme has strong roots in the concordances and disruptions between individual rights and social interests. This section traced temperanceôs attempt to resolve that tension by creating a rhetoric representing unified individuals sharing a sober community-based ideology, a rhetoric modeled on the didactic instructions of ministers to a complicit congregation. I also pointed to the responsive backlash against the perceived ñcoercionò which assumes a compliant/passive reader in collusion with temperance demands. Satiric characters and literature aimed at social critique express that dissent, by challenging standard temperance fare of straightforward moral models.

Part III of this introduction will look at critical theories regarding temperance and alcohol themes post-Prohibition to the present day. This analysis is aimed at incorporating the ongoing alcohol-related literary dialectic between individual and community into a narrative theory of narrator-reader relations. While a problem/solution approach continues to define literary narratives about alcohol practice and distribution, my study proposes reconsidering this historically entrenched analytic framework, and subsequently shifts the emphasis from author/narrator to narrator/reader. The social interaction implied in the narrator/reader construct is of particular issue in texts concerning alcohol practice, given attendant themes of socialization and alienation. My shift in analysis as a point of entry into the field is meant to complement the

extensive work concerning cultural representation that has defined the field to date, as I will discuss below.

To make clear my point of departure from current literary theories concerning alcohol and literature, I will quickly describe the schools of literary criticism in terms how their approaches consider the narrator/reader relation. My emphasis on reader-based models may be understood both in response to as well as a complementary deepening of the ongoing social negotiations represented in specific texts.

Since the mid-twentieth century, alcohol studies generally have shifted to rehabilitation solutions and away from reform models, following alcohol reformôs socio-historical progression. After Prohibition proved temperanceôs imagined community ideal a cultural failure in practice, legal/social solutions fell from favor, and rehabilitation became the object of reformôs attention.[46] Aiding the rehabilitation movement was the increasing medicalization of addiction theory.[47] Addiction theory proposes alcohol abuse not as a social problem needing legal management but as an individually-manifested disease needing professional medical treatment. The problem is no less urgent, but that urgency applies to individual sufferers, not to the culture as a whole.

Alcoholôs narrative status lost its cultural centrality, and temperance adherents were reimagined as outliers. Nineteenth-century temperance reform narratives became interpreted as the purview of fanatics which a general (reading) public rejected.[48] For instance, in *The Popular Book: A History of America's Literary Taste* (1950), James David Hart dismisses temperance fiction even as he acknowledges reform cultureôs influence: ñReform was in the air and one could not avoid it, but except for a particularly striking novel or two, its fiction was generally read by extremistsò (110). He cites abolition fiction as far more relevant as ñit touched political and economic realities [and thus] it affected all the people.ò Stories such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

reflect a popular concern in light of the affecting ñrealitiesò experienced, a reality alcohol narratives do not touch upon. To support his claim, Hart cites Hawthorneôs 1855 letter to a publisher, in which Hawthorne relates he has convinced a friend to sign the temperance pledge. Hawthorne then writes that he celebrated his success by pouring himself an extra glass of wine. This, Hart notes, points out the divergence between the alcohol reform impulse and the actual drinking behavior of individuals. The contradiction proves the failure of temperance logic, logically counteracting the representative ideology. Hart further notes that ñthe temperance novelisté was obviously too fanatical to attract a normal reading publicò (109) and that a ñnormalò reader was much more ñapt to look upon the subject as did Hawthorne,ò i.e., in alcohol-indulgent rejection.[49]

Two things come together in Hartôs analysis. First, Hart depends upon an assumed reader-centric consensus regarding ñnormal readingò practice in order to reject a given narrativeôs claims. Second, Hartôs reading is standard ñNew Criticò formalism which assumes perfect narrator-reader accord. A text is judged by how successfully its narrative creates a unified message for the reader to decode. In this case, the narration of a common temperance story expresses a radical position, and therefore Hart and like-minded non-fanatical readers can have no interest in such narratives. Readers nodding along to temperance stories are too radical to be considered relevant to normative literary approaches.

New Critical readings such as Hartôs exclusively empower an authorial voice in composing the formal limits of the text for the reader. ñé the formalist critic assumes an ideal reader,ò writes Cleanth Brooks in his definitive work, *The Formalist Critics*; ñé .that is, instead of focusing on the varying spectrum of possible readings, he attempts to find a central point of referenceò (54). This interpretation demands a passive and/or complicit reader who unlocks the

textôs narratively composed meaning as defined by literary historyôs established formal standards. While New Critics theorize that the ideal reader is composed by a formally unified text, in practice New Critical theory composes an audience for itself that reinscribes the traditional formal values it scrutinizes. Voices and perspectives that would challenge New Critical values are not ñidealò and therefore excluded.

The ñideal readerò finds his ñcentral point of referenceò within the narrative structural form alone, via the textôs composition. Hartôs critique of nineteenth-century alcohol-themed fiction equates this fictionôs ideal reader as complicit with temperanceôs central organizing themes, and with the narrative voice positing underlying reformist assumptions. Prohibitionôs failure is failure of the movementôs underlying assumptions, and a concordant failure of narratives composed on a temperance standard. Temperance fiction and its readers can all be safely ignored, according to Hart.

New Historicism disagrees with this approach, and its critical tradition arose specifically to argue against New Criticism. Instead of positing a pre-authorized narrative voice inscribing traditionally read ideal forms, New Historicists analyze texts through the socio-historical conditions explaining textual emergence. Culturally-empowered narrative voices compose textual objectives, and historical forces shape texts that in turn express a historically grounded cultural ideology. Temperance fiction underwent a considerable rehabilitation by New Historians, who mine temperance fiction for its ideological messages. New Historicism changed two critical aspects of narrator status relevant to my project. First, this interpretation questions the socio-cultural/historically defined values which promote certain narrative voices and interpretations over others. While New Critics evaluate texts in terms of how a narrative addresses a universal, humanist ideal, New Historians focus instead on how narratives describe

specific, historically-defined interests. The second aspect of interpretation that New Historicism revolutionized is closely related to the first point: the readerôs critical position is explicitly defined by socio-historical concerns uncoupled from a given narrativeôs assumptions. The readerôs focus is not necessarily in accord with a textôs narrated objectives. Instead, New Historicism questions the source of narratively represented authority. Who is speaking about the subject, and to what purpose? In literary studies, these questions ground themselves in contextualizing the historical developments of temperanceôs progress and implementation, partly in response to the work of critics such as Stephen Greenblatt and Hayden White, who challenged the assumption that narratively-expressed values represent history as such.[50]

Texts such as the previously discussed *Profits, Power and Prohibition* by historian John Rumbarger analyze temperanceôs assumptions in New Historicismôs terms. Rumbarger examines a capitalist authority controlling temperanceôs reform message, a message that benefited the socio-economic entrenchment of an upwardly mobile middle-class. Rumbargerôs issue lies in how narratives promote historical forces that then reproduce narratively inscribed values. Texts thus do not necessarily represent an historically definitive population/reading audience for the reader to consider, but an historically empowered narrative directing readers. In Rumbargarôs interpretation, temperance fiction narrates a model for service to the middle class business interest. Rumbargar directly refuted claims by sociologist Joseph Gusfield, who argued (twenty-six years earlier) that temperance was an historical aberration conveyed by socio-economically disinterested narrators, for the moral improvement of the nation. Rumbarger objects to Gusfieldôs universalizing claims, arguing instead that temperance narratives served to benefit specific socio-economic interests defined by historical trends particular to American culture. The New Historian literary approach likewise focuses on representations motivated by historical forces;

this approach has led directly to cultural studiesô renewed interest in temperance fictionôs ideological messages, particularly in regard to the manner in which normative narrative assumptions reinforce gender and racial exclusions by reinscribing restrictive middle-class values.[51]

New Historicism and attendant cultural studies opened up to literary studies new approaches to an old subject. Temperance was not what the more traditional Gusfield called a ñdisinterestedò moral movement, but was instead an ideologically invested one. The incorporation of historically invested readings allows critics to account for readers whose interests are served or addressed by particularly inscribed narrative values. The point is not to either accept or reject the ideology promoted by a given narrative, but to consider the cultural forces at work in shaping the narrative and affecting the reader. New Historicism and the cultural studies field which followed has opened new avenues to explore the didactic, ideological messages conveyed in narratives to and about specific audiences.

The development of historically and culturally weighted analyses points toward alternative interpretations which challenge previously understood (in alcohol-themed literature, coercive) authoritative interpretations. In 1989, the literary magazine *Dionysos* was launched explicitly to examine inter-disciplinary alternatives to this subjectôs more traditional literary approaches. Billing itself as a showcase for the field of ñLiterature and Intoxication,ò the first issue of *Dionysos* featured historian Ernest Kurtz, who commented that ñthe hope of the [chemical dependency treatment] field lies in those who are liberally educated ï those who know the human condition from the perspective of history and literature rather than through the demeaning and desiccating categories of the social sciences.ò[52] Something new was going on in this critical approach: the problem/solution frame the sciences offered seemed to be put into

ñperspectiveò by approaches concerned with ñthe human condition.ò What did that mean?[53] In the second issue, the editors note their enthusiasm that the project was so well received ñby those outside the literary community.ò They focus on the idea of interpretive voices from different perspectives engaged in a conversation concerning alcoholôs literary presentation.

Dionysos never quite found its niche in creating a conversation between solution-based rhetoric and literary-cultural work concerning alcohol use and culture. Eventually, the magazine changed its descriptive tag from ñLiterature and Intoxicationò to ñLiterature and Addiction.ò In an ongoing attempt to find an audience, the journalôs emphasis shifted from one that incorporated alcoholôs intoxicating potential for alternatively-perceived literary/humanized effects to an emphasis specifically addressing alcoholôs social problems. *Dionysos* folded in 2002. While *Dionysos* may not have successfully sustained a reconsideration of the subject, the magazine represents an attempt to step away from criticism complicit with traditional reformist terms. Its limitations underscore how entrenched the cultural perceptions are. The alcohol subject has long been read in terms of the search for a reform solution to the problem of alcoholismôs antisocial effects.

More recently, however, cultural studies increasingly have been considering non-reformist frameworks regarding nineteenth century American alcohol culture. For example, a number of recent works examine nineteenth-century tavern culture. These studies include Christine Sismondoôs *America Walks into a Bar* (2011) and Madelon Powersô *Faces Along the Bar* (1998). These books offer a balanced view of alcoholôs cultural work in both facilitating and stymieing socialization. Tavern culture is presented as a creative force with traditions and a life of its own, and not simply the object of temperanceôs anti-immigrant sentiment.

In addition, works such as Iain Gatelyôs *Drink* attempt to draw more nuanced depictions of temperanceôs audience. Gately focuses on both positive and negative reader reception. His work takes into account the ongoing cultural practice and defenses of alcohol consumption, looking past official positions to examine letters, tracts, essays and diary entries of average citizens.[54] Nicholas Warnerôs *Spirits of America* demonstrates literatureôs representation of a ñcritically neglected but extraordinary depiction of intoxicant use in the antebellum periodò (4). He considers texts representing alcoholôs positive as well as negative effects. All of the above studies point out that there is a counter-balance to nineteenth-century reform perspectives.

The study to follow proposes that alcohol-themed texts question the very nature of the socialized frames of meaning brought to bear upon them in part through disruption of temperanceôs assumed ideal reader. In examining narrator-reader negotiations, my analysis seeks to open up questions concerning the nature of social relations, rhetorical negotiation between individuals and social groups, and the role of assumptions concerning alcohol and intoxication in literatureôs narrative constructs. This analysis will point out that the narrative address to the reader does not simply reinforce temperanceôs solution-based directives, but may provoke a deeper consideration of the social problems suggested by alcohol-themed literary representations.

Narrative theory is particularly useful in separating the representation of temperanceôs social assumptions in a text from an authorôs endorsement of reformist solutions. Narrative theory points out that the narrator does not necessarily articulate the overall textual meaning an author designs. Instead, the narrator is the textôs voice mobilizing the readerôs attention. Narrators may directly address the reader; for example, George Cheeverôs narrator tells the reader to look at a described business advertisement. But narrators may also distance themselves

from characterized concerns. This latter technique is of particular interest to the realists, and will be fully explored in the chapter involving Stephen Craneôs work. In exploring the way alcohol-themed works position the reader-narrator relation, my critical approach depends upon an understanding of the distinction between character voices, the narratorôs voice, and overall textual objectives.

The most fundamental assumption in narrative theory is that the narrator is *not* the author, nor is the narrator the ñimplied author.ò The implied author is defined by Wayne Booth in his seminal work, *The Rhetoric of Fiction,* as that which controls the overall textual design. The implied author is that which the reader assumes ñchooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choicesò (74-75). The narrator, on the other hand, is a formal element used to address the reader and draw attention to the situations described in the text. A text may have a single narrative voice (either first or third person), or may switch between multiple narrators. These narrating voices will describe a variety of charactersô viewpoints and experiences for the readerôs consideration, drawing an overall textual picture through various competing character perspectives. The narrator is essentially a device that directs the readerôs attention by describing any number of character viewpoints and experiences, the sum total of which address the implied authorôs overarching concerns. The narrative focus through a particular characterôs experience and/or viewpoint is termed narrative ñfocalization.ò The concept of focalization is suggested in Bakhtinôs use of the dialogic as a formal mode in story construction, or, the concept of ñinternal stratification of language, of its social heteroglossia and the variety of individuals voices in it.ò[55] Bakhtin emphasizes the value of this variety of viewpoints. His theory counters the New Criticsô subordination of fictional narrative to poetryôs ñunifying principle.ò[56] In contrast to the New

Critics, Bakhtinôs novel/fictional narrative is composed from heteroglossia, positing a range of possible viewpoints from which a ñstylistic unificationò of the entire work (i.e., the implied author) emerges from the writerôs aesthetic choices. The narratorôs presentation of a range of voiced character experiences composes the textôs overall meaning.

Mieke Bal considers ñfocalizationò a more useful term than character ñperspective,ò although she believes the two are somewhat interchangeable.[57] Bal uses the term to clarify ñdistinction between, on the one hand, the vision through which the elements are presented and, on the other, the identity of the voice that is verbalizing the visionò (143). The narrator may focalize through a character but the characterôs viewpoint is not (necessarily) concordant with the narratorôs. In addition, a characterôs focalized perspective may not be wholly accounted for in a given narrative, as the range of character viewpoints, and not any one specific viewpoint, composes what the reader perceives as the overarching textual statement. In this, Balôs paradigm reaches back to Bakhtinôs ñstruggle among socio-linguistic points of viewò rallied within an implied authorôs ñstructured stylistic system.ò[58] Wayne Booth emphasizes this overarching understanding, stating that the reader perceives ñthe chief valueò to which a given ñimplied author is committed,ò as revealed by ñthe extractable meanings but also the moral and emotional content of each bit of action and suffering by all of the characters.ò[59] The reader does not simply follow the narratorôs instructions, but considers the focalized viewpoints the narrator voices. These competing messages are focalized by the narrator to compose an overarching purpose, maintained by the implied author. The implied authorôs ultimate purpose is to create a world in which the reader will ñknow where, in the world of values, he stands ï that is, to know where the author *wants* him to stand.ò[60] According to Seymour Chatman, the narrator is ñthe only subjectò of a text, whereas the implied author is ñthe patterns in the text which the reader negotiates.ò[61]

In my analyses of literary works, I will use the term ñfocalizationò to denote the narratorôs attention to character situations and points of view as a formal element of the text. This is distinguishable from the term ñperspective,ò which implies the representation of extra-textual social and cultural beliefs illustrated by a characterôs focalized position (for example, Cheeverôs Deacon Giles focalizes an interaction with demons he mistakes for ordinary men, but his perspective represents the distillery businessôs shunning of temperance organizationôs moral condemnations). Through this distinction, I will argue that texts do not simply represent ideology, but draw the readerôs attention through character focalization to representations of alcohol-based ideology as a subject for consideration. In this way, writers draw attention not just to temperanceôs imperative instructions, but to the social implications of assumptions concerning alcohol use and environments.

Part IV: Chapter Descriptions

George Cheeverôs *Deacon Giles's Distillery* is not a typical temperance fiction, though it is considered a classic temperance text. Its narrative certainly exemplifies the movementôs one-sided, didactic narrative approach. Chapter one roots my study in temperanceôs moralizing voice, and the movementôs assumption of a complicit and passive reader in agreement with a textôs moralizing framework. In this chapter I flesh out temperanceôs religiously-based fictional constructs that will set the groundwork for subsequent chapters. I also examine Cheeverôs embattled history with Salemôs religious community along with the fall-out after his storyôs publication to point out that the American readership and culture by no means automatically agreed with his narratorôs point of view. The center of this chapter is the libel lawsuit brought against Cheever. John Stone, a prominent Salem businessman/distiller, was the presumed model

for Deacon Gilesôs character, and he successfully sued Cheever for libel. The resultant scandal brought temperanceôs representative claims to national attention. This chapter begins a discussion concerning contradictions between temperanceôs assumptions of a unified reading community, and the divisive imagery concerning community standards in relation to alcohol practice. It also sets the groundwork for a discussion concerning temperanceôs references to the inhuman and alcoholôs antisocial status, as embodied in Cheeverôs demon allegory. Specifically, I will examine the divided audience reading Cheeverôs temperance story and the responses to his taleôs reformist proposition. Cheever claimed that his fictionôs allegorical generalizations exempted him from accusations of social harm to the greater community. This first chapter will set the groundwork for further examination of the connections between temperanceôs unified community claims, dissenting viewpoints, as well as arguments for and against nineteenth-century literatureôs figuration of the antisocial nature of characters involved in alcohol culture.

Edgar Allan Poe took a dissenting viewpoint. His fiction reflects his critical outlook; Poeôs narrators alienate readers. Many see in Poeôs narrative twists his own antisocial proclivities and alcoholic personality. Chapter two delves into Poeôs fictional constructs between narrator and reader not as confrontations between antisocial representation and socially normative victim, but as challenges to the reader to move beyond socially complacent assumptions. In analyzing texts such as *The Black Cat,* I propose that Poe uses temperance ideology and imagery to lull the reader into a prefigured moral position that the narrative then undermines. Many of his stories foreground temperance figuration in characterizing drunkenness. Poeôs stories manipulate clichés to facilitate the appearance of understanding between the narrator and reader, provoking in the reader a horrifying sense of misplaced reliance on dictated directives. Through such stories, Poe attempts to reshape reading practice, fighting against complacent moralizing hierarchies such as

those aligned against him in professional literary circles. Many see Poe as the ultimate example of his own fiction: a dark, troubled, drunken soul who embodies a Gothic spirit. Poe himself recognized the value of promoting this image to sell his work, but he also fought against New Yorkôs closed-minded literati, who would use his reputation against him. In fact, Poe was a diligent and perspicacious writer, and his stories foreground assumptions concerning the nature of alcoholic characters in order to critique the moralizing sanctimony so predominant in mid-nineteenth-centuryôs literary culture. He sought to raise literary standards by challenging readers to question an automatic acceptance of narrative presentation.

The question of temperance fictionôs assumption of a complicit reader informs Chapter three, which brings together two vastly different authors: Walt Whitman and Stephen Crane. Whitmanôs *Franklin Evans* and Craneôs urban fiction, specifically *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* and *George's Mother* differ markedly not only in the narrator-reader construct, but also in style and intent. Both authors, however, use the theme of alcohol use to imagine cultural marginalization on the modern landscape. This chapter compares the markedly differing narrative approaches to the similar issue of urban alcoholic environments. I will argue that despite the differences, both authors are more successful in relating the problems faced by alcoholic characters, than in clarifying a solution to alcohol-related issues. In *Franklin Evans,* Franklin characterizes a recurring desire that resists the temperance-speaking Authorôs commands. The storyôs abrupt end seeks to unify Franklinôs experiences with the Authorôs directives; Whitman eventually revised the story to present a more successfully unified narrative. In clarifying his storyôs message, however, he eliminated the temperance theme altogether. Craneôs stories depict characters lost in the slumsôalcoholic environments, with no social cues to point the way out. These storiesônarratives are designed to put the reader on the same footing as

the characters: without reference to the type of overarching voice dictating instruction that *Franklin Evans* employs. Craneôs stories and Whitmanôs tale demonstrate markedly differing narrative approaches to a similar problem, but they equally demonstrate the incapacity for a satisfying resolution to the problem of ongoing alcohol use. *Franklin Evans* makes clear that temperanceôs unified solution is nothing but a dream, and understanding Crane depends upon an ability to read through a competing ñwelterò of viewpoints that are never unified.

Despite any perception of temperanceôs ideological inability to address the problem, temperance values remained strong at the end of the century. Political solutions, however, had varying success as moral ideals yielded to compromised reality. This final chapter examines the conflict between figurative representations of a sober African American ideal, and fictional depictions addressing their compromised realities. Frederick Douglassôs iconic *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* set the terms of representation for the black community. Freedom lay along a sober, rational path to American citizenry. By 1881, with the third edition of his autobiography (revised again in 1892), Douglassôs narrative details a more diverse depiction of African American alcohol use than the original narrative admitted, indicating the need to publicly address perceptions of drunkenness in the black community. Both Paul Laurence Dunbar and James Corrothers address this growing public concern. Their narratives work with and against Douglassôs idealized figure of the sober African American citizen. The satires and caricatures of their texts display awareness of the scrutiny turned on the black community; both writers depict characters drinking in response to an uncertain social status in the face of public judgment. Particular to these writersô texts is the awareness of the charactersô performances, and drunkenness is characterized as a matter of playing to an audienceôs exploitative expectations. Corrothersô *The Black Cat Club* is particularly associated with minstrelsy performances. This

final chapter looks at the manner by which these narratives address the reader in order to question perceptions of represented intoxication. Dunbar and Corrothers sought to undermine racist determinations informing cultural assumptions of dangerous, drunk black men, by re-characterizing drunkenness not as a social idealôs failure, but as a performance in response to an unrealistic social expectation.

Endnotes

[1] Ecoôs work is in semiotics; his analyses focus on narrative rhetorical structure in directing an authorial point of view guided through appropriately selected semiotic cues. In *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods,* Eco defines the reader as bound to this narrative direction as a ñmodel readerò who follows what Eco calls the ñgameò of the text. Rules of the game are established by a model author, defined as the ñtextual strategyò that sets the rules of the game for the model reader, with ña will and ability to adapt to this style.ò Ecoôs own model reader is then invited ñto play my game with meò (see in particular pages 20-25 in Chapter one, ñEntering the Woodsò). In *The Role of the Reader,* Eco acknowledges the issue of a potential ñunlimited semiosis,ò which he explains is controlled by a writerôs forecast of potential interpretations, where ñforeseen interpretation is a part of [a given textôs] generative processò (3). Eco later emphasizes the practical control a semiotic approach exercises over the issue of reader interpretation: ñTo organize a text, its author has to rely on a series of codes that assigns given contents to the expressions he uses. To make his text communicative, the author has to assume that the ensemble of codes that he relies upon is the same as that shared by his possible readerò (7).

[2] Bakhtin indicates the range of represented voices that a novel brings into play: ñThe novel as a whole is a phenomenon multiform in style and variform in speech and voiceò (261). An essential component of a textôs meaning rests in understanding the negotiation of the social situation the novelôs particular descriptions compose at any given moment. This applies to the readerôs situation, the textôs, and the grounds on which they meet: ñEvery utterance participates in the ôunitary languageô (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)ò (272).

[3] See Gusfield, pages 49-51, ñAbstinence as Status Symbol.ò

[4] Rumbarger focuses on temperanceôs political aspects that support his socio-economic argument. For instance, he highlights the anti-Saloon Leagueôs ñcoerciveò tactics but mostly ignores the Washingtonian movementôs influence and the Womenôs Christian Temperance Leagueôs propaganda drive. Rumbarger argues against earlier interpretations of the temperance movement as motivated by morality. Instead, the middle-class economic values expressed by temperance leaders were motivated by the need for a sober labor force to fuel the American economic engine. The industrial revolution was anticipated and made possible by a propertied class that motivated labor to focus less on drinking, and more on working. The temperance movementôs essential ñevangelical zealé zealotry, fanaticism, and, finally, obsessionò (xvii) according to Rumbarger, was less propelled by religious concern for fellow citizensô welfare, and more motivated by the bottom line. By highlighting ñmiddle-class fantasies about capitalismôs capacity to establish a rational social order,ò one that best fostered class differences making middle-class prosperity possible, Rumbarger rejects earlier theories such as those of Richard Hofstadter (*The Age of Reform,* 1950) and Joseph Gusfield (*Symbolic Crusade,* 1972) who theorized temperanceôs moral center as either an aberration or an exception to historyôs economic engine (Gusfield called temperance a ñdisinterestedò social movement more responsive to religious motivation than finances). Rumbarger argues temperance was preempted all along by propertied citizensô desire for a stable society in which productive strength is optimized to their own benefit. ñThe reform impulse had derived from the pragmatic observation

that customary drinking diminished productivityò (9). In contrast, Gusfield refutes a primary economic motive by arguing that ñAmerican society has possessed a high degree of consensus on economic mattersò (2). Dismissing the differences in economic class status may have been less pronounced in the beginning of the 19th century than during the immigrant influx of the industrial revolution (which is the focus of Rumbargerôs work), but even then the desire for consensus is more rhetorical than actual. As W.J. Rorabaugh points out in *The Alcohol Republic*, ñé temperance men who had preached that the poor should give up whiskey while the rich might continue to drink wine came to recognize the inconsistency of their positionò (123).

[5] See Lender, Mark Edward and Martin, James Kirby. *Drinking in America: A History (A Revised and Expanded Edition).* New York: The Free Press, 1982, pages 30-33; and Jack S. Blocker Jr., ñ*Kaleidoscope in Motion: Drinking in the United States, 1400-2000*, pages 226-7.

[6] See Rorabaugh, W.J., *The Alcoholic Republic*, particularly Chapter 4 (ñWhiskey Feedò) that explains the poverty of the American diet as well as economic and political conditions that made alcohol, particularly whiskey, an important dietary supplement, both in calories and in taste/effect.

[7] On the high end of statistics, Thomas Pegram identifies the number as between 6.6 and 7.1 gallons of pure alcohol consumed per capita between 1800 and 1830; on the low end, Jack Blocker cites four gallons (page 10). W.J. Rorabaugh states the number ñexceeded 5 gallonsò (page 24). For comparison, the National Institutes of Health estimate American alcohol consumption of pure alcohol in 1998 at just over 2 gallons per capita.

[8] In the ñIntroductionò to *One Hundred Years of Temperance* published in 1885 by the National Temperance Society and Publication House, Theodore R. Cuyler identifies Rush as ñthe pioneer of a movementò (7) and likens him to Christopher Columbus. Rush is generally referred to as ñthe father of the temperance movementò in current studies.

[9] See in particular the section ñConcern for Virtue,ò pages 228-230 in Abzugôs ñBenjamin Rush and Revolutionary Christian Reform.ò

[10] As recounted in Gately, page 233.

[11] The term is anachronistically applied. Although many discussions of the Whiskey Rebellion use the term ñsin taxò to describe the protested tax on alcohol, the *Oxford English Dictionary* points out that the colloquial usage of the term ñsin taxò did not arise in American popular culture until the 20th century, when it first appeared in a *New York Times* article on December 8, 1901: ñA society in Yonkers composed of young women fines its members 10 cents for each ungrammatical or slang expression used during social or other sessions. ôMy sin tax!ô said one young lady as she paid her fine.ò *Oxford English Dictionary.* Northamptonshire: Oxford University Press, 1989.

[12] For more about the Whiskey Rebellion, see Thomas P. Slaughterôs *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (1988); and William Hogelandôs *The Whiskey*

Rebellion: George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and the Frontier Rebels who Challenged America's Newfound Sovereignty (2006).

[13] See the ñRush, Benjaminò entry in Padwa, Howard and Cunningham, Jacob. *Addiction: A Reference Encyclopedia.* Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010. 265-267.

[14] From Rushôs correspondence with Jeremy Belknap, the minister of Bostonôs Arlington Street Church: See the ñBelknap Papersò in the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Sixth Series ï Vol. IV, Boston: Massachusetts Historical Trust Fund, Cambridge: John Wilson and Son, University Press. 1891, pages 435-436.

[15] See Lender and Martin, pages 66-67.

[16] The full report of the Committee is recorded in *The Christian's Magazine,* Vol. 4 (No. 6), New York: Samuel Whiting & Co., 1811. 335-341.

[17] Quote is taken from the report from the *Minutes* of 1811 (page 474). In: *Collection of the Acts, Deliverances, and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church,* Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1856, page 794.

[18] See Pegram, pages 8-9.

[19] The tavern, or ñpublic houseò was an established, traditional meeting ground for the American Revolutionôs political activism. Drinking establishments continued to fill a number of social roles in the growing republic following independence. See Holmes, Oliver W.: ñSuter's Tavern: Birthplace of the Federal City.ò *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, Washington, D.C., Vol. 49 (1973/1974): 1-34. Specifically, see page 3 regarding the negotiations for the site of the national capital that were conducted at Suterôs Inn. See also Rockman, D. and Rothschild, N.: ñCity Tavern, Country Tavern: An Analysis of Four Colonial Sites.ò *Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1984): 112-121. In addition, wine played an important role in religious services and other rituals of church life. Temperanceôs anachronistic revisions of Jesusô wine-drinking ways troubled many for years to come. See: Erskine, John: *Prohibition and Christianity And Other Paradoxes of the American Spirit*, 1927; and Andreae, Percy: *The Prohibition Movement*, especially Ch. 1: ñA Glimpse Behind the Mask of Prohibition,ò pages 9-19. For additional explanations of the cultural roots of alcohol and taverns in early American history, see Lender & Martin, Chapter One: ñThe óGood Creature of Godô: *Drinking in Early America*ò; and Eric Burnsôs *Spirits of America : A Social History of Alcohol*, Chapter One: ñThe First National Pastime.ò

[20] Eric Burns argues that early temperance organizers did not aim to alienate the sinner from the saint by targeting the community. They ñwere not zealots, not singleminded, rock-jawed, fire-breathing tub-thumpers. Not by any means, not yet.ò Instead, early organizers hoped to influence public awareness in order to change the easy acceptance of alcohol practice. According to Burns, they were devoted to ñthe strength of the Lord, and with a view to the account which they must render to Him for the influence they exert in the world, to make a vigorous, united and persevering effort, to produce a change of public sentiment and practice, with regard to the use of

intoxicating liquorsò (26-27). The focus was not on legal force, but change in ñpublic sentimentò by which the attendant ñpracticeò of consumption would be affected for the betterment of all.

[21] Mendelson and Mello, page 27.

[22] *Permanent Temperance Documents of the ATS*. Boston: Seth Bliss, 1835. The selection from the 1826 Executive Committee report is quoted in the Fourth Annual report of 1831, pages 12-14.

[23] Mendelson and Mello, page 30. The authors note that the Society was less focused on actual drunks as the heavy drinker was considered a lost cause, hopelessness placing him outside the realm of community concerns. The Societyôs rhetoric instead directed members toward self-examination and attempts to constrain and even eliminate consumption among the salvageable, and not waste energy trying to save those already lost to alcoholic excess.

[24] For the extensive role played by the various churches, see the section ñA Century of Church workò in *One Hundred Years of Temperance,* pages 283-446.

[25] Dr. Speedôs testimony is cited in the *Permanent Temperance Documents of the American Temperance Society*, pages 521-524.

[26] The story quoted is the first chapter of *Picnic Tales,* ñThe Distillery,ò pages 2-60.

[27] Before the Civil War overrode temperance concerns, the push for prohibition resulted in a proliferation of local and state laws throughout the 1840s and 1850s. See David Okrentôs *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, Chapter 1: ñThunderous Drums and Protestant Nuns,ò especially pages 10-11 where Okrent identifies PT Barnum as one of those beating drums most loudly for a transition to Prohibition, with a ñdeclaratory capital *P.*ò See also Rumbergerôs *Profits, Power and Prohibition,* ñNeal Dow and the Advent of the Maine Lawò pages 31-37 and ñThe Failure of Reform, 1850-1860,ò pages 37-41. Rumbarger argues that the State stepped in for absentee business owners to ensure a sober work force. See Blocker, Jack et al.: *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History: A Global Encyclopedia*, particularly pages 393-395 for details of Neal Dow and the Maine Law of 1851. See also Blocker, Jack: *American Temperance Movements,* pages 51-60, ñToward Coercionò for details regarding the Maine Law and the motivation of prohibitionists to ñexploit the political flux, to mobilize middle-class fears of urban disorder, and to channel middle-class hopes for control of both self and societyò (57).

[28] For more about the rising print culture and dissemination of popular literature, see Mendelson and Mello, pages 30-31; David Reynolds: *Beneath the American Renaissance,* Chapter 6: ñSensational Press and the Rise of Subversive Literatureò; and Gusfield*,* pages 44-45.

[29] The quote is from Reynolds, ñBlack Cats and Delerium Tremens,ò page 50.

[30] The Washingtonians are sometimes considered precursors of the modern A.A. movement, with its traditions of sobriety through shared experiences and community support. Though it lasted a relatively short period (1840 through the mid 1840s), the Washingtoniansô grass roots

sensibility and focus on redemption narratives captured the romantic imagination of the nation. For more information regarding the rise of the Washingtonian movement, see Rumbarger, pages 25-29; Blockerôs *American Temperance Movements*, ñThe Washingtonians,ò pages 39-47; and Padwa and Cunningham, ñWashingtonians,ò pages 315-317.

[31] For the Washingtonianôs demise, see Szymanski, Ann-Marie, *Pathways to Prohibition* pages 31-32. Szymanski relates the Washingtoniansô failure to poor leadership and lack of systematic organization across its affiliated membership.

[32] This citation as well as those in the paragraph that follows are taken from the originally published *Autobiography* of 1845. Gough later published an expanded autobiography in 1870 to include his experience as a reform speaker, which is cited in the section that follows accounting for his alleged relapse.

[33] See, Martin, Scott: *Devil in the Domestic Sphere;* Mattingly, Carol*: Well Tempered Women: Nineteenth Century Temperance Rhetoric*; and Donavan, Gina Dianne: *Demon Rum and Saintly Women: Temperance Fiction of the Early Nineteenth Century*. These studies focus primarily on the edict of purity and faith available to women as well as womenôs role in temperance culture. Martinôs work, particularly Chapter 1: ñFemale Intemperance,ò pages 15-38 also discusses how depictions of female intemperate reinforced the moral code by providing a horrifying example of purityôs negation. The role of literature is primarily discussed in these studies as representative models for womenôs expected social roles.

[34] For the autobiographical account of this incident, see John Goughôs *Autobiography and Personal Recollections of John B. Gough: With Twenty-six Years' Experience as a Public Speaker*, pages 202-205. Gough blames a stranger named ñJonathan Williamsò serving him a drugged raspberry soda. ñWilliamsò was never discovered thereafter; further accounts can be found in Reynoldsô *Beneath The American Renaissance,* pages 67-68 (though Reynolds cites ñcherryò and not ñraspberryò soda). See also Edward Van Everyôs *The Sins of New York as "Exposed" by the Police Gazette,* Chapter 4: ñGough Versus the Gazette.ò The *Police Gazette* claims to have caught Gough falling off the wagon on at least two other occasions in Massachusetts, incidents officially put down to ñfatigue.ò The *Gazette* is quoted: ñTake one look back through [Goughôs] whole history, and the mind reels back sickened and disgusted with the spectacle. We first find him a mere brute wallowing in the mire and degradation of continual drunkenness; next a temperance apostle and member of a church, who, notwithstanding his solemn vows and pledges before the altar of his God, and his sacred pledges before man, returns back to his vomit, and seeks solace for his forced abstemiousness in the secret orgies and caresses of drunken prostitutes.ò

[35] From ñBlack Cats and Delirium Tremens,ò pages 28-30. Reynolds calls these characters ñoxymoronic,ò ñsubversiveò types that ñundermined clear moral signifiers and contributed to the paradoxes of the major literatureò (29). According to Reynolds, these characters were not so much an expression of discontent with the moral ideology as a signal for its redirection toward more authoritatively unified narratives.

[36] See Mendelson, Richard: *From Demon to Darling: A Legal History of Wine in America*, specifically the section entitled: ñThe Rise of Legal Coercion: From Local Option to Statewide Prohibitionò pages 18-27, focusing on the push for legislation that occurred in the late 1840s into the 1850s.

[37] An overall negative description by historians concerning temperance leadersô alleged move from moral suasion to the push for prohibition laws is apparent in the frequency with which versions of the word ñcoercionò and ñcoerciveò are emphatically echoed across historical studies to describe prohibition advocatesô tactics. [All emphases of ñcoercionò in the following quotes are mine.] For instance, Rumbarger uses the word ñcoercionò frequently in his study, beginning in the intro when he writes that ñtemperance capitalists sought to introduce the ***coercive*** power of the state to implement drinking reform.ò (xxii). He uses versions of the word three times in contextualizing the demise of the Washingtonian movement as too grass-roots for self-interested capitalism: page 26-27, Rumbarger states that ñorganized religionò was regarded by the ATU ñas the best means of ***coercing*** the nationôs elitesò; on page 28, he writes that ñEssentially Washingtonianism was an expression of middle- and working-class hostility toward the ***coercive*** impulses that dominated ATU temperance strategiesò; and on page 30: ñThe Washingtonians ï fraternities of working-class men ï had rejected political and religious ***coercion***ò in capitalist control of their movements. In *Battle Cry of Freedom,* James McPherson describes prohibition reform in this way: ñA perceived rise of drunkenness, brawling, and crime especially among the Irish population helped turn temperance reform into a ***coercive*** movement aimed at this recalcitrant elementò (134). Joseph Gusfield writes that ñAssimilative reform diminished as the Temperance reformers sought to ***coerce*** the non-believer to accept an institutional framework in which drinking was no longer socially dominant... the ***coercive*** side of Temperance, emerged in a context in which the bearer of Temperance culture felt that he was threatened by the increase strength of institutions and groups whose interests and ideals differed from his ownò (110). Michael McTigheôs chapter on temperance in his study of Protestant reform movements notes that ññIt has been an accepted part of the historical treatment of the temperance movement to find a shift in strategy from moral persuasion centered in voluntary organizations, which is held to have characterized the 1830s and 1840s, to legal ***coercion***ò (109). And, Richard Mendelsonôs historical account of wine in America contains a chapter about this period entitled ñThe Rise of Legal ***Coercion***: From Local Option to Statewide Prohibition.ò

[38] According to Paul F. Boller in *Presidential Anecdotes*, page 141, the *New York Herald* reported this anecdote as Lincolnôs response to a visiting temperance group when they asked him to control Grantôs drinking during the war. However, Boller states that Lincoln later denied the story was true when asked to verify the *Herald*ôs report. Despite Lincolnôs own negation of the account, this story is repeated and recorded to this day.

[39] For an in-depth look at Lincolnôs work in supporting temperance reform and enacting prohibition laws, see Charles Whiteôs *Lincoln and Prohibition.* Lincolnôs 1842 address to the Washingtonians is reprinted on pages 40-57. Lincoln traces the unpopularity of temperance reform to the ñwant of *approachability*ò and reformersô ñimpoliticò tactics of attack and denunciation against those involved in alcohol use and trade, but states that the ideal goal is a point ñwhen there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on earthò (54).

[40] See McPherson pages 133-137, especially concerning the Know-Nothing nativist movement and its platform of ñfreedom, temperance, and Protestantism against slavery, rum and Romanismô (137). Also, see Madelon Powersô *Faces Along the Bar* for saloon cultureôs ñpolitical, social and economic objectivesò; Pegramôs *Battling Demon Rum*, particularly pages 92-107 detailing the influence of German breweries and affiliated taverns on urban neighborhoods; and Christine Sismondoôs *America Walks into a Bar,* particularly Chapter 7: ñThe Political Machine Invades a Barò for immigration and reactionary Nativist politics.

[41] Asbury, page 106.

[42] See Lender and Martin, pages 106-114; Gately, pages 347-349. See also Blocker, Jack *Give to the Winds Thy Fears: The Women's Temperance Crusade, 1873-1874;* and Fletcher, Holly Berkley: *Gender and the American Temperance Movement of the Nineteenth Century*, particularly Chapter Four: ñA óKnitting Together of Heartsô: A Crusader, the WTCU, and The Building of a Temperance Coalition.ò

[43] Rumbarger claims that the League had only a limited effect: ñThe League itself was never in a position to dictate the course of antisaloon politics; the larger exigencies of Americaôs economic order ultimately set that agenda.ò But the chapter goes on to detail that the ñLeagueôs importanceò lay in how it ñfaithfully reflected all the antisaloon suppositions articulated by the Committee of Fifty,ò or the Committee of Fifty for the Investigation of the Liquor Problem, the sociological group composed of industrial heavyweights committed to sobering up their work force through political contributions that would push for regulation of alcohol and saloons. Thus, according to Rumbarger, The ASL was chiefly influential concerning political rhetoric as opposed to cultural practice. See also Jack Blockerôs *American Temperance Movements*, Chapter Four: ñThe Anti-Saloon League Era (1892-1933).ò Blocker primarily points out the effectiveness of the ASL in that, unlike the defunct Prohibition Party, it was ñnon-partisanò and focused primarily on supporting politicians who were anti-liquor, as opposed to reacting as an independent default against political corruption. The ASL, Blocker argues, was organized to support the specific legislative issue, regardless of party affiliation.

[44] Howellsôs intentions regarding the moral rectitude of his characters has long been debated; he has been both celebrated and vilified as a champion of middle class morality. One of his most fascinating characters, the morally dubious, sensually indulgent Bartley Hubbard of *A Modern Instance* exploits his weaknesses to project a bourgeois mien that gets him by, at least until he is exposed and moves on. Howells later claimed that he drew on himself as the form on which Bartley Hubbard was modeled. For more, see John Updikeôs ñHowells as Anti-Novelistò in *The New Yorker,* July 16, 1987.

[45] For contemporaneous reviews commenting on the realism of the characters in *George's Mother,* see *Stephen Crane, The Contemporary Reviews*, pages 69-98. Chapter Four of this dissertation contains a more detailed analysis of this text.

[46] For an example of the falling public support for reform-based solutions, see Pamela E. Pennockôs *Advertising Sin and Sickness: The Politics of Alcohol and Tobacco Marketing, 1950-1990*. Pennock traces the efforts of organizations such as the WCTU to restrict and even ban

advertisements promoting alcohol use. These efforts met an increasingly ñambivalentò response in the face of an ñincreasingly urbane mainstream American cultureò that was wont to favor individual choice and free enterprise over socially regulated public health issues.

[47] The central tenets of Alcoholics Anonymous, founded in 1935, discusses the balance between individual responsibility and community support. A.A. creates a network of alcoholics who understand their problem as forming a society of alcoholics, assuming support can only be found among other sufferers. This support is definitively separate from mainstream society ï original members remained ñanonymousò to escape the onus of being labeled sick and/or different in their professional and personal relationships during recovery. The twelve steps detail a process of empowerment in claiming personal responsibility for past actions and reincorporating the self with social consciousness so as to overcome alcoholic alienation. The solution is primarily individual with the support of others who have shared similar personal experiences. As a matter of institutional policy, A.A. remains steadfastly out of all religious, political, and ideological debates and involvement. Its sole purpose is to support a community of individuals in achieving sobriety. This work is explicitly isolated from other social concerns. See *The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous* (ñThe Big Bookò).

[48] A backlash of disparaging critical attitude toward temperance ideology and its fiction post-Prohibition lasted a long time. John William Crowleyôs 1994 collection, *"The White Logic," Alcoholism and Gender in American Modernist Fiction* alludes to this critical posture. In the section concerning nineteenth century alcohol-based literature, ñDrunkardôs Progress,ò Crowley writes, ñIn choosing excerpts for this anthologyé I have been guided by a desire *not* to adopt the customary modern condescension towards temperance literature; rather, I have sought to take it seriously on its own terms.ò (ix). The low status of temperance reform literature in the literary community is so marked as to need countering.

[49] Regardless of Hartôs claim that Hawthorne rejected temperance reform, any disagreement Hawthorne had with the ideology did not stop him from writing ñRill from the Town Pump,ò a Twice-Told Tale that capitalizes on temperanceôs premises while satirizing its tactics. Temperance fiction may not be read by all, but the argument it set in motion was recognizable and effectively deployed across a variety of texts and readerships.

[50] The shift away from a unified cultural meaning toward questioning authorized narrative rhetoric was a particular issue for Hayden White, who challenges the assumption that narratively-expressed values represent history as such. White believes that fictionôs form did *not* reflect historical reality, and historical narrations were problematic at best because they implied a reflexivity human action often lacked. The composition of narrative ï fiction or otherwise ï assumes a beginning, middle and end in which earlier elements causally explain later elements. Narrative is composed as a formula of dramatic events figuring climactic ends, designed to support a given textôs conclusive (narratively invested) statements, and story climaxes are formed to address and answer issues a given narrative builds to its conclusion. Frank Kermode describes this as narrativeôs ñfixation on the eidetic imagery of beginning, middle, and end, potency and causeò (138).White reasoned that narratives were not disinterested, and that historians who assumed invested narrative conclusions argued values, not objective reality: ñIt is historians themselves who have transformed narrativity from a manner of speaking into a

paradigm of the form that reality itself displays to a órealisticô consciousness. It is they who have made narrativity into a valueé this value attached to narrativity in the representation of real events arises out of a desire to have real events display the coherency, integrity, fullness, and closure of an image of life that is and can only be imaginaryò (24). By ñimaginaryò White means ñwishes, daydreams, reveriesò that project a desire for ñmoral authority.ò This process interferes with the historianôs goal, to transmit ñreal eventsò as they unfold in time with limited imposition, or at least some understanding of the limiting impositions of the (narrating) transmitter. Temperance narratives validly represent an aspect of the culture, and the narrative position cannot be rejected because it does not represent the average readerôs sense of reality. But neither can such reform stories be said to represent the underlying values of the nationôs citizenry as a whole.

[51] For gender theory, see Footnote 31. In addition, Mattingly, Carol: *Water Drops from Women Writers,* 2001; Grimshaw, Tammy: *Sexuality, Gender, and Power in Iris Murdoch's Fiction*, 2005; Parsons, Elaine Frantz: *Manhood Lost: Fallen Drunkards and Redeeming Women in the Nineteenth Century United States,* 2003*;* Fletcher, Holly: *Gender and the American Temperance Movement in the Nineteenth Century;* Murdoch, Catherine Gilbert: *Domesticating Drink: Women, Men, and Alcohol in America, 1870-1940*, 2002. Racial issues have not received as comprehensive an overview, possibly because racially-defined readers are not perceived as the specific audience addressed by temperance narrators. Analyses of race in alcohol reform texts tend to focus on racist exclusion and socio-political issues, rather than questions of an addressed readership. The focus tends to be on racist rhetoric in specific texts concerning drinking, or on the racism expressed by temperance organizations and their expressed ideology. See for instance: Fahey, David: *Temperance and Racism*, 1996; Holmes, Malcolm D. and Antell, Judith A. ñThe Social Construction of American Indian Drinking: Perceptions of American Indian and White Officials.ò *Sociological Quarterly* Vol. 2(2), 2001: 151-173. Izumi Ishii colludes with the general theoretical perspective of texts concerning Native Americans as fighting for acknowledgement of their subjectivity against a rhetoric that would dehumanize them. See particularly pages 60-61 of Ishiiôs *Bad Fruit of the Civilized Tree: Alcohol & The Sovereignty of the Cherokee Nation* (2008), and pages 75-77, where he claims that Cherokee leadership used temperance society affiliation as a cover for ñopportunities for political leaders to meet.ò A lack of records precludes any in-depth understanding of the relation of temperance rhetoric to Cherokee objectives. Cultural studies tend to focus on the Native community fight against being objectified. A study of Samson Occum, recounts his fight within religious organization for acknowledgement of Nativeôs particular problems, specifically regarding the introduction of a destructive alcohol element to the culture, and documenting Occumôs ñdecisive break with the ministerial modelé his awareness of his unique situation as a person of color with significant public authority, and his willingness to use this authority to condemn the inhumanity and evil of empireò (page 165 of *The Collected Writings of Samson Occum, Mohegan: Leadership and Literature in Eighteenth Century America,* edited by Joanna Brooks, 2006). In addition, Simon Pokagonôs *Queen of the Woods* (1899) has received some attention, best expressed by Philip DeLoriaôs ñForwardò in a recent edition. DeLoria states the book may be taken as ña mawkish, sentimental, romantic tragedy, or as a subtle recounting of the key ideological underpinnings of American conquest and colonialism.ò Pokagon, Simon. *Ogimawkwe Mitigwaki (Queen of the Woods)* (originally published 1899, MSU Press edition 2011).

[52] In *Dionysos*, Vol. 1 No. 2 (1989): 2.

[53] The branching out of literature into other fields of study has created both exciting opportunities as well as deep epistemological challenges. For an enlightening read regarding the ñtwo culturesò debate (i.e., sciences and the humanities/social sciences), see John Guilloryôs ñThe Sokol Affair and the History of Criticism.ò Guillory discusses the problem in imagining a supposed battle between the sciences as an objective practice concerning empirical proof, versus the humanities as a subjective practice of interpretation. His article examines the interdependency of these practices in actual application, and the seeming reluctance of the fields to co-mingle. Specifically, he states regarding literary studies, the tendency to equate positive proofs with positivism may keep interpretive studies engaged in cultural critique from searching for evidentiary claims. Guillory implies the work to be done lies in exploring the way the methodological practices actually implicate, or speak to one another:

Because the social sciences and the humanities were thus polarized between naturalistic and interpretive methodologies, the terrain lying between these polarized positions - that of an interpretive human science - remains underdeveloped to this day. Without question, the disciplinary bridge over this gap is history, which has intermittently grounded literary and cultural studies. It seems evident in retrospect that the humanities have alternated between an orientation toward the positive knowledge of history and toward the function of cultural critique, sometimes in the same work; but there is no reason to assume that these motives are simply incompatible, much less that the assertion of a positive knowledge would lead us back into the desert of positivism. (507)

[54] See Gately, Ian. *Drink: A Cultural History of Alcohol*. New York: Gotham Books, 2008. Gately looks past propaganda pieces to ongoing debates, including the debate regarding wine prohibition caused in the Christian community, for which he examines published essays (both for and against) and newspaper advertisements for non-alcoholic communal wine (pages 258-59). In addition, Gately cites diary entries of soldiers during World War I to point out ñthe boost they gained from a drinkò (see page 367-8), to establish the ambivalence average citizens felt about the prohibition issue.

[55] In ñDiscourse in the Novel,ò Bakhtin states that the novel is composed of ñinternal stratification of language, of its social heteroglossia and the variety of individuals voices in it, the prerequisite for authentic novelistic proseò (264). Novels bring together competing levels of discourse, as opposed to poetryôs ñunity of the language system.ò In terms of fictional narrative, Bakhtin challenges the idea of an ñauthorial individuality in languageò in composing ñthe whole of the novel and the specific tasks involved in constructing this whole out of heteroglot, multi-voiced, multi-styled and often multi-languaged elements.ò (265). Bakhtin rejects the idea that the unifying principle underlying poetic theory could be applied to the novel. Instead, the novel emerged within a social consciousness as ña struggle among socio-linguistic points of view.ò Competing voices, or heteroglossia, ñare organized in the novel into a structured stylistic system that expressed the differentiated socio-ideological position of the author amid the heteroglossia of his epochò (300).

[56] The New Critics erased the problem of competing interpretations by invoking TS Elliotôs ñobjective correlativeò: ñthe external world to the mind; which needs, also, as the condition of its manifestation, its objective correlative. Hence the presence of some outward object, predetermined to correspond to the preexisting idea in its living power, is essential to the evolution of its proper end, ð the pleasurable emotion.ò The mindôs internal processes seek out conditions in the objective world that provoke a corresponding emotional response. Literary texts capitalize on these conditions to stimulate reader response, but the conditions are wholly controlled by the authorôs objectively selected material. Both reader and author are bound by the terms of the authorized text.

[57] On pages 143-144 in *Narratology,* Bal states that ñperspective ñreflects precisely what is meant here,ò but the term is traditionally understood as ñboth the narrator and the vision,ò indicating a collapse between the narratorôs focus of the characterôs vision.

[58] Bal is less clear about the role of competing cultural viewpoints the reader brings to the text. Bal states that her work is not engaged in socio-linguistic theories and as such is intratextually oriented, but she does acknowledge that ñreaders will respond according to their own cultural positionò (66). In the interest of controlling the analysis, Bal posits the reader as a function of the narratorôs address assigned by the implied author; she notes the difference between her work and Bakhtinôs is that Bakhtin ñdid not refer to narrative as a discursive mode but to the novel as a historical genreé ò For her full explanation of the relation of Bakhtinôs work regarding intertextuality to her own regarding intratextual discourse, see pages 64-66 of *Narratology.*

[59] Booth, Wayne. *The Rhetoric of Fiction,* page 73. Booth prefers the terms ñreflectorò as opposed to ñfocalizer,ò helping himself to Henry Jamesôs use of the term.

[60] Chatman, Seymour. *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film*, page 190.

[61] ibid., page 87. While narrative theorists are clear in differentiating between the actual writer, the implied author and the narrator, they are less clear about the ñimplied reader.ò According to Chatman, the implied reader assumes a position constructed for him or her as signaled by textual cues which direct ñexplicitly or implicitly, information about how to read,ò which the actual reader evaluates. However, other critics fail to differentiate between the reading audiences and the implied reader. See pages 149-152 of Chatmanôs study for more explicit definitions concerning the ñfallible filtrationò and the dependence of implied authors on implied readers, specifically in ironic narrations.

Chapter I: ñIt Was a Dream, But Not All a Dreamò: Allegorical Intention and Fictional Representation in George Cheeverôs Libel Trial

On February 19, 1835, the *Boston Intelligencer* carried the following announcement: ñOn Tuesday, the Rev. Geo. B. Cheever was arrested on the complaint of J.F. Allen, on an account of libel against J. Stone, Elias Ham, and Caleb Dodge. He acknowledged himself to be the author of the article in the Landmark alleged to be libelousé ò The described ñarticleò was ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery,ò a fantastic tale about a rum seller who employs demons to distill his product. Despite the storyôs supposed fictional status, Salemôs citizens recognized in the storyôs title a local distillerôs advertisement: ñInquire at John Stoneôs Distillery.ò The uproar was immediate. Cheever defended his story as a means of publicizing liquor distributionôs harmful effects upon a fictional community, but many of Salemôs citizens considered Cheeverôs real target a religious one. By no coincidence, Stone was a deacon in Salemôs Unitarian First Church. Ever since Cheeverôs arrival in Salem two years before, Unitarians had felt the lash of Cheeverôs public harangues against their religion.

This chapter will examine the prosecutionôs charge that Cheever used fiction as a cover to attack a prominent Salem businessman, and Cheeverôs defense that his story is an allegory representing alcoholôs evil, with no one man the specific target. How literally could Cheeverôs story be understood in its characterization of Giles, and by extension, the community? While the prosecutionôs putative charge was that Cheever used Stone as a model and meant to disrupt his business, the actual effect of Cheeverôs story on Stoneôs finances was never established, and the

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Endnotes may be found on pages 88-94

prosecution avoided discussing the storyôs figuration of a demonic invasion enabled by Gilesôs interests. I will argue that the prosecutionôs objections did not concern what Cheever had to say, but how he said it; the prosecution objected to Cheeverôs narrative strategy of modeling a reader who learns to share the narratorôs stated condemnations of beliefs held by a significant portion of the community. In establishing the readerôs complicity with the narratorôs omniscient presence in the storyôs described settings, Cheeverôs narrator enforces the taleôs damnation of the supposedly representative community member, the Deacon Amos Giles. It was no coincidence that Cheeverôs narrative describes a Unitarian as his fictional distiller; Cheeverôs own Congregationalist doctrine railed against Unitarian philosophy. Cheeverôs doctrinal beliefs are promoted in his storyôs rhetorical figuration of a reader who is led to share the narratorôs omniscient viewpoint and subsequent damnation of Deacon Gilesô interests. The tale and the trial point to a symbolic fight for Salemôs ï and the nationôs ï souls.

ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò was published in the Salem *Landmark* on January 31, 1835. The story begins from an anonymous citizenôs point of view. While reading an advertisement, ñInquire at Deacon Gilesô Distillery,ò the narrator begins to ñdreamò of demonic liquor production, and the havoc a distilleryôs demons spread among distributors and tavern patrons. This is the short pieceôs entire plot. The narrator is inspired by the advertisement to imagine a rum distiller who fires his workers and hires demons. The demons work around the clock, and ñplay a trickò by signing rum barrels with messages of death and damnation, causing fear and panic among the drinkers and tavern owners. The narrator awakens to reflect on the hell that is the distilling business.

The demon story is framed specifically as a dream. The narrator initially addresses the reader: ñThe readers of the Landmark may suppose, if they choose, that the following was a

dream, suggested by the phrase.ò[1] Immediately, the boundary between the fiction of a ñdreamò and the identity of those represented in the story ï such as ñthe readers of the Landmarkò ï is in question. Likewise, the addressed reader may ñsupposeò that the story is fantasy or reality. That is to say, the narrator intimates that this story might not simply take its inspiration from real places and people, but may depict an identifiable time and place.

Salemôs citizens recognized the storyôs title phrase as directly lifted from the Stone distilleryôs advertisement. John Stone was a prominent local businessman; he was also Deacon of one of the townôs four Unitarian churches. The anonymous author of this scurrilous story was soon unmasked as the pro-temperance Orthodox minister, George Barrell Cheever. Cheever was not only virulently anti-liquor, he had also set himself fiercely against the liberal Unitarian philosophy. Unitarianism was actually an offshoot of Cheeverôs own Congregational faith, having broken away in a then-recent religious schism. In Cheeverôs opinion, Unitarians were apostate. His disdain had become notorious, and he delivered it through missives such as his infamous Fourth of July address lambasting distillery owners and Unitarians alike. That speech had been delivered not two years before this new, fictional insult.

Cheever was sued for libel, and ultimately fined one thousand dollars and sentenced to a month in jail. The punishment was as much rebuke for Cheeverôs reputation as a trouble-maker bent on vexing the local Unitarian business interests as it was a punishment for libel; Deacon Giles is clearly described as Unitarian by the narrator. Or, as the prosecutor stated during Cheeverôs libel trial, Gilesôs depiction is ñthe representation which we know is often made by orthodox people, of Unitarianism. It is as much a libel upon Unitarianism as the rest of the libel is upon deacon Stone.ò[2]

Cheever relished the controversy he stirred up. His very principles demanded he rise to battle for Congregational Orthodoxy against the Unitarian blasphemy. Only twenty-six years old when appointed to serve in Salemôs Howard Street church in 1833, he immediately set about confronting the well-established Unitarian community.[3] He accomplished this in his 1833 Fourth of July speech, given in Salemôs town square to the general public, and entitled, ñSome of the Principles according to which this world is managed, contrasted with the Government of God, and the Principles exhibited for manôs guidance in the Bible.ò Fourth of July public speeches traditionally focus on a patriotic message, but Cheever instead took advantage of the gathered townspeople to damn Unitarianism. Many listening considered Cheeverôs address doctrinal warfare. Cheever declared, ñThis religion [Unitarianism] makes no appeal to manôs true spiritual nature and condition, but, entering into a friendly alliance with worldly pleasures and gaieties, and putting the false gloss of taste and refinement even over manôs depravity, commends itself powerfully to the worldly, thoughtless, and impenitent; it *is* a religion, according to their own commendation of it, which suits the hearts of mené ò (22). According to Cheever, Unitarians were misguided at best and agents of Satan at worst. Like Satan, Unitarians sought to convince man of his likeness to God. In contrast, Orthodoxy taught manôs denigrated nature, the consequences of which could not be overcome without Godôs divine, undeserved Grace. Godôs perfection opposed the worldôs sinfulness. For his inherently corrupt nature, man deserved nothing but Godôs wrath. According to Cheever, human motivation should spring from a doctrinal obedience and faith in Godôs incomprehensible glory, to which mankind can only submit, and never aspire.

The Unitarians, in contrast, believed in reasoned, enlightened ideals. They believed that Godôs will and mankindôs intellectual processes serve similar ends here on earth, with manôs

achievements illustrating Godôs glory.[4] In his Fourth of July address, Cheever countered that only a fearful faith avoids sinôs consequence. No matter how good the motive or the outcome, any motive promoting mankindôs values over Godôs is damnable, even when the motivated sin has good outcome. ñThough the absence of a holy motive is sin to the individual, even in actions that result in good, the evil effect of his selfishness is often restricted to his own bosom; what is unmingled evil to himself, because of his own depravity, becomes unmingled good to others. In this way even the means by which a man may be instrumental in leading others to heaven, may become to himself the successive steps to perdition.ò (10) Cheever specifically criticizes what he calls the Unitarian ñprinciple of expediency,ò the propensity to weigh moral principle with material and social considerations. The Unitarian, Cheever charged, values social relations over his own soulôs status. ñThis religion makes no appeal to manôs true spiritual nature and condition, but, entering into a friendly alliance with worldly pleasures and gaieties, and putting the false gloss of taste and refinement even over manôs depravity, commends itself powerfully to the worldly, thoughtless, and impenitentò (22). In seeking to ñescape the consciousness of guilt,ò Unitarians focus on manôs positive worldly contributions, as if worldly reason and social progress are part of Godôs will. Instead, manôs ñrelation to God is that of moral depravity to infinite holinessò (37), and only those who acknowledge and repudiate sinful imperfections are prepared for Godôs grace, and serving the community of the faithful.

In this notorious Fourth of July address, Cheeverôs strongest comments are reserved for distillery owners. These remarks come toward the end of speech, and they received little attention in the furor that followed through the summer and fall of 1833. One possible reason Cheeverôs extreme temperance comments received paltry notice may be the fact that distillery owners served only as an example serving up the primary point of Cheeverôs vituperation.

Cheever lambasted distillery owners as an example of hypocrisy, sinners who worship God one day and sow disaster the next. Such behavior exemplifies Cheeverôs point concerning Unitarian philosophy. Using negative logic, Cheever reasoned that if temperance reformers took on the same type of expedient philosophy distillers exercised, they would never have thought to condemn ñall traffic in ardent spirits [as] an immorality,ò as to do so would not have seemed practical. Cheeverôs words assume a mocking tone as he imagines such an ineffectual position: ñé it was taking too bold a stand; ministers, he said, would not know what to do with their church members that kept dram-shops, or their deacons, that kept distilleries; and the whole country, he said, would be put into a ferment, and there would be a great reaction, and by such imprudence and rashness, they would do the temperance cause a great deal more harm than goodò (43). Instead, temperance reformers serve Godôs ideology and practicality be damned, literally. Well before ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò was published, Cheever was targeting ñdeacons, that kept distilleries.ò[5]

Salemôs Unitarians took great exception to Cheeverôs speech. Fourth of July speeches by the local clergy, they argued, should not be screeds exacerbating religious tensions. Unitarian leaders such as Charles Upham, pastor of the now-Unitarian First Church blasted Cheever for corrupting the community tradition for his own polemic ends. In a series of letters to the editor in the Unitarian-leaning *Gazette* (later published as a pamphlet[9]), the war of words raged on for months between these two stalwarts of their respective faiths. Upham charged that Cheeverôs speech is ñabuse toward the Unitarians to a degree unparalleled even in the worst days of theological bigotry and ignoranceò (32). One of the Unitariansô chief complaints (along with a charges of ignorance, misrepresentation and plagiarism) centered on Cheeverôs ñaggressiveò style.[7] Upham charged that Cheever has ñintroduced an entirely new style into the pulpit and the

pressé [and] confines himself to mere abuseé ò[8] Upham specifically calls upon the community to protest Cheeverôs approach, or, should members ñagree that Unitarianism is infidelity, they are bound to leave our Societies.ò[9] Upham proves Cheeverôs point by deferring to community considerations in deciding spiritual matters. Upham does not protest Cheeverôs depiction per se; instead, he rails against Cheeverôs disregard of the social considerations Unitarians so value. In a letter to the editor dated November 14, Cheever replied, stating that Uphamôs attack is equally divisive, but Upham hypocritically misrepresents his own self-interested motives. ñThe Unitarians had been accustomed to hold up their system as the only one fit for enlightened minds, and the system for the Orthodox as fit only for the dark ages; and they had got so accustomed to this, that they seemed to think it their exclusive privilege.ò[10]

The battle between Upham and Cheever came at the tail end of the separation of the Unitarian church from the Congregationalists, a schism known as the Unitarian Controversy. The Salem preachersô clash was no less fierce for its timing.[11] The Congregational Church was based on the idea of the Covenant, a personal relationship with God that established the soulôs status. Fellowship was secondary to the individualôs primary and definitive personal relationship with God. Congregationalist churches associated through their shared belief in the covenant, but each community drew up its own Creed of belief. The Salem Congregational Churchôs Creed of 1629 was succinct in defining this unifying hierarchy: God first, and community under Godôs covenant. ñWe Covenant with the Lord and one with another; and doe bynd our selves in the presence of God, to walke together in all his waies, according as he is pleased to reveale himselfe unto us in his Blessed word of truth.ò[12] In 1636, the Salem Congregationalist Church expanded its Creed to outline the individualôs responsibilities to fellow church-goers, and to the community in general.[13] Social relationships were secondary, regulated by Godôs commands and covenants,

and understood via Church doctrine. For the Congregationalists, ideological principle serves as a check to potentially harmful social relationships and ambitions, which may turn the unworthy, sinful soulôs attention away from God and toward personal accomplishments. Reliance on human reason and social status serves to distract from the realization of Godôs grace delivered to the inherently unworthy human soul. The Unitarians, he charged, would promote alcoholic commerce and avoid disrupting the community over mankindôs best interests.

Unitarians disagreed, and argued that human community formed the values through which God could best be worshipped. In ñUnitarian Christianityò (1819),[14] William Channing notes that ñWe [Unitarians] are said to exalt reason above revelation, to prefer our own wisdom to God'sò (92). Channing instead explains that human reason is the unifying principle by which man is united with God, with Christ, and with each other.[15] Essentially, as noted in *An American Reformation,* Unitarians believed the ñcardinal idea was that man was goodò (15). Unitarian arguments for rational interpretations depended upon the idea that ñGod was loveé and by love they meant human love.ò Mankind is socially united in the moral logic of Godôs love. Unitarians denied the Orthodox assumption of mankindôs inherent corruption. Instead, they ñthought in terms of an understandable human category which the doctrines of total depravity and predestination violatedò (37). The Unitarian community defined itself as a benevolent social support, where rational inquiry and understanding was encouraged.

The controversy fueling Cheeverôs trial, then, had deep roots in the doctrinal argument between these religions. Congregationalists were seen by Unitarians as disregarding civil accord in promoting their own ideology. ñIs not Mr. Cheever remarkably fond of controversy?ò the District Attorney asked a witness at Cheeverôs libel trial.[16] Cheeverôs public war of words with Upham and the Unitarian Controversyôs issues resonated throughout the libel trail. In his opening

remarks, D.A. Austin echoes Uphamôs emphasis on social values, stating that ñThe question is whether the law of the land is to be our guide, or whether the regulations of a self created society are to govern us.ò The point is not morality: ñWe do not stand here to argue the cause of temperance or intemperance ï we stand here for LAW ï If that has been violated, the defendant must take the consequences.ò The chief issue for the prosecution concerned how Cheever had represented a prominent member of the community. Reverend Cheever, according to Austin, maliciously libeled John Stoneôs character so as to damage his legal, socially protected business. ñThe libelous article purports to be an allegory. The writer pretends to be in a dream, but it is all fictitious, the writer never had such a dream; and it is a meaner and more cowardly offence to resort to an allegory as a vehicle for libelé ò

The prosecutionôs charge was that Cheever had invented an allegory to malign Stone, and readers should disregard the storyôs literary figurations to focus on Cheeverôs literal targets. Cheever countered in his *Defence* (a long, at-times digressive discourse that he recited during the trialôs penalty phase) that his story merely alludes to the truth, and as such is not a malicious lie. He did, indeed, make it up, but he did not specifically imagine John Stone as the model for Deacon Giles. The point of ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò was not to malign Stone personally, but to warn readers to watch for allegorical demons invited into the community by such socially accepted businesses.[17] Deacon Giles is not Deacon Stone of Salem; Giles is all distillers everywhere.

Like much of Salem, D.A. Austin was put off by the storyôs condemnatory tone. There is no redemption for the characters; Giles is more allegory than example and learns nothing along the way.[18] Giles is ña man who loved money, and was never troubled with tenderness of conscience.ò[19] The narrative ends where it begins. The first sentence of ñInquire at Amos Gilesô

Distilleryò reads, ñSome time ago, the writerôs notice was arrested by an advertisement in one of the newspapers, which closed with words similar to the following: óInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery.ôò The last sentence closes with, ñé every time I see his advertisement, óInquire at Amos GilesôDistillery,ôI think I see Hell and Damnation, and he, the proprietor.ò The repetitive use of Gilesôs ad slogan echoes the narratorôs unwavering condemnation of Gilesôs character and business.

The adôs repetition also indicates a dramatic change, but that change is not in the distillery nor in its proprietorôs attitude. The businessôs environment remains damnable, fostered by alcoholôs evil effects and the allegorical demon figures invited in through Gilesôs materialism. The drama of the story does not involve Gilesôs character. As a representation of corruption, he either cannot or will not reform. Instead, the narratorôs address to the reader structures the storyôs drama. The narration is designed to change the readerôs point of view, not to account for the corrupt main characterôs salvation. If the reader casually takes in the first notice of Gilesôs ad as a matter of course, by the end of the story he too will see the narratorôs ñHell and Damnation.ò

After coming upon the ad, the narrator states that ñreaders of the Landmark may suppose, if they choose, that the following story was a dream, suggested by that phrase.ò This suggestion accomplishes two things. First, it puts at stake the readerôs status in relation to the recounted events. Second, the narrator specifically names the readers of the *Landmark*, the magazine in which the story was published in January of 1835. This creates a tension between the readerôs imagination and the storyôs identifiable representations, a tension that animates both the narrative and the textôs subsequent status. (It should be noted that later editions deleted the narratorôs reference to the *Landmark.* By that time, the storyôs cultural status had transcended the Salem religious controversy, as will be discussed.)

At first, the narrator relates to the reader as a town member. Along with the reader, he too reads ñone of the newspapersò in which the ad appears. The narrator continues in his role as town-member when he shares the local gossip. He states of Amos Giles, ñIt was said that the Worm of the Still lay coiled in the bosom of his family, and certain it is that one of its members had drowned himself in the vat of hot liquoré ò Sharing the gruesome gossip of Gilesôs family, the narrator establishes his credentials to comment on the local community.

The narrator then takes on a succession of perspectives. He abandons his status as corporeal character relating well-known information, and instead explores unfamiliar perspectives. The narrator describes Giles hiring a group of demons when his regular workers quit after a drunken quarrel. The demons ñoffered to work for the Deacon; and he, on his part was overjoyed; for he thought within himself that as they had probably been turned out of employment elsewhere, he could engage them on his own terms.ò The narrative has shifted from the familiar perspective of a community member who comments on events ñnot to be wondered at,ò to a disembodied voice recounting events from Gilesôperspective, which may be greatly wondered at. The narrator also describes Gilesôs justification for hiring the demons as consciously materialistic. Giles ñthought within himselfò that he could take advantage of the gangôs unemployed status, to his own benefit.

The disembodied narrator now moves into the distillery with the demons, out of Gilesôs focalization, and takes the reader directly into a hellish fantasy. ñAs soon as he was gone, you would have thought that one of the chambers of hell had been transported to earth, with all its inmates.ò The scene in the brewery is transmitted through the narratorôs impression of ñwhat you would have thought.ò Specifically, the distillery is a hell on earth. The narratorôs now-omniscient viewpoint describes the demonsôwork: ñé all were boisterous and horribly profane, and seemed

to engage in their work with such familiar and malignant satisfaction, that I concluded the business of distilling was as natural as hell, and must have originated there. I gathered from their talk that they were going to play a trick upon the Deaconé ò The supernatural becomes ñnatural as hell,ò as the narrator familiarizes the reader with the demonic environment. The community of ñweò has been shifted from the recognizable community of *Landmark* readers to the hellish world within the distillery. The known has fallen away, and the previously unknown is replacing the familiar as the reader is directed to imaginatively experience the horror of alcoholôs creation.

The narrator then takes the reader into the fiendish perspective. The chaos the demons ultimately create ñé had some effect for a time, but it was not lasting, and the demons knew it would not be, when they played the trick; for they knew the Deacon would continue to make rum, and that as long as he continued to make it, there would be people to buy and drink it. And so it proved.ò The demonic motives are now recognizable, ñnatural as hell.ò The point is not that Giles and his customers recognize the fiendish deception, but that the *reader* does.

The narrative is configured from the beginning to allow the reader to recognize who the demons are, despite their ability to deceive Giles. While they first appear as ña gang of singular looking fellowsé wild and uncouth,ò with ñawfulò speech, they make little effort to hide their character. For example, when Giles first negotiates their pay, offering as much rum as they may drink, the demons refuse: ñSome of them broke out and told him that they had enough of hot things where they came from without drinking damnation in the distillery. And when they said that, it seemed to the Deacon as if their breath turned blueé ò Giles refuses to see these signs because he is motivated by his bottom line; but the reader, aligned with the narrator, will recognize the danger. This danger is later revealed to the alcoholic community; after producing Gilesôs rum, the demons inscribe the casks with a series of messages warning of alcoholôs

dangers: ñConsumption Sold Here,ò ñInsanity and Murder,ò ñPutrid Fever and Cholera in the Collapse.ò The messages flame up as the casks are tapped by their purchasers, each inscription followed by ñInquire at Deacon Gilesôs Distillery.ò The drunks and tavern owners panic and return the product, but then, as noted, the business reasserts itself due to its unchanging, unchangeable and corrupt nature.

The taleôs suspense, such as it is, involves the readerôs ability to recognize the hellish in the familiar. In more general terms, the distinction between complacent acceptance of the alcohol business and the vision of demonic damnation is a matter of perspective. The storyôs drama takes place in the narratorôs address to the reader, as the reader joins the narratorôs vision and learns to envision hell in a familiar business. Giles and his sort learn nothing. In the end, Gilesôs ñdistillery has smelled of brimstone ever since; but he would not give up the trade. He carries it on still, and every time I see his advertisement, óInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery,ô I think I see Hell and Damnation, and he, the proprietor.ò

ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò thus expresses Cheeverôs Puritanical view of the worldôs sinful nature. The world is full of corruption, distracting the faithful from Godôs divinity. Only by turning away from the worldôs material, sinful attractions can one prepare for Godôs Grace and the gift of salvation. In this regard, Cheeverôs text echoes Cotton Matherôs warning in *Wonders of the Invisible World*, in which Mather describes ñthat Horrid *Kingdom*, which our Lord Christ refused, but Antichrist accepted, from the Devils Hands; a Kingdom, which for *Twelve Hundred and Sixty* Years together, was to be a continual oppression upon the People of Godò (41). According to Mather, the Devil is the literal commissioner of Godôs will, sent as judge upon a divided community. ñBut such a *permission* from God, for the Devil to *come down*, and *break in* upon mankind, oftentimes must be accompany'd with a *Commission* from some

wretches of mankind it selfé When ungodly people give their *Consents* in *witchcrafts* diabolically performed, for the Devil to annoy their Neighbours, he finds a breach made in the Hedge about us.ò Cheeverôs story does not intend to illustrate a world made better by experiential moral enlightenment, but to convince the reader to turn away from self-interested men such as Giles, ña man who loved money, and was never troubled with tenderness of conscience,ò and who ñwould continue to make rum, and that as long as he continued to make it, there would be people to buy and drink it.ò In Cheeverôs puritanical terminology, ñDemon Rumò becomes an allegorical expression of the literal embodiment of Satan on earth.

But how far could Cheever push this allegorical vision of a literal damnation onto the Salem community? Even before the Fourth of July ideological fireworks, Cheever had made such disparaging remarks concerning alcohol-producing Unitarian deacons that Cheeverôs mother and a fellow member of the clergy had to convince Cheever to back down from yet another nasty exchange. In a letter dated June 8, 1833, Cheeverôs mother wrote: ñôIt is a great relief to hear your *Temperance Affair* is not likely to give you further trouble. I have felt anxious respecting it and continually anxiousé lest your *zeal* carry you beyond the bonds of *prudence.*'[20] ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò was certainly not the diplomacy Cheeverôs mother had hoped for, as Deacon Giles is explicitly Unitarian. The story explains that Giles hires his demons and then attends church, where he ñheard his minister say that God could pardon sin without an atonement, that the words hell and devil were mere figures of speech, and that all men would certainly be saved. He was much pleased, and inwardly resolved he would send his minister half a cask of wineé ò The words which please Giles so much describe Cheeverôs ongoing objections to Unitarian philosophy, as D.A. Austin was to point out at trial.

Such general religious disparagement may perhaps have been overlooked as par for the

course where Cheever was concerned. But the similarity between Gilesôs family situation and Stoneôs seems to have been the final straw for Salemôs Unitarian elite. The ñWorm of the Stillò that ñlay coiled in the bosom of his family,ò was perceived as a reference to John Stoneôs son, a well-known inebriate. This description is fairly general, and could have been a reference to anyone with a drunken relative. But Cheeverôs story also described another relation who ñhad drowned in the vat of hot liquor, in the bottom of which a skeleton was some time after found, with heavy weights tied to the ancle bones.ò It was well known that one of Stoneôs relatives had committed suicide by tying a heavy kettle to his leg and throwing himself into a distilling vat. Reference to this painful tragedy was tactless at best. Together with the storyôs title, this detail confirmed to all of Salem the subject of Cheeverôs story. According to reports, everyone knew and was talking about Cheeverôs attack on John Stone from the moment the story was published.[21]

The case for libel filed against Cheever makes clear the prosecutionôs belief that Cheeverôs supposed allegory had literal referents. The charge against Cheever on record inserts the alleged libelous ñmeaningò into the verbatim text of the story as follows.

> Sometime ago the writerôs, meaning George B. Cheeverôs notice was arrested by an advertisement in one of the newspapers which closed with words similar to the following, Inquire at Amos Giles distillery, meaning one of the advertisements of said John Stone published in one of the newspapersé Deacon Giles (meaning John Stone) was a man who loved money & was never troubled with tenderness of conscience meaning that said Stoneé [22]

The prosecution purports that Cheeverôs story directly represents events occurring in Salem to specifically indicate John Stone as Amos Giles. ñIt was said that the worm of the Still (meaning the habit of intoxication) lay coiled in the bosom of his (meaning the said Johnôs) family) and meaning that the said John Stone by his greediness for gain had contributed to the intoxication of some member of his own family)é ò The first part of the indictment concerns the Giles/Stone

characterization via the narratorôs sensibilities, of ña false unlawful indecent wicked & defamatory libel of & concerning the said John Stone & of & concerning his trade art mystery occupation business & employment as a distiller of New England Rum & of & concerning the manner in which he conducted his said businessé & concerning the said John Stone in his character & capacity of a Deacon of a Church of Christian worshippingò (541-2). Cheever is said not only to attack Stoneôs individual person and business, but he also attacks Stone as a representative Unitarian. The prosecution represents Stoneôs business in direct contrast with ñfalse scandalous indecent defamatory malicious libelò: ñJohn Stone was engaged & concerned in the lawful trade mystery art & business of distilling New England Rum, by his diligence and industry, in said business made & provided an honest support for himself and his familyé ò (539). This characterization of Stoneôs ñhonestò nature and his engagement in ñlawful tradeò counters Cheeverôs purportedly libelous representation of Stoneôs long-standing business. Stoneôs ñdiligence and industryò rebukes Cheeverôs ñindecentò account. The prosecution directly counters the satanic chaos that Cheeverôs story imagines with the characterization of Stoneôs ñhonestò community values.

Certainly, as the prosecution pointed out, the characterization of Deacon Giles was damning. But could the character be so literally read, to the point of the reader assigning to Giles a human counterpart? Stone was not alone in seeing his own likeness in Cheeverôs story. Elias Ham, the distillery foreman, took perhaps even greater offense, or certainly a more violent one, in perceiving his counterpart in the tale. On February 7, 1835, Ham set upon Cheever on a public street in broad daylight and beat him with a cowhide.[23] Cheever testified at Hamôs trial that he had been stopped by the foreman on Essex Street. Ham ñsaid he had something for me, - and I knew then his object. I asked him if he knew that God was looking at us, and would judge us

both? He paused for a moment, then seized me by the collar and threw me in the gutter.ò After recounting the beating and quick intervention by the noon-day crowd, Cheever continued, ñI have an indefinite recollection of what was testified to by another witness, respecting Hamôs accosting me with something about his being one of the ódevils.ôò Whether or not such an insult deserved a beating seemed the question at the heart of Hamôs subsequent trial; despite the fact that the assault was witnessed, Hamôs punishment was a mere slap on the wrist, a sentence of time served and a $40.00 fine.[24] The lightness of the sentence attests to the sympathies of Salemôs justice system. More to the point, in seeing himself as one of the ñdevils,ò Hamôs interpretations points out the ambiguity of the storyôs representations. In the narrative, the devils are hired because Giles has quarreled with and fired his drunken employees. One would think Ham would be insulted by the depiction of Gilesôs quarrelsome, drunk and longstanding employees, given that the prosecutionôs case against Cheever rested on his storyôs illicit mixing of fact and fiction. What did Ham have in common with demons? The willful nature of Hamôs reading himself into the story, however, never became an issue, and no matters concerning Hamôs trial arose during Cheeverôs, which followed four months later.

Cheeverôs libel trial pitted the prosecutionôs argument of fact-based misrepresentation against Cheeverôs argument of imaginative transformation. The prosecution charged Cheever with malicious mischaracterization of Salemôs established socio-economic community, while Cheever argued that his story engages the readerôs moral sensibility through fictional allusions. The trial was to settle whether Cheeverôs story specifically (mis)characterized Stone to damage his interests. Cheever countered that his fictionôs allusions characterize the hellish nature of *all* distillersôalcohol products, and Cheever himself was not responsible for any specific real-life example that resembles his storyôs depictions.

The trial took place in June of 1835. By then, ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò was fast becoming a *cause célèbre* in arguments both for and against temperance. Aware of this, D.A. Austin noted that ñWe do not stand here to argue the cause of temperance or intemperance ï we stand here for LAW.ò[25] In contrast, Mr. Choate, Cheeverôs defense attorney, focused on Cheeverôs general intentions, ñfor the purpose of doing good to this country.ò

> The main matter to be inquired of here, is the object and scope of the *whole* article, and with what motive it was written. Do you believe that it was written with the design of doing good, by exposing the general business of distilling; or with the design of inflicting a base stab upon a character of deacon Stoneé We say, this article was written bona fide, for the purpose of doing good to this country. It was written for the purpose of showing up in its true character the horrible business of making rum. It was to show that the sin lay not at the door of the retailer, or the poor tippler, but with the capitalist, the rich distiller, without the most remote allusion to Mr. Stone, or any other individual in particular.[26]

Choate defends the story as indirectly maligning all distillers, but not directly maligning Stone per se. Indeed, Choate argues, there is nothing in Cheeverôs history to indicate any bad feelings toward Stone, ñexcept in one allusionò (by which Choate apparently meant the suicide-by-drowning). Choate argues that the only indication of a negative history linking Cheever to Stone is the indirect connection of Cheeverôs argument with Charles Upham, a minister at Stoneôs church. ñThe question is,ò the defense argued, ñwhether Mr. C. has written a general article, or aimed a dark blow at Mr. Stone.ò After describing at length the damage alcohol distribution inflicts on the national community, Choate then proceeded with an actual defense: ñMr. Choate here entered into a variety of details, to show that scattered throughout the article, was a variety of allusions to remove the imputation from Mr. Stone.ò[27] The *Bedford Mercury* summarized the defenseôs argument as emphasizing the connection between literary allusion and real-life representation as a matter of reader imagination: ñthe allusioné had benn [sic] made without any intention of drawing the mind of the reader to Mr. Stone; also that the identify of Deacon

Giles with Deacon Stone had no foundation but in the well-known ardent imagination of the latter.ò[28] This argument claims that the story draws its allusions specifically to provoke the readerôs imagination toward a general truth, and not toward a specifically represented townsperson. Cheeverôs allusions draw attention to a general problem, and if Stone engages in that problem, it does not mean he is the specific target of the fictional characterization. Cheever, the defense argued, is not responsible for Stoneôs engagement in a business with such socially harmful results.

Unfortunately for the defense, Judge Strong charged the jury in such a manner as to make Choateôs argument moot. In addition to explaining that any direct correlation between Stone and Giles must result in a guilty verdict, Strong stated that ñIf [Cheever] meant it for the public good in general, to put down distillers, yet if he mean it also for John Stone, it was a libel.ò[29] If the jury believed the defense has proven a temperance argument, i.e., that Stoneôs business destroys ñthe souls and bodies of men,ò it also needed to decide if general temperance aims justified the ñmannerò of the articleôs characterization.

The jury took three hours to find that the storyôs manner represented a libel. According to news accounts, ñit was the connexion ï of *true charges* enough to identify Deacon Stone as Deacon Giles, with *fictions* enough to render him and his business ridiculous and contemptible, ï which constitute *libel.*ò[30]

Cheever immediately appealed. However, he eventually dropped the case and accepted the guilty verdict, reportedly in deference to the ñopposition of friends,ò and ñdesirous to avoid the excitement, interruption, vexation and expense of another trial.ò[31] Despite his supposed acceptance of the verdict, at his sentencing Cheever reiterated and expanded his argument. His statement was later published in 1836 as a tract entitled ñDefence in Abatement of Judgment for

an Alleged Libel in the Story Entitled ôInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryô Addressed to the Hon. Chief Justice Shaw at the Session of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts Held in Salem December 4, 1835.ò In this long speech, Cheever argues that ñwhile there are allusions to known truthé they were not introduced for the purpose of personal, malicious application.ò In fact, ñthe original conception of the article was simply to introduce a company of demons into a distilleryò (8) to draw ña literal delineation of the tendency of the occupation of distillingé Nearly all the materials and machinery employed in the execution of this purpose were the mere creation of the fancy.ò The storyôs central allusion, according to Cheever, was not Stone represented by Giles, but the nature of the distilling business as characterized by the demon allegory.

The D.A.ôs original indictment in fact had all but ignored the fictional demons. I have italicized the relevant elision as stated in the original charge (emphasis mine). ñHe (meaning said John Stone) was in much perplexity for want of hands to do the work of the Devil on the Lordôs Day (meaning that the business & occupation of said John Stone was wicked & immoral & that he was desirous of carrying on a wicked & immoral business on the Lordôs day). *And another part of said libel* is of the tenor following, vis, In the evening the men came again & again the Deacon (meaning said John Stone) locked them to themselvesé ò (544-5) While the charge reads the story almost verbatim up to the point where the demons are introduced, it skips over the demons entirely to ñanother part of said libel,ò ignoring the supernatural/fictional nature of the story entirely. As the trialôs conclusion implies, these ñfictionsò were considered by the jury (and, it may be assumed, by the prosecution) as mere supplements to the ñtrue chargesò against the main character of the piece.

Cheeverôs *Defence* does not distinguish between ñtrueò and ñfiction,ò but instead defines all the imaginative figures as allegories of truth. These fictional characterizations, insisted

Cheever, are fancifully imagined to direct the reader to perceive the alcohol businessôs general effects, and not to illustrate a specific case. If the demons are understood as ñthe creation of the fancy,ò so too is Giles. ñThe conception of the character of the Deacon was purely imaginary, and never intended to be applied to any individual whateverò (9).

Cheever also argued that the imaginary elements of the piece lack malicious intent. ñI may even describe a fictitious abandoned character, and in that description I may interweave features that belong to some living man, and scenes transacted by living witnesses, and provided the actual occurrences are not introduced to fasten the fictitious descriptions, and give them a personal realization, but to illustrate and give energy and zest to truth through the medium of fiction, there can be no libelé ò (30) The allusions suggested in his ñmedium of fictionò happen to illustrate Stoneôs guilt, but Stoneôs specific case is not the object of Cheeverôs characterizations. In any case, ñin an earnest attempt through the medium of fiction to stigmatize the business as the business of fiendsé Something must be pardoned to the liberty of description, when the subject of delineation is one of wanton miseryò (26).

A great part of Cheeverôs *Defence* is taken up in describing that ñwanton misery.ò According to Cheever, the ongoing nature of an alcohol-saturated culture requires temperance reform, which in turn requires readers alerted to the danger at hand. Noting that the temperance movementôs fight against alcohol is akin to fighting ñthe devil, whose offspring and likeness it isò (93), Cheever aligns himself with other temperance advocates as well as ña power higher than the law, a power of an enlightened public opinion, the moral sense of the communityò (53). He further argues that prosecution may have made sense thirty years ago, but now distilling ñis known to be the business of murder, and every man, of every profession, is bound to attack itò (91). Similar to his narrative strategy in ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery,ò Cheever here

defines the reading publicôs perspective in line with Cheeverôs own, as interested in exposing the malignant nature of the distilling business. His defense, like his fiction, draws the moralizing ñweò at the center of Godôs community, with alcoholic demons trying to get in. When the *Defense* directly addresses Judge Shaw, the allusion to ñyour honorò takes on a double meaning: ñI am not willing to believe that your honor will lend your influence to sanction this enormityò (79). Outside the context of the court, within the parameters of a stand-alone pamphlet, ñyour honorò indicates the readerôs self-imagined conception of the moral community Cheever champions.

The reader needs Cheeverôs allegorical fiction to clarify the stakes in the Christian communityôs battle for manôs soul on earth. Cheeverôs narrative expresses his religious aims: ñto deliver the soul from bondage and pollution of sin, and to prepare it for a mansion in heavenò (87), and to fight the alcohol business which would ñchain the soul down to sense, imbrute all its faculties, and prepare it for the fires of hell.ò ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery,ò then, engages the reader by offering allusions that clarify in allegory this high-stakes battle between good and evil for the readerôs soul and by extension, the communityôs. A straightforward representation of Salemôs community as it presently functions would only serve the devilôs purpose: ñé the state of the community is such, that the man who exposes [distilleriesô] wickedness may be reviled and prosecuted with the utmost energy, while the iniquity itself is shielded from reproachò (116).

Cheeverôs convictions concerning literatureôs moral basis upheld the religious ideology his appeal defended; he was less interested in alcohol per se and more interested in religious rectitude. His literary reputation and editorial work, established well before his arrival in Salem, bears up his moral interests. He began editing his poetry anthology while studying at Andover; he also published the *American Common-Place Book of Prose*. Both anthologies were published

before he accepted his Salem ministry.[32] Critics generally praised Cheeverôs selection of material for having been made ñwith taste, with judgment, and with religious feeling.ò[33] Still, Cheeverôs didactic sensibilities drew some criticism. Alexander H. Everett, in a generally favorable review in the *North American*, hailed the selections as representing ñgreat taste, and a strict regard to the higher moral considerationsé ò[34] But he disagreed with Cheeverôs assessments concerning Danaôs superiority to Bryant. Everett felt Bryant had a genius ñpeculiarly suited to the accurate and exquisite description of what is beautiful in nature; and, what is more, he unites with this power the spirit of gentle human feeling, and sometimes a rich, grand, and solemn philosophyò (300). Danaôs genius, in contrast, ñexhibits loftier powers, and his compositions agitate the soul with a deep emotion.ò Such criticism was careful not to denigrate literatureôs moral purpose, but to interject an awareness of Cheeverôs narrower interests at the expense of more worldly, and even aesthetic, considerations. These critics make clear that Cheeverôs literary assessments valuing religious didacticism over aesthetic philosophies were not wholly taken for granted. The anthologies remained popular,[35] but by mid-century Cheeverôs particular moralizing perspective was more openly acknowledged. Rufus Griswold notes that ñIt has been complained of Dr. Cheever that he introduces too frequently his religious opinions, and is too apt to find ósermonsô in everything he hears or seesò (452). Despite this, Griswold agrees with Cheeverôs emphasis on morality: ñé one who does not worship when he comes into the presence of the sublimest works of God is no Christian; and one who can regard without a feeling of indignation a people debased by a political and religious despotism is no American.ò Cheeverôs opinions concerning American literature excited the same protests expressed by Upham and the Salem Unitariansô observations concerning Cheeverôs divisiveness. Edgar Allan Poe, in his 1846 sketch of Cheever in ñThe Literati of New York City,ò states that ñóThe Commonplace Book of American Poetry,ôé *is*

exceedingly commonplaceé The selections appear to me exceedingly injudicious, and have all a marked leaning to the didacticò (33). According to Poe, Cheeverôs reputation is built through ñall that has already been said on its own side of the question.ò[36] Poe begins his review by acknowledging Cheever ñcreated at one time something of an excitementò in *Deacon Giles Distillery.* Any creative element, ñhowever,ò is left behind as Cheever pursues more narrow ideological concerns. Poeôs assessment of Cheeverôs career implies that any valuable literary argument ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò raised was subsequently ignored in Cheeverôs religious pursuits.

Cheeverôs appeal also relied on this didactic reasoning. In his *Defence,* he focuses almost exclusively on damning the business of distilling and promoting temperance concerns, to the point where he all but cedes the literary questions his text raises concerning the representation of ñtruthò via fictional devices. Is Stoneôs family history literally reinscribed in the similar tragedy Cheeverôs narrative details? Is Giles as a fictional character on the same level as the demons who work in his distillery? Do narrative instructions to the reader necessarily preclude the reader from seeing fiction as editorial commentary, as opposed to a verbatim description? The ever-opinionated Cheever is far more interested in his moral lecture, so that he never addresses the possibility that alternate reading viewpoints may inform his story. Such a defense would be far too Unitarian. Instead, Cheever reluctantly admits that the prosecution may have a point. ñLet the defendant be shielded. Even if he has overstepped the limits of exact prudence, in his efforts to portray the evils of intemperance, in the name of mercy let the great object of the effort shield *him*, and let the law be turned against that *dreadful business* whose nature he aimed to delineateò (112). The argument here is based wholly on moral, not literary, grounds.

D.A. Austin was happy enough to engage these terms. The prosecutor ñadmitted that

horrid and iniquitous consequences resulted from the operation of distilleriesò but stated that the law protected *all* citizens, and not simply those who agreed with Cheeverôs convictions. The means by which to correct the situation, Austin replied, is not through literary libel, but ñby the legislature, the common voice of the whole people.ò Justice Shaw agreed, sentencing Cheever to a month in jail along with a thousand dollar fine. Cheever was ultimately found at fault for having written a story that did not take into account the general reading public.

The fine was paid by C.E. Delavan, a temperance advocate from Albany, New York.[37] Cheever served his thirty-day jail term in a cell furnished and carpeted by his defenders. He was catered to by members of his church and temperance supporters for the duration of his incarceration.[38] His martyrdom drew attention and growing support to the national temperance movement.[39] By ignoring the general reading public, Cheeverôs story inspired a growing change in the general readerôs perspective, one more in line with the reader Cheeverôs narrator imagined.

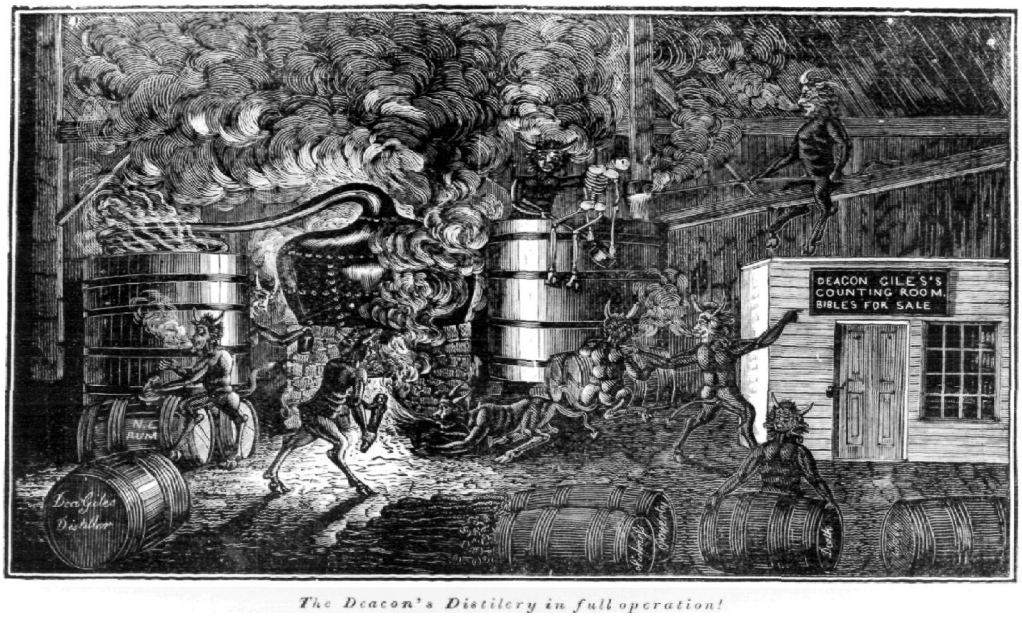
Cheever initially took advantage of his notoriety to press on with temperance concerns. On August 14, 1835, he published a companion piece, ñDeacon Jonesô Brewery,ò in the *Salem Gazette*.[40] An editorial comment noted that ñWe copy the communication annexed, at the request of several of our subscribers, who assure us that in *this* article there is no libel concealed.ò Unlike ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery,ò ñDeacon Jonesô Breweryò concedes a modicum of ñprudenceò regarding the community sensibility, in that the main character demonstrates a social awareness of the alcohol problem in which his business is engaged. Deacon Jones is also an alcohol manufacturer, but he is not simply Satanôs complicit delivery-man. He is instead conscious of public objections to his brewery, but he ignores temperance morality for business reasons. Despite his rationalizations, he ñdid not feel easy on the score of conscienceé ò (113). Like Giles, Jones suffers family tragedy, but Jonesôs woes are more generally described, and

concern children who ñhad died drunkardsò or ñwere living at home, idle and dissipated.ò The *Gazette* subtitled this tale, ñOr, the Distiller turned Brewer. ï A Dream,ò[41] a description emphasizing the *Gazette*ôs commitment to the storyôs allegorical nature. This tale subsequently excited little of the attention its predecessor had.

Despite such gestures, the issues brought forward by ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò continued to divide the community. Shortly after ñDeacon Jonesô Breweryò appeared, ñA Letter to the Author of ódeacon Jonesôs Breweryôò responded to the piece.[42] The anonymous letter-writer initially names ñDeacon Jonesô Breweryò as his subject, but he then quickly turns to the divisive issues at the heart of Cheeverôs trial. The problem, according to this writer, is not the sentiment behind ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distillery,ò but its expression. ñé sober reason and common senseò should provide the example, not inflammatory quasi-fiction. ñBut I argue upon reason, and Scripture and common sense, for their rational and temperate enjoymenté Let us not dream ódreams,ô upon such a subject. Let us awake and examine it fully by the clear and sufficient light of reason and Revelation!ò (8) ñTemperanceò reform should be ñrationalò and not the ñDreamsò of fiction. Perhaps the emphasis of ñDeacon Jonesô Breweryò upon its fantastic, fictional nature explains why ñDeacon Jonesô Breweryò elicited so much less attention. In contrast, ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò illustrates the capacity of fiction to draw the readerôs attention to the very thin line between the literal and the literary, between the fictional and the real. In this, the complicity of the readerôs acquiescence becomes the subject of debate.

The issues of literatureôs role in articulating a representative reality for the reader had by no means been settled by Cheeverôs trial. Around the same time the letter concerning ñDeacon Jonesô Breweryò was published, the original ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò was reprinted as a widely-distributed pamphlet by JS Redfield. Included in this reprint were four illustrations by

Miles St. John, the largest of which illustrates the distilleryôs demonic takeover. A prominent feature in the first plate (see *Figure 1*) is a potentially controversial representation of poor Caleb Dodge, in the skeleton which can be seen perched on the vatôs lip while the demons cavort around it.



The Deacon's Distilery in full operation!

Figure 1
[Digital reproductions courtesy, American Antiquarian Society]

Even more startling is the fourth engraving in the series. Entitled, ñThe Foreman in a Rage,ò the lower mid-right section of the frame contains a depiction of Amos Ham, cowhide in hand, rushing off to beat Cheever while drunkards cheer him on in the foreground (see *Figure 2)*. This incident, of course, happened after the story was originally published.

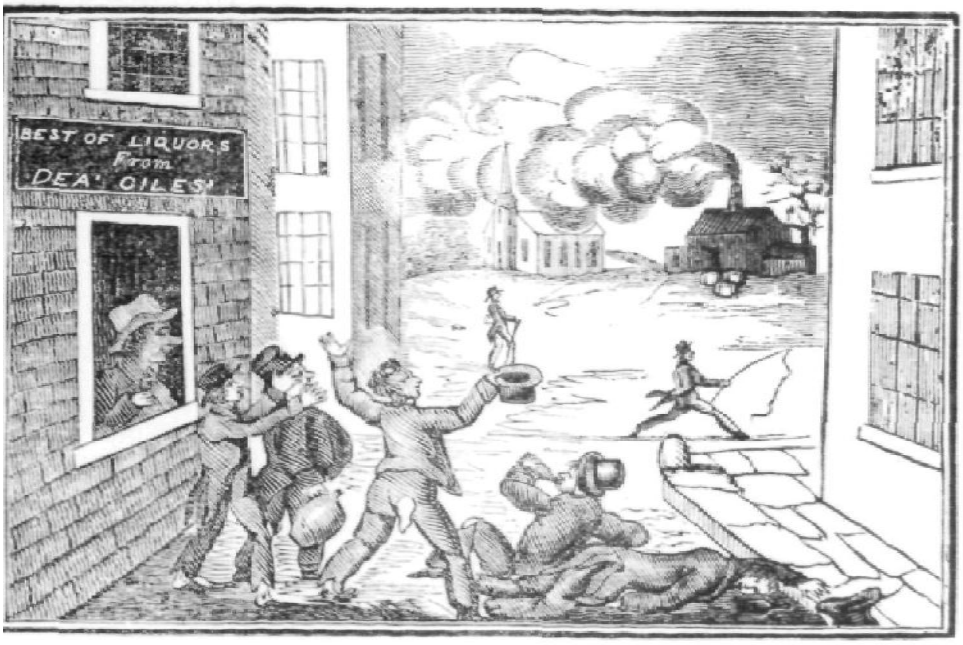


Figure 2.
[Digital reproductions courtesy, American Antiquarian Society]

Subsequent reprints of ñInquire at Amos Gilesô Distilleryò (subsequently referred to as *Deacon Giles's Distillery*) continued to emphasize the textôs capacity to blur the line between imaginative depictions and social reality. If the trial enacted a face-off on either side of ñreality versus fiction,ò the textôs popularity drew from the intermingling of fact and fantasy in readersô minds. Savvy publishers, especially in the temperance industry, capitalized on this convergence. Later reprints emphasize the ambiguity to greater and lesser degrees. An 1844 edition was entitled, ñThe True History of Deacon Gilesô Distillery: Reported for the Benefit of Posterity.ò The introduction preceding the story itself recounts a brief history of distilling through mid-nineteenth century, and frames Cheeverôs work as David standing up to a distilling Goliath giant. Distillers ñwere run by men of wealth and influence in the community. They were publicly supported by public sentimenté and laughed at the shaking of our spear.ò (6). An 1848 edition is entitled *The Dream: or, the True History of Deacon Giles's Distillery and Deacon Jones'*

Brewery, Reported for the Benefit of Posterity. Underneath the title is reprinted the inscription: ñIt was a dream, but not all a dream.ò[43]

An 1859 edition, also entitled *The Dream, or the True History of Deacon Giles's Distillery*, is introduced by the Reverend John Marsh, ñcorresponding secretary of the American Temperance Union.ò Marsh echoes the 1844 introduction, and frames the story within a vision of good versus evil. Cheeverôs martyrdom against the well-established Salem distillers was a heroic action, according to Marsh, with an inevitable martyrôs end: ñSuch, however, was the state of the public mind that he was condemnedé ò The heroôs narrative in which temperance writers later framed *Deacon Giles Distillery* encapsulates Cheeverôs own self-characterization during the libel trial, when Cheever depicted his case as one of persecuted righteousness. ñFor the sake of freedom and in the proclamation of truth, I am unwilling that an unrighteous and oppressive verdict should be sustained and sanctioned by the decision of this courté For the sake of temperance, I am unwilling that the distillery interest, productive of so much misery in this country, should here find a shieldò (*Defence* 110). The historian Robert York points out that given the fact that Cheever accused Salemôs liquor interests and the townôs government as being death-dealers if not outright murderers, Cheeverôs insistence that ñhe had not intended to slander any particular personé was a considerable understatement.ò[44] From the oppositionôs viewpoint, the argument against Cheever concerned standards of a diverse communityôs civil discourse. The temperance movement articulated Cheeverôs experience within the Dreamôs framework of a binary good versus evil. Thus, what Marsh termed a ñstate of the public mindò invested in a harmonious status quo, was reconceived by the reader of *Deacon Giles* as a fight against allegorical demons for community preservation. Wrote one temperance chronicler in 1850: ñFar from being considered an officious meddler in affairs with which he had no concern, Mr.

Cheever began to be regarded as a martyr to the truth.ò[45] Temperance reformers began to re-conceive Cheeverôs story as representing the communityôs salvation from its degenerative elements. And with the growing sympathy in the general readerôs perspective regarding temperance reform, *Deacon Giles's Distillery* came to symbolize not an intemperate assault, but reformist championing.

This urgent message of good versus evil happily situated Cheeverôs Orthodox philosophy directly within the temperance communityôs mission, and he was adopted as a martyr for the cause. But within a few short years, Cheever left Salem to travel abroad, after which he took up a position at Park Street Church in New York City. His interests also shifted, primarily in support of abolition and the death penalty.[46] While he still supported temperance reform, Cheever was unwilling to take advantage of his national reputation, which would well have served him and his cause. Why did Cheever all but turn his back on the temperance movement?

The simple answer is that Cheever was more interested in fighting manifestations of demonic influence than he was in accommodating social solutions. His turn away from the temperance movement is concordant with temperanceôs philosophical divergence from Cheeverôs doctrinal values. As described in this first part of this chapter, Cheeverôs fight with Salemôs Unitarians concerned the latterôs focus on material and social concerns as ends in and of themselves.[47] The most heated moments of the Fourth of July controversy involved the Unitariansô complaint that Cheever zealously and deliberately set out to destroy the community peace. Cheever countered that Unitarians were more interested in social harmony than Godôs will, and saw community peace as more important than the communityôs salvation. Preparing for Godôs Grace, according to Cheever, requires rejecting earthly materialism, although material signs may incidentally indicate accordance with Godôs plan. In Cheeverôs Orthodox view, any

philosophy emphasizing humanist values as a path to God colluded with Satanôs deceptions. Evangelical proselytizing was necessary to warn those still capable of being saved. Cheeverôs fiction is consequently aimed at depicting the worldôs dangerous material temptations as a warning to a readers. The characters in his stories are not saved, but continue to spread their poison through the community, if they are not outright damned to hell altogether.[48] Cheever saw his mission as preparing the sinner for Christian regeneration, not for getting along with the neighbors. Salvation and grace are the result of struggle; they do not issue from ñprofound quiet.ò[49] Cheeverôs fiction sought to clarify the stakes for those Christians capable of receiving Godôs Grace. His aim is not to illustrate a character learning from material losses, but to draw an allegory of suffering that clarifies the dangers of Satanôs worldly temptations.

Instead, *Deacon Giles's Distillery* was lauded by the temperance community as an example of work that united humanity through temperanceôs utopian ï and ultimately its worldly ï ends. Temperance histories emphasize Cheeverôs role as martyr to the cause of national social reform in general; his fiction was interpreted as a message for the general population, and not just potentially regenerate souls. For example, in *A Forty Years' Fight with the Drink Demon, Or A History of the Temperance*, Charles Jewett writes of the women who catered to Cheever during his incarceration, that ñthey instinctively felt that he had been fighting a battle for them, their homes, and most precious earthly interestsé ò (220). Cheever might more appreciate a reputation as a warrior for the womenôs spiritual, not ñearthly,ò concerns. Heaven and earth are sharply divided in Cheeverôs conservative philosophy, and sinful man deserved neither.

The national temperance movement instead imagined reformist goals manifested here on earth. Divisive individual and partisan issues took a back seat to a utopian ideal emphasizing an ecumenical and socially unifying message. This message focuses on an individualôs temperate

practice; religious beliefs are important only insofar as they influence sober behavior. A general Christian morality replaced the sectarian issues which motivated Cheeverôs fiction. That is not to say that material ambition replaced moral ambition in temperance imagination. In ñFear of Seduction: The Allure of Alcohol in Late-Nineteenth-Century Temperance Thought,ò Elaine Franz Parsons notes that from the start, temperance rhetoric took a skeptical position concerning individual ambition. Parsons states that while financial ruin illustrates the dangers of drunkenness in temperance fiction, a material ambition is equally problematic. ñFrom very early on, drink was closely associated in temperance literature with a dangerous desire for social advancement. Ambition served as both a warning sign that a man was likely to become a drunkard and, as in ôMy Motherôs Gold Ring,ô a result of drink itselfò (210). The story Parsons cites was written by Lucius Manlius Sargent in 1833, two years before *Deacon Giles'* publication, and represents an ecumenical message that competed with Cheeverôs partisan moralizing. In ñMy Motherôs Gold Ring,ò the desire for a better equipage comes upon a young husband under the influence of drink. The couple is just starting out, so the husbandôs alcohol-driven ambition is unrealistic, and eventually ruinous. His ongoing drunkenness destroys any hope of financial and social security for his family. Self-interested religious figures offer no help to the problem. ñMy Motherôs Gold Ring,ò like *Deacon Giles,* describes hypocritical clergymen as part of the husbandôs woes; he is first tempted to imbibe liquor on a cold day by his grocer, a local church Deacon. Later in the story the manôs own minister, a drinker himself, tells the husband that he should not sign the temperance Pledge. Salvation here comes from a generally moral character, while religious figures consciously reject the drunkardôs suffering. The family is saved by their good neighbor Johnson, a temperance man who has signed the pledge. Johnson is described as a non-religious Good Samaritan, in direct contrast to the hypocritical religious

leaders who literally walk by the homeless drunk and his family on the side of the road. This non-partisan message is directed by the author of the tale, who states in his preface ñTo The Reader,ò that the story ñcan do you no harm; there is nothing *sectarian* about it.ò[50]

By mid-century, temperance reform had all but dismissed sectarian religious doctrine for an earthly utopian ideal expressing community-based solutions. This is explicit in the work of T.S. Arthur, one of temperanceôs most prolific and widely-read authors. The best-selling *Ten Nights in a Bar-room* (1855) presents a narrator who observes the community of Cedarville degenerating into ruin following the opening of the ñSickle and Sheaf,ò an inn/tavern. Slade, the tavernôs proprietor, is a former miller. Sladeôs ambition has led him to the seemingly more profitable business of selling alcohol. Those supporting the inn/tavern argue for its commercial contribution to the town, even as the narrator observes its ruinous moral influence and the consequent resulting material degeneration of the town as a whole. The taleôs moral is delivered by Joe Morgan, the former town drunk who reforms by swearing off drink and returning to the very mill work abandoned by the Sickle and Sheafôs owner. Morgan lectures at a town meeting, ñé óthere is but one remedyé The accursed traffic must cease among usé If you would save the young, the weak, and the innocent, on you God has laid the solemn duty of their protection ï you must cover them from the tempteré Let us resolve, this night, that from henceforth the traffic shall cease in Cedarvilleôò (141). God demands prohibition to protect the townôs society as a whole. Everyone in town acquiesces to Morganôs words, but the narrator reminds the reader that ñThere were, in Cedarville, regularly constituted authorities, which alone had the power to determine public measuresé through these authorities they must act in an orderly wayò (142). Joe and his family may represent a moral model for emulation, but that model must, in the end, accommodate the diverse communityôs democratic legal processes.

Ten Nights in a Bar-room focuses on moral behavior and an implicit, rather than explicit, religious foundation. Arthurôs novel *Danger, or, Wounded in the House of a Friend*, published twenty years later, is even more explicit in prescribing non-partisan religious practice as a solution for socially destructive drinking. In this novel, the Reverend Mr. Elliot comes to understand the dangers of supporting even a temperate use of ñgood wine.ò His own moderate consumption provides a bad example for others who cannot control their thirst. In the course of the story, Mr. Elliot reverses his position opposing the ñfanaticò temperance movement, and comes to understand that his example contributes to othersô drunken ruin. The solution for the problem drunk is a religious one. Temperance societies, Elliot notes, work to influence ñpublic sentiment,ò but only ñChurchò serves the drunkard. He then defines this church as composed of ñMen and women of nearly every denominationé working together in love and unity. Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Presbyterians, Swedenborgians, Congregationalists, Universalists and Unitarians, so called, here clasp hands in a common Christian brotherhood, and give themselves to the work of saving the lost and lifting up the fallenò (269).

Cheeverôs religious philosophy argues against this ideal of benevolent community harmony. Instead, his Calvinistic concerns directed his reformist impulses. He turned away from temperance and toward abolition and the death penalty, two movements which allowed him to see demons at work rather than communities at play. Cheever was ultimately more motivated to fight as David reaching up to strike a demonic Goliath while cheered on by Godôs chosen, rather than stooping down as a Good Samaritan to comfort and lift up the worldôs sinners.

Endnotes

[1] The narratorôs address to readers of the *Landmark* was edited in reprints to address a more general readership by deleting reference to the Landmark, and instead read: ñThe reader may suppose, if he chooseé ò

[2] As reported in the *Salem Gazette*, June 30, 1835.

[3] Salemôs Unitarian community was spread across four churches, including the original Puritan First Church, which had split from the Orthodox community during the Unitarian controversy earlier in the century. William D. Dennisôs ñHistorical Addressò of the First Universalist Meeting Houseôs Centennial Anniversary in 1909 relates the Unitarian split as follows: ñIn three of the churches the change from Calvinism to a more liberal belief had taken place, and their clergymen were of pronounced Unitarian viewsò (30-31). These included ñthe First Church, the mother of all Salem churches,ò and the ñSecond Church,ò whose pastor ñhad led his people out of Calvinism.ò Dennis traces the separation of the Puritan First Church in Salem during the Unitarian controversy at the early part of the nineteenth century into four separate churches, all of which were Unitarian except for Cheeverôs Howard Street Church which continued in Congregation Orthodoxy/Calvinism. See pages 30-32 of Dennisôs account.

[4] In 1809, William E. Channing delivered his celebrated address defining Unitarianism. ñThe Moral Argument Against Calvinismò explained the objections to Orthodox doctrine. ñIt is plain that a doctrine which contradicts our best ideas of goodness and justice cannot come from a good and just God, or be a true representation of his characterò (461). Channing states that Calvinism, by ñoutraging conscience and reason, tends to array these high faculties against revelationò (468). Sydney E. Ahlstrom and Jonathan S. Carey further explain Unitarianismôs roots in an Age of Reason: ñTheologically, it was an American Reformation ï the distinctive transformation of Christianity and Calvinism of the eighteenth century through Arminianism and other Enlightenment influences into nineteenth-century liberal Christianityò (xii). Mary Kupiec-Cayton sums the argument up succinctly: The liberals believed in ñthe right of people to believe as the light of reason informed them, as long as they remained within the general rubric of Christianity and guided in some general way by the wisdom of sacred scriptureé Congregationalists would charge the liberals with doctrinal heresy, and liberals would respond by claiming the fomenting of doctrinal controversy to be an evil they would rather avoidò (87-88).

[5] Cheever was fully involved in temperance reform by this point in 1833. His ñFifth Report of the American Temperance Societyò was presented in Boston 1832. Entitled ñThe Temperance Reformation,ò Cheever traces the temperance tradition back through Lyman Beecherôs *Sermons on Intemperance.* While sobriety ñprepares [a man] for the spiritual life and the activity of his immortal partò (59) intemperance ñput the seal of fire upon the eternal soulò (63). His remarks anticipate his activities in Salem; Cheever asks, ñWho can believe that the drunkardôs habits prepare him for heaven, or that the fires of eternity will accomplish that regeneration, which the fire he has been drinking in this world has failed to accomplish here?ò

[6] The quotes are taken from the pamphlet entitled ñThe Charge of Ignorance and Misrepresentation Proved against Rev. George B. Cheever,ò covering the letter exchange from September of 1833 through April of 1834.

[7] Uphamôs remarks pattern themselves on Channingôs definitive statements made in 1815, published as ñThe System of Exclusion and Denunciation in Religion Considered.ò In this account, Channing notes that Orthodoxy is a ñsystem of exclusionò based in fear, whereas Unitarians wish for nothing but ñthe peace and prosperity of the church of Christò (478). ñBoth Scripture and reason unite in teaching, that the best and only standard of character is the life; and he who overlooks the testimony of a Christian life, and grounds a sentence of condemnation on opinions, about which he, as well as his brother, may err, violates most flagrantly the duty of just and candid judgment, and opposes the peaceful and charitable spirit of the Gospelò (480). This ñcondemnation,ò according to Channing, is an unreasonable ñdefamation and persecution.ò

[8] Letter dated September 24, 1833.

[9] Letter dated October 4, 1833.

[10] In an overview of Cheeverôs career in Salem (ñHistory Time: Temperance and Tumult in Salemò), Robert Booth implies that the clash between the two men goes beyond theology to issues of culture and class. Booth points out that Upham was long associated with Salemôs successful Unitarian businessmen, whereas Cheever, ñthe son of Salem-bred newspaper editor,ò had only just been appointed to his post in Salem in February of 1833. Uphamô Unitarian pedigree is traced to Harvardôs Divinity School, the birthplace of Unitarianism. In addition, Booth points out, Upham was deeply invested in Salem, having preached there for ten years and publishing various articles on Salemôs history. In contrast, Booth intimates, Cheever was an outsider due to his upbringing in Maine, his education at Andover Theological Seminary (a Calvinist Orthodox institution), and his newness to the community. This implication of class conflict is reflected in the religious communitiesô demographics. As described by Alice Blair Wesley et al. in ñThe Unitarian Controversy and its Puritan Roots,ò socio-economic reasons explain the attraction of the upper middle class to Unitarianism. ñé the growing mercantile economy of New England also exerted a moderating influence on New England religious life. Merchants belonged not only to a Puritan congregation but to the international trading community as well. They felt that in markets abroad they labored at a disadvantage, in that a certain stigma of intolerance attached to anyone from New England. One businessman complained that public punishment for heretical belief was bad for business because it ómakes us stinke every wheare.ô The interest of the merchants in promoting free movement of people and goods conflicted with the desire of the Puritan leaders to keep New England isolated and free from foreign influence.ò For whatever reasons, Upham was seen as an established insider in Salemôs community, while Cheever was viewed as the troublesome upstart.

[11] Pertinent texts and a general introductory overview of Unitarian history may be found in *An American Reformation: A Documentary History of Unitarian Christianity* (Sydney E. Ahlstrom & Jonathan S. Carey, Eds.). In addition, see ñExpansion and Reform,ò Chapter 7 in *The Congregationalists,* particularly pages 123-127, ñTheological Disputes and the Unitarian Schismò and the biographical sketches of Ebenezer Gay (253-255), Jonathan Mayhew (277-279),

and Joseph Tuckerman (315-316). For further specifics, see Mary Kupiec-Caytonôs ñWho Were the Evangelicals?: Conservative and Liberal Identity in the Unitarian Controversy in Boston, 1804-1833ò and Sidney Meadôs ñLyman Beecher and Connecticut Orthodoxy's Campaign against the Unitarians, 1819-1826.ò

[12] The Salemôs Congregational churchôs originating creeds are listed in Williston Walkerôs *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism,* pages 116-118. For early twentieth-century retrospectives of Congregationalist origins, see Champlin Burrageôs *The Church Covenant Idea: Its Origin and Its Development*, and Williston Walkerôs *History of the Congregational Churches in the United States.*

[13] For the full text of the expanded Creed of 1836, see Walker, pages 116-118.

[14] ñUnitarian Christianityò was delivered at the ordination of Jeremy Sparks on May 5, 1819 in Baltimore, Maryland (see Sydney E. Ahlstrom & Jonathan S. Carey, Eds. *An American Reformation: A Documentary History of Unitarian Christianity*, pages 91-117 for a copy of the text).

[15] Channing denies the impossibility of understanding Godly motives. ñGod is infinitely good, kind, benevolenté not to a few, but to all; good to every individual, as well as to the general systemò (*An American Reformation* 105). Furthermore, ñtrue love of God is a moral sentimenté We esteem him and him only a pious man, who practically conforms to Godôs moral perfections and government; who shows his delight in Godôs benevolence, by loving and serving his neighboré ò (112-113). Godôs moral authority serves as a paternal model for manôs imitation in his individual and social life.

[16] The quotes attributed to D.A. Austin in this paragraph are taken from the *Salem Gazette* issue dated June 26, 1835.

[17] In this point, Cheeverôs text firmly situates itself in Salemôs history, specifically in the tradition of Cotton Matherôs *The Wonders of the Invisible World*. In this famous text defending Matherôs part in Salemôs witch trials, Mather explains the presence of allegorical devils among the human population. He warns that the Devil may enter the community of the faithful at the invitation of the ungodly, an invitation potentially sanctioned by social niceties. Like Cheever, Mather saw Satanôs work in even lawful activities, and warned the faithful to be ever vigilant. ñWhere shall we find that the Devil has laid our most fatal Snares? Truly, our Snares are on the *Bed*, where it is *Lawful* for us to Sleep; at the *Board*, where it is *Lawful* for us to Sit; in the *Cup*, where 'tis *Lawful* to Drink; and in the *Shops*, where we have *Lawful* Business to do. The *Devil* will decoy us, unto the utmost Edge of the *Liberty* that is *Lawful* for us; and then one Little push, hurries us into a Transgression against the Lordé .ò (179).

[18] Cheever had a great respect for allegory as a key literary device in religious expression. In 1847, he published a series of essays praising the superiority of Bunyanôs *Pilgrim's Progress*, entitled *Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress, and on the Life and Times of John Bunyan*.

[19] The quotes which follow, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the 1835 Redfield broadside that reprinted the original *Landmark* article. This is a reprint on a single sheet, and thus no page numbers are cited.

[20] According to Robert Yorkôs biography of Cheever, ñapparently in the heat of the Unitarian dissension, Cheever made some disparaging remarks about a Unitarian Deacon who was engaged in the distilling of liquor at Salem. At the urgent insistence of his mother and Justin Edwards, Cheever soft-pedaled his convictions, so that the affair was passed over without a serious skirmishò (70-71).

[21] The prosecution brought witnesses to attest to the suicide allusion. For instance, testimony of George W. Jenks (from *The Salem Gazette,* June 26, 1835): ñI have heard the circumstances attending the death of one of his [Stoneôs] connexions similar to those alleged in the indictment. About 17 years ago went into the counting-room with young Pickering Doge and saw there several articles marked óC.D.,ô among others a stamp. I inquired who the person was, and was informed that Caleb Dodge was a brother of Mr. Pickering Dodge, (Mr. Stoneôs brother-in-law.) I was informed that C. Dodge was found drowned in one of the vats of the distillery, some years before, and have always understood that he drowned himself there.ò Rev. John Princeôs testimony likewise recounts, ñThe circumstances of Caleb Dodge were notorious. He threw himself into the vat, with a kettle tied to his legs.ò

[22] From the Supreme Judicial Court for Essex County record, 542-43. This document is actually Cheeverôs appeal; the original charge was read into the appeal as a matter of record (the record of the original trial was explained to be missing, per phone conversation June 2011).

[23] The account is taken from the minutes of Hamôs trial on assault charges, recounted in the *Boston Observer,* February 26, 1835.

[24] In his *Defence* against the libel charge, Cheever expressed outrage at the contrast between Hamôs light sentence for physical assault against his more severe sentence for literary assault. ñIn mitigation of judgment at this time, I need scarcely remind your honor more particularly of the course taken by the Attorney General in the discharge of two of the individuals engaged in the assault upon my person, without even the form of trial. Whether it be a greater offence in the judgment of this court to describe a distillerôs occupation as I have done in the Landmark, or with personal violence to attack an unarmed citizen as they did in the street, the sentence which may be declared will go far to determine. I know not by what rule of justice the latter criminals, with proof clear, full, and conclusive against them, were suffered to depart triumphant in their violation of the law, while the former alleged offence has been prosecuted with such undeviating fixedness of purpose. It seems to me a singularly unjust proceedingò (108-109).

[25] From the *Salem Gazette* June 26, 1835.

[26] *ibid.*

[27] Both Choateôs quotes and the trial description is from the *Salem Gazette* June 26, 1835 account.

[28] From ñA Case of Libel,ò *New Bedford Mercury,* July 3, 1835.

[29] From *Michigan Temperance Journal and Washingtonian*, May 15, 1846, Vol. 1; No. 5, p. 35.

[30] From the *Portsmouth Journal,* reprinted in the *Salem Gazette,* July 14, 1835. This issue of the *Gazette* devoted a significant portion of the paper to the reactions of the press, ñFor the Verdictò and ñAgainst the Verdict.ò The *Gazette* lists the *Portsmouth Journal* account as ñFor the Verdict.ò

[31] Cheever, *Defence,* page 6.

[32] For more on Cheeverôs career as an anthology editor and the nature of these works, see Margaret Dennyôs ñCheeverôs Anthology and American Romanticism.ò

[33] The quote is from C.M. Heardôs review of *The American Common-place Book of Poetry* in the *Christian Examiner*, page 92.

[34] From the *North American Review*, October 1831, page 297.

[35] Margaret Denny notes that Cheeverôs *Common-place Book of Poetry* was essentially a best-seller. Influential among the American reading public, the text indicates ñevidence that the poems had qualities which the public at that time was ready to accept and admireò (9). By the mid-1840s, the book was in its eleventh printing, and it continued to be reprinted through the second half of the nineteenth century.

[36] This criticism of redundant narrowness is specifically in regard to Cheeverôs ñA Defence of Capital Punishment,ò but also applies to Cheeverôs general arguments, and his reputation as a whole. Poe succinctly cuts through the uneasiness that comes across in other, more positive assessments of Cheeverôs work. Specifically, Poe acerbically notes that Cheeverôs narratives narrow the capacity of a reader to consider alternative perspectives, and consequently Cheeverôs work is designed to silence more comprehensive literary concerns. ñA Defense of Capital Punishment,ò contains ñpremisesé admitted only very partially by the world at large - a fact of which the author appears to be ignorantò (34) Poeôs assessments succinctly focus on the faith-based convictions at the heart of Cheeverôs writing, convictions which necessitate exclusion and are narrated by terms too narrow to appeal generally.

[37] A footnote in the Introduction to *Memorabilia of George B. Cheever* identifies ña fine of $1000 paid by E.C. Delavan of Albany, N.Y.ò (x). Robert York identifies Delavan as a ñformer wine-merchantò turned ñthe leading temperance worker in New York Stateò (75). York notes that Delavan published *Deacon Giles' Distillery* in his magazine, *Temperance Recorder.*

[38] In *Executing Democracy,* Stephen John Hartnett recounts that ñThe upstanding ladies of Cheeverôs church were so appalled by his egregious treatment at the hands of drink-mongering toughs and morally debased courts that they carpeted his jail cell and besieged him with what Cheever described as ósundry loaves of bread and great bowls of baked apples, and huge piles of

cakes and tarts.ôé óso many friends called to see him [in jail] that he was obliged to name reception hours!ôò (87). Tellingly, temperance advocates later accounted for Cheeverôs visitors in more universal terms. In *Temperance Progress of the Century* (1905), the authors state that ñThe women of Salem, however, sympathized with Cheever, carpeted his cell and fed him sumptuous dinnersò (83). Such accounts seek to imply that *all "*women of Salemò were on his side of the cause, and not just members of his church.

[39] In *Origins of Prohibition,* John Allen Krout notes that Cheever ñsucceeded in his real purpose, for the higher court found against him, and his thirty-day imprisonment was regarded as a martyrôs fate by temperance advocates throughout the country.ò Krout further notes that ñRetribution came seven years later, when the Washington Temperance Society of Salem was organized in the building formerly used as Deacon Stoneôs Distilleryò (260). The conversion of John Stoneôs old distillery to a house of temperance is corroborated in *Excelsior: Journals of the Hutchison Family Singers, 1842-1846.* A journal entry dated May 8, 1843 recounts the Hutchison family arriving in Salem for a ñTea-Partyò of the local temperance society, held in John Stoneôs old distillery building, which had been converted to headquarters for the local Washingtonian chapter. See pages 108-110 for the particular account. The conversion of the building to its new purpose was a well-publicized triumph for the temperance movement.

[40] The *Landmark* distanced itself from Cheever after its editors were sued and offices vandalized. The *Boston Observer and Daily Intelligencer* reports on February 19, 1835, that ñMr. Dudley Phelps, Editor, and Mr. F. Andrews, printer, were also arrested for printing and publishing the article.ò The lawsuit for libel of the Landmark editors/owners Dudley Phelps/Ferdinand Andrews is also reported in the *Salem Gazette* on February 23, 1835. William Garrison, a staunch supporter of Cheever during this period, reports that ña mobò destroyed the *Landmark* press, and the paper subsequently went out of business in November 1836 (as reported in the *History of Essex County, Massachusetts,* page 126).

[41] Subsequent reprints omitted the *Gazette*ôs subtitle.

[42] In the *Salem Gazette,* August 14, 1835.

[43] This line echoes the opening line of Byronôs ñDarkness,ò ñI had a dream, which was not all a dream.ò Byronôs poem describes hell on Earth. The irony cannot be lost on the reader, as Cheeverôs comments regarding Byronôs work in his 1933 *Studies of Poetry* state that any ñdelightò the reader may experience in the poetôs imaginative genius is far overshadowed by ña most destructive influence upon the moral sensibilitiesò (354). Byronôs ñcomplete works, ought never to be purchasedé except by extracts.ò By changing ñI hadò to ñIt was,ò and ñwhich wasò to ñbut,ò this allusion both implies the idea of ñDarknessò even as it attempts to distance itself from a direct representation. However, there is no proof that the inscription is intended to allude to Byronôs poem.

[44] York, page 78.

[45] Reverend Crossôs account frames Cheeverôs text as both an allegorical fight of good versus evil, as well as assisting the material concerns of the community. In *The Mirror of Intemperance,*

and the History of Temperance Reform, Cross invokes both Cheeverôs role as imaginary knight for virtue, and his own memories concerning the role of temperance tracts in the community: ñA temperance document, for a series of years, was placed in each family of a town; and I was assured it occasioned the saving of ten thousand dollars a year, in the cost of ardent spirits alone, not to mention the many and great incidental advantagesò (iii).

[46] In a study of the death penalty in nineteenth-century United States, Stephen John Hartnett states that Cheever seemed less interested in the judicial particulars of the issue and more in ña public stage for performing a bravura defense of Christian conservatism and a no-holds-barred assault on the basic premises of modernity and democracyò (94). Samuel Pearson, Jr. points out in ñFrom Church to Denomination, American Congregationalism in the Nineteenth Century,ò by mid-nineteenth century, the Congregationalists became embroiled in an ideological fight with Presbyterians over slavery. Congregationalists took an abolitionist stance.

[47] Hartnett sees Cheeverôs Fourth of July address as an attack on the foundation of man-made democracies in general, not just the Unitarians. ñDemocracy is but a façade for Satanôs workéò Hartnettôs full explanation of Cheeverôs antinomianism beginning with his Fourth of July speech is described from page 92 on.

[48] Cheever also produced a short fiction entitled ñThe History of John Stubbs: A Warning to Rum-selling Grocers,ò which ends with Stubbs burned alive, and the narrator speculating that that ñwould be nothing to the torment of a damned soul in hell, that in this world, that it is to be feared is the case with all rum-selling grocers, who engage in the business of preparing the bodies and souls of men for everlasting damnationò (129).

[49] In ñReligion of Experience,ò Cheever contrasts the true religion of ñcontrast and powerò against that of ñweakness and profound quiet.ò As always, he warns that much good can be done in the guise of a nominal religion that performs humanitarian objectives, but is not headed for salvation. ñThe world might be filled with a nominal Christianity, yea, an Evangelical Christianity, and the Spirit of God have very little to do with itò (see *Memorabilia* 346).

[50] ñMy Motherôs Gold Ringò was Number One in a series of temperance stories that Lucius Manlius Sargent wrote over the next several years. His tales were extremely popular, widely read, and distributed at large by temperance and religious societies. The stories were later published as a collection in a two-volume set.

Chapter II: ñYou, Who So Well Know the Nature of My Soulò: Edgar Allan Poe, Intoxication, and Public Perception

Edgar Allan Poe seemed to relish his enemies. In the words of James Russell Lowell, ñé he seems sometimes to mistake his phial of prussic-acid for his inkstand.ò[1] Poe took aim at the most influential literary arbiters, men such as Theodore Sedgwick Fay of the *New York Mirror*, or editor of the *Knickerbocker* Lewis Gaylord Clark. Poeôs stories also take aim at conventional readers, challenging them through controversial material. His editorial views spewed bile at the literatiôs leading figures, while alcoholics and madmen populate his fiction, horrifying the public with sensationally vulgar displays.[2]

Poe drew his targets deliberately, not from an indiscriminate desire to offend readersô sensitivities. He wanted to awaken reader sensibility. His narratives are not an intemperate assault on the public, as his detractors accused. Instead, his fictional narratives maneuver the reader into a position of doubt and mindful questioning. Poe brings the reader to question the status quo his narratives invoke through narrator-reader confrontations. The theme of alcohol, in particular, implies conventional temperance responses and moral assumptions concerning character and circumstance that Poeôs narrative confrontations undermine. Poeôs stories challenge the reader to see past the facile conclusions conventional forms automatically elicit. His narratives confront the reader, thereby encouraging resistance to empty social conventions. Poe is not interested in telling the reader what to think or in reinforcing meaningless moralizing,

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Endnotes may be found on pages 130-135

no matter how distasteful the matter in question. He is interested in challenging the reader to see how social standards and conventional forms may be manipulated to problematic ends.

His enemies, however, encouraged readers to see Poeôs stories as nothing more than evidence of an alcoholic, corrupted mind. The most notorious of these enemies was Rufus Griswold, Poeôs former associate. Posthumously appointed Poeôs literary executor,[3] Griswold executed Poeôs legacy swiftly and with extreme prejudice. In his infamous ñLudwig article,ò[4] published anonymously following Poeôs death in 1849, Griswold draws a lurid picture of a quixotic, choleric and impulsive madman whose writing conveys a ñmorbidò impression. ñHe walked the streets, in madness or melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayers for the happiness of those who at that moment were objects of his idolatry.ò Damning with faint praise, ñLudwigò specifically characterizes Poeôs writing as clever madness: ñIn poetry, as in prose, he was most successful in the metaphysical treatment of the passions. His poems are constructed with wonderful ingenuity, and finished with consummate art. They illustrate a morbid sensitiveness of feeling, a shadowy and gloomy imagination, and a taste almost faultless in the apprehension of that sort of beauty most agreeable to his temper.ò Griswoldôs juxtaposition of Poeôs mad ñtemperò with his aesthetic ñtasteò questions the nature of ñthat sort of beautyò Poe so excellently produced. Poeôs legacy was most damaged by the connection between his aesthetic ñtasteò and an emotional, alcoholic instability which the Ludwig article emphasized.

Griswold later dropped his anonymous mask for an even more devastating attack, which came in the first official publication of Poeôs works printed the year following his death. Griswoldôs introduction to *The Life of the Late Edgar Allan Poe* attributes Poeôs misfortunes directly to a ñbrutish drunkennessò that ñfrequently interrupted the kindness and finally

exhausted the patienceò (xxx) of his employers and peers.[5] His characterization of Poeôs antisocial destructiveness applied equally to Poeôs writing. *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym,* Griswold states, ñhas as many atrocities as the Book of Pirates, and as liberal an array of paining and revolting horrors as was ever inventedé ò (xxxi). In the very next sentence, Griswold attributes this manner of writing directly to a ñtendency to extravaganceé He had been more anxious to be intense than to be natural.ò Even as he praises stories such as ñThe Fall of the House of Usherò or ñLigeiaò as ñmasterpieces,ò Griswold charges that Poeôs genius-level ratiocination masks Poeôs moral fallibility. ñé the strange and solemn and fascinating beauty which informs the style and invests the circumstance of both [stories], drugs the mind, and makes us forget the improbabilities of their general designò (xxxii). Poeôs genius is a drugged one, Griswold warns. Griswoldôs introductory sketch deftly ties Poeôs vicissitudes of fortune to a ñmorbid and insatiable appetite for the means of intoxication,ò endemic to the quality of his work. And Griswold does not stop there; Poeôs drunkenness represents a dangerous antisocial immorality informing both his career and art. Griswold saves the most devastating assessment for the end of his commentary.

> Poe exhibits scarcely any virtue in either his life or his writings. Probably there is not another in the literature of our language in which so much has been accomplished without a recognition or manifestation of conscience. Seated behind the intelligence, and directing it, according to its capacities, Conscience is the parent of whatever is absolutely and unquestionably beautiful in art as well as conduct. It touches the creations of the mind and they have life; without it, they have never, in the range of its just action, the truth and naturalness which are approved by universal taste or in enduring reputation (xlvii).

Just as Poeôs command of literatureôs structural design ñdrugsò the reader to disregard a moral sense, so Poeôs diseased conscience infects his art. Poeôs effect on the reader is similar to alcoholôs effect on Poe; this assessment specifically points to Poeôs genius, his ñminuteness of detail, refinement of reasoning, and proprietary and power of languageò (xlviii) as a means of

conveying the ñstrange and spectral and revolting creationsò from his mind to the readerôs, ñso that his books were closed as one would lay aside the nightmares or the spells of opium.ò

This might be true if one read Poeôs narrators as Poeôs authorial voice. Stories such as ñKing Pestò would be highly problematic should a reader take Griswoldôs advice to heart and read the story as a straight-forward representation of Poeôs opinions. Many readers did. ñKing Pestò suffers from a reputation as illustrating Poeôs poor taste, just as Griswold lamented. In 1875, Robert Louis Stevenson described ñKing Pestò as a ñghastlyò example of Poe seeming ñto have lost respect for himself, for his art, and for his audienceé He who could write ñKing Pestò had ceased to be a human being,ò as the narrative is a ñpointless farrago of horrors.ò[6] More recently Thomas Ollive Mabbott, who seeks to rescue the story by validating its cultural sources and noting its status as predecessor of ñMasque of the Red Death,ò also acknowledges that ñThis is certainly one of the least valuable of Poeôs stories and has received scant praise from the critics.ò[7]

Whether or not the incidents detailed in ñKing Pestò are based in fact (as Mabbott claims), the taleôs main characters are not role models. ñLegsò and ñHugh Tarpaulinò openly mock social conventions. Worse, the narrative does not condemn their behavior, but simply describes the sailors as ñinteresting.ò The story begins as these two broke, drunken men flee a tavern, whose sign, ñNo chalk,ò they cannot read. However, Legs and Hugh do understand they will not be extended credit for their drinks. Their violation of clearly marked social boundaries continues as they enter an area of the city abandoned due to plague and a consequent superstitious fear of demonic invasion: ñé tales so blood-chilling were hourly told, that the whole mass of forbidden buildings was, at length, enveloped in terror as in a shroudé ò (722).[8]

Devoid of its sober, middle-class population, the cityôs buildings are empty structures ripe for illicit occupation by drunks and harlots, as well as Legs and Hugh.

Titles and honors in ñKing Pestò are just as easily occupied by dishonorable figures. Drawn into a funeral homeôs wine cellar by sounds of revelry, the sailors are confronted by other trespassers who have garbed themselves in the former occupantsô clothing. Their imposture involves both dress and title; there is a ñpresident,ò ñgentleman,ò and ñladies,ò an ñassemblyò demanding ñdecorum.ò These are ñKing Pest,ò ñQueen Pest, our Serene Consort,ò ñHis Grace the Duke Pest-Ilentialò ñHis Grace the Duke Tem-Pest,ò and ñHer Serene Highness the Arch Duchess Ana-Pest.ò King Pest proceeds to qualify his presence in procedural terms that imitate official pronouncements: ñé we are here this night, prepared by deep research and accurate investigation, to examine, analyze, and thoroughly determine the indefinable spirit ï the incomprehensible qualities and nature ï of those inestimable treasures of the palate, the wines, ales, and liqueurs of this goodly metropolisé ò (727). King Pest has appropriated the royal ñweò for an inappropriate agenda: intoxication.

The narrator likewise appropriates the readerôs position to establish his own blithe assessments. His language in relation to Legs and Hugh Tarpaulin draws the reader into a compromised position set by the narratorôs presumptive terms that not only exonerate but even outrageously celebrate the storyôs players. Legs and Hugh are ñour two seamen,ò then ñour friends,ò and lastly ñour heroes.ò Like the dress and titles King Pest and his coterie have donned, the narrator covers his criminal drunkards in inappropriate rhetoric to describe their status as the storyôs subjects: the narratorôs and readerôs ñheroes.ò

Legs and King Pest begin an argument concerning which of them is entitled to the funeral home and its wine cellar. Ignoring the fact that they are all trespassing in a forbidden zone of the

city and in someone elseôs business, Legs preempts the Kingôs claims to squatting rights by invoking a personal relationship and claiming he knows the owner: ñómy honest shipmate, Will Wimble the undertaker!ôò (726). The King trumps Legsôs claim by invoking a higher authority. The groupôs drunken revel is not a matter of their ñówn designsò but a matter of ñthe true welfare of that unearthly sovereign whose reign is over us all, whose dominions are unlimited, and whose name is ñDeathòôò (727). If royaltyôs sovereign rights are unquestioningly ordained by God, here King Pest blasphemously invokes Death as the source of his own dominion. He demands Legs and Hugh drink a gallon of cheap liquor as a sign of fealty and acquiescence. But the sailors refuse to buckle under, and the meeting devolves to an all-out brawl, with Legs accusing the King of being nothing more than a stage actor. Legs and Hugh defeat the King and his Duke, and the two seamen sail off on a wave of beer with the ñladies,ò to return to their ship.

This story makes visible the implicit nature of the social contract by repeatedly violating it through depicted invasions of property and propriety. The reader is uncomfortably situated between two equally pestilent camps. If King Pest is a usurper, so are Legs and Hugh. The reader cannot feel comfortable in taking sides in their quarrel, as both sides violate socially acceptable standards, laws, and morals. Neither can the reader comfortably go along with the narratorôs ñweò that, like King Pestôs royal ñwe,ò inappropriately appropriates universalizing language to rope others into agreeing with questionable claims. Even the narrator alienates the reader. Stevenson went so far as to call this storyôs readers ñvictimsò of Poeôs lack of respect. Stevenson stated that the reader should not ñbe permitted to soil himself with the perusal of the infamous óKing Pest.ôò

Other critics agree with Stevenson. The problem, they suggest, is not Poeôs subject matter, but Poeôs narrative stance in regard to the subject matter. ñKing Pestò is offensive due to

the narratorôs collusion with the celebratory drunkenness and repeated violations the characters enact, and a concordant insistence on the readerôs participation in the charactersô violations. In ñPaying It Close to the Pest,ò Louis Renza states that Poe challenges the reader by removing the placating ease with which uncomfortable situations are narrated, by ñallegorizing the negation of allegoryò (4). Allegory, Renza states, is a means of negating that which is related on the page by turning into something else. By negating the readerôs ability to comfortably distance him or herself from the subject matter in ñKing Pestò through allegory, Poeôs story confronts its readers with the taleôs ñscatologicalò fare. The narrator bypasses judgment and directly confronts the sensational desires described in the story. ñScandalizing the moral sensibilities of common and intellectually sophisticated readers alike, óKing Pest the Firstô would also upset those with aesthetic-sensationalist appetitesò (4).

Poe admitted his desire to confront the smug complacency he believed resulted in poor literary representation. Poe wanted to promote work ñin which the *true,* in contradistinction from the merely *factitious,* genius of the country shall be represented. I shall yield nothing to great names ð nor to the circumstances of position. I shall make war to the knife against the New-England assumption of óall the decency and all the talentô which has been so disgustingly manifested in the Rev. Rufus W. Griswoldôs óPoets & Poetry of Americaôò[9]

Griswoldôs *Poets and Poetry of America* argued that ñsublime sights and heavenly harmonies should live in the poetôs song. The sense of beauty, next to the miraculous divine suasion, is the means through which the human character is purified and elevatedò (7). The concern with moral decency aligned Griswold in sentiment if not in fact with a group of New York publishers whom Poe called the ñcabal,ò[10] men whose work Poe regarded as wanting. These men were editors of widely circulated magazines including the *New York Mirror* (Fay),

the *New York Commercial Advertiser* (Col. William L. Stone), and the *Knickerbocker* (Clark), magazines that defined the national popular literature. Regular editorials set the standards of literary selections represented. Poe railed against this literary establishment as unimaginative, limited, and arbitrary. He complained they ñpuffedò works of favored authors (which of course included their own), in mutually beneficial public-relations promotions that rewarded loyalty and financial gain over literary excellence. From his careerôs beginning, Poe opposed what he saw as routinely published tripe. Poe used his own editorial positions to question the terms by which ñgoodò writing was understood, often in scathing assessments. He particularly protested the literatiôs lack of reasonable critical standards. Poe clarifies this in his review of Laughton Osbornôs ñVision of Rubeta,ò a poem Poe does not find particularly good, but one at least worth considering. He castigates the New York editors for dismissing the work because it aims its vituperation ñat the critics in general but more especially at Colonel Stone, the editor of the óCommercialôé ò Poe comments that Osborn apparently wrote the work in revenge for a perceived insult, and its satire is ñvery censurably indecent ï *filthy* is, perhaps, the more appropriate word. The press, without exception, or nearly so, condemned it in loud terms, without taking the trouble to investigates its pretensions as a literary worké óThe Vision of Rubetaôwas decidedly *the best* satire. For its vulgarity and gross personality there is no defence, but it mordacity cannot be gainsaid.ò[11]

Poe did not rest with satirical asides; he was also quite direct in criticizing his nemeses. In his review of editor Stoneôs *Ups and Downs in the Life of a Distressed Gentleman* in the June 1836 edition of *Southern Literary Messenger*, Poe blasted the story as a ñpublic imposition.ò The author ñis unreasonable in his exactions upon the public, and is presuming very largely upon their excessive patience, gullibility, and good nature.ò Among the bookôs more egregious faults

is Stoneôs fictionalized description of *New York Commercial Advertiser*ôs editor, i.e., himself. In this story, Stone turns himself into a character who can do no wrong,[12] and then continually rescues the narrator from the storyôs drama. Overall, Poe summed up, Stoneôs writing is ñflat.ò

Poeôs most scandalous literary battle was with the writer Thomas Dunn English. A prominent member of New Yorkôs literary society, English was enraged when Poe began publishing the infamous ñLiterati of New York Cityò series. In this series, Poe accuses English of plagiarizing, and stated that Englishôs editorial talents were only possible with a great deal of professional collaboration. Poeôs assessment cheerfully remarks, however, that ñI make these remarks in no spirit of unkindness. Mr. E. is yet young ð certainly not more than thirty-five ð and might, with his talents, readily improve himself at points where he is most defective.ò[13] English replied in the *Evening Mirror* on June 23, 1846, stating direct personal knowledge of Poeôs chronic drunkenness. He accused Poe of manipulating the public to commit outright fraud. This exchange led Poe to sue the *Mirror*, but it did not stop English, who continued to characterize Poe as an unrepentant drunk long after the matter was settled.[14]

However unfair the attacks on Poeôs character, they set a tone both during his lifetime and after his death. In 1879, Thomas Wentworth Higginson summed up Poeôs genius as ñbroken and disfigured by all sorts of inequalities and imitation and stucco; he not disdaining, for want of true integrity, to disguise and falsifyé and even, as Griswold showed, to manipulate and exaggerate puffs of himself.ò[15] Walt Whitman called Poeôs work a ñlurid dream,ò[16] and Henry James dismissed him as a ñcharlatan.ò[17] An early twentieth-century overview of ñThe Poe-Griswold Controversyò by Killis Campbell states that Poeôs legacy cannot be separated from the controversy that surrounded him. ñIn any serious consideration of Poe's life and character it will be necessary to take account of Griswold's estimate of the poetò (436). But Campbell also

concedes that ñmost of the more damaging things alleged by Griswold against Poe were without substantial basis in fact or were greatly exaggeratedé ò (456).[18]

Charles Baudelaire was one of Poeôs first defenders who challenged Poeôs posthumous reputation. From a cultural as well as a literary distance, Baudelaireôs comments help to clarify the nature of the general reader Poeôs writing imagined, as one for whom a sanctimonious moralizing holds no appeal. Baudelaireôs defense of Poe romanticizes his drinking instead in order to promote Poeôs critical assessments of those he derided. Poeôs drinking, according to Baudelaire, was an understandable response to the ñtyranny of fools.ò Clark, Stone, and especially Griswold represented a ñhypocritical trading-classò morality that sought to shape ñPublic Opinion,ò and made the United States ña vast prisonò for Poeôs genius. In ñEdgar Allan Poe: His Life, and His Works,ò Baudelaire intimates that Poeôs intoxication ñwas a mnemonic means, a method of workéô The poet had learned to drink as a laborious author exercises himself in filling note-books. He could not resist the desire of finding again those visions, marvellous or awful ð those subtle conceptions which he had met before in a preceding tempesté The works that give us so much pleasure to-day were, in reality, the cause of his deathò (19). In describing Griswold and the magazine cabal as unimaginative scolds, Baudelaire reconsiders Poeôs supposed weaknesses as strengths. According to Baudelaire, Poeôs style estranged him from his detractors not because of its depraved or puerile nature, but because it is ñremoved from the vulgar,ò and ñserved to push his reader towards the desired end,ò in questioning the ruling classôs intransigent moralizing and the social status quo. Baudelaireôs defense of Poeôs reputation points out the personal nature of criticism leveled at Poe. However, Baudelaireôs vision of Poe as tragic hero mistakes the nature of his alcoholism, and fails to account for the function of Poeôs fictional drunkards.

While Poeôs fiction ñpushedò the reader to his desired ends, his public behavior at times worked against him. Poeôs reputation as a drunken, deluded hysteric can be traced directly to personal attacks that played out in the public eye. Of particular embarrassment was an encounter in 1845 between Poe and his editorial nemesis, Lewis Gaylord Clark. Poe was walking with his friend Thomas Holley Chivers, who later described Poe as ñdrunk as an Indian.ò[19] Poe at first shook Clarkôs hand, but then had to be restrained following a temperamental about-face in which he became aggressive. Clarkôs answering attack took place in the press; he described Poeôs work as of a piece with his drunkenness. In ñThe Editorôs Tableò commentary of the *Knickerbocker* May 1846 issue, Clark derided: ñThere is a wandering specimen of ó*The Literary Snob*ô continually obtruding himself upon public notice; to-day in the gutter, to-morrow in some millinerôs magazineò (461).

Direct insults were only the most obvious manifestation of the battle between Poe and the New York cabal for the reading publicôs attention. Clark and his cohorts pushed moralizing, conventional social standards, and their writing conveys what Poe termed a flat, sanctimonious effect that does not make for good literature. Poe sought to construct stories that would attract more responsive readers. His satires concerning the publishing industry seek to establish collaboration with the reading public in protesting mediocre literary standards. In this regard, his fictional characterizations are not simply critical assassinations, but appeals to the reader to insist on a more satisfying American literature product. ñThe Literary Life of óThingum Bobôò (1844), for instance, is not simply an attack on Clark or George Graham of *Graham's Magazine,* but an excellently written piece about badly written prose.[20] Bob is an inept writer whose work comes to prominence when he is paid in good reviews instead of hard cash. His blithely terrible narrative style is similar to Zenobiaôs in ñHow to Write a Blackwood Article.ò Both stories

position the reader to consider the low standards promoted by many popular magazines. Poe had long concerned himself with the publishing marketôs literary standards, or, more specifically, the lack thereof. As early as 1833, he proposed to Joseph and Edwin Buckingham of the *New England Magazine* a series of stories organized as a ñburlesque upon criticism,ò the so-called ñFolio Clubò collection.[21]

Poe hoped to capture the general readerôs attention with well written material. In 1835, just after publication of the gruesome ñBerenice,ò Poe wrote to Thomas White, owner of *The Southern Literary Messenger* to address Whiteôs concerns with the storyôs subject matter. ñTo be appreciated you must be *read,* and these things are invariably sought after with avidity. They are, if you will take notice, the articles which find their way into other periodicals, and into the papers, and in this manner, taking hold upon the public mind they augment the reputation of the source where they originated.ò After noting that style and a tightly controlled plot will keep more lurid pieces from degenerating into the ñturgid or the absurd,ò Poe states that ñThe effect ð if any ð will be estimated better by the circulation of the Magazine than by any comments upon its contents.ò[22] The publicôs buying power reflected the storyôs appeal, not critical denigration of the work. The most important matter was the engagement of the story with the public imagination.[23] Once the publicôs imagination was engaged, Poe reasoned, a great writer would keep even the most sensational material from becoming cliché.

Despite the trouble his alcoholic reputation was causing him, Poe knew its ñluridò nature served to attract attention not just to him, but to his writing. He carefully distinguished public perception which would cast him as a character in one of his own stories, and the reality of his literary working experience. In a letter written toward the end of his life to his admirer, George

Eveleth, he attributes this bad reputation specifically to those who know him socially, but not intimately.

> The editor of the ñWeekly Universeò speaks kindly and I find no fault with his representing my habits as ñshockingly irregularò. He could not have had the ñpersonal acquaintanceò with me of which he writes; but has fallen into a very natural error. The fact is thus: ð My *habits* are rigorously abstemious and I omit nothing of the natural regimen requisite for health: ð i.e ð I rise early, eat moderately, drink nothing but water, and take abundant and regular exercise in the open air. But this is my private life ð my studious and literary life ð and of course escapes the eye of the world. The desire for society comes upon me only when I have become excited by drink. Then *only* I go ð that is, at these times only *I have been* in the practice of going among my friends: who seldom, or in fact never, having seen me unless excited, take it for granted that I am always so. Those who *really* know me, know better.

Poe upends the interpretation that his alcoholism facilitates an antisocial nature; alcohol, he states, does not inform his private writing life. Instead, his bad reputation is specifically defined by and through social perception of his public appearance. Poe challenges Eveleth to reconsider his reputation as an irascible drunk whose mean-spirited, antisocial character is the model for his sensational stories. Poe argues that this reputation is fostered by an alcohol-enabled sociability, which does not represent the ñstudious and literary lifeò generating his writing.[24]

Poeôs fiction represents a mastery over the subject of public relations that his personal experience never managed. It is not my purpose here to debate the scope and nature of Poeôs actual drinking problem,[25] but to point out that there is indication he considered the issue not simply a personal one, but a subject deeply entrenched in matters of public perception. Poe well understood the double-edged nature of public perception; while he could not control the rumors about his private life from circulating, he appreciated the nature of speculation applied to literary material. For instance, in a generally favorable review of Dickens, Poeôs chief criticism of *Barnaby Rudge* is that it does not leave enough work for the reader. Poe states that Dickens

overplays his narrative hand and gives away so much detailed foreshadowing that readers will reach specific conclusions regarding charactersô motivations and the narrative intent. Conclusions should remain in speculative shadows where the storyôs implications will continue to haunt and the reader will continue to consider them. About *Barnaby Rudge,* Poe writes, ñé the anticipation must surpass the realityé The skilful intimation of horror held out by the artist, produces an effect which will deprive his conclusion of all. These intimation ï these dark hints of some uncertain evil - are often rhetorically praised as effective ï but are only justly so praised where there is *no denouement* whatever ï where the readerôs imagination is left to clear up the mystery for itself.ò[26]

Alcohol often appears in Poeôs stories as an element enabling ambiguous if not mistaken perceptions. In ñThe System of Dr. Tarr and Professor Fether,ò the narrator visits a mental institution where, unbeknownst to him, the inmates have taken over management. Because he is told the administration is experimenting with modern treatments, he sees the chaos as an expected result of this apparently new approach. Prior to arriving, the narrator states that ñI had heard, at Paris, that the institution of Monsieur Maillard was managed upon what is vulgarly termed the ósystem of soothingôð that all punishments were avoided ð that even confinement ï was seldom resorted to ð that the patients, while secretly watched, were left much apparent libertyé ò (308). Based on what he ñhad heard,ò the narrator fails to perceive that the lunatics have taken over the asylum. He instead trusts in the idea of a universal benevolence communicated to him by the ñdirectorò (who is actually an inmate), unwittingly placing himself in a precarious situation made all the more threatening because he does not recognize its danger. The narrator takes the copious drunkenness and odd behavior of the masquerading inmates as a matter of course, reading ñthe bizarreò behavior against his own determined objectivity. ñI could

not help thinking that there was much of the bizarre about every thing I saw -- but then the world is made up of all kinds of persons, with all modes of thought, and all sorts of conventional customsò (311-312). Two things keep him from reading the drunken orgy for what it is: the fact that he had been told this was an ñalternativeò institution, and his determined refusal to entertain alternatives to his own pre-determined understandings. The narrator does not question the inmatesô drinking and rioting, because he believes he already has the answers, based on what he has been told and what he believes prior to his visit.

In the above story, alcohol enables madness, breeding chaos and community degeneration, even as the narratorôs misapplied, objective rationality allows the madness to continue. But Poe does not restrict drinking characters to the insane, or to the criminal. In ñThe Cask of Amontillado,ò the drinker is not the perpetrator of the crime, but a victim of his own tipsy assumptions. Fortunato is doomed by his reliance on what he thinks he knows concerning his friendship with the storyôs narrator, Montresor. For Fortunato, a common interest in wine signifies an assumption of social bonhomie. When Montresor meets Fortunato on the street, the two greet each other effusively. Fortunato ñaccosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking muchò (274). Montresorôs greeting is just as excessive, but whereas Fortunatoôs drinking intensifies his consistently expressed feelings, Montresor informs the reader, or, ñYou, who so well know the nature of my soul,ò that his equally warm greeting hides the opposite. ñIt must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.ò Fortunatoôs assumed understanding of his social connection is directly related to Fortunatoôs intoxicated assumption of friendship at which Montresor only pretends.

Montresor privately derides Fortunatoôs reputation, a reputation that has not suffered at all from the fact that he is frequently tipsy. The two men share an interest in wine connoisseurship, and Montresor tempts Fortunato with a rare cask of Amontillado, a drink normally out of season. Should Fortunato not join him in the catacombs where the wine is stored, Montresor threatens to share the rare bottle with a rival connoisseur, Luchresi. Fortunato insists, remarking that ñóLuchresi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherryôò (275). Elena Baraban points out that Fortunatoôs remark reveals his ignorance ï Amontillado *is* a sherry wine, and Fortunato himself is not able to tell the difference. His ignorance seems to hint at a reason for Montresorôs feelings, if not the latterôs solution to Fortunatoôs offense. Baraban notes that ñThe reader can actually hear the mistake, which is otherwise unheard in a dialogue - namely, that Fortunato capitalizes the word ósherryôand uses it as a proper name rather than a generic term for several varieties of wine. Fortunato's mistake conveys his ignorance and arrogance.ò[27] Baraban further points out that Montresorôs ñMotive for Murderò is that Fortunato ñis being punished for his arrogance and for insulting someone who is equal or superior to him.ò[28] Many critics note that Fortunatoôs drunkenness contributes to Montresorôs presumed superiority, as well as Montresorôs ability to capture and contain the increasingly drunken rival so easily.[29] Some critics go further, and envision Fortunatoôs growing dread as the unwritten capstone of the story: ñ..as [Fortunato] slowly dies, the thought of his rejected opportunities of escape will sting him with unbearable regret, and as he sobers with terror, the final blow will come from his realization that his craving for the wine has led him to his doom.ò[30]

The inherent danger informing this story is not Fortunatoôs drunkenness; it is Montresorôs duplicity, his ability to manipulate Fortunatoôs drunkenness to his own ends. The final exchange

between the two is controlled by Montresorôs terms, revealing a communication undermined by the very social cues that enable it:

> "He! he! he! -- he! he! he! -- yes, the Amontillado . But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo, the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."
> "Yes," I said "let us be gone."
> "FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, MONTRESOR!"
> "Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"
> But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud --
> "Fortunato!"
> No answer. I called again --
> "Fortunato!"
> No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick -- on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labour. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I reerected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them (279).

To the end, Fortunato casts about for a logical explanation, one that accords with his usual beliefs. When all his intoxicated presumptions fail, he grasps at the idea that this is an inexplicable joke. The eeriness of the final dialogic exchange rests in the echoing of language that reveals the depth of the rupture between the two men. Montresor cruelly mocks his companion for having misread their relationship, echoing back to him his very own words with an entirely different meaning: ñFor the love of God, Montresor!!/For the love of Godé Fortunato!ò Finally, the only response is the jingling of the bells as Fortunatoôs appeals fail and he is left voiceless. Montresorôs narration emphasizes that this ruptured communication is welcome; he notes that ñMy heart grew sick ï on account of the dampness of the catacombs.ò The comment is literal, and not a socially acceptable expression of regret. Rhetorically, Montresor casts aside Fortunato along with the socially acceptable meaning of the cliché, ñMy heart grew sick.ò There is no sympathy here, only the deadly, echoing catacombs.

This line should serve as warning to the reader as well, that Montresorôs purposes are determined by his will alone. Montresor addresses the reader only once, at the beginning of this supposed confession: ñYou, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose that I gave utterance to a threatò (274). Poeôs models for this story have long been speculated,[31] and the range of that speculation attests to the slipperiness of determinacy. Is the ñYouò addressed by Montresor an actual intimate, as Fortunato assumed he himself was? Montresorôs threats are not direct, as he himself warns ñyouò; the story of Fortunatoôs fate illustrates every reason to fear any seeming motivation in Montresorôs use of social forms. He concludes his ñconfessionò by stating the final Latin phrase, ñ*In pace requiescat!"* (279). As pointed out by Baraban, this translates to ñMay *he* rest in peace,ò and not the expected ñ*In pace requiescas!"* of the last rites (ñmay *you* rest in peaceò).[32] By invoking the ritualistic language between confessor and listener, Montresor at once raises the possibility of traditional social forms for communicating meaning, even as he reveals a much more sinister end game. By exchanging ñyouò for ñhim,ò the expected response/social form is negated, and the meaning of the traditional language is occupied by Montresorôs unknowable purpose. Is he confessing, or is he bragging? Or is there another, still darker motive behind this seeming confession? Any assumption on the part of the reader that he or she participates in a ritual of social affirmation revealing Montresorôs purpose in relating this story is equivalent to Fortunatoôs intoxicated bonhomie, and just as vulnerable to the narratorôs machinations. Montresor provides his narrative with his own quasi-blessing, and in effect ñmurdersò the readerôs expectations of what his ñconfessionò should convey.

In his analysis of ñThe Cask of Amontillado,ò Mikhail Bakhtin states that Montresorôs narrative is essentially ñsterileò in its deadly intent. As opposed to Rabelaisian celebrations of intoxicating life, Bakhtin notes that Poeôs narratives ñare structured on sharp and completely

static contrasts: the gay and brightly lit carnival/the gloomy catacombs; the merry clownôs costume of the rival/the terrible death awaiting himé ò[33] Poeôs story posits a tragic, gloomy meditation ñoriented toward death.ò While most critics see ñThe Cask of Amontilladoò as far superior to ñKing Pest,ò Bakhtin sees in the latter a superior redemptive quality in its representative potential for ñvictory over the plague and over the phantoms of death.ò

Bakhtinôs formal analysis focuses on the static nature of intratextual oppositions in Poeôs work to illustrate the lack of redemptive potential in these charactersô lives. But even in this analysis, intoxication functions less as a set metaphor signifying antisocial deteriorations. Instead, Bakhtin points out, Poeôs consideration of the drinking subject concerns a meditation on the nature of social relations: specifically, that perceptions concerning drinking characters establish only ambiguous motivations.

The key to Poeôs depiction of the challenging, intoxicated and irrational personal relations may be found in an engaged readership, one that questions static social assumptions. Poe saw himself as a writer and critic who could potentially raise literary standards by challenging the reader to accept less of what he or she is told to believe. The clichéôd trope of the stock drunken figure provided perfect material for Poeôs narrative provocations, as his drunkards slip in and out of socialized containment.

Poeôs short stories instead use alcoholic characters to critique social assumptions that go unquestioned. Far from celebrating the drinkers in ñKing Pest,ò Poe uses them to demonstrate how easily the upper classôs titles and the middle classôs social rituals are appropriated. And in the most directly alcoholic story of them all, ñThe Black Cat,ò Poeôs narrator distracts the reader from his actual crime by providing a story of conventional alcoholic madness. Is the murder of

the narratorôs wife attributable to the husbandôs drunkenness? Or is there a darker purpose that temperance tropes conceal?

Written at the height of what David Reynolds calls the ñdark temperance-modeò of sensationalized anti-alcoholic moral tales, ñThe Black Catò is narrated by a man who manipulates anti-alcohol tropes to assume a generative fiendishness.[34] The main character is not written to channel antisocial objectives, nor to promote temperanceôs prescribed moral objects. Instead, ñThe Black Catò uses a drunken narrator to illustrate the readerôs dependence on prefigured socialized meaning, despite the evidenceôs questionable nature and the lack of a motive. The narrator begins his story already jailed for the murder; his subsequent narrative suggests that the jargon used to contain drunken, criminal behavior does not actually explain drunkenness and crime. The story begins and ends with the narrator facing judgment, but his narrated explanation continually resists socially normative solutions with which the reader may judge him. As Jonathan Elmer questions in his examination of the competing social demands that occupy Poeôs story, it is not even clear to whom the narrator of ñThe Black Catò directs his story, nor to what purpose. ñThe reader is steadily moved into a position from which judgment would seem to be required, but the tale has made such judgment an impossible taskó To what end, and for whom?ò (126).

ñThe Black Catò was first published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1843. Both a horror and a murder story, it plays on temperance themes while never quite reaching the expected moral denouement temperance tales supply. The expectation that a reasonable morality will reveal the terms of judgment is suggested at the beginning, however. ñFOR the most wild, yet most homely narrative which I am about to pen, I neither expect nor solicit belief. Mad indeed would I be to expect it, in a case where my very senses reject their own evidenceò (223). The narrator begins

with reason and analysis on one hand, and reactive sensation on the other. The two are set up as separate entities at odds with each other, and the reader is defined against the narratorôs mad passion. The reader will deliver ñsome intellect more calm, more logical, and far less excitable than my own, which will perceive, in the circumstances I detail with awe, nothing more than an ordinary succession of very natural causes and effects.ò Madness takes a back seat to reasoning processes as the narrator ñplace[s] before the world, plainly, succinctly, and without comment, a series of mere household eventsé these events have terrified -- have tortured -- have destroyed me.ò Horror and madness on the one hand and common logic on the other, the reader is informed that these are the choices with which to configure the narratorôs tale, ñto meò on the one hand, and ñto manyò on the other. Directly addressed, the reader is drawn into communication with the narrator both in terms of representing a socially normalizing rationality by which to make sense of the story, and in terms of suspending that rationality in order to construct an intimate relationship by which the narratorôs story may be followed.

This divide in the readerôs sensibility between socially stabilizing language and a destabilizing intimacy does not seem to pose a problem at first. The narrator is a self-confessed drunk, whose use of generic temperance language suggests the obvious source of his problems. Any reader versed in the genre (and Poeôs audience of magazine readers certainly was) will quickly recognize the typical temperance address. ñé I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others. I suffered myself to use intemperate language to my wife. At length, I even offered her personal violenceé ò (224). The harmonious home life with his wife and pet cat is ruined by ñthe Fiend Intemperance.ò Typical temperance phrases are not only invoked but repeated in the mutilation of his pet during a drunken rage: ñThe fury of a demon instantly possessed meé a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every

fiber of my frameé I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.ò In the usual temperance story, such ñgin-nurturedò behavior as if ñdemons instantly possessed meò typically leads to disaster, repentance and either damnation or reincorporation into family and community. In either case, family and community control the agenda. And it would seem the narrator is deferring to the readerôs understanding of a temperance-based moral framework to both condemn him and represent his actions.

However, instead of a remorseful drunk and a moral denouement by which the narrator offers temperance-type solutions, there is only an excuse, an appeal to the reader for understanding. That understanding is based not in the socially normative moral framework temperance stories construct, but in the particular address with which the narrator appeals to the reader. The reader of this text must abandon the social logic of moralizing frameworks in order to follow the narratorôs particular story. There is now an antagonism in the readerôs sympathy between ñthe readerò constructed by the narratorôs reference to the intimate communication, and a reader defined by a moralizing critical position external to the narratorôs terms. The narrator pleads for understanding, if not forgiveness: ñWho has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should not? Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is Law, merely because we understand it to be such?ò (225). Who has not been guilty of either a ñvile or silly action,ò or an action that possibly violates the law? Not everyone can identify with a compulsive need to drink, or a desire to mutilate and murder the family pet, but one may identify with a type of impulse, acted on or not. Granted, harmless impulses are a far cry from pet mutilation, but the narratorôs generalization from specific action to type establishes a position for the addressed reader to take in relation to the events described. A potential temperance-type

objective with which the reader has approached this story is now overcome and replaced with a different generalization. The readerôs attention is shifted from a temperance objective that assumes forgiveness or judgment, to the narratorôs ñperverseò logic that assumes relatable understanding as the object of communication. This is not temperanceôs description of demonic descent and social rehabilitation that reasserts socially redemptive moral ends from the outset. Instead, the narrative evacuates socialized judgment and replaces it with the potential for intimate understanding. ñThe Black Catò essentially divides a reader between the hidden objectives potentially communicated by the narrator, and apparent social objectives presuming pre-ordained judgment.

Without a prefigured morality, however, the reader is forced to confront the unreasoning and unreasonable violence at the heart of the narratorôs drunken madness.

> One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity (224).

Stephen Rachman points out the nature of the ñpen-knifeò pun; the narrator ñpensò the cat even as he ñpensò the story, even as he himself has been penned in prison.[35] A similar figurative displacement attributes this ñatrocityò to the ñfury of a demon,ò and not to his own ñfancy,ò with which this scene begins. The narratorôs fancy becomes a demonic possession, and finally an intense, reactionary ñfiendish malevolence, gin-nurturedé ò Gin *nurtured*, not derived; the drunken fury displaces the imagining fancy that opens this passage. Rachman points out that Poe is playing here with questions of autonomy and social occupation of the self. Rachman notes that the perversity of the narratorôs actions signal an attempt ñto contain the renunciative cultural

logic of Washingtonian reform by exposing its porousness in Poeôs perverse and pervious puns."[36] The puns serve to point out the narratorôs capacity to present specific, horrific acts of violence through a process of generalization allowing the reader to relate to the narratorôs terms. Deprived of general moral assumptions by which to follow the story, the reader has only the terms the narrator supplies as a guide. A specific explanation, however, never comes: ñBut my disease grew upon me - for what disease is like Alcohol!ò Instead of following through and explaining how alcoholism leads to monstrous acts (or how it does not), he instead only explains that drunkenness allows him to avoid thinking about what his actions mean. The ñsentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guiltyò is soon forgotten as he ñdrowned in wine all memory of the deed.ò The alcoholic condition erases his memory, and consequently his direct recall of the abuse. Alcohol is not guiltôs genesis, but its erasure. The narrator is not explaining; he is distracting. He generalizes specific acts to reason them out of existence, and he invites the reader to share in this process. In this way, the narrator draws the reader into both the crimeôs experience and its socialized containment, with the narrator playing victim, not the guilty party. He has framed his monstrous act as a perversion of socialization. As the reader is drawn in by the promise of specific explanations that are continually deferred to morbid generalizations, the narratorôs activities grow more monstrous.

The crime at the center of his supposed confession does not occur until deep into the story. Even then, the wifeôs murder is related as incidental to the narratorôs catastrophic perversity and intoxicated fixation on the cat. The drama of this segment is not a matter of madness and murder; it is a matter of the readerôs perception of the narratorôs madness and murder. The tension lies not between the narrator and his wife, or even the narrator and the cat; it is between the narrator and the reader. Three-quarters of the tale is taken up before the narrator

even discusses killing his wife. The murder is then presented as a minor detail in the larger mosaic of the narratorôs horrifying descent into unreasonable, drunken madness. Even as the narrator is locked up in prison, he seeks to pose his wifeôs murder not as the cold-blooded crime for which he has been condemned to death, but as a mere instance in a bigger battle, collateral damage in his compulsive war with the cats. Far from a rationale to explain how and why his wife was killed, his drunkenness becomes a piece of evidence supporting the irrational basis of the narratorôs ratiocination. This contradiction is never resolved, but simply left to point out the inadequacy of simplistic moral assumptions, such as temperanceôs alcoholic demons, to explain actions that fall outside the social purview.

Critics have long explained ñThe Black Catò as an examination of containment processes. The reason for the narratorôs containment is under debate, but so is the question of what exactly is contained here. Is the narrator insane, is he dissimulating, or is he suffering acute alcoholism? Most interpretations suggest the story represents an aberrant resistance to socially acceptable morality, ending in a guilty judgment. Rachman, for instance, states that Poeôs narrator envisions the demonic black cat as alcoholismôs materialized sign: ñóThe Black Catôverges upon a material representation of the symptoms of delirium tremens.ò[37] Other critics barely mention the narratorôs drinking issues, and instead focus on his criminal insanity. Margaret Alterton, for instance, points out that accounts from actual medical case records were represented in Poeôs stories.[38] In ñIrresistible Impulses: Edgar Allan Poe and the Insanity Defense,ò John Cleman states that a number of Poeôs stories, including ñThe Black Cat,ò ñinvite a reading in the context of the insanity-defense controversy because each of the three tales includes a self-defensive, insane murderer whose story is told within the processes of legal justiceé Poe's narrowed focus on the aberrant psychology of the accused criminal, for whatever it owes to his aesthetic theory,

general ótherworldliness,ô and private demons, also has a locus in specific jurisprudential issues of his dayò (625). While Cleman allows that the story is not confined to intertextual sources, he does state that the narratorôs rationalizations demonstrate not so much logic as an ñappearance of rationalityò that defines the narratorôs actual insanity. The choice for Brett Zimmermanôs reading is whether one should believe the cat is a supernatural doubling of the first, infused with a knowledgeable revenge, or if the narrator is unbalanced and having alcoholic delusions, projecting social justice into feline bodies. Zimmerman refers to the narratorôs rhetoric as repeatedly implying a supernatural interpretation that the narrator himself attempts to explain away with the help of the reader; ñhis explanation of perversity is merely a rationalization or an outright lie.ò[39] Zimmerman argues that ñthe narrator in ótThe Black Catô seems unable ï in spite of his best rhetorical efforts ï to convince himself of the validity of rational explanations.ò[40] He points out that this storyôs narrative is torn between containmentôs rational processes, and irrational excesses identified with the supernatural, what the narrator specifically defines as ñPERVERSENESS.ò Nicholas Warner suggests that this quality may precede and define the narratorôs lack of reason. Unlike alcoholism, perverseness may be tied to human nature; it is not simply disease-based (as the narrator suggests) or a social defect. ñThe narrator of ótThe Black Cat,ô after expounding on his ógin-nurturedô vices, describes óperversenessô as fundamental to human nature.ò[41]

These various analyses all point to a fundamental confrontation in this story between socially accepted explanations and what may be best described as a desiring impulsiveness that exceeds rationality or rationalization. Intoxication functions in ñThe Black Catò not as a problem in need of solution, but instead as a sign of a fundamental human desire that overruns the socially accepted formalities the narrator suggests in the first paragraph. The rationality he then offers to

solve the mystery of how and why he ended up in prison, actually undermines the capacity of the reader to understand what lies beneath the described desire to drink. The narration continually slips the socially acceptable containment it brings to bear.

The narrator evades the readerôs desire to understand in part because his storyôs specifics resist socially negotiated frames of meaning. From the beginning, the narrator implies a separation between social harmony and his own need to explain. He initially refers to his tale as a ñwild, yet most homely narrativeé ò In addition to the storyôs domestic setting, ñhomelyò suggest Poeôs remarks in ñThe Philosophy of Composition,ò defining ñhomelinessò as the heartôs realm. ñTruth, in fact, demands a precision, and Passion, a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me) which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul.ò Both Truth ï ñthe satisfaction of the intellectò and Passion ï the excitement of the heartò ï are the objects of prose worksô explorations of human nature. In particular, ñThe Black Catò points out the failure in communicable meaning when a competing interplay of intellect and passion resist socially rationalized assumptions. Poe further underscores the problem in ñThe Poetic Principle,ò where he divides the ñworld of the mindò into three parts: ñPure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Senseò (76). In ñThe Black Cat,ò separation between the narratorôs intellect (concerned with Truth) and a Moral Sense (ñregardful of Dutyò) is taken to its extreme limit. In the terms of ñThe Poetic Principle,ò the narrator of ñThe Black Catò lacks compunction regarding Duty. He fails in his social responsibilities towards the reader as well as his wife.

He cannot even communicate a clear picture of the cats, and the cats assume a range of potential representations as the narrator offers several theories without settling on any one. His language in representing the cats further illustrates his capacity to dissemble and distract. The

title of the story, ñThe Black Cat,ò implies that there is just one animal. There is one *type* of cat; there are two actual animals. The narrator has been inspired by a drunken perverseness to hang the first cat and hide his crime with a fire that literally burns onto the wall a ghostly apparition of the catôs shadow. The mystery of this shadowôs meaning haunts the narratorôs thoughts. He provides a pseudo-scientific explanation for the ghostly mark, and at the same time he describes a sense of a mystery that left a ñdeep impression upon my fancy. For months I could not rid myself of the phantasm of the cat; and, during this period, there came back into my spirit a half-sentiment that seemed, but was not, remorse. I went so far as to regret the loss of the animalé ò (226). Beginning with a scientific explanation, he then considers a supernatural ñphantasm,ò and finally admits to a complete failure of empathy as he attempts a socially appropriate feeling, but can only approximate one. Caught up in ñfancy,ò he decides his confusion signals ñsentiment,ò and ñseemed, but was not, remorse.ò He understands such feelings only for what they ñseemedò to be, not for what they are. He is haunted both by the catôs shadow and the unformed realization that he is missing a connection he can neither fully understand nor articulate. He fails to come up with answers, and ñdrowns in wineò his quasi-remorse. Intoxication ironically serves not to confuse the problem. Instead, a drunken vision seems to suggest a solution. As he sits in a tavern drinking, ñhalf stupified, in a den of more than infamy, my attention was suddenly drawn to some black object, reposing upon the head of one of the immense hogsheads of Gin, or of Rumé ò The ñblack objectò the narrator has been staring at in the shadows of a tavern shapes itself into another catôs form. This cat is distinguished from the first only by an ñindefinite splotch of white.ò Is this a ghost? Is it a second, random cat? Has the first cat literally been re-membered, or is this merely a projection of the narratorôs alcohol-fueled passion? These questions are left to the reader decide, but never settled in the text.

The second cat follows the narrator home and ñdomesticated itself at once.ò Now part of the storyôs homely setting, the cat assumes the place of the first, and the narrator hopes it will heal the loss engendered by his abuse of the first animal. But again, the narratorôs expectations are undermined, and his reaction to this second animal becomes ñjust the reverse of what I had anticipated.ò Only now, deep in alcoholôs grip, the narrator states the significance of the second catôs relation to the first. Instead of replacing the figure of the first, murdered animal, the re-membered animal signals the coming consequence of his past failures. ñThe reader will remember that this mark, although large, had been originally very indefinite; but, by slow degrees ï degrees nearly imperceptible, and which for a long time my reason struggled to reject as fanciful ï it had, at length, assumed a rigorous distinctness of outline. It was now the representation of an object that I shudder to name ï and for this, above all, I loathed, and dreaded, and would have rid myself of the monster *had I dared* – it was now, I say, the image of a hideous ï of a ghastly thing ï of the GALLOWS!ò (227) If the narratorôs drinking has enabled the body of the second cat to emerge as the sign of consequence for the narratorôs offenses, it should be remembered that the narrator has not committed a death-penalty offense at this point in the story. The narrator assumes a gallows conclusion at a point in the story prior to committing the murder. If the reader accepts the gallows vision as explaining or even foreshadowing the storyôs ultimate meaning (of why and how the narrator has been condemned to die), the conclusion of consequence in the chronology of events precedes the event which supposedly precipitates that consequence. The need for a socially acceptable explanation precedes the relation of events the reader is considering as evidence. Again, the narrator has undermined the very processes of logic the reader is asked to put into place in order to understand the storyôs meaning.

Rationalizing logic has been turned on its head. The actual murder becomes nothing more than an aside in the narratorôs battle with ñan incarnate nightmare.ò In contrast to the passionate horror of his battle with the cat, the cool tone with which the narrator describes murdering his wife masks the murderôs significance. ñGoaded, by the interference, into a rage more than demoniacal, I withdrew my arm from her grasp and buried the axe in her brainé This hideous murder accomplished, I set myself forthwith, and with entire deliberation, to the task of concealing the bodyò (228). The narratorôs logical response is to bury the corpse, to cover over his responsibility and escape detection. Instead of dilating on the consequence of this murder and asking the reader to understand *this* event, the narrator merely recounts the ñmeansò and the ñstepsò with which the cover-up is effected. He then goes back to fixating on the now-missing cat, describing its ñwretchedness,ò and his own ñblissful sense of reliefò (229) at its disappearance.

The denouement comes when in a ñfrenzy of bravado,ò (230) the narrator seeks to prove his deceptive storyôs soundness to the detectives investigating his wifeôs disappearance. The second cat, having been walled up with the wife, has survived the entombment. It screams when the narrator raps on the wall, as if one ñof the demons that exult in the damnation.ò Even when his wifeôs corpse is revealed, the narrator instead fixates on the catôs screams, describing them as the work of the ñArch-fiendò and ñdemons.ò Temperance imagery and madness is communicated in his irrational fixation on the black cat to the end, even as the detectives tear away the wall to reveal the wifeôs corpse. Between the dispassionate tone of the murder itself and the temperance terminology offerings, the narrator performs a rhetoric of public relations. He has been discovered and sentenced to death, but he would rehabilitate his reputation in terms the public

would expect, in part by downplaying the horror of his criminal act, and stridently emphasizing a rational frame through which the public will accept his having committed this horror.[42]

According to Jonathan Elmer in *Reading at the Social Limit: Affect, Mass Culture, and Edgar Allan Poe,* the real problem at this storyôs center is not the murder; it is the readerôs willingness to ignore the irrational elements and instead defer to reasonable explanations that contain the narratorôs irrational presence. Elmerôs interpretation finds the taleôs horrifying effect in the readerôs rational response to it. The story projects the crime from the narratorôs past into the readerôs present, and via the reader to ongoing social institutions. The crime is derived from the narratorôs ñperversenessò and shared with the reader not as a specific act, but as a *type* of action. As a type, perverse activity is endlessly reproducible. Any attempt to impose a ñmetanarrational frameò to explain the originating event will fail, as the crimeôs narrative automatically invokes not the narratorôs specific experience, but a theory relating the crime to events the reader supplies and then erases as a touchstone, substituting a generalized relation for a specific, irrational act. Via the narrator-reader relation, the crime itself escapes its point of origin as it becomes an example of a pattern that survives by retelling. According to Elmer, the reader is the more deeply implicated participant in the tale, because her agenda ensures this process of culturally meaningful reproduction in both reproducing the moment of violence and simultaneously containing it.

The power of this complicity between narrator and reader lies in its invisibility. By the end of the story, the narrator no longer directly addresses the reader, even as the readerôs participation remains implicit. The narrator began ñin a case where my very senses reject their own evidence,ò and ends in a case of the reader rejecting the evidence for a more palatable social theory. The readerôs assumption of the narratorôs unsupported but socially acceptable

explanations is emphasized by the distance the narrator takes from the reader just after the sign of the gallows emerges on the second catôs fur. ñThe reader will rememberò the mark, the narrator implores, ñwhich for a long time my Reason struggled to reject as fanciful.ò After making this statement, the narrator then ignores the reader altogether, as intemperanceôs effects have been established. In the end, there is a socially acceptable explanation, but given the evidence it does not exculpate the narratorôs guilt.[43]

The readerôs willingness to accept the narratorôs excuses informs the debate behind this story. At the time ñThe Black Catò was written, the guilt of criminal drunks was intensely argued, both for and against. Jeremy Taylor, nineteenth-century clergyman and moral philosopher, believed that a ñdrunken or stupid personò may be condemned, but he is subsequently excused for ñcircumstances of great horrorò which result from the originating sin. Taylor writes, ñThe vilenesses which are done by drunken or stupid persons unwittingly, are not of the same kind, of which naturally they are and would be, if the actors were sober. They are not the crimes of murder or lust or incest respectively, but circumstances of great horror aggravating the drunkenness, and deeply condemning the mané ò[44] Ignorant, even criminally ignorant acts derived from intoxicationôs ñstupidity and ignoranceò can only be blamed on the originating drunkenness, so a criminal drunk is primarily guilty of intoxication. Crimes done unwittingly in a drunken stupor are not of a ñnaturallyò damnable character as they would be in a reasonably sober mind. Drunken crimes are instead due to ñcircumstances of great horror.ò

Can even antisocial, violent actions be exculpated through social perception of an individualôs motivation? I believe that ñThe Black Catò is designed to suggest that the perception of seemingly unacceptable drunken behavior can be abrogated by good public relations. Poeôs

story plays with the gullibility of the reader to excuse even the most monstrous acts through socially appealing excuses.

Many critics argue that ñThe Black Catò is Poeôs hoax on the reader. For instance, John Harmon McElroy writes, ñóThe Black Catôis designed, and can only be read because it is so designed, as a hoax or diddle on sentimental readers who too readily pity criminals proclaiming their innocence of malicious intent.ò[45] But Poeôs contemporaries seemed less willing to exonerate the criminal acts, and were more likely to accept the story at face value. They assumed Poeôs story exposed condemnable behavior, with the murdererôs deviousness taken for granted. Reviews of Poeôs *Tales* from 1845 focus more on this storyôs horrifying descriptions of a guilty murdererôs thoughts,[46] or its gruesome inappropriateness.[47]

Poeôs point was broader than the condemnation or exculpation of criminal drunks. By challenging the addressed reader to pick and choose selective evidence in deciding on a system of supernaturally posited logic, his story points out the fairly selective nature of socially constructed assumptions concerning the guilt or innocence of individual violations. Poe invokes alcoholic consumption in his fiction to probe at the nature of judgment concerning the perception of socially unacceptable behavior. Narratives such as ñThe Black Catò and ñThe Cask of Amontilladoò explore presumptions concerning alcohol and drinking on social relations, inclusions, exclusions, and questions of status. More than simply representing antisocial figures, Poeôs narratives comment upon the nature of social assumptions in configuring social relations, between characters as well as between narrators and readers, that are not always what they appear.

In May of 1846, *Godey's Lady's Book* published Poeôs ñThe Literati of New York City: Some Honest Opinions at Random Respecting Their Autorial Merits, with Occasional Words of Personality.ò Poeôs war with the literary establishment was fully engaged. He characterizes ñthe most ópopularôò writers and their enabling editors as ñbusy-bodies, toadies, quacks.ò Certainly, this got the negative attention of the ñquacksò Poe then proceeded to sketch in *Godey's.* It also got the attention of the reading public. Poe was interested in a reader he carefully distinguished from ñpopular opinion.ò Popular opinion ñcan be called ópinionô only by courtesy. It is the publicôs own, just as we consider a book our own when we have bought it.ò[48] But popular opinion is merely that promoted by editorial ñfluffingò of an authorôs own expressed remarks ï all of which Poe states is directed toward ñputting money into the purse of the quack and the quackôs publisher.ò Poe explains that his sketches will instead reveal literatureôs merits as agreed upon outside of the contrived market of ñpopular opinion.ò He states, ñI shall differ from the voice, that is to say, from what appears to be the voice of the publicé ò The reader is called upon to join Poe in throwing off the contrived popular opinion quacked out in modern magazines, and consider instead Poeôs presentation of literary excellence.

That idea of excellence is closely tied to questioning the nature of social presumptions in prefiguring judgment prior to full examination of the evidence. Poe described alcoholic intoxication in his tales not as a definitive representation of antisocial madness, but as a means of provoking questions regarding socialized containment and the seductive power of popularly opinionated assumptions. The power of Poeôs work lies in its ability to recreate between narrator and reader that seductive reliance, even as his stories make room for the reader to discover his or her own passage through. As stated by one of Poeôs contemporaries shortly after his death, ñWhen, therefore, the reviewer complains that Poeôs characters are destitute of óa manifestation

of conscience,ôthe answer is, because *that* was not his object. What is called conscience is an excellent theme for a psalm, or a sermon, and would be an invaluable possession to a biographer if he would but keep it; but it is a poor material to use in the accomplishment of the startling highest effects of tragic *art.'*'[49]

Endnotes

[1] Lowellôs comments were published in 1845 in *Graham's Magazine.*

[2] Modernists in particular assessed Poeôs work as crude in taste and expression. In 1937, Yvor Wintersôs assessment of Poe, ññEdgar Allan Poe: A Crisis in the History of American Obscurantism,ò charges Poe with a ñvulgar sentimentalismò in keeping with the romantic notions of the period. Winters defines Poeôs ñobscurantismò as resulting from ña willful dislocation of feeling from understandingé growing out of the uncertainty regarding the nature of moral truth in generalé ò (389). T.S. Eliot, in his lecture ñFrom Poe to Valéryò (November 1948), states that Poeôs genius is akin to ñthe intellect of a highly gifted young person before pubertyò; Poe lacks the ñdignityò and ñconsistencyò that comes with age.

[3] Officially, Griswold was given power of attorney ñfor the publication of Poeôs worksò shortly after Poeôs death. It is not certain whether or not Poe endorsed this; in *Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography,* Arthur Hobson Quinn recounts a letter from Mrs. Weiss related in Scribnerôs Magazine (in March 1878) stating that Poe showed her letters in which Griswold accepted Poeôs proposals concerning this matter, but the account further states that ñthis incident is a contradiction of [Griswoldôs] statement that previous to Poeôs death he had had no intimation of the latterôs intention of appoint him his literary executor (635-636). In addition, Quinn points out the ambiguous nature of the ñPower of Attorney from Mrs. Clemm for the Publication of Poeôs Works,ò a contract dated October 20, 1849 between Griswold and Poeôs mother-in-law, a contract unsigned by witnesses (754). Mrs. Clemm later protested Poeôs papers being sent to Griswold, and not to herself.

[4] The Ludwig article was originally published in the *New York Tribune* on October 9, 1849.

[5] Griswoldôs ñMemoir of the Authorò introducing *The Works of the Late Edgar Allan Poe, Volume I,* contains any number of misrepresentations if not outright lies attributed to Poeôs own words, as presented in Quinnôs biography on pages 444-450.

[6] From Robert Louis Stevensonôs review of *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, *Academy* (London), vol. VII, no. 1, January 2, 1875, pp. 1-2.

[7] Mabbottôs introduction to ñKing Pestò is found on page 238 in Poeôs *Tales and Sketches, Vol. I: 1831-1842*, published in 1978. In his introduction, Mabbottôs chief interest is in news sources for the taleôs sensational themes. ñKing Pest,ò one of Poeôs earlier works (1835), is believed to be intended for Poeôs abandoned Folio Club story collection (unlike other tales in this collection, however, ñKing Pestò ñhad no appropriate narratorò identified among the Folioôs Clubôs buffoons). Mabbott proposes ñKing Pestò as a predecessor of the gruesome ñMasque of the Red Death,ò although he does not make clear the precedence for ñKing Pestòôs ñscatologicalò humor, stating only that both stories take place in a plague period.

[8] Story quotes in this chapter are taken from *Tales and Sketches, Vol. I: 1831-1842* (1978), and will be indicated by page number appropriately.

[9] Letter to Daniel Bryan, July 6, 1842.

[10] In a letter to Sarah Helen Whitman on October 18, 1848, Poe explicitly named his ñenemiesò in the literary press as ñthe Channings ï the Emerson and Hudson coterie ï the Longfellow clique, one and all ï the cabal of the ónN. American Reviewõé ò

[11] ñLaughton Osborne,ò published in *Godey's Lady's Book*, June, 1846, from *The Literati of New York City* series.

[12] In current terms, this perfect character is known as a ñMary Sue,ò and is often merely a projection of the authorôs ego.

[13] ñThomas Dunn English,ò published in *Godey's Lady's Book*, July 1846, 33:13-19.

[14] Englishôs novel *1844,* published in 1846, contained the character ñMarmaduke Hammerhead,ò author of ñThe Black Crowò who is an abusive, drunken fraud, and Englishôs fictionalized depiction of Poe. Nigel Barnes points out that ñeven after Poeôs suit had come to court, [English] constantly abused Poe in print until eventually he was threatened with so many libel suits from others that he ceased publicationò (209). Englishôs attacks started possibly in 1843, with ñDoom of the Drinker,ò a temperance story published in *Cold Water Magazine* in October 1843 (101-132). This story includes a character known as ñthe critic,ò who surrounds himself with mental inferiors, and was ñthe very incarnation of treachery and falsehoodò (118).

[15] From ñPoe,ò *The Literary World* 10 (1879), 89.

[16] From *Specimen Days*, 150.

[17] In ñCharles Baudelaire,ò 280. In this piece, Henry James famously remarked that ñAn enthusiasm for Poe is the mark of a decidedly primitive stage of reflection,ò a remark echoed by T.S. Eliot who wrote in 1949, ñThat Poe had a powerful intellect is undeniable; but it seems to me the intellect of a highly gifted young person before puberty.ò

[18] The association of Poeôs literary reputation with drunken perfidy continued to be held well into the twentieth-century. In 1963, "The Question of Poeôs Narrators,ò page 177, James Gargano signals a sea change: ñé the contention that [Poe] is fundamentally bad or tawdry stylist appears to me to be... based ultimately, on the untenable and often unanalyzed assumption that Poe and his narrators are identical literary twins and that he must be held responsible for all their wild or perfervid utterancesé ò Poe had his defenders. William Dean Howells, for instance, implied that Poe was a true American original, and presciently questioned, ñis it perversely possible that his name will lead all the rest when our immortals are duly marshaled for the long descent of time?ò (From ñA Hundred Years of American Verse,ò page 153).

[19] The incident is described in ñChiversô Life of Poe,ò in 1952 on pages 57-61. Originally published in *Century* magazine as ñThe Poe-Chivers Papers,ò the incidents described are based

primarily on Chiversô correspondence with Poe, and material that was later reported as an unpublished manuscript that Chivers, a physician/poet from Georgia, attempted to have published in 1852. The details of this particular encounter, therefore, are somewhat suspect, but given the cross-references to the incident by the participants involved, it is apparent that there was some sort of encounter and that the publicized details were not to Poeôs credit. Chivers was a temperance man, and his correspondence with Poe at times alludes to the dangers of Poeôs drinking.

[20] In his introduction to ñThe Literary Life of Thingum Bob, Esq.ò in *The Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe – Vol. III: Tales and Sketches* (1124-1149), Mabbott cites potential targets of this piece as contemporary editors Clark and Graham, as well as the writer Samuel Samson. See also Footnote 14 of Genevieve Amaralôs ñEdgar Allan Poe's Fear of Texts: The Man of the Crowd as Literary Monster, which states that ñóThe Literary Life of Thingum Bob, Esq.ôis also a clear parody of the *Biographia Literaria*, with a backwoods bumpkin standing in for Coleridge.ò Amaralôs piece, however, makes clear the general nature of Poeôs attack on a fairly arbitrary system of criticism predominant in the culture.

[21] The ñFolio Clubò collection was never published. Poe originally intended to title the series ñEleven Tales of the Arabesque.ò These included ñMS found in a Bottle,ò ñDuc De LôOmelette,ò and ñKing Pest.ò Poe made the original proposal to E. and J.T. Buckingham in a letter of May 4, 1833, but while individual stories were published separately, the collection as a whole was never produced.

[22] Letter to Thomas W. White, April 30, 1835.

[23] In her examination of *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, Ki-Yoon Jang argues that Poe paid close attention to the public taste; his fictional tales, Jang points out, are predicated on reader-centric determinations, so that his focus was necessarily that of attracting a readership whose attention he could then hold. ñPoe, aware of the impossibility of authorsô absolute regulation of texts and readers from the onset of his writing career, searched for a different kind of author-figure and of author-reader relationshipé the author is none other than a fictive character which is only made an author by means of readersô belief in its existence and rights as an author. In this respect, it will become clear, Poeôs author-figure resembles a ghost, a presence that is not self-determined and self-evident but determined and evidenced by the interpretive responses of its witnessesò (356-357).

[24] Poe elsewhere attributes his drinking to pressure to fit in socially. Shortly after leaving his position as editor of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine,* he learned that William Evans Burton was accusing him of being a drunk. While contemplating a lawsuit, he replied to Joseph Evans Snodgrass, who had first alerted him to the rumors, that his drinking occurred in the South where such social communion was expected. ñé I certainly did give way, at long intervals, to the temptation held out on all sides by the spirit of Southern conviviality. My sensitive temperament could not stand an excitement which was an everyday matter to my companions.ò In a letter to Joseph Evans Snodgrass on April 1, 1841, Poe blamed his wife Virginiaôs death for inciting a madness which made him drink; as he was to state on numerous occasions, his drinking was now behind him.

[25] One of the less analytic explorations of Poeôs drinking problem is Marion Montgomeryôs *Why Poe Drank Liquor,* written in 1983. Essentially, the study posits Poe as an ñanemic, lost being that the new world dreamed into being (13), and more or less agrees with Baudelaireôs assessment of Poe driven to drunkenness by social alienation. Letters and commentary on Poeôs drinking seem to imply a fairly compulsive use, and what seems to be a last-ditch attempt to quit with the help of a temperance society. The Edgar Allan Poe Society on-line has an excellent overview, entitled ñEdgar Allan Poe, Drugs and Alcohol,ò which can be found here: http://www.eapoe.org/geninfo/poealchl.htm.

[26] From Poeôs review of Dickensôs *Barnaby Rudge,* in *Graham's Magazine*, February 1842; the quote is found on page 239 in *Poe: Essays and Reviews.*

[27] In ñThe Motive for Murder in ôThe Cask of Amontilladoô by Edgar Allan Poe,ò page 53.

[28] ibid., page 56.

[29] In *Edgar Allan Poe,* Kenneth Silverman points out at that the story appeared in the midst of Poeôs literary battle with Thomas Dunn English, ñand the tale of course brings to mind English, Fuller, Briggs, Clark, and the host of other enemies he has attractedò (316). Silverman implies that Poeôs critics form a composite in Montresor, who murders Fortunato for presuming an equal, and even greater, status.

[30] Arthur Hobson Quinn, *Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography*, page 500.

[31] Richard Rust proposes Thomas Dunn English as the model for Montresor. ñThe Cask of Amontilladoò was published shortly after the infamously hostile public exchange between Poe and English. For details, see "Punish with Impunity: Poe, Thomas Dunn English and ôThe Cask of Amontilladoô." For an overview of the possible meaning of the ñyouò indicated in this story, see Jeffrey Charis-Carlsonôs ñôYou, who so well know the nature of my soul": Poe and the Question of Literary Audience.ò After noting the various historical, biographical, psychological and formal readings that have been brought to bear on the text, Charis-Carlson explores the potential audience as the ñlargely female readership of Godey's Lady's Book,ò in which the story was originally published.

[32] Baraban, 56-57.

[33] In, ñForms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel,ò 199-200.

[34] Reynolds blames alcohol for allowing the murder to happen in the first place. ñé all aspects of this crime ï the motive, the criminal and his victim, the foil, the instigation ï have been closely tied to alcohol obsession and alcohol expertise. The horrid shrieks of both the victim and the murderer as the deadly masonwork is completed suggest the hellish end to which this misled expertise has led.ò Reynolds concludes his analysis of Poeôs work by stating that Poe ñavoid[s] didactic statementsò (34-35).

[35] Rachman, ñPoeôs Drinking, Poeôs Delirium: The Privacy of Imps,ò page 27.

[36] Rachman, page 31. Rachman further states ñthat Poeôs tale be understood as a *perverse* Washingtonian temperance narrative, one that calls into question the possibility of reform, exploiting the new form of mass cultural discourse in order to display its contradictions. In effect, the story performs the cultural pathology of temperanceò (26).

[37:] ibid, page 31.

[38] In *Origins of Poe's Critical Theory*, Alterton draws particular attention to case studies in the *Medico-Chirugical Review* of 1838. See pages 17-18.

[39] In *Edgar Allan Poe: Rhetoric and Style*, page 49.

[40] ibid., page 43. While Zimmerman sees the contradictions as proving the narratorôs insanity, Dan Shen sees the narrator ñgloating over his own dissemblance.ò In ñEdgar Allan Poe's Aesthetic Theory, the Insanity Debate, and the Ethically Oriented Dynamics of ôThe Tell-Tale Heart,ôò Shen argues that Poeôs narrative representation of an insane irrationality serves his narratorsô fairly rational ends. ñé when critics find the narration problematic or unreliable, they only take it as an indication of the narrator's madnessò (338). Poeôs confession stories, according to Shen, may be understood as rational expressions of the insanity defense. The ñunreliableò aspects are both intentionally problematic and unified with the textôs overall agenda. Shen positions the text as an enactment of the social conditions outside of the text, and his reading of ñThe Black Catò as a story dealing with madness in a fairly rational way.

[41] In *Spirits of America: Intoxication in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, page 82.

[42] See T.J. Mathesonôs ñPoeôs ôThe Black Catô as a Critique of Temperance Literatureò for Poeôs repudiation of temperance movementôs assumptions in this story.

[43] The traditional reading of this story is that the narratorôs deception must be exposed and punished, as in James Garganoôs argument from 1960. He states that missing the moral of the story is missing the point: ñé To accept [the narratorôs] specious intellectual dodges as the point of ôThe Black Cat,ô as so many critics do, is to exalt the very thing Poe is deriding in the narrator. If any perverseness exists in the story, it is the protagonist's perverseness in being able to dismiss a transparently moral adventure as a mere sequence of inexplicable eventsò (178). John Bryant derides the attempts of the narrator to mislead: ñé the narrator continues to enjoy the delusions we have outgrown,ò and is ñfinally a foolò (38).

[44] In *The Whole Works of the Right Reverend Jeremy Taylor, D.D.,* page 669. Poe makes reference to Taylorôs writing in ñMarginaliaò in *Democratic Review,* November 1844. In addition, a letter from Phillip Cooke dated December 19, 1839 to Poe makes passing reference to Jeremy Taylorôs rhetorical style. While there is no evidence that Poe read this specific passage, it is clear that Poe was familiar with Taylorôs writing, and he surely was aware of the death penalty debates; Taylorôs position expressed that of the anti-death penalty political movement pushing for legislation. In *Executing Democracy: Vol. Two: Capital Punishment and the Making of*

America, 1835-1843, Stephen John Hartnett points out that publisher/editor John OôSullivan, a chief organizer of anti-death penalty political lobbying, believed ñthat violent crimes are almost always senseless acts of drunken stupidity, vengeful explosions of lousy husbands, inarticulate eruptions of anger and fear and jealousy,ò and ñLess romantic than patheticò (79). Death penalty supporter George B. Cheever was Hartnettôs implacable nemesis, as described in Hartnettôs study.

[45] In ñThe Kindred Artist, or, the Case of the Black Cat,ò pages 104-105.

[46] Evert Duyckinck wrote that the story ñis doubtless a fair exhibition of the inward life of the criminal whose motives and actions are narrated,ò and the London *Critic* stated ñThe Black Cat is a figurative personification of the dark-brooding thoughts of a murdereré ò

[47] In the London *Literary Gazette* (January 1846), Martin Farquhar Tupper cautioned that the story ñis impossible and revolting.ò

[48] From Poeôs introductory remarks, ñThe Literati of New York City,ò in *Poe: Essays and Reviews*, page 1118.

[49] C. Chauncey Burr, ñCharacter of Edgar A. Poe.ò

Chapter III: Narrative Guidance Through Corrupt Environments:
The Novels of Stephen Crane and Walt Whitman

Whitmanôs *Franklin Evans* and Craneôs *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* and *George's Mother* depict New York Cityôs socio-economic challenges at street level. Stories are set in treacherous environments which characters negotiate at extreme risk. Alcohol saturates these worlds and adds to the risk characters experience. Whitmanôs temperance novel and Craneôs urban stories are not often compared, as their narrative styles and stances differ markedly. ñ*George's Mother* is, implicitly, a temperance novel, like *Franklin Evans;* to say that it is greatly superior is merely to recall that Crane's primary medium was prose fiction, whereas Whitman never matured as a story-teller.ò[1] While *George's Mother* and *Franklin Evans* share the dubious distinction of ñtemperanceò story-telling, Craneôs narrative skill enables ñbiting ironies,ò while Whitmanôs narrative ñaccepts [temperance] values whole-heartedly.ò

Like Sholom Kahn, whom I quote above, I do not believe that *Maggie*ôs roots are found in Whitmanôs only full-length prose work.[2] There is no proof that Crane ever read *Franklin Evans,* and if he had, he may very well have dismissed it as drivel due to its reliance on a didactic sensibility that ignores literary nuance.[3] Whitmanôs novel and Craneôs urban stories, however, do share fundamental thematic similarities. Both use New Yorkôs urban environment as a source of dissolute temptations held out to the protagonists. Depictions of alcohol permeate these stories. Whitmanôs *Franklin Evans* and Craneôs urban novels involve protagonists

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Endnotes may be found on pages 175-180

struggling to survive in tiny apartments and boarding houses, working in sweatshops, hanging out on the streets and visiting playhouses rife with temptations of flesh and fantasy, sex and intoxication. Both authors deal with the problem of alcoholôs rife use in both private situations and public settings, but any prefigured solution ultimately fails to adequately address the scene of dissipation.

While Whitmanôs novel offers a preformed temperance-based solution dictated by an Author who instructs an acquiescent Reader defined within the text, Craneôs narrator does not address the reader at all. Instead, Craneôs narration directs the readerôs attention by describing character perspective ï in formal terms, through character focalization ï and by using descriptions of a social environment steeped in drunken, impoverished misery. Both Crane and Whitman approach the problem of urban impoverishment and drunkenness as the issue at hand. Craneôs narrative technique of figurative description draws the readerôs attention to the failures of socialized judgments, while Whitmanôs narrator dictates a temperance ideology that falls short of addressing Franklinôs drunken behaviors.

This chapter will study the divergent narrative approaches these authors take to the similarly defined problem of drunkenness and poverty. I will argue that ultimately, despite widely disparate styles, all of these stories fail to deliver to the reader a satisfactory response to the drinking problems outlined therein, because the real problem these characters struggle with is not alcohol per se, but an inability to articulate any position outside of the social values brought to bear within the text. Whitmanôs story with its narrated directives and prefigured conclusion cannot wholly frame its main characterôs chronic drunken desires as a lesson for the reader; the edited edition solves this problem by eliminating the temperance theme altogether and unifying the narrative. By contrast, Craneôs technique of focalizing character experience for the readerôs

consideration allows for a more nuanced perspective concerning character behavior, but stymies any reader looking for a socially applicable answer to the issue of alcoholic environments. Craneôs work is designed to deny the reader a framework of pre-established moral expectations such as those demonstrated by Whitmanôs narrator(s). Craneôs lack of narrative direction both frees and frustrates the readerôs capacity to judge described events, while the explicitly narrated instructions in *Franklin Evans* frustrate any ability to fully understand Franklinôs propensity for destruction and an inability to deny himself intoxicating pleasures. Ultimately, Craneôs work is far more successful in the terms it brings to bear, while Whitmanôs narration undermines the storyôs overtly stated intentions.

Whitmanôs *Franklin Evans* is narrated to emphasize the eponymous protagonistôs drunken failures. Franklin serves as an anonymous Authorôs negative example. His alcoholic indulgence illustrates socially ruinous behavior for which temperance ideology has the solution, a solution Franklin cannot or will not exercise himself. As the voice of drunken ruin, Franklinôs first-person narrator declares a lesson that his actions do not embody.

To contain this problem, ñIntroductoryò and ñConclusionò chapters narrated by an anonymous ñAuthorò bracket Franklinôs first-person account, and literally enclose his story between them. The unnamed ñAuthorò directly addresses a ñReaderò to consider Franklinôs story a lesson in the importance of ña prudent, sober, and temperate course of life [which] cannot be too strongly taughtò (4). The Author urges his ñReaderò to understand Franklinôs story as a negative model illustrating lessons ñfavorable to the Temperance Reforms.ò This is ñthe account of a young man, thrown by circumstances amid the vortex of dissipationé ò (3) After Franklinôs story has been told, the Author repeats in the Conclusion chapter that temperance ideology is to

serve as the storyôs ñvehicle of morality,ò warning the reader of the ñruins and curses which follow the habitual use of strong drinkò (111). Without mentioning Franklinôs experience specifically, the Authorôs concluding comments turn Franklinôs experience from a personal account into a typical one. Franklinôs tale serves only as an example, a ñsort of messenger of the cause of Temperance.ò His experience as negative model primarily serves the Authorôs temperance message to the addressed Reader.

In contrast to the direction of the Authorôs ideological voice, Franklinôs story caroms between his ongoing failure to maintain sobriety, and his feverish insistence upon correct, sober behavior. Franklin first appears immediately following the Authorôs ñIntroductionò as a character observed approaching the narrated scene. The narration of Chapter I describes a scene of travel from a local ñvillage inn,ò where a stage-coach driver is taking his brandy at the bar-room. Franklin is described in the narration from a third person perspective: ñAs the landlord, a sickly-looking, red-nosed man, was just counting out the change for the one dollar bill out of which the price of the brandy was to be taken, a stranger entered upon the scene. He was a robust youth, of about twenty yearsé ò (5). That ñstrangerò is Franklin. He is observed ñas he came toward the taverné ò In the very next paragraph, however, Franklin himself picks up the narrative with his own first-person account: ñReader, I was that youth; and the words just quoted, are the name of the hero of the tale you have now begun to peruse. Flattered shall I feel, if it be interesting enough to lead you on to the conclusion!ò (6) The Authorôs first person bridges through the third person identification of the taleôs ñhero,ò which Franklin then assumes in his own voice. His experience is recounted only after his relationship to the Authorôs overarching temperance ideology is established. The social connection between Author(ity), Franklin, and the reader is

defined at the outset of Franklinôs story via sobrietyôs ideological framework. Franklin proceeds to illustrate in negative terms the consequence of drunken failure.

Franklin explains to the reader that as a young man, he has few resources, and so upon arriving in New York City he is directed to a boarding house that accommodates bachelors. There, he is befriended by the dissipated Colby, who introduces Franklin to taverns and theaters, hangovers and poor business decisions. The first of the object lessons is illustrated when a sympathetic businessman named Lee employs Franklin, but Franklinôs drinking ruins his chances at this job.

Thus begins the unsettled nature of Franklinôs narrative, as he consciously moves between the Authorôs command for sobriety, and his own attraction to the cityôs intoxicating temptations. Franklin sobers up long enough to find a position bartending at a small inn. He marries the innkeeperôs daughter, but alcoholic excess again leads to ruin. This is fatal not to Franklin, but to his wife. ñI remember the gathering degradation that fixed itself round our name. I remember how my wretched Maryôs face grew paler and paler every day ï the silent uncomplaining method of her long, long time of dying ï for my conduct killed her at lastò (50).[4] Drunkenness destroys another potentially happy ending. Franklin retreats from New York where ñThough I did not drink to anything like my former excess, I was by no means abstemiousò (52). He is sober enough to save a child from drowning, but then slides to dissipation once again. Returning to the city helps not at all, and he is kept from jail only by the timely interference of the near-drowned childôs father, who happens to be a lawyer. The lawyer will intercede only if Franklin promises to swear off drinking. Unfortunately, he signs the ñOld [Temperance] Pledgeé which forbade only the drinking of the most ardent kinds of liquors, and allowed

people to get as much fuddled as they chose upon wines, and beers, and so onò (76). This half-way measure is no solution to Franklinôs troubles.

To this point, over two-thirds of the way into the novel, the plot patterns a series of examples illustrating alcoholôs ruinous effects: a dead wife, criminal degradation, economic ruin, etc. Rescue is possible only with the timely intervention of Temperance-minded community members who can save him from drunken destruction. Franklin emphasizes this temperance message: ñé the object of the truly wise and good will be, to raise [the drunkard] up again; to reform and brighten those capacities, and to set in operation a train of causes, which will afford him a chance of attaining once more a respectable station in society. Once *thoroughly regenerated,* the remembrance of his old defamation will stand before his eyes like a pillar of fire, and warn him back from any further indulgence in his vicious courseséò (56). The ñwise and goodò will save the drunkard from social exile to which alcoholic involvement has condemned him.

Franklinôs obvious resistance to an ideology he so strongly vocalizes only serves to confuse the reader. Critics find Franklin a highly unsatisfying protagonist. Emory Holloway points this out in his introduction to the first major republication of *Franklin Evans* in 1927, noting that the storyôs ñlogic of the moral, no less than the dramatic quality of the incidents, is marred by the particular type of central character which a history of such a rogue requires. His hero can hardly engage the interest or the sympathy of the reader; for he is neither amiable nor genuinely villainousé ò(xiv). Not only does Franklinôs character embody failure, the continually digressive narrative wanders ever away from the Author-directed temperance imperative. In one such digression, Franklin spins for fellow travelers the story of Windfoot, a vengeful Indian.[5] The longest seeming digression follows Franklin on business to the South. This adventure, which

spans almost one-third of the book, concerns issues of slavery and gothic sensationalism as much as drunkenness. In their 2007 reissue of *Franklin Evans*, Christopher Castiglia and Glenn Hendler attribute the narrativeôs weaknesses to all of the above issues and summarize: ñé the reason critics and editors have left it unread for decades: it is an incoherent and often aesthetically dissatisfying textò (lvii).

Critics have resolved the textôs muddled message by understanding *Franklin Evans* as a poor expression of Whitmanôs reformist ideals. Critics have long debated *Franklin Evans*ôs place in the Whitman canon, with many dismissing it as bombastic editorializing from Whitmanôs journalist/editor years, before he became the Good Gray Poet.[6] Many critics fail to distinguish between the Authorôs remarks in the Introductory and Conclusion chapters and Whitmanôs editorial voice. Whitmanôs later interest in the social status of young, single men is seen in the Authorôs promotion of temperanceôs working-class Washingtonian movement.[7] Hollowayôs decree exemplifies a common conclusion, that *Franklin Evans* is an early, inept approach to various issues Whitman handles far more successfully in his poetry.[8] Post-publication, Holloway argues, Whitman realized his vision of a manly ideal could not take shape within temperanceôs negative model. Subsequently, Whitman ñset about an all-inclusive reform of his own, the creation of an image of the ideal modern man, in whom temperance would be the resultant of many positive virtues, the by-product of a well-poised but dynamic personalityò (xxi-xxii). Holloway articulates the argument that *Franklin Evans* may be read as a young Whitmanôs experiment with social reform.

Another approach is to outright reject the text, following Whitmanôs own final word on the novel. In the 1963 republication of Whitmanôs long-neglected prose works, Thomas Brasher refers to *Franklin Evans* as ñan inept pot-boiler which could scarcely be a credit to anyone and

especially to a cosmic bard.ò[9] Jean Downeyôs 1967 edition of *Franklin Evans* describes Whitmanôs prose fiction as ñin the dustbins of literatureé where the poet himself would have them, except at that time, they did add to his importance as a member of the pressò (15). Whitman himself was equally blunt in assessing the book. Years later, he said that *Franklin Evans* was ñdamned roté not the business for me to be up to.ò[10]

Stephen Craneôs *George's Mother* (1896) also features vehement temperance messages countered by examples of drunken ruin, but Crane separated the concepts into two separate characters: the dissipated George Kelcey and his temperance-minded mother, who live together in a New York City tenement apartment. Critics debate the overarching message of this storyôs narration; the novel has generally been understood as critiquing temperanceôs didactic ideology in favor of more worldly experience. Crane had a history with reformist missionary work; his mother, Mary Peck Crane, was an ardent member of the Womenôs Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Mary was on the temperance lecture circuit as often as she was at home,[11] and reviewers take it for granted that Craneôs novel expresses rebellion against Methodist indoctrination and prohibitionôs restrictive political agenda. Writes Brenda Murphy, ñ*George's Mother* is not Crane's most virulent attack on the fanatic Methodism he had seen in his youth, but it is, in the end, perhaps the most affecting.ò[12]

Other critics give some perspective to Maryôs influence over her son. Thomas Gullason notes that *George's Mother* is only a ñpartial portraitò of Mary Peck Crane. But even as he points out that Craneôs actual mother ñwas no fanatic but a practical, hardworking, effective organizer and campaigner,ò[13] Gullason nonetheless blurs the line between Mary and Georgeôs fictional mother. ñHer son Stephen rarely noted this enlightened and democratic side of his motherôs

nature. Instead, he painted only a partial portrait, one that has been accepted for decades as her full portrait. [In *George's Mother*] she epitomized the desperate religious zealot, unable to save her son from his life as a wastrel and alcoholic.ò[14] Nonetheless, Gullason does point out that the object of *George's Mother* is not to critique Motherôs convictions, but to focus on the ñdramatic gloss of the tragic distance between Mrs. Crane and her son.ò[15]

It may be more fair to say that Crane did not oppose his motherôs reformist activities, so much as he disagreed with the effectiveness of a didactic approach. Craneôs preference for learning through experience emerged early on. A boyhood friend, Post Wheeler, recounts a childhood encounter with Stephen when the boys were eight and six years old, and accompanying their mothers to a Revolutionary War celebration at which the WCTUôs Frances Willard was to speak. The boys ran through the more secular festivities, and ñStevieò shocked Post when he bought and drank a beer. Wheeler recounts asking the younger Crane ñdíhowôd you dast do it?ôé ódPshaw!ôsaid Stevie. ódBeer ainôt nothing at all.ôThen he added, defensively but emphatically, ódHow was I going to know what it tasted like lessôn I tasted it? How are you going to know about things at all lessôn you *do* ôem?ôò[16]

In *George's Mother*, the story shifts between two perspectives: Georgeôs and his motherôs. Georgeôs mother is a member of the WCTU; she leaves the apartment only to attend religious revival meetings. At home, she keeps the house for George, in whom she believes fiercely. George hardly deserves her faith; he is more interested in getting drunk with the local street toughs. He resists requests to join her at church, and he loses his job because he is hung-over and belligerent. The story has less plot and more atmosphere; the textual tension concerns the clash of perspective between the two main characters. The story ends when Mother dies, and George is left on his own.

George is eager to experience all the pleasures his church-going mother warns him against, especially those found in the tavern. The tension driving the storyôs plot lies in the irreconcilable differences between mother and son, illustrated by narrative focalization that switches between Georgeôs point of view and his motherôs. Each character imagines the world in very different terms, even as both attempt to articulate a positive role for George to assume. Lacking any positive reference in the urban environment, the narrative depicts a shared reference to the romantic imagery of dragons as metaphor for their struggles. As the narrative switches from Georgeôs point of view to his motherôs, it becomes clear that while both would imagine George the embattled hero, each imagines the metaphorical dragon differently, so as to clarify their clashing perspectives. In describing Motherôs experience, the narrative depicts an apartment dominated a ñstove that lurked in the gloom, red-eyed, like a dragon.ò In preparing for Georgeôs arrival from work, Mother wages a ñbattleé in full swing. Terrific blows were given and received. There arose the clattering uproar of a new fight. The little intent warrior never hesitated nor faltered. She fought with a strong and relentless willò (80). In Motherôs imagination, George stands as her effortôs worthy, sober object, and she the gallant ñwarriorò who serves him. In explaining his hung-over surliness to herself, she invokes this same language, and imagines ñwondrous influences swooping like green dragons at himé She longed to discover them, that she might go bravely to the rescue of her heroic sonò (91). In reimagining Georgeôs bad temper as a mythical beast, Mother is able to avoid confronting the true nature of Georgeôs sullen temper.

In contrast to Motherôs battle at home, George stages a battle at the tavern; he fights for, not against, the dragon of drink. ñDrink and its surroundings were the eyes of a superb green dragon to him. He followed a fascinating glitter, and the glitter required no explanationò (112).

The ñglitterò is a false conviviality he sees as social acceptance. Alcohol is not what George ultimately wants. The narrative describes that he was ñborn with an abhorrenceò for beer, but he ñhad steadily battledò against this repugnance in order to join his fellow drinkers in the roughly convivial tavern society. The bar boys accept Georgeôs swaggering pose in a way his mother never will; he is not interested in drunkenness so much as he desires acceptance from the street-wise toughs. For this, George is fighting on the dragonôs side.

While worlds apart, both of these charactersô imaginative constructs allow them to avoid dealing with the real issues of grinding poverty and Georgeôs growing alcoholism. Unlike *Franklin Evans,* in which the reader is instructed to apply the Authorôs ideological demands to Franklinôs antisocial behavior, here, the narrative illustrates for the reader the incapacity for Motherôs temperance-defined point of view to comprehend Georgeôs behavior. George, like Franklin, is clearly aware that he has fallen short of temperance standards. His discomfort is seen when Mother insists that he accompany her to a temperance meeting at her church. George is reluctant to accompany her because he knows how far he has fallen from not only his motherôs ideal, but the ideal of the congregation she represents. The narrative focalizes his perspective as he enters the meeting so as to emphasize not the reformersô actual judgment of him, but his perception of being judged. In keeping with the romance of battle rhetoric, George feels attacked by the meetingôs temperance adherents. ñThe multitudinous pairs of eyes that turned toward him were implacable in their cool valuationsé one could feel there the presence of the army of the unknown, possessors of the great eternal truthsé ò (110). As they sit, ñThe leader of the meeting seemed to be the only one who saw him. He stared gravely, solemnly, regretfullyé Kelcey hated the man.ò George is wholly estranged from this religious temperance army, feeling ñcompletely

alone and isolated.ò His response is a desire to ñassassinateò his mother; not to simply kill her, but to eliminate her as an enemy leader. He cannot leave the church quickly enough.

But whereas *Franklin Evans* attempts to solve the problem both Franklin and George represent by unifying the voice of a temperance Author with Franklinôs negative representation and the readerôs ideological acquiescence, the focalization technique in *George's Mother* allows the narrative to frame Georgeôs alcoholic resistance in a wider perspective. The narrative pulls back from the battle between George and his mother, and instead offers to the reader a wider perspective, from street level. ñIn a dark street the little chapel sat humbly between two towering apartment-houses. A red street-lamp stood in front. It threw a marvelous reflection upon the wet pavements. It was like the death-stain of a spirité . A roar of wheels and a clangor of bells came from this point, interwoven into a sound emblematic of the life of the city. It seemed somehow to affront this solemn and austere little edifice. It suggested an approaching barbaric invasion. The little church, pierced, would die with a fine, illimitable scorn for its slayersò (110). Not only are George and his mother framed in embattled language, so is this small, doomed place a refuge from the ñbarbaric invasion.ò The ñlife of the cityò is the ultimate threat in its implacable approach; from the street perspective, George and his mother are invisible. The narrative focalization of viewpoints between George and his Mother makes clear that their romantic interpretations, alike in kind but so different in character, remain focused on the battle between them and distracted from the real source of danger: the larger urban environment, a dehumanizing entity that threatens from without.

When Georgeôs hung-over belligerence causes him to finally snap at Mother, she cannot believe the logical explanation for his behavior. ñThere came a look in her eyes that told that she was going to shock and alarm him with her heaviest sentence ï ñit canôt be that yehôve got

tôdrinkinô.ôé She had not been serious. She was only trying to display to him how she regarded his horrifying mental stateò (113). For Georgeôs mother, this accusation is only a way of conveying her frustration. As the star of her romantic tale, she is incapable of imagining him her temperance storyôs villain. When she pleads for him to go to another prayer meeting with her, it is a plea that he share her world-view. But sharing his motherôs viewpoint would necessitate he agree that alcohol is the problem, not the solution. Preferring a starring role in his own story as intoxicated street soldier, George resists. ñShe put on her bonnet and shawl and then came and stood near him, expectantlyé ôWell, are yeh cominô?ôé He threw his paper down, angrily. óOh, why donôt yeh go on anôleave me alone?ôhe demanded in supreme impatience. ôWhat do yeh wanta pester me fer? Yehôd think there was robbers. Why canôt yeh go alone er else stay home? You wanta go anôI donôt wanta go, anôyeh keep all time tryinôtôdrag me. Yeh know I donôt wanta go.ôHe concluded in a last defiant wounding of her.ò (113-114) There are no wondrously imagined romantic beasts illustrating this struggle; the direct exchange is stark and painful. Absent are the imagined heroics and medieval monsters that not only make life bearable for each, but give an illusion of purpose that is stripped away in this hostile confrontation.

Crane originally entitled the story *A Woman Without Weapons*,[17] a title that emphasizes Motherôs ultimate helplessness. He claimed in a letter to Hamlin Garland that *George's Mother* ñleaves Maggie at the post. It is my best thing.ò[18] Critical response, however, was mixed. Harry T. Peck called the ñwhole thingé an incoherent fragment, told with no purpose and fraught with no interest... This is not literary realism. Literary realism would perhaps take such wretched material as this for its own purposes, but it would use it with some insight, some psychology, some grasp upon the essential meaning of it all.ò[19] Mother may be helpless, her romantic vision evacuated, but the narrative should fill the void with some statement of meaning. Instead,

Craneôs narrative relies on switching through character focalizations and pulling back to view the city landscape, and letting the reader understand that by ignoring the urban ñbarbaric invasion,ò George and his mother are missing the source of their real problems.

At the end of the story, as George sits mute at Motherôs deathbed, the urban foe again emerges. George has no retreat from the environmentôs threatening encroachment, the thing he has been avoiding all along. Mother dies, seeing ñsomething sinisterò coming for her. She ñturned to her son in a wild babbling appealé there began within her a struggle to reach him with her mindé ò (128). George can only watch helplessly. ñHe became so that he could not hear the chatter from the bedé ò As he sits in a stupor, he becomes vaguely aware of the city outside the window: ñAn endless roar, the eternal trample of the marching city, came mingled with vague cries.ò Like the ñbarbaric invasionò approaching Motherôs church, now the city threatens to overwhelm Georgeôs only safe haven: his motherôs imagined ideal of him. This threat sounds in a final conversation that takes place in the hallway outside the death room, between two unnamed figures whose voices echo Georgeôs earlier confrontation with his mother.

> ñJohnnie!ò
> ñWot!ò
> ñYou come right here tôme! I want yehs tôgo tôdôstore fer me!ò
> ñAh, ma, send Sally!ò
> ñNo, I will not! You come right here!ò
> ñAll right, in a minnet!ò
> ñJohnnie!ò
> ñIn a minnet, I tell yeh!ò
> ñJohnnieð ò

Evacuated of named characters, this exchange echoes Georgeôs resistance to his motherôs plea for company. Stripped of imaginative metaphor or any emotional shading, their romanticized struggle is laid bare as nothing more than a petty squabble endemic to the environment. Both characters suffer an unfulfilled need to transcend the degraded surroundings, but this is clear

only through reading the juxtaposition of the encroaching urban threat with George and his motherôs romanticized struggles. These strategies for avoiding problems endemic to poverty lead to a dead end. Craneôs narrative only points out the charactersô drive to avoid the problem. The narrative leaves the reader as helpless to a solution as George and his mother, although a reader is at least aware of the issue.

Almost all of the contemporary criticism of *George's Mother* complains about the storyôs negativity. The *New York Tribune* points out that the narrative negation of the main charactersô romantic dreams leaves an epistemological vacuum: ñ[the storyôs] virtue is purely negative, and if it shocks less often it is all the more unrelieved vacuity.ò[20] Neither Georgeôs violent, drunken escapism nor Motherôs temperance-based religious moralizing can provide a solution to the dehumanizing, impoverished environment. Imaginary heroics only deepen social estrangements. As George and his mother demonstrate, it is easier to battle imaginary villains than to deal with the slumsô dehumanizing conditions.

Not all reviewers lamented the lack of narrative direction to the reader. *The Critic*ôs reviewer found Craneôs refusal to assess the charactersô choices refreshing. ñIt is greatly to Mr. Craneôs credit that he indulges in no rhetoric and is never denunciatory. It is such an easy trick of art, and such a convenience to good people who want a definite object of attacké ò[21] But readers struggled with Craneôs approach. While the *Critic* reviewer celebrated Crane for ñoffer[ing] no solution; he does not even state the problem,ò others denigrated the narrativeôs reliance on character viewpoints that convey only confusion. The *Brooklyn Eagle* critic complained: ñThe scalpel-like analysis of the beery convolutions of drink-laden brains have no possible interest for anybodyé ò[22] Absent a strong narrative voice, Georgeôs and his motherôs viewpoints prove

empty. Henry Peck complained that ñThere is no meaning to any of ité Anyone can hang around a barroom and jot down the conversation.ò[23]

Whitman seemed to have the opposite problem in *Franklin Evans*; a strong Authorôs voice points out the weakness of the questionable hero. Whitman solved the problem of Franklinôs weak character and alcoholic fallibility by revising the narrative completely and eliminating the temperance theme altogether. A heavily edited *Franklin Evans* was republished in the *Brooklyn Eagle* between November 16 and November 30, 1846.[24] This revised version eliminates the Author by cutting out the Introductory and Conclusion chapters. Franklinôs singular ñIò subsequently takes over as unified narrator. This version condemns urban corruption instead of intemperance as the source of Franklinôs troubles. A series of depicted incidents illustrates the evils of modern life. The temperance message is erased and alcohol appears as only one of many dangers a young, ambitious man may face. All of Franklinôs intoxicated relationships are edited out, and any ambiguity of Franklinôs character with them.[25]

The rewrite unifies narrative meaning through Franklinôs controlling, singular point of view. His first person voice streamlines the storyline, but it ultimately weakens the readerôs interpretive capacity as Franklinôs drunken behavior is no longer the subject of narrative consideration. Franklin remains a character in the story, but his actions are now unified with his narrated message. Alcoholôs ambiguous appeal and the problem Franklin represents in the original edition are eliminated when Franklinôs weak character is transformed into a strong narrator. He no longer speaks from an intoxicated viewpoint with attendant unstable relationships. Instead, Franklinôs strongly expressed narrative viewpoint interprets all of the focalized stories, transforming ambiguous relationships into definitive illustrations.

In this revised version, Franklin does not fail his responsibilities because his character is seduced by intoxicationôs effects; instead, he is failed by a corrupted and corrupting cultural materialism endemic to New York (but not isolated to the city confines). This moral lesson is reinforced in all of the particular examples that Franklinôs narration focalizes. For example, an early scene in the original story illustrates Franklin and his friend Colby getting drunk in a tavern and meeting up with dissolute actresses after a stage performance. Franklinôs original attraction to her is due to alcoholicôs effects; the actress is later revealed as ñcoarse and masculine,ò far different from her beguiling on-stage presence. ñSo much indeed was I fascinated with her, that I expressed my opinion in terms which the liquor I had drank just before by no means contributed to render less strongò (31). Franklin has been seduced by alcoholôs effects more than the lady herself. In the *Brooklyn Eagle* edition, the sentence is edited to eliminate alcoholôs causative effect: ñé that I expressed my opinion in prodigious terms.ò The fault is not Franklinôs drunken intoxication, but the corrupt environment of the theater and the actress who represents it.

The revised story is careful to remove Franklinôs intoxicated state of mind as the source of his troubles and the central problem with which the narrative struggles. For example, in informing the reader of the unfortunate environment he experienced while working as a bartender, Franklin attributes the difficulty to others, not to himself: ñThe scenes which I witnessed there [in the bar], and the duties my situation obliged me to perform, were not pleasant, and at the end of a fortnight I left my placeò(44). The original version states that Franklinôs experience as a bartender was overwhelming ñeven for my callous heart.ò In eliminating this final clause, Franklinôs character in the barroom scene shifts from problematic participant to observer whose judgment is unified with the narrationôs social critique.

Franklin as narrator unifies all character focalizations as examples for his directive social commentary. One of the few references to drunkenness left intact is the story of the intemperate Dennis, Franklinôs former co-worker. Dennisôs experience is preserved because it demonstrates the narrativeôs moral lesson, exemplifying both the consequences of immoral behavior and the evils of corrupt business practice. Dennis, a heavy drinker, loses his job and is subsequently imprisoned for stealing bread. The narrator states that Dennis steals due to hunger, and hurts no one but himself. He later dies in prison. In contrast, Dennisôs former employers have played the stock market and cheated hundreds out of their life savings. Those ñstock jobbersò however are legally untouchable. The only line edited out of this passage in the *Brooklyn Eagle* edition is Franklinôs remark that ñHow little did I think, that one day might find me so little removed from [Dennisôs drunken] condition!ò (35) Otherwise, Franklinôs condemnation of New Yorkôs corrupt business class remains intact.

The revised textôs conclusion comes with the end of Franklinôs story; the entire Authorôs ñConclusionò chapter in praise of Temperanceôs Washingtonian movement is eliminated. In this edited version, Franklinôs charitable friend, Lee, rescues him from his financial troubles. Lee observes that ñexperience has taught you wisdom.ò (105) However, now Leeôs remarks echo Franklinôs own ongoing observations of examples that illustrate his narrated point; in the original, Leeôs rescue of Franklin reads more as a friendly *deus ex machina*. Here, Lee is not rescuing Franklin from himself, but providing yet another character focalization of the narrativeôs composing moral. Franklin ends the revised tale with comments cautioning the reader against corrupting practices and corrupted settings, including ñstock-jobbing,ò boarding houses, and drunkenness. Intoxication is simply another immoral practice in a list.

By focusing on an observable, damnable corruption, Franklinôs narration focalizes character experience as unified examples forwarding the textôs social critique. Drunkards are only one type of many examples of moral corruption to be overcome. The revised version is hardly a temperance story, but temperance-minded readers would probably appreciate Franklinôs strengthened narration in its singularly moral position.

Perhaps Whitmanôs most startling revision to the text, however, is the elimination of Franklinôs miscegenistic marriage to Margaret, the slave girl. This revision eliminates the most explicit description of Franklinôs struggle between his desire for intoxicating experience and his desire to align himself with the Authorôs temperance directives. In the original story, Franklin becomes enamored of Margaret during a drunken visit with her owner, Bourne. The revised story changes Margaret into Bourneôs Creole half-sister, a ñdark-eyed, handsome maiden, whose grace and voluptuousness fascinated me.ò[26] Bourne regards Margaret with ñentire indifference,ò as nothing more than ñan entire stranger,ò whose character is both introduced by and predicated upon her jealousy of a rival, Mrs. Conway. Margaretôs original story, detailing a flight from slavery and rescue through Franklinôs drunken marriage to her, is eliminated. Instead, Franklin fills in Margaretôs introduction by framing her as a mistake brought on by urban seductions. ñI had imbibed not a few of the pernicious notions which prevail among young men in our great American city, upon conjugal matters.ò These ñimbibedò corrupt notions should be avoided to prevent negative social fallout.

Franklinôs originally narrated relationship with Margaret is far more ambiguous than the revisionôs composition of Margaret; the revised edition instead composes her as an example of corrupt emotions. In the original story, Margaretôs introduction is focalized through her own point of view, a narrative tactic that creates sympathy for her escape from slaveryôs violent

conditions. Her marriage to Franklin saves her from a life of abuse and oppression. Margaret participates in Franklinôs bad decisions because she has something of her own to gain. The introduction of Mrs. Conway and Franklinôs interpretation of Margaretôs jealousy occur only well after Margaretôs relationship with Franklin has begun. It is only after Margaretôs bid for freedom has been made clear, that Franklinôs narration begins to transform her from a character for whom Franklin expresses ongoing sympathy, into an outright temperance demon.

Whitmanôs introduction of abolition themes and a murder-suicide plot into the original story has long caused critics to shrug off this part of *Franklin Evans* as gothic sensationalism simply underscoring the ñfatal consequences of drink.ò[27] But Karen Sanchez-Eppler states that this section ñattests to something other than an interest in the ills of drink.ò[28] The Southern section traces Franklinôs struggle between unacceptable longings, and the socially acceptable, sober community demanded of the reader by the Author. [29] To unify himself with the temperance community, Franklin has to surrender articulating intoxicated desire. In so doing, he sacrifices Margaret, and his narrative slowly represses Margaretôs fight for freedom and her potentially heroic freed slave narrative. The focalization of Margaretôs experience becomes voiced in temperance terms which take over whatever anti-slavery reform themes Margaretôs story suggests. As Franklinôs terms shift, Margaret is turned into a temperance-style demon.

Franklinôs first encounter with Margaret suggests an abolition slave narrative. She is a woman at the mercy of a violent slave system. While the language is stereotypical ï she is introduced as a ñpassionate slaveò and maintains a sexualized character throughout the story ï Franklinôs narrative focalizes her story in abolition terms. ñAmong the slaves on Bourneôs estate lived a young woman, named Margaret, a creoleò (80). The entire paragraph explaining her history is told from a third-person perspective, unmarked by Franklinôs ñIò. She attracts the

ñlicentious eyeò of an overseer, Phillips, whose lust propels an attack: ñé Margaret being employed in the field, Phillips came, and, as formerly, offered proposals which the indignant creature rejected with terms of anger. Irritated at her severity, the overseer proceeded to such lengths, that the passionate slave lifted the instrument of labor she had been using, and felled him to the earth with a heavy blowò (80). This sets the terms for Margaretôs character as ñpassionate,ò but also strong-willed. She is not only strong-willed, she is quite aware of her circumstances, and what her self-defense means. ñA momentôs reflection convinced Margaret of the dangerous nature of the act she had committed. With promptitude, she immediately made up her mind what courses to pursue. She came at once to the homestead, and asked for her master. We were sitting together at the time upon the verandaé ò Only now does Franklin appear, seen through the focalization of Margaretôs approach to the plantation house. Her defense is posed in her own words; she states that ñóthe consequence of [Phillipsôs] deeds he can only lay to himselfôò (81). Franklin narrates unequivocally that Margaret ñhad the justice of the dispute.ò The character focalization allows a sympathetic reading in which Margaretôs bid for freedom is understood as a flight from violence. Franklinôs sympathy combines with lust and copious amounts of alcohol. In an intoxicated state, he asks Bourne if he will allow them to marry. Margaret receives the freedom she craves, and Franklin satisfies his own desires.

On sobering up weeks later, however, he characterizes the miscegenistic marriage as ñabsurdé a crowning act of all my drunken vagariesé ò Franklin knows this marriage is the ultimate example of a drunken mistake, and he struggles to explain his behavior to the reader. ñThe mind becomes, to use an expressive word, *obfuscated*, and loses the power of judging quickly and with correctnessé so muddied are his perceptions, and so darkened are all his powers of penetration. And the worst of it is, that even in his sober moments, the same dark

influence hangs around him to a great degree, and leads him to a thousand follies and miseries (82). Franklinôs attraction to Margaret is explained on a par with his intoxication, a ñmuddledò position at the margins of social acceptability. Alcohol use leads to a loss of ñperception,ò ñpenetration,ò and the ñpower of judgment.ò In characterizing this ñdarkenedò influence, Franklin capitalizes on racist assumptions to equate his intoxicated condition with his married condition. Darkness, then, is a condition related through Franklinôs socially unacceptable drinking, and not exclusively through the oppressive system Margaret understandably resists. Margaretôs darkness is married to Franklinôs social alienation, and both are subject to equal damnation.[30] ñWhitman is not interested in awakening readersô sympathy and moving them toward egalitarian reform,ò Debra Rosenthal notes.[31] Instead, she states, *Franklin Evans* equates drinking and race relations to the same problem of immoderation, a problem requiring ñself moderation through discipline.ò[32] This is a more traditional, conservative ï and racist ï message.[33]

Franklin has disciplined his narrative voice to express a moderated temperance message which competes with his ongoing sympathy for Margaretôs point of view. ñPoor Margaret!ò Franklin states, even as he abandons her, ñI have no doubt she had loved me tenderlyò (85). The acknowledgement of Margaretôs feelings does not keep Franklin from becoming involved with Mrs. Conway, a woman related to the overseer who originally assaulted Margaret. When Margaret asks about his association with the woman, he replies that Mrs. Conway ñóis wonderfully fair, not dark and swarthy, which I detest!ôò(85). Franklin notes that Margaret is ñsurprisedò and ñwould have spoken further, but her pride prevented her.ò Franklinôs interpretation of Margaretôs reaction validates her justifiable feelings, but his narration begins to impose temperance references that interpret Margaret as a threat. ñI do not think I have given a

faithful transcription of the creoleôs character in all its strong points. She was, indeed, a very woman, with some of the most beautiful traits, and some of the most devilishé ò Franklin has begun to characterize Margretôs reactions as less than her own; now he gives the ñtranscriptionò of her storyôs meaning;[34] even as he names her ñbeautiful traits,ò for the first time he gestures to her ñdevilishò nature. The description specifically invokes temperanceôs figurative language denoting demon drink, language that competes with ongoing slave themes. Those themes continue to appear, however, such as in Margaretôs care of her brother, Louis, who ñwas beloved by [Margaret], as a woman might cling to her own childò (87). Louis had been given as a wedding gift to Franklin. Now, however, Mrs. Conway demands Franklin hand Louis over to her as a sign he cares for her. Franklin frames the ñtempestò of Margaretôs response as one of jealousy, not as a mother-figure terrified for her child. ñWho may describe, then, what took place in her bosom when this matter was broken to her?ò Before the reader may insert an answer sympathetic to Margaret, Franklin answers the question by providing ñangerò as her response, anger typical of ñthe spirit of her fiery race.ò In describing Margaretôs passions, Franklin bridges slavery themes through a negative interpretation of Margaretôs ñspiritò defined by her ñjealousyò of Mrs. Conway. From there it is an easy step to characterizing Margaret as a demon, with a ñdevilishò temperament.

The final solution to Franklinôs ñmuddied,ò intoxicating relationship comes in a dream, literally. In Chapter XX, Franklin falls asleep, and dreams up the answer to his problems. He imagines wandering through a Utopian vision symbolized as a prosperous marketplace in which all citizens are sober. There, the entire nation celebrates the ñLast Vassal of the Snake-Tempter,ò the final convert to the temperance pledge. This is a man ñwhom I had noticed in the procession ï the Last Vassal. Far around on every side, countless multitudes of nothing but human heads

were to be seen, in one compact bodyò (97). As Franklin joins the community celebration, his first person narrative voice disappears, and instead the community ñbodyò speaks. ñõWe welcome you!ôthey cried, as with one voice.ò Events are focalized exclusively from this point through the watching crowdôs unified eyes. The Last Vassal denounces the ñchainsò of drink, and binds himself instead to the ñpleasant bondage of good.ò The crowd responds with an inarticulate ñthunder-peal of hurrahs.ò ñTheyò are speaking in ñone voice, ò composed of ñone compact body.ò The voice of this temperance community overcomes Franklinôs intoxicated resistance, replacing it with a socially unifying will. Holding the crowdôs attention is a ñfair female, robed in pure whiteò (96). Providing the perfect foil to Margaretôs darkness, this utopian representative of the collective will is holding temperanceôs ñgoblet of clear waterò and ñUnder her feet were the senseless remains of a hideous monsteré ò

On awakening, Franklinôs language now frames Margaret as temperanceôs monster. She is fully transformed in Franklinôs perspective into a demon, one mad with jealousy for her supposed rival, Mrs. Conway: ñWhat deep breathings of hate ï what devilish self-incitementsé what mad, and still clearly defined marking out of fiendish purposesé will ever stay buried in the darkness of things gone: darkness which falls alike on the dreadful motives of the murderer, and the purity of hearts filled with abundance of good!ò (99).

Mrs. Conway falls ill. Margaret sneaks into the recovery room and murders her. The murder is narrated in present tense, in contrast to the past tense of the story to this point. Karen Sanchez-Eppler states that this verbal shift in tense allows Franklin to ñevacuateò the participantsô more complex history from the murderous moment. Their history ñthreatens to fracture whatever unity may be achieved in the stillness of any framed and frozen moment.ò[35] Instead, Franklin imposes his polarized narrative of good versus evil onto the scene. Margaret

becomes a ñrepository of African otherness,ò in Sanchez-Epplerôs words, with Franklin mediating the narrative terms by which her otherness is presented. In addition, Franklin narrates this murder scene from a point in time after it has taken place, claiming Margaretôs confession as his source. Franklinôs voice has fully preempted Margaretôs perspective: ñUpon her story as she told it to me, and her own acknowledgement, I have given many of the incidents of the previous two chapter, which, at the time they took place, were totally unknown to me,ò (104). The scene of demon Margaret killing the fair Mrs. Conway is focalized through Franklinôs temperance dream transformation. She is the demonic object of Franklinôs temperance story. Franklinôs narration now coincides fully with the Authorôs directions to the Reader that both introduce and conclude Franklinôs tale.

The storyôs Southern portion ends abruptly. Stating that ñI sometimes fancied I had been in a dream,ò Franklin quickly retreats to New York, where his old friend Lee convinces Franklin to sign a total abstinence pledge. Franklin vows his troubles are now over. ñReader!ò he concludes his narrative, ñI may be presumptuous to flatter myself that it has been of much amusement to youé [and] that a few seeds of wholesome instruction might be dropped at the same time,ò (105). These final words echo the terms initially set by the Authorôs Introductory remarks that the ñmighty and deep public opinioné ever welcomes anything favorable to the Temperance Reform.ò

As a character engulfed in the alcoholic experience, Franklin can never fully unify with the Authorôs dictates until he abandons his individual desires for an assumed community ideal. He is only able to approximate the Authorôs socially normative commands by offering a symbolic sacrifice, transforming one of his intoxicating relationships from an inexplicable experience of desire to a monstrous violation by turning his partner into a figurative demon and

crushing it under temperanceôs ideological heel. Franklinôs drinking experience is not explored or understood, so much as it is finally rejected. The addressed Reader is required to accept the Authorôs, and ultimately Franklinôs, terms of community, or be left behind in the inarticulate realm of demon drink.

Craneôs narratives also demonstrate the failure of definitive socialized solutions to adequately respond to charactersô alcoholic behavior. In particular, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* illustrates the corrosive effects of social surroundings in which a drunken, violent dissipation sets the tone. The story is focalized through a variety of characters populating ñRum Alley.ò These characters have only the terms available to them to form their responses; likewise, without a strong narrative guide, the reader is left to search the described environment for cues to meaning.

Maggie: A Girl of the Streets has long been both celebrated and lamented for its refusal to orient the story to a central narrating voice.[36] Craneôs style is generally understood as ñimpressionistic,ò or, ña complex welter of narrative voicesò conveying an ñimmediate sensory and perceptual experience.ò[37] Readers are challenged to find clear direction within this ñwelter.ò ñNo American work of its length has driven the reader so hard,ò writes John Berryman, ñé in none had the author remained so persistently invisible behind his creation.ò[38] Judgmental assessments appear as character expressions, not narrative directives.

The first chapters introduce Maggieôs home life as an example of the tenementôs horrifying living conditions. The narrative here focalizes through Maggieôs ñurchinò brother, Jimmie, seen fighting ñfor the honor of Rum Alleyò (7). He is caught and dragged home by his father, through ñdark stairways and along cold, gloomy hallsò until they ñentered a lighted room in which a large woman was rampantò (11). This large woman is Mary, Jimmieôs mother. In a

parody of maternal care, Mary ñthrew herself upon Jimmieé She dragged him to an unholy sink, and soaking a rag in water, began to scrub his lacerated face.ò The father protests her rough treatment by admonishing: ñóYouôve been drinkinô, Maryé Youôd better let up on the boô, olô woman, or youôll git doneò (12-13). Mary ñroaredò back that ñI ainôt had a drop,ò and there follows an argument in which ñthey damned each otherôs souls with frequence,ò until the father storms out of the tiny rooms, ñdetermined upon a vengeful drunk.ò

Jimmie cowers with his sister Maggie in the corner, taking in this familial chaos. Their mother abruptly drops the angry explosion and becomes a sobbing, victimized wife, as she laments her husbandôs drunken abuse. Mary ñcame and moaned by the stove. She rocked to and fro upon a chair, shedding tears and crooning miserably to the two children about their ópoor motherô and óyer fader, damn ôis soulôò (14). As the mother wails, Maggie tiptoes about, trying to normalize the setting. Jimmie watches as Maggie sets the table for dinner, but he keeps one eye on his mother : ñHe cast furtive glances at his mother. His practised eye perceived her gradually emerge from a muddled mist of sentiment until her brain burned in drunken heat. He sat breathlessò (14). While Maggie attempts to actively regulate the chaos, Jimmie watches for his motherôs switch from pathetic victim back to attack mode. It comes when Maggie drops a plate, and Mary pounces on her, allowing Jimmie to escape to the hallway.

A consistent theme in *Maggie* is the confluence between observation and judgment, and how much the latter is based on superficial evidence and prefigured understanding. For instance, Jimmieôs survival amidst his familyôs drunken chaos depends on his ability to read his motherôs drunken rages, and to respond accordingly by running. The narration does not focus on Jimmieôs feelings, but on his reactions, which compose his character.

The neighborsô reaction to the domestic violence in the Johnson home is to view it as an entertaining spectacle. After Jimmie has escaped from his mother, a neighbor stops him in the hall and eagerly asks, ñóis yer fadder beatinô yer mudder, or yer mudder beatinô yer fadder?ôò (14). The scene of brutality in the Johnson apartment is so common that neighbors have worked it into the buildingôs society as an entertaining spectacle. The reader waiting for a statement condemning Maryôs drunken violence will be disappointed. Instead, the neighbors only want to know who has won the daily battle. Maryôs drunken violence is predictable and familiar.

Maggie, in contrast, is unreadable to her neighbors. She is not her motherôs daughter, as her ñprettinessò is in direct contrast to her motherôs ñbedraggledò appearance. She stands out among the weeds of the slums. Maggie is a girl who ñblossomed in a mud puddleé None of the dirt of Rum Alley seemed to be in her veins. The philosophers up-stairs, down-stairs and on the same floor, puzzled over itò (22). As a visible standout, Maggie is not an object of celebration, but one of confusion. What does her prettiness mean? The language Crane uses to describe Maggie derives from Jacob Riisôs popular best seller, published only a few years before *Maggie*. *How the Other Half Lives* details a photojournalistôs exposition of New Yorkôs slum life, balancing the graphic depictions of struggle and suffering with a reformerôs narrative of hope and transcendence. Riisôs narrative of the slumsô graphic depictions at one point gestures to ñheroic men and women striving patiently against fearful odds and by their very courage coming off victors in the battle with the tenement; of womanhood pure and undefiled. That it should blossom in such an atmosphere is one of the unfathomable mysteries of life. And yet it is not an uncommon thing to find sweet and innocent girls, singularly untouched by the evil around themé in the worst of the infamous barracksò (11). Craneôs story contradicts Riis gesture to a ñheroicò womanhood growing in such a setting. Like Jimmy, whose only recourse for surviving

the ñbattle with the tenementò is to react to the vicissitudes of the violent, drunken chaos around him, the characters have only their direct environment from which to take their cues. Craneôs narration is careful to simply describe the setting, and not impose any ideology external to the characters. Understanding is channeled to the reader through character focalization alone, so the reader, like the characters, have only the observed environment from which to assess the described situation.

Maggie is therefore not a heroic protagonist; she is a strange object out of place in the slum community, a character that suggests potential for something outside the neighborhoodôs understanding. But the neighborhood, like the reader, has only the terms available in the immediate environment to comprehend Maggieôs significance. Maggie ñshould blossomò into a hero, but she is instead trapped by the pre-existing viewpoints of those surrounding her.

Critics found Craneôs determination that the reader share character experience off-putting. Hamlin Garland, for instance, both praised and questioned the bookôs bleakness in depicting a fateful social determinism. As ñthe voice of the slumsé [*Maggie* is] the most truthful and unhackneyed study of the slums I have yet read.ò And yet, Garland continued, it is ñonly a fragmenté typical of the worst elements of the alleyé The author should delineate the families living on the next street who live lives of heroic purity and hopeless hardship.ò[45] By gesturing to the ñheroic purityò absent in Craneôs bald examination of the slumsô conditions, Garland ignores Craneôs deliberate disruption of Riisôs romanticized heroics. Conditioned by Riisôs terms and sentimental stories of impoverished young women who righteously kill themselves rather than remain in degraded conditions, the reading public wanted a narrator to put the immoral, drunken violence into an expected perspective and to reward Maggieôs ñprettiness,ò her difference from

that represented by her motherôs degraded condition. Instead, Craneôs narrator will not direct the readerôs reactions.

Sympathy for Maggie is instead garnered by the narrativeôs focus on her sensitive reaction to her surroundings. She has romantic hopes and dreams for something better, but again, these wishes are only expressed in the terms available to her; her reactions may be sensitive, but her perceptions are conditioned by her rough society. When Jimmie brings home his friend Pete, Maggie is impressed specifically by Peteôs self-characterization as a fighter. In terms of the embattled environment, Maggie ñperceivesò Pete as a winner. She ñperceived that here was the beau ideal of a man. Her dim thoughts were often searching for far away lands where, as God says, the little hills sing together in the morning. Under the trees of her dream-gardens there had always walked a loverò (25). Anticipating Peteôs visit to her home, Maggie buys decorative objects in an attempt to change the apartmentôs bedraggled appearance. The lambrequin she buys to decorate the mantel reflects her own delicate personality, but it is subject to the drunken brutality that nothing in the apartment escapes. Mary later destroys all of Maggieôs embellishments while in ñsome phase of drunken furyò (28).

Maggie does not have a model through which to shape her sensitive outlook. Her thoughts are focalized through a wandering imagination. She is aware that her life and work is ña dreary place of endless grinding,ò and she passes her time at work wondering about her co-workers: ñtales of imagined or real girlhood happiness, past drunks, the baby at homeé ò She fears a similar future ñas a scrawny woman with an eternal grievanceò (33). Maggieôs model for womanhood is found in these women, as well as a mother who is ñoften drunk and always raving.ò In contrast to Maggieôs passive watchfulness is her motherôs drunken exhibitionism. Mary is impenetrable, her character all on the blustering surface. The narration never focalizes

through Maryôs point of view, but describes her in terms of othersô regard. In one scene, ñA group of urchins were intent upon the side door of a saloon. Expectancy gleamed from their eyesé The saloon door opened with a crash,ò and Mary appears, having been kicked out for creating a disturbance. She continues her rampage, chasing the children, who ñwhooped in glee.ò To them, this is a game. The source of Maryôs drinking is never explained; she simply exists as a reliable spectacle, an unchanging object of the degraded surroundings. She is perceived through other characterôs viewpoints, and directly reacts to the expectations of those watching. When arrested for public drunkenness, the judge asks Mary to explain herself. She draws on a rote pool of ñvoluble excuses, explanations, apologies and prayers,ò which are indulged by her ñacquaintances among the police-justices.ò ñCourt officials called her by her first nameé They invariably grinned and cried out: óHello, Mary, you here again?ôò (23). Like the neighbors and the street urchins, the public officials nod and wink at Mary as a familiar public spectacle. Whereas the neighborhood is ñpuzzledò by Maggieôs singular appearance, Mary is familiar. Her brutal intoxication is easily contextualized because it fits her observersô understandings. She does not challenge the slumsô degraded conditions, but reinforces them. Her stories to the establishment are contained to the obvious, part of the status quo.

Can Maggie be saved from these hellish surroundings? After Peteôs appearance, she begins to consider the possibility of a new life. But again, that hope is dependent upon the terms available to her. Specifically, she frames her dreams within the terms of a play to which Pete brings her on their night out. ñThe theater made her think. She wondered if the culture and refinement she had seen imitated, perhaps grotesquely, by the heroine on the stage, could be acquired by a girl who lived in a tenement house and worked in a shirt factoryò (34). The staged melodrama allows Maggie a language to express desire for something better in life, to care and

to be cared for. Maggie has a means of expressing herself and an object of her affection: the dissipated and worthless Pete, whom she casts as hero in her romantic rescue story. She admires him for his ñdisdain for the inevitable and contempt for anything that fate might compel him to endureò (25). In contrast to Peteôs blustering command of his surroundings, Maggie longs to escape. She is defined more by what she is not and what she does not wish to become, than by what she is. ñI have little idea of Maggieôs personality,ò John Barry wrote to Crane after reading the book, ñshe is not much more than a mere figure to me. You have been most successful in drawing her mother, I think.ò[39]

Mary serves the reader better because her status is articulated through the surrounding communityôs pre-existing perceptions. Maggie, on the other hand, is a ñpuzzleò to the neighborhood, and to the reader as well, because her characterôs romantic hopefulness has no corresponding referent in the surrounding, narratively-depicted environment. Maggieôs dreams are not a vehicle of delivery from her degraded surroundings, but a dead end. A reader may feel frustration that Maggie does not recognize in Pete a reflection of her motherôs aggression, but Maggie, with no social reference for escapist dreams, imagines Peteôs swagger as heroic command. She believes in his ñdisdain for the inevitable and contempt for anything that fate might compel him to endureò (25). Their first date gives her hope that he will rescue her the same way the hero on the stage rescues the abused heroine.

Unfortunately for Maggie, the watchful neighborhood has a very different interpretation of her relationship with Pete. Instead of viewing her story as romantic, the neighbors assign Maggie a role more in keeping with the slumsô environment. The chapter detailing Maggieôs fall from grace is rich in narrative descriptions of character observations. It begins with Maryôs abrupt expulsion from a saloon, a scene focalized through the watchful regard of the street

children. ñóHere she comes,ô yelled one of them suddenly. The group of urchins burst instantly asunder and its individual fragments were spread in a wide, respectable half-circle about the point of interest. The saloon door opened with a crash, and the figure of a woman appeared upon the thresholdò (36). Maryôs drunken frustrations become a parade and a game to these watching children as they follow her down the street. Once back at the tenement building, the neighbors open their doors and ñpeered curiously out, watching her. With a wrathful snort the woman confronted the door, but it was slammed hastily in her faceò (37). Jimmie, arriving home, can only follow in his motherôs cursing wake as she screams at the closed doors, and ñroared at the spectatorsò to fight with her. The door of the Johnson apartment opens and ñMaggie looked out,ò but quickly retreats as her brother herds Mary in, away from the neighborsô watchful gaze. Mary battles her children instead, subsequently destroying the apartmentôs furniture. The children are as helpless as the neighbors to confront this drunken disaster; the narrative describes that Maggie ñgazed about herò at the ñusual upheaval of the tables and chairsò (38). The only response to Maryôs intoxicated rampage is to watch and wait. Into this mess steps Pete, who tells Maggie to come with him and ñówe'll have a hell of a timeôò (39). Hearing this, Mary curses her daughter. The narration does not record Maggieôs reaction other than that she ñgazed long at her motheré began to tremble,ò and finally ñcast a glance about the room filled with a chaotic mass of debris and at the red, writhing body of her mother.ò This time, when Mary spits out, ñ ñgo teh hell and good riddance,ôò the narration notes that ñShe went.ò The narrative focalization through Maggieôs viewpoint specifically describes her watchfulness and not her feelings; the only indication of an emotional reaction is when she begins ñto tremble.ò This focus on external evidence leaves no room for Maggieôs internalized dreams, but only for her immediate reaction to her motherôs drunken destruction. Maggieôs final decision to retreat seems logical: ñShe

went.ò This scene mirrors the textôs first account of the embattled Johnson family, when Maryôs drunken violence caused their fatherôs retreat to the sound of Maryôs curses. Maggieôs retreat here echoes not only her fatherôs earlier reaction, it also copies the neighborsôact of shutting the door on Maryôs rage.

The problem for Maggie is that she does not understand her reaction will be framed in the terms available to those watching her. By breaking the pattern signifying dutiful daughter, she is now subject to the assessment that she is following instructions and is indeed going ñteh hell.ò However, Maggie sees herself quite differently; she is playing the role of romantic heroine, rescued by Pete from her motherôs drunken rampages. In the readerôs next encounter with the couple, she is sitting with Pete in a ñhall of irregular shapeé drinking beerò (47). This may be taken as an ominous sign, as the alcohol-filled setting echoes the drunkenness from which she has just retreated. In addition, Maggie now suffers the watchful eye of surrounding gazes: ñAt times men at other tables regarded the girl furtivelyò (49). Maggie ignores any similarities to the home she has just left, to instead focus on Peteôs command of the surrounding environment. He yells at the waiter, ñóWhat deh hell yehôs lookinôat? Two more beehs, dôyeh hear?ôò The fact that he is imbibing in the very drink that fuels her motherôs violence does not bother Maggie, as she ñthought of her former Rum Alley environment and turned to regard Peteôs strong protecting fistsò (48). Maggie determinedly sees Pete as protection, not as drunken aggression. And so Maggie is able to shrug off the seemingly threatening watchfulness surrounding them: ñGrey-headed men, wonderfully pathetic in their dissipation, stared at her through cloudsé Maggie considered she was not what they thought herò (49). The narrative at this point creates sympathy for Maggie through the contrast between her interior hopefulness and the communityôs pre-existing expectations formed by the social environmentôs callous nature. The reader has been

granted access to Maggieôs dreams only through the narrativeôs focalization; the external setting the narrative describes has no place for them. Maggie is uncomfortably aware of the looks being leveled at her, but she is able to resist any misgivings by deferring to the heroism she projects onto Pete. But Peteôs behavior is simply an earlier stage of a full-blown alcoholism predicting behavior much like Maryôs. Maggie inevitably finds herself rejected by Pete as well.

ñI doubt if such literature is good,ò Barry wrote. ñé it closely approaches the morbid and the morbid is always dangerous.ò The theme, Barry continued, ñought not to be treated so brutallyé you have painted too black a picture, with no light whatever to your shade.ò[40] Crane was aware that readers may not receive the book well; he famously inscribed on an early copy of *Maggie: "*It is inevitable that this book will greatly shock you, but continue, pray, with great courage to the end, for it tries to show that environment is a tremendous thing in the world, and often shapes lives regardless. If one could prove that theory, one would make room in Heaven for all sorts of souls (notably an occasional street girl) who are not confidently expected to be there by many excellent people.ò[41] Crane urges the reader to suspend the preconceived judgments his narration pins to descriptions of the watching community. Instead, he hopes that by contrasting Maggieôs dreams with her situation, the reader may make room for understanding of the ñoccasional street girlò his narrative delineates.

William Dean Howells was more encouraging than many critics, although he did share Craneôs concern regarding readersô reactions. *Maggie*, Howells notes, is ñso good but so impossible of general acceptance because of our conventional limitations in respect to swearing.ò[42] The coarse nature of Craneôs material potentially repelled the audience he hoped for. The readersô capacity for such preconceived judgments underscores the critique Crane articulates through the text. Subsequently, the 1896 revised edition published by Appletonôs is

stripped of its curses.[43] Crane saw the wisdom in making the text less alienating; he wrote to his editor, Ripley Hitchcock, that ñI am working at *Maggie*é I have dispensed with a goodly number of damns.ò[44]

Appletonôs republished *Maggie* in 1896 with language more acceptable to its readership. Robert Stallman points out that the revision ñin some of the instancesé often weakens the text in tone and even in meaning,ò but the narrative essentially remains intact.[45] One effect of the revised language is that Maryôs parting shot to Pete and Maggie is no longer an incidental curse that predicts the neighborhoodôs reaction and seals Maggieôs fate. When Mary originally tells Maggie to get out, her ñGo teh hellò echoes all the other fights that have taken place in the Johnson household. It is a throwaway line until a neighbor reads Maryôs send-off to her daughter as a literal interpretation of Maggieôs departure. Maryôs curses mean little to nothing until Jimmie is informed by the neighbor that ñI could seeò Maggieôs leaving with Pete as a fall from moral grace. Jimmie reinforces the neighborôs judgment by repeating this to his mother, who is at first ñastonished.ò Acceptance comes easier as neighbors repeat the damning verdict: ñI could aôtolô yehs dis two years agoé Anybody what had eyes could see dat dere was somethinô wrong wid dat girlò (42). Maggieôs damnation ultimately is not the result of her choices or decisions, or even her motherôs, but the result of those reading Maggie through the terms available in the surrounding environment. *Maggie* reflects a ñquality of fatal necessity which dominates Greek tragedyò Howells declared, with Maggie as ña soul struggling vainly with an inexorable fate.ò[46] In Craneôs heroine, Howells saw a critique of hypocritical moralizing that dooms Maggie.

Crane agreed. ñPreaching is fatal to art in literature,ò he wrote ñTo The Editorò of *Demorest's Family Magazine.*[47] By refusing to instruct the reader, his narrative resists preaching. While Maryôs character practically invites temperance lectures, Crane uses her to demonstrate

the way in which even the system outside of the slums takes her for granted as a typical expression of the inner city. We see this after Maggie leaves home, when Mary is again arrested for public drunkenness. Once again, Mary faces no real consequence, or even a serious lecture concerning her condition. By turning her usual rampage into a story the justices recognize, she is more amusement than public threat. ñWhen arrested for drunkenness she used the story of her daughterôs downfall with telling effect upon the police justices. Finally, one of them said to her, peering down over his spectacles: ôMary, the records of this and other courts show that you are the mother of forty-two daughters who have been ruinedé ôò (52).

Mary survives because she plays to the expectations of watchful, judging eyes, and Maggie is destroyed because she attempts to escape them. Maggie is inevitably abandoned by Pete, and on her attempt to return to her motherôs home, Mary echoes the condemnation the neighborhood has leveled: ñôLookut her! Lookut her!ôò (59). Maggieôs final expulsion becomes an entertaining spectacle which ñbrought the denizens of the Rum Alley tenement to their doorsé curious eyes staredé Childrené ogled heré From above came an unceasing babble of tongues, over all which rang her motherôs derisive laughterò (60-61). The final verdict condemning Maggie to ruin and an ultimate early death is directed by her mother, the ironic representative of prefigured social judgment.

The final scene clarifies the shallowness of such judgments, when Mary is shown to easily imitate religious cant in service to her own ends. After learning of Maggieôs death, Mary is visited by church women. Mary plays to the expectations of her viewing audience, reflecting the demeanor of the visiting missionary worker whose ñgood, motherly face was wet with tearsò and whose ñvocabularyé derived from mission churchesé ò (71). Mary responds in kind, mirroring the social sensibilities judging her daughter. Sympathy here is a ritual of staged woe in which

there is no real compassion for the dead girl. The church woman comforts Mary by telling her that Maggie has ñgone where her terôble sins will be judged.ò The novel ends with a grotesque parody of Mary playing martyr, and sounding the novelôs final note: ñóOh, yes, Iôll fergive her! Iôll fergive her!ôò (72). The hypocrisy of Maryôs ñforgivenessò of her daughter signals the narrative contrast between an externalized view that judges surface manifestations of the environmentôs effects, and the internalized focalization of Maggieôs inarticulate hopes for something better. Mary is the final, devastating voice of social judgment in a place where dissipation defines the terms of the watchful community.

Whitman was to eventually reject *Franklin Evans* because he came to believe that its narrow moral vision did not adequately address the social issues the story represents. He told Traubel, his biographer, that the book was ñnot the businessò for him. Traubelôs account in *With Walt Whitman in Camden* further details that Whitman did not simply reject his earlier story; he rejected temperanceôs social activism, adamantly stating he ñnever was inò a temperance organization.[48] *Franklin Evans* was nothing more than ña species of entertainment.ò[49]

Such comments are predicated on the inability of Whitmanôs novel to articulate a satisfying solution to the issues temperance validly indicated, but poorly served. Whitman did not abandon temperanceôs idea of the problem, however. *Leaves of Grass,* Whitmanôs master work, depicts familiar scenes of alcoholic social ruin: ñThe quadroon girl is sold at the auction-stand, the drunkard nods by the bar-room stove,/The machinist rolls up his sleeves, the policeman travels his beaté /The young fellow drives the express-wagon, (I love him, though I do not know him;)é ò Here, the ñdrunkardò is not an object to be fixed, but part of a larger community, equally deserving of the narratorôs and readerôs shared sympathy.

Craneôs narratives reflect Whitmanôs later rejection of temperance solutions to the problem of human desire. *Franklin Evans* could only unify its solution-based narrative by deleting the theme of Franklinôs alcohol-driven desiring transgressions altogether. In contrast, Craneôs narratives seem to suggest that whether or not a solution is possible is beside the point; the reader first needs to understand the conditions characters face in degraded social environments. Craneôs urban tales challenge the reader to dispose of pre-formed solutions, to better understand the humanity encountered in alcohol-fueled settings.

Endnotes

[1] Kahn, Sholom J., page 73.

[2] Kahn sees ñmore or less significant characteristics and analogiesò across these writersô vision of urban corruption, issues of oppression (though directed toward different demographics) and biographical roots concerning the writersô mothers. Kahn discusses *Franklin Evans* only in relation to *George's Mother*: ñ*George's Mother* is, implicitly, a temperance novel, like *Franklin Evans;* to say that it is greatly superior is merely to recall that Craneôs primary medium was prose fiction, whereas Whitman never matured as a story-tellerò (73). He compares *Maggie* primarily to Whitmanôs poetry.

[3] Critical comparison of Whitman and Crane involves poetic stylistics. Crane himself said little of his sources and influences. Thomas Wentworth Higginson in *The Nation* 61 [October 24, 1895], 296, ñRecent Poetry,ò characterized *The Black Riders* in terms of ñthe brevity of its stanzas, its rhymelessness and covert rhythms, as a condensed Whitman, or an amplified Emily Dickinson.ò Prior to reprinting Craneôs poem ñWar Is Kind,ò *Literary Digest* asked in 1896, ñIs there room for a second Walt Whitman?ò before declaring Whitmanôs legacy as not yet set, and Craneôs only in ascendance. And Harry Thurston Peck, in his review of Black Riders in ñLyrics of the Day,ò *Literary Digest XII* (February 29, 1896), 520, wrote ñIf Whitman had been caught young and subjected to aesthetic influences, it is likely he would have mellowed his barbaric yawp to some such notes as that which sounds in the poems that are now before us.ò

[4] Unless otherwise indicated, all quotes from *Franklin Evans* are taken from Christopher Castiglia and Glenn Hendlerôs 2007 reproduction of the original publication (1842).

[5] In *A Critical Companion to Walt Whitman*, Charles Oliver describes ñThe Death of Wind-Footò as an embedded tale, ñarguably better than the novel.ò It was published as a stand-alone short story in the June 1845 issue of *American Review.*

[6] The moniker ñGood Gray Poetò originated with William Douglass OôConnorôs *The Good Gray Poet: A Vindication* published in 1866. The pamphlet is a defense of Whitmanôs poetry, especially *Leaves of Grass*. It was published after James Harlan, Secretary of the Interior, fired Whitman from a government position after reading the ñindecentò material.

[7] In *Walt Whitman's Multitudes,* Jason Stacy writes that Whitmanôs early writings demonstrate an attempt to find a balance between radical class leanings and a utopian vision, specifically in service to a labor reform agenda that benefited the working class. While not specifically addressing *Franklin Evans* in the body of his analysis, Stacy notes that temperance reform for Whitman represented the capacity to attain ñan ideology of self-improvementò in forming a democratic ideal essential to his later work. Christopher Castiglia and Glenn Hendler also note Whitmanôs representations of the effects of a corrupt economic system on working menôs lives; they cite the Authorôs praise of the Washingtonian movement as representing Whitmanôs promotion of working class values. David Reynolds agrees, but dismisses the relevance of the Authorôs allusion to the Washingtonian movement as a cheap way ñto make a connection with the American masses.ò Lastly, Andrew Lawson traces Whitmanôs ongoing interest in the

working manôs issues back through *Franklin Evans,* and to Whitmanôs own hardscrabble life growing up between Brooklyn and Long Island. Lawson sees the promotion of working class issues as represented in *Franklin Evans* ñremarkably consistentò throughout Whitmanôs life.

[8] *Leaves of Grass* signals a radical shift in Whitmanôs literary status. Critics distinguish between the ñWalterò of Whitmanôs journalist/editor years (*Franklin Evans* was published under ñWalter Whitmanò), and the Good Gray Poet ñWaltò of *Leaves of Grass* fame.

[9] Brasher, Thomas, Ed. *The Early Poems and the Fiction*, page vii.

[10] *With Walt Whitman in Camden*, Vol. 1, page 93

[11] In 1922, *The Christian Advocate* published an article by Carl F. Price, who ñwas able to interview people who had personally known Crane and his family.ò This article states that Mary Peck, daughter of Gregory Peck (a former editor of *Christian Advocate*) was ña writer of many subjects, was much in demand as a public speaker, especially by the Methodist womenôs societiesé ò The article criticizes how Maryôs domestic skills suffered as a result: ñso unconventional were her housekeeping habits that when she came under that scrutiny which the ladies of the congregation sometimes delight in lavishing upon a ministerôs wife, she suffered much open criticism and was finally informed that she ought to stay home and take care of her large family, instead of making so many speeches.ò

[12] ñA Woman with Weapons: The Victor in Stephen Crane's "George's Mother,ò page 93.

[13] *Stephen Crane's Literary Family: A Garland of Writings*, page 142.

[14] ibid., page 144.

[15] Mary Peck Craneôs reputation as the ultra-religious model for *George's Mother* is strongly implied in the Thomas Beer biography, a source for much related commentary regarding Craneôs mother and her work. Beerôs own sources have been revealed as extremely dubious. Beer describes Craneôs relationship to his mother as remarkably similar to the novelôs description. Calling her work with the WCTU ñthe Methodist holy showé ò Beer attributes to Crane the statement that ñit hurt her that any of us should be slipping from Grace and giving up eternal damnation or salvation or those things. You could argue just as well with a waveé ò. In the Beer biography, Crane describes getting drunk at age fourteen, after which ñI felt ecstatic and then I was an Emperoré I had been sulky all morning and now I was perfectly willing to go to a prayer meeting and Mother was tickled to death. And, mind you, all because this nefarious Florentine gave me a red drink out of a bottle.ò See *Beer,* pages 49-50. The Beer biography further asserts Craneôs anti-temperance position, stating that Crane wrote to ñMiss Catherine Harrisò that he felt Frances Willard, the national leader of the WCTU, ñis one of those wonderful people who can tell right from wrong for everybodyé Perhaps it never struck her that people differ from her. I have loved myself passionately now and then but Miss Willardôs affair with Miss Willard should be stopped by the police.ò Robert Stallman dutifully includes these accounts in his definitive collection of *Stephen Crane Letters* (1960), drawing on the Beer biography to compile unfounded sources. These sources have been used faithfully in othersô subsequent research.

However, Stanley Wertheim and Paul Sorrentino have noted that much of Beerôs source material is not in evidence, and should be considered suspect at best, if not wholly made up. In ñStephen Crane: The Clay Feet of the Beer Biography,ò Sorrentino and Wertheim argue that *all* of the unfounded material from Beerôs account should be avulsed from both canon and criticism. Beerôs biography is now considered a fictionalized biography, but its influence remains. For example, even as Christopher Benfey notes Beer as the source for letters describing Crane railing against his motherôs Methodist ñrituals,ò Benfey still feels free to state, ñThis may be Beerôs invention as well, but it seems possible that he did get wind of some such story as thisé ò (93).

[16] From *Dome of Many-Coloured Glass*, page 22. Like the Beer biography, Wheelerôs interpretation of events may be more inspired by Craneôs fictional voice than his actual history.

[17] In his review of Stephen Craneôs work originally published in May 1895 in *The Bookman*, Harry Thurston Peck noted that the manuscript of ñA Woman Without Weaponsò was in the hands of the publishers. This is the work that would become *George's Mother.*

[18] Letter to Garland, November 15, 1894 (cited on page 79 of Wertheim and Sorrentinoôs *The Correspondence of Stephen Crane,* Volume I).

[19] ñGeorgeôs Mother,ò reviewed in *Bookman* Volume 3, July 1896.

[20] *New York Tribune*, July 1, 1896.

[21] ñTwo Books by Stephen Crane,ò *Critic* Volume 26, June 13, 1896.

[22] ñNew Books: Stephen Craneôs Recent Workò *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 7, 1896.

[23] From Peckôs review in *Bookman*, July 1896.

[24] Whitman served as editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle* from 1846 until January of 1848. See Oliver, pages 259-261 for details of Whitmanôs work there.

[25] An account of the specific edits that appeared in the *Brooklyn Eagle* from November 16-30, 1846 can be found in Thomas Brasherôs *The Early Poems and the Fiction*. In addition, Brooklyn Public Library hosts the original, electronically scanned copies of *The Brooklyn Eagle*, 1841-1902 at: http://eagle.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/Default/Skins/BEagle/Client.asp?Skin=BEagle

[26] *Brooklyn Eagle,* November 24, 1846.

[27] Fiedler, Leslie. *Love and Death in the American Novel*, page 264. Fiedler criticizes the entire Southern section and Margaretôs story as intruding "so inappropriately upon Whitman's temperance novel." In *Breaking Bounds: Whitman and American Cultural Studies*, Michael Warner agrees, stating that Margaret plays only an ñancillary role in such gothic disastersò that Franklin creates.

[28] In ñTo Stand Between: A Political Perspective on Whitman's Poetics of Merger and Embodiment,ò Karen Sanchez-Eppler traces Whitmanôs reputation as ñpoet of the bodyò specifically to racialized depictions of physical relations. ñClaiming to reconcile racially distinct bodies,ò she writes, ñWhitman locates the poet in the sexually charged middle space between masters and slavesò (926). In her interpretation, Franklinôs emphasis on Margaretôs physical characteristics allows him to evacuate her unique point of view as an ex-slave, and assert his own agenda as mediating voice between poles of opposition and reconciler of differences.

[29] Michael Warner points out that, ñNewspaper subscribers and óFriends of Temperanceô would have brought to the object the mass-mediated self-understanding of the temperance movement.ò Warner criticizes the story for failing to resolve the narrativeôs controlling temperance ideal and the main characterôs struggle with a sensationalizing sensuality, but he states that the story represents the beginning of Whitmanôs later poetic dialectic between ñself mastery and self-abandonment.ò

[30] In *Whitman, Slavery and the Emergence of Leaves of Grass*, Martin Klammer notes that Whitmanôs use of the ñtragic mulattoò archetype ultimately advocates ñpro-slavery ends,ò and Margaret is symbolically demonized to illustrate the consequences of Franklinôs intoxicated freedom from social constraints.

[31] In *Race Mixture in Nineteenth-Century U.S. & Spanish American Fictions. Gender, Culture, and Nation Building*, page 63. Rosenthal argues that in *Franklin Evans,* Whitman manages themes that become significant in his poetry, specifically regarding issues of repressed sexuality.

[32] ibid, page 59.

[33] George Hutchison and David Drews describe Whitmanôs position on African Americans as ñWhitman's confused and contradictory prose meditations on race and slaveryò (568). They point out that Whitmanôs essays generally concerned the effects of racial issues on white working men. Michael Robertson has stronger language: ñWhitman, always more egalitarian in his poetry than in his personal life, cared little what happened to Southern blacks.ò Robertsonôs account details the falling out between Whitman and William OôConnor, the author of ñThe Good Gray Poet,ò who took a strong stance on black suffrage. Whitmanôs resistance to the idea caused an argument that led to a decade-long estrangement between the two men.

[34] In *Interior States*, Christopher Castiglia characterizes Franklinôs takeover of Margaret as *Franklin Evans*ôs ñimperial fantasy,ò a strategy to quell the destabilizing narrative Margaret representsò (165).

[35] Sanchez-Eppler, page 930.

[36] Craneôs impressionistic style with its pastiche of viewpoints has been alternately celebrated and lamented. In ñBackgrounds and Definitions, Conradôs óComplete Impressionist,ôò James Nagel describes this style as ñCraneôs use of fragmented scenes to form episodes, the restriction of narrative comments to perceptions rather than logical conclusionsé ò See pages 104-106 for Nagelôs discussion of Craneôs impressionist style.

[37] Bergeron, Frank. *Stephen Crane's Artistry,* page 1. In *Stephen Crane: A Biography,* Robert Stallman states that the readerôs to identify the narrativeôs moral center accounts for lack of critical remark: ñThe lack of preaching in *Maggie* undoubtedly accounts for its neglectò (78).

[38] Berryman, John. *Stephen Crane: A Critical Biography*, page 58.

[39] In *The Correspondence of Stephen Crane, Volume I and II,* page 49.

[40] ibid., page 50.

[41] Crane inscribed this message to the Reverend Thomas Dixon in a copy of *Maggie*; the inscription is recounted by Harry Thurston Peck in his review of *The Black Riders* which appeared in *Bookman* 1 (May 1895), 229.

[42] Howells, ñLife and Letters,ò page 1013.

[43] In the *Dictionary of Literary Biography,* Paul Sorrentino notes that Crane was a willing participant in the editing process: ñAlthough Crane apparently at first intended to keep his revisions to a minimum, his changes became extensive over the course of his work on the novelé Crane deleted reference to God or ógawd,ô a considerable amount of profanity, and many blasphemous epithets; presumably an editor, possibly Hitchcock himself, improved the grammar and style, tempered verbal excesses, and converted the remaining instances of ódamnô and óhellô into ódðnôand óhðllôor hðllòò (91). Crane acknowledged the edits were necessary due to the storyôs abrasive effects. In a letter to William Heinemann on February 17 1896, he wrote, ñ*Maggie* was born into a world of enemies three years ago but I have toned it somewhat the request of Appleton.ò

[44] The two-paragraph note to Ripley Hitchcock in February of 1896 consisted mainly of the ñdelicate matterò of payment.

[45] According to Robert Stallman in his critical examination of the variant editions, the chief effect of the rewrite was a loss of the ñforcefulnessò of the originalôs dialogue: ñthe 1893 edition isé far more picturesque in phrasing than the 1896 editionò (530). Stallmanôs main complaint regarding the revision concerns the gutting of Maggieôs death march in Chapter XVII, especially the loss of the repulsive, controversial ñfat manò who accompanies her to her death. This is the only omitted section Stallman found significant; his examination otherwise yielded ñdisappointing results,ò although the omission of the swear words, ñin some of the instancesé often weakens the text in tone and even in meaningò (532).

[46] In, ñNew York Low Life in Fiction,ò page 259.

[47] Craneôs letter was published in *Demorest's Family Magazine* under the title ñA Remarkable First Successò in May 1896. In a personal correspondence to Nellie Crouse dated February 11, 1896, Crane repeated the sentiment. ñI detest dogma,ò he wrote.

[48] Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden, Volume 2*, page 323. Traubel puts a period on Whitmanôs account of *Franklin Evans* by noting Whitman shared a bottle of wine as he told the story, but Traubel also points out that ñW. did not touch the wine.ò

[49] In ñBlack Cats and Delirium Tremens,ò David Reynolds posits the storyôs sensational nature as its driving force: ñé there was a good amount of dark theater involved in Whitmanôs delivery of the temperance message in *Franklin Evans*. The novel was, in his italicized words, ñwritten *for the mass*ò (*WEP*, 127), and, like other reformers of the day, he knew that the mass liked violence and sex mixed with their moralityò (49). It should be noted, however, that in ñhis italicized words,ò ñhisò indicates Whitmanôs Author, not Whitman himself.

Chapter IV: ñA Moral Monsterò: Alcohol and African American Characters

In 1853, Elizabeth Cady Stanton voiced a belief that many nineteenth-century reformers shared: ñIn our creed it is a sin to hold a slave; to hang a man on the gallows; to make war on defenseless nations, or to sell rum to a weak brotheré ò Under this reformist ñcreed,ò slave owners and alcohol distributors are equally responsible for the miseries of humankind.[1] In her autobiography *Eighty Years and More,* Stanton notes that ñabolitionists, in those days, were all converts to temperanceé ò (87) Reformers shared a vision of humanity free from the chains of addiction and repression. If reform goals embody Americaôs cultural potential, then the reverse represents not only Americaôs demise, but all humanityôs. ñEnslave the liberty of but one human being and the liberties of the world are put in peril,ò William Lloyd Garrison wrote in the first issue of *The Liberator* on January 1, 1831. Free the slave and the drunk from their tormenters, and deliver the world from mankindôs sins through an American reformist discourse.[2]

Frederick Douglass was the epitome of that reformist ideal. Having thrown off the chains of slavery and alcohol, he articulated his story as Representative Man[3] and devoted himself to abolitionist and temperance goals, as detailed in his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass.* Considered the voice of his race and an embodiment of freedom and sobriety, Douglass is nineteenth-century reformôs ideal black subject.

The temperance movementôs growing racist exclusions following Emancipation, however, led Douglass to distance himself from official affiliation with organized temperance

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Endnotes may be found on pages 221-229

associations. His faith in sober advancement and self-creation did not falter, but black progressive reform began to seem a less universally realizable dream. Temperance discourse instead followed the general post-Civil War cultural backlash defined by the Jim Crow laws. Douglass was especially dismayed by the racist alarmism sounded by cultural leaders such as Frances Willard, head of the Womenôs Christian Temperance Union, a woman Douglass acknowledged as ñdistinguished among her sisters for benevolence and Christian charity.ò[4] His dismay was in response to remarks such as the 1890 interview that Willard gave to *The Voice* magazine in which she characterized the South as overrun by drunken mobs of lawless blacks: ñ'Better whiskey and more of it' has been the rallying cry of great dark-faced mobsé ò (8). In this interview, Willard depicts a black population controlled exclusively by emotional excitements and sensual desires. She implies that black peopleôs lack of sober judgment was cause for their disenfranchisement. ñTemperance has no enemy like that, for it is unreasoning and unreachable. To-night it promises in a great congregation, a vote for temperance at the polls to-morrow; but to-morrow twenty-five cents changes that vote in favor of the liquor seller.ò[5] Douglass blasted Willardôs position, taking particular umbrage that even ñthe fairest and most humane of the Negroôs accusersò believe the average black man is essentially a drunken rapist: ñé even they paint him as a moral monster,ò Douglass lamented.

Nonetheless, Douglass believed that sobriety was a necessary component of social progress, and he remained committed to it. His commitment was well acknowledged; during the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago,[6] where Douglass served as Haitiôs ambassador, national temperance leaders gathered along with the Chicagoôs black society elite to celebrate Douglassôs life-long achievements. James Corrothers, the young local dialect poet who had organized this ñFarewell Reception,ò notes in his 1916 autobiography *In Spite of the Handicap,*

that the event gave ñall classes of my race an opportunity to show that they honoured [Douglass] as did the whites; and to pour out their gratitude to him for all he had accomplished on their behalfò (127). In attendance were ñMrs. Daisy H. Carlock, vice- president of the Illinois State W.C.T.U., and Mrs. Matthews, then prominent in temperance work in London, England, [who] told of the esteem in which Douglass was held by temperance workers everywhereò (128-9).

Douglassôs secretary at the Fair was another young poet named Paul Laurence Dunbar. Dunbar and Corrothers were well acquainted; Corrothers credits Dunbar with convincing him to experiment in the increasingly popular dialect poetry with which Dunbar was to make a great name for himself.[7] It was at Chicagoôs World Fair that Douglass called Dunbar ñthe most promising young colored man in America.ò Dunbar returned the admiration; two years after Douglassôs death, Dunbar commemorated Douglass in verse with ñFrederick Douglass,ò a poem remarking on Douglassôs continuing influence: ñthou has passed beyond the shore/But still thy voice is ringing oôer the gale!ò

Despite the influence of Douglassôs example, Dunbar and Corrothers faced different circumstances than had the great man at his own careerôs start. Whereas Douglassôs early voice was encouraged by a reformist audience that celebrated ï or at least acknowledged ï his sober self-fashioning, Dunbar and Corrothers began their careers facing a public conditioned to see an African American ñmoral monsterò characterized by violent drunkenness, a racial figure represented at best through a buffoonish minstrelsy. Their prose works bring attention to this marked public scrutiny.

This chapter considers Dunbarôs and Corrothersôs use of narrative irony in the form of satire and caricature respectively to address black life at the turn of the century. I argue that these writersô narrative targets are not representative black figures, but the audiences depicted

watching the black characters. The subject of Dunbarôs and Corrothersôs prose narratives is the performance that African American figures put on for the surrounding community. Intoxication in these prose works is framed not as monstrous or antisocial, but as an aspect of character performance that satisfies the viewing audience. The stories under discussion subsequently take on farcical aspects, specifically of tragic satire in Dunbarôs case, and of comedic caricature in Corrothersôs.

My study will begin by examining Frederick Douglassôs iconic self-representation as an African American sober ideal. Douglassôs confrontation with the temperance movementôs racism will be studied to account for Dunbarôs and Corrothersôs reaction to cultural limitations in the form of stereotypical, drunken black characters. Douglass and Corrothers used irony and exaggeration to address the public perception of irredeemably violent black drunks. The uncomfortable stereotypes depicted in these authorsô prose fictions occupy at best an ambiguous status in the African American writing tradition. This chapter will put that ambiguity in perspective by considering these authorsô literary approaches as a response to cultural expectations that black characters perform within rigidly perceived limitations.

To clarify Douglassôs struggle with American temperance and his eventual decision to distance himself from its institutions, a short discussion of temperanceôs racial history is necessary. Scholars initially assumed that temperance reform was rejected in the antebellum South, but more recently, this interpretation has undergone some revision as scholars began to pay more attention to antebellum temperance in black communities. In ñThe Transformation of the Black Temperance Movement, 1827-1854: An Interpretation,ò David Yacovone points out that there is no in-depth treatment of the nineteenth century black temperance movement to date.

In part, the competing goals of Southern temperance and black activism during this period led scholars to define Southern temperance exclusive of black civil rights. As Yacovone notes, the Southern African-American temperance movement was grounded in a rhetoric of civil liberties, ñan interpretive frame-work that locates black temperance within the larger black struggle for autonomy and freedom before the Civil Warò (282).[8] The white Southern temperance movement, however, ceded to racist sentiment and rejected their black counterpartsô civil-liberties rhetoric. Scholars have more recently focused on a strong, though not necessarily unified, temperance sentiment in the South to include the black population.[9]

It is true that white-led Southern temperance organizations resisted a perceived collusion between abolitionists and anti-alcohol activists, in concession to pro-slavery Southern economic and ideological interests. As a solution, temperance leaders marginalized and outright excluded black participation.[10] This marginalization grew following the Civil War, as a post-Reconstruction backlash relegated the freed black population to second-class status.[11] National temperance leaders increasingly uncoupled anti-liquor rhetoric from association with an enslaved peopleôs freedom, and social liberty issues yielded to coercive prohibition measures. Despite the increasingly restrictive rhetoric, black support for temperance remained strong,[12] resonating on religious/moral grounds that emphasized social integration. Sobriety was seen by the black leadership as a necessary step toward middle-class American culture. ñUpliftò ideology promoted by W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington responded to the increasingly repressive national environment defined through Jim Crow laws and by *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Although they argued over the specifics, Du Bois and Washington agreed that black citizens must model exemplary behavior.[13] Sobriety was an integral component of that model, which they hoped might lead to cultural assimilation.

But therein lay a glaring contradiction: given the increasingly repressive socio-legal conditions, assimilation was more theoretical than actual. Even as temperance ideology promised the rewards of sobriety with incorporation into American material society, this new status never materialized for the average black citizen. Consequently, although black support for temperance remained strong and black drinking was, in fact, less of a problem than for any other demographic,[14] anti-prohibitionists had some success in appealing to a portion of the black population by framing anti-liquor laws as restricting freedom of choice.[15]

Frederick Douglassôs career mirrors this trajectory of the black communityôs problematic association with white temperance institutional rhetoric from mid to late nineteenth century. He was a strong supporter of the American temperance movement, but came to object to its racist exclusions.[16] How could one hope to fix the alcohol problem when ignoring the repression that drove a part of the population to drink? Alcohol promised an illusory sense of freedom, the only freedom a black man may feel he had.

Douglass reasoned that slaves needed to understand that alcoholôs illusory escape was in fact slave ownersô oppressive tool, and as such, the slave must reject it. Douglassôs objection to alcoholic consumption is expressed in the well-known passage from his first autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845).

> é the slaveholders not only like to see the slave drink of his own accord, but will adopt various plans to make him drunk. One plan is, to make bets on their slaves, as to who can drink the most whisky without getting drunk; and in this way they succeed in getting whole multitudes to drink to excess. Thus, when the slave asks for virtuous freedom, the cunning slaveholder, knowing his ignorance, cheats him with a dose of vicious dissipation, artfully labelled with the name of liberty. The most of us used to drink it down, and the result was just what might be supposed; many of us were led to think that there was little to choose between liberty and slavery. We felt, very properly too, that we had almost as well be slaves to man as to rum.

Although ñmanò and ñrumò are ñalmostò equally oppressive, Douglassôs syntax makes clear that alcohol is an extension of the slave-ownerôs will. The slave-owner is the subject voice directing alcoholôs function as an actively oppressive agent. The slave here is a passive object, cheated of his rightful subjectivity by a ñcunningò deceiver. The slaveôs status as passive object is underscored by the passageôs focus on the slave-ownerôs subjective control. The slave owner ñcheatsò the slave by giving him a hangover equated in the slaveôs mind with alcoholôs ñdissipatedò imitation of freedom. The ownerôs objective thus dictates the slaveôs experience.

Douglass argues that the only way to attain true freedom is not through a delusional drunkenness, but through an enlightened sobriety. In his storyôs most triumphant moment, Douglass employs the rhetoric of grassroots temperance societies to underscore his theme of freedomôs sober clarity. Robert Steven Levine points out that Douglassôs language in *Narrative* ñuses almost the same religiously and politically charged Washingtonian language of the New York State Temperance Society in describing his ócemancipationô from the slave breaker, Coveyò (127). In the pivotal scene when Douglass fights Covey and achieves mental and spiritual if not physical freedom, Douglass recounts that he is moved forever ñfrom the tomb of slavery, to the heaven of freedomò (81). This scene of emancipation from plantation mentality is preceded by his meeting with Sandy Jenkins, the slave who gives Douglass a magical root for protection. ñI at first rejected the idea,ò Douglass states, but to please Sandy, he carries the root with him. While being assaulted by the slave breaker, Douglass suddenly finds the will to resist, though ñfrom whence came the spirit I don't know.ò John Sekora notes that the Covey scene illustrates Douglassôs emphasis on how his individual effort resonates collectively. ñWhen Douglass does physical battle with the slavebreaker Covey, he is establishing an identity within the earlier promise to reveal how a slave was made a man, giving a communal significance to an individual

effort.ò[17] What Sekora does not note is the importance of Sandyôs support in leading to this moment. While Douglass ultimately rejects the motivating superstition to which Sandy holds such faith, given the circumstances, he ñwas half inclined to think the *root* to be something more than I at first had taken it to be.ò Sandyôs support, effective or not, inspires in Douglass a necessary community spirit propelling him to a position where he may serve his community as elevated example.

Internal community support was all the more vital for African Americans because they were not supported by a national community. Temperance organizations modeled racist exclusions, as Douglass became increasingly aware during his trip overseas to Great Britain in 1845 through 1846. The overseas tour was arranged by fellow abolitionists and led by his mentor, the editor William Lloyd Garrison, who traveled with Douglass for part of the journey.[18] Accompanied by members of Garrisonôs organization, Douglass spoke on slavery and alcohol at various temperance meetings, including the 1846 World Temperance Convention in London. Douglass expounded on the problem of slaves being denied sober subjectivity. Slaves, he said, are given drink by owners to keep them from ñdevising ways and means by which to obtain their freedom. In order to make a man a slave, it is necessary to silence or drown his mindé which distinguishes man from the brute creation. To blind his affections, it is necessary to bedim and bedizzy his understanding. In no other way can this be so well accomplished as by using ardent spirits.ò[19] The slave is an object of the subject ownerôs abuse. The slave not only lacks agency, he is also kept from desiring agency because he is kept drunk.

In robbing human beings of the choice of salvation and turning them into degraded objects, the slave system is drunkenness write large. At a speech in Ireland, Douglass declared, ñif we could but make the world sober, we would have no slavery. *Mankind has been drunk*.ò[20]

One need not consume alcohol to be enslaved/drunk; drunkenness here is a metaphor for humanityôs communal fate. In this equation, both slave owner and slave achieve equal degradation. This fate includes freed blacks as well. ñTrue, the white and the black could wallow in their degradation in the same mire, but when the white man became sober, he had no idea of the black man coming up by his side, sober.ò It is not enough to defeat the slave owner through abolition reform. Instead, only by drawing together as a community committed to the shared goal of elevating the human subject would reform organizations find success: ñ*All great reforms go together.* Whatever tends to elevate, whatever tends to exalt humanity in one portion of the world, tends to exalt it in another part.ò Just as the enslaved communityôs faith allowed Douglass the strength to overcome the oppressionôs chains and attain the consciousness of Man, the reform communityôs faith could do the same for others who struggle under oppressive conditions.

Douglass took this message to the World Temperance Convention at the Covent Garden Theater in London, where he was invited to speak on August 7, 1846. His speech fired a shot across the American temperance delegationôs bow. Douglass pointed out the failure of temperanceôs objectives so long as black voices are excluded from participation. ñI regret,ò he said to the crowd, ñthat I cannot fully unite with the American delegates in their patriotic eulogies of America and American temperance societies. I cannot do so for this good reason: there are at this moment three million of the American population by slavery and prejudice placed entirely beyond the pale of American temperance societiesé and four hundred thousand free colored people are almost completely excluded by an inveterate prejudice against them on account of their color.ò[21] In the final version of his autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881), Douglass is careful to record the audienceôs enthusiastic response. He records the response by directly transcribing bracketed interjections into his speechôs text: ñ[Cries of

ôShame! shame!ôò and ñ[Great cheering, and some confusion on the platform.]ò In transcribing his speech in this manner, the direct audience interjections call attention to the crowdôs agreement with slaveryôs abhorrent and shameful nature. But even more, the crowdôs rebuke of Americaôs slave system serves to demonstrate that the world is on Douglassôs side in excoriating the black populationôs exclusion from American temperance institutions.[22]

Douglassôs criticisms were especially galling to the Reverend Samuel H. Cox, D.D., a member of the Conventionôs American delegation. In a letter to the *New York Evangelist,* Cox expresses outrage at Douglassôdragging the abolition argument into the temperance debate. Douglass ñcreated an Ephesian uproarò among the audience to which ñWe all wanted to replyé that the cause of temperance was not at all responsible for slavery.ò[23] Cox objects to Douglassôs ñabominationò in suggesting that the abolition and temperance movements were indivisibly linked, and he expresses indignation at what he considers Douglassôs attacks on his compatriots. Dashed off the day following Douglassôs speech, Coxôs letter charges that up to the moment of Douglassôs speech, the delegates had been under the ñinfluenceò of temperanceôs ñglorious unity of thought and feeling.ò He protests Douglassôs introduction of the slavery issue as inflammatory, setting a tone which ñmust be exorcised out of England and America, before any substantial good can be effected for the cause of the slave. It is adapted only to make bad worse, and to inflame the passions of indignant millions to an incurable resentment.ò Indeed, Cox relates, the next morning the issue was addressed, and the other temperance reformers ñall rejoice in re-established peace with us, and feel kind and pacific all.ò His emphasis on the restored ñpeaceò underscores the contrast with his description of Douglassôs ñrevengeful missilesò designed only to agitate ñthe flames of national exasperation and war.ò[24]

Coxôs gratitude for the ñre-established peaceò characterizes a harmony-loving temperance community allied against Douglassôs belligerence. This is more than a little misleading. In fact, the morning after Douglass spoke, Pennsylvaniaôs Reverend Emerson Andrews relates a far different sentiment. ñ[Andrews] wished not to quit [his English friends] until he had said a few words. He came from the land of William Penn, the special land of peace and temperance. Their only warfare there was moral. It was against slavery in all its forms ï the chains of the slave dealer; the fetter of the poison dealer and manufacturer. With regard to negro slavery, he would declare they had nailed their flag to the mast.ò[25] Andrewsôs speech repudiates Coxôs implication that the Worldôs Temperance Convention attendees were united against Douglassôs position. Instead, Reverend Andrews, a representative of the ñland of peace,ò aligned himself with Douglas against *all* slavery, both enchained and alcoholic. Andrewsôs speech echoes Douglassôs emphasis on the union of all reform movements against human bondage of any sort. After the Reverendôs statement, a resolution was reportedly carried, one that expressed hope for a time when all ñfriends of the causeò would be ñunited.ò In the meantime a ñmutual forbearance, concession and affectionò was urged. Far from Coxôs implication that delegates had united in peaceful repudiation of Douglassôs fiery rhetoric, the secretary records: ñAn irrelevant discussion then arose, relative to some observations made the previous evening, at the Covent Garden meeting, by Mr. Douglass.ò[26] Such ñirrelevantò concerns, however, played well to an American readership. Coxôs letter to the *New York Evangelist* demonstrates the very problem Douglass sought to address: the American reformist community was divided along racial lines.

Douglass replied to Cox and the American audience in *The Liberator*. His letter emphasizes a dual purpose going forward. First, he corrects the mischaracterization others assign to him. Second, he claims a position as representative speaker for his fellow African Americans.

In doing so, Douglass refuses to be pronounced upon, but claims for himself and black Americans a self-representative subject status.

Douglassøs ascension to the position of community spokesperson necessitated his break with Garrison, the man who had directed (and limited) his career to that point.[27] From this point on, Douglass spoke for the black communityøs particular needs to which reformist objectives ï including temperance objectives ï must respond. Douglassøs writing exemplifies this shift from focalizing a definitive white subjectivity, to foregrounding the black communityøs viewpoint.

This shift can be seen in the next edition of Douglassøs autobiography, *My Bondage and My Freedom,* published in 1855. The drinking slave here is more than just a drunken object in configuring national shame and exemplifying the slave-ownerøs abuse. This revised depiction of slavery is more complex than the earlier model. In *My Bondage and My Freedom*, slaves continue to be victimized by owners who manipulate alcohol consumption, but the possibility for an alternative relation between slaves and alcohol is written into the narration. The existence of alternatives emphasizes the slaveøs capacity to make rational choices. Like the original *Narrative,* the revised edition places Douglass on the same footing as other slaves: ñWe were induced to drink, I among the resté ò The original version of Douglassøs *Narrative* then recounts that ñthe result was just what might be supposed,ò emphasizing that the reader can draw the obvious conclusion. In *My Bondage and My Freedom,* however, Douglass describes the slave experience not in terms of the readerøs foregone conclusion, but in terms of the slave communityøs imaginative agency. ñ[Drinking] was not what we had taken it to be, nor what it might have been, had it not been abused by usò (255-6). The emphasis on ñwe,ò and the introduction of what ñmight have beenò suggests a potential agency that the *Narrative* does not explore in depth. Here, Douglass does not allow the reader to default to predetermined

suppositions. Instead, he directs an equation between the readerôs and the slaveôs imaginative rationality through what ñmight have been.ò Instead of defaulting to the slave-ownerôs objectives, *My Bondage and My Freedom* emphasizes the slaveôs agency by focalizing the slave communityôs subjective experience through a strongly narrated first person.[28] In *Narrative,* Douglass focused on the slave-ownerôs preferences; for example, ñthe slaveholders not only like to see the slave drink of his own accord, but will adopt various plans to make him drunk.ò In *My Bondage and My Freedom*, this line becomes, ñI have known slaveholders to resort to cunning tricks, with a view of getting their slaves deplorably drunk.ò Perhaps the most obvious revision in the autobiographyôs later version is that final line: ñIt was about as well to be a slave to *master*, as to be a slave to *rum* and *whisky.*ò In the *Narrative,* this line reads, ñWe felt, very properly too, that we had almost as well be slaves to man as to rum.ò The reader, Douglass emphasizes, should not confuse ñmanò with the slaveholder; ñmasterò and ñmanò imply distinct states in the later account. The status of humanity, ñman,ò belongs to Douglass and his fellow slaves as much as (if not more than) to the slaveholding white men.

Douglassôs updated autobiography also introduces the idea of agency into the depiction of drinking behavior among slaves. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* generalizes the imbibers to an inclusive ñweò or ñusò: ñThe most of us used to drink it down...ò While ñmost of usò indicates there are some of ñusò who do not participate, potentially sober slaves are then more or less ignored in the earlier account for a disquisition concerning alcoholôs oppressive function. *My Bondage and My Freedom* is far more explicit in taking the others into account and depicting diverse responses. In *My Bondage and My Freedom,* Douglassôs ñweò expands beyond that of the representative enslaved victim who gets drunk at the slave ownerôs command. Instead, the community Douglass describes includes a ñsoberò class that builds useful things, another

group that hunts, and finally ñthe majorityò who ñspent the holidays in sports, ball playing, wrestling, boxing, running foot races, dancing, and drinking whisky.ò In this expanded description of the holidays, drinking is one activity of many. And while the majority may indulge in less sober activities, whisky drinking is just one of them. In this way, Douglass describes an active and vital community in its own right.

While Douglass continued to support temperance reform,[29] his insistence upon civil liberties estranged him from national temperance organizations. He continued to promote the sober ideal of the black community with himself as its temperate representative. By the time Douglass, Dunbar and Corrothers all met at the World Fair in 1893, Douglass was the ñLion of Anacostia,ò his reputation as his raceôs sober Representative Man secure.

Dunbar and Corrothers inherited the same difficulties and frustrations that Douglass faced in his attempts to influence public perception concerning ñgreat dark-faced mobs.ò Corrothers and Dunbar too were considered exceptional black men. The public applause caused each a certain amount of distress, as they struggled with the divergence between their own life experience and the dialect-speaking characters that their poetry, and later their prose works, depict. Works such as Dunbarôs poem, ñWhen Melindy Sings,ò captured the public imagination with its dialect renderings and grassroots piety. ñOh, hit's sweetah dan de music/Of an edicated band;/An' hit's dearah dan de battle's/Song o' triumph in de lan'é ò Dunbarôs dialect verses at best captured the Southern accents and spiritual values of the characters he portrayed. But Dunbar grew increasingly conflicted toward the end of his short life, and Corrothers, too, grew disenchanted with the public perception of his dialect work. By 1910, Corrothers renounced the dialect form for a life in the ministry, though he did continue to produce classically-themed poetry. Dunbarôs initial success with dialect-speaking characters was reassessed following his

death in 1906, when he was accused of contributing to the production of racist literary images. He was especially maligned for his contribution to Broadwayôs first minstrelsy show, Clorindy.[30] In addition, as Henry Louis Gates points out, Dunbarôs complex negotiations with the dialect form later had to be swept aside for black Renaissance poetryôs full effect to take root. By the 1960s, critics such as Robert Bone scathingly challenged the dialect-speaking characters found in Dunbarôs novels. In *The Negro Novel in America* (1965), Bone charged that Dunbar resorted to "caricature in his treatment of minor Negro characters." Such stereotypic portraits of black characters, according to Bone, serve to reinforce ñthe prejudices of his white audience.ò[31] Dunbarôs poetry flourished in an atmosphere hopelessly entangled in minstrelsyôs racism; Gates reiterates that critics such as Bone dismiss Dunbar altogether because his dialectôs ñcentrality to the racist stage genres of minstrelsy and vaudeville had corrupted its poetic potential hopelessly, or so the argument went.ò[32]

However, contemporaneous response to Dunbarôs characterizations was enthusiastic. The *New York Times*ô review of Dunbarôs third book of poetry, *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896), for instance, unironically illustrates the contrast between what Dunbar represented as a writer, and the specific characterization of black life he was expected to produce. The review reads that Dunbar ñcaught the peculiarities of his own people, not in language alone, but in their thoughts.ò[33] It expounds on Dunbarôs ñdeliciously lazy lines,ò the ñmusical linesò and his ñjollification.ò The dialect character of Dunbarôs poems is said to be delivered by a poet who ñinterprets human passions, who counts heart throbs, and, incomprehensible as it may seem, has a subtle humor, is keen, abounding in mother witéA true singer of the people, white or black, it makes no matter.ò Despite this rave review, the gesture to the ñincomprehensibleò nonetheless points out a dilemma for Dunbar: his dialect literature was read to represent a racialized

figuration that his own erudite life contradicted. Dunbar would spend his short life torn between the literary representations his readership expected from him, and his struggle to achieve credit for his intellectual gifts.[34]

Dunbarôs novels expound on the limiting perceptions under which black characters labor. His prose works do not draw the ñportrait of a people,ò so much as they critique the perception of a people. Two novels in particular, *The Fanatics* and *Sport of the Gods,* confront the reader with black characters drinking not from an inherently bad moral nature, but in response to social expectations. The narratives focus on communities which judge drunken black characters harshly. Dunbarôs narrators never directly confront the readerôs perception of these characters, but instead filter that perception through that of the described watching community. The reader is ultimately forced to consider his own position in acquiescing to the community view, as black charactersô problematic behaviors are explicitly traced to social expectations. The satirical nature of Dunbarôs work relies on this split between what is depicted, and the injustice of these drunken black menôs fates.

Many critics trace Dunbarôs focus on the theme of reactive drunkenness to his own alcohol abuse.[35] Publicly, Dunbar characterized his alcohol dependence as a panacea for the tuberculosis that eventually killed him. In one *mea culpa* expressed in a letter published in *Talent* Magazine in 1900, Dunbar apologizes for his drunken behavior during a local university appearance. According to the poet, he had suffered a hemorrhage and was feeling unwell before the reading. Out of fear of disappointing the audience and a need ñto bolster myself up on stimulants,ò Dunbar drank more than was wise for the public occasion.[36]

Such behavior contradicted his hard-won reputation as genius poet and beacon for the community. ñThe Negro race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men,ò wrote

W.E.B. Du Bois. ñThe problem of education, then, among Negroes must first of all deal with the Talented Tenth; it is the problem of developing the Best of this race that they may guide the Mass away from the contamination and death of the Worst, in their own and other races.ò[37] Drinking issues were perceived as a significant problem of ñthe Worst.ò Reflecting a popular sentiment, Booker T. Washington remarked that ñstrong drink is one of the chief causes of Negro crime in the South. In every instance where the prohibition law has been rigidly enforced and the Negroes have been unable to get liquor, there has been a decrease in the crime rate.ò[38]

Dunbar agonized over the possibility that he be perceived in such negative terms. His apology is expressed in *Talent:* ñI was nervously anxious not to disappoint you, and so I tried to bolster myself up on stimulants. It was the only way that I could have stood up at all.ò[39] As representative of his race, Dunbar felt the pressure to transcend the very difficulties his writing depicted. He struggled to articulate a sympathetic portrayal of his black subject that took into account his readershipôs prejudiced viewpoint and his own experience as both exemplary and vulnerable human being. Demands that he write to expected racial stereotypes hampered his efforts. His relationship with William Dean Howells demonstrates Dunbarôs conundrum, as Howellsôs generous support both promoted and limited Dunbarôs career potential. In discussing Howellsôs enthusiastic introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, Dunbar later wrote that ñI see now very clearly that Mr. Howells has done me irrevocable harm in the dictum he laid down regarding my dialect verse.ò[40] Howellsôs praise of Dunbarôs ñhumorò and ñsympathyò applies to a specific type of character, one Howells defined as consisting of ñappetite and emotion, with certain lifts far beyond and above it, which is the range of the race. He reveals in these a finely ironical perception of the negro's limitations, with a tenderness for them which I think so very rare as to be almost quite new.ò[41] The fact that Howells expresses sympathy and not derision

does not make his assessment any less galling. Howells both echoes and reinforces the culturally accepted assessment that the ñMassò of black people are emotionally reactive creatures of appetite, essentially irrational.

The Fanatics (1901) and *Sport of the Gods* (1902) confront this perception, and counter with the implication that black charactersô drunken fallibilities arise in response to social expectations. These characters are caught in a losing battle between a desire for social acceptance and the communityôs unsympathetic regard. Dunbarôs intoxicated characters are not simply irrational; they are insecure. They use alcohol when safety and security has been denied them. Caught between the fantasy of a fostering communityôs inclusion and the reality of public judgment, they struggle to satisfy social expectation and overcome subsequently imposed limitations. The result is a difficult passage toward an uncertain outcome.

One such figure is ñthe negro known as Nigger Edò in Dunbarôs *The Fanatics* (1901).[42] The novel is a romance, depicting the Town of Dorbury, Ohio during and after the Civil War. The citizenry is split in loyalty. Mary and Bob, two lovers whose story composes a main plot point, are separated because of their fathersô passionate adherence to opposite sides. The narrative follows Dorburyôs response to the War efforts and the conflicts that arise as a result; it ends with the townôs uneasy reconciliation.

Ed is Dorburyôs town mascot, introduced as a degraded black figure who ñfilled, with equal adaptability, the position of town crier and town drunkardò (13). He is regarded as a ridiculous character whose dramatic and faulty interpretations of the townôs news supply the townspeopleôs entertainment. He ultimately finds redemption on the battle lines, as the War gives him a chance to serve as nurse to the Union wounded and dying.

But before the war, Ed seems happy to play his buffoonish role. His happiness is specifically illustrated in terms of public perception, not through his own state of mind. The narration does not clarify Edôs point of view, but instead addresses the reader to consider Ed through the townspeopleôs view of him. For instance, Mary expresses her unhappiness at the Warôs effect on her life as follows. ñWhat had she to do with those black men down there in the South, it was none of her business? For her part, she only knew one black man and he was bad enough. Nigger Ed was funny. They all liked him and laughed at him, but he was not exemplaryò (13) In introducing Ed, Mary singles him out in two separate ways which she then connects. First, she associates Ed with ñthose black men,ò and as such indirectly responsible for the civil conflict she hates. Second, as a drunk he is ñnot exemplary.ò Even though Dorburyôs citizens find Ed ñfunny,ò his drunkenness serves as a representation of black peopleôs unworthiness of community protection. Mary blames Ed in his status not as a citizen of Dorbury, but as a racial representative. In blaming Edôs representative character for Dorburyôs ï and the countryôs ï implosion, Mary finds a way to keep her community imaginatively intact by turning her gaze on Ed, and not considering her own inflammatory prejudices and ignorance as fuel for conflict.

Maryôs assessment of Edôs inherent drunken unworthiness is contradicted when ñthose black menò begin to appear in Dorbury. As the town has become a sanctuary for Southern refugees fleeing the war, Southern ex-slaves settle in hovels on the edge of town. They soon become a focus for the townôs frustrations over war issues, and they are rejected by both white townspeople and Dorburyôs black community alike. ñBut were they received with open arms?ò the narrator asks, only to answer, ñNo, the God that fostered black and white alike, rich and poor, was not known to foster these poor fugitivesé ò (162). Like Ed, the refugees become scapegoats for the townspeopleôs fears. Maryôs use of Edôs drunkenness as proof of his unworthiness is

revealed as mere excuse when alcohol instead incites a group of white vigilante townsmen who share Maryôs opinion about black people. ñSome of the citizens of Dorbury, inspired by the public spirit which barroom speech arouse, had determined to rise and throw off the stigma of black invasion.ò[43] Civil discord is traced here not to an inherently weak and drunken black character, but to drunken white prejudice. The mob is led by Raymond Stothard, brother of a leading Dorbury citizen, a man ñcapable of doing anything when he was drunk.ò Stothard is ñdrunk when he made the speech which instantly made him the leader of the aggressive movementò (164). He plays on his listenersô fears about the refugees eventually taking over of white menôs jobs, so that ñthe men who are eating white bread and butter will have to get down to the level of these black hounds.ò Stothard and his angry drunken mob then descend upon the refugee camp, starting a war within town limits. The black men rise to the occasion, and ñstood their ground and fought like soldiersò (176). The result is a decimated encampment and Stothardôs death.

The scene that follows explicitly overturns Maryôs willful desire to blame Edôs drunken unworthiness as a representative source of conflict. Almost immediately following Stothardôs death, a meeting is called to discuss the ongoing tensions tearing the town apart. Edôs inadvertent appearance causes an uproar between town citizens advocating for the North, and those advocating for the South. ñOne side was furious that blood should be spilled for such as the negro bell-ringer, while the other was equally incensed at being accused of championing his causeò (180). Finally, the townôs leading citizen interrupts the argument and provides the key to the novel as a whole: ñThe trouble is not with him but with us. It's not without, it's within. It's not what he is but what we believeò (182). The narrator then reflects on this speakerôs configuration of ñhimò as opposed to ñus,ò in that it does not account for Edôs feelings, but explains him

through the perception of his fellow human beings. ñ[Ed] was so near the animal in the estimation of his fellows (perhaps too near in reality) that he could be presumed to have few mental impressions.ò Ed is more like ña childò seeking approval, though the town thinks of him as a dog without humanity. ñBut no one would have given him credit for that much of human feeling. They had kicked a dog and the dog had gone away. That was all. Yet Ed was not all the dog. His feeling was that of a child who has tried to be good and been misunderstood. He should not have felt so, though, for he knew Dorbury and the times by an instinct that was truer than conscious analysis, and he should have known, if he did not, that the people who mistreated him, were not sane and accountable. But the under dog does not stop to philosophize about his positionò (182-183). Edôs lack of ñconscious analysisò reworks the metaphor the town prescribes to those of his race, replacing ñdogò with ñunderdog,ò the image of the ultimately innocent human being. ñEd was not all the dog,ò but responded as ñthat of a child,ò though ñHe should not have felt so.ò While the ñchildò descriptor is hardly the soldier image assigned to the black refugeesô armed resistance, it serves to directly contradict Stothardôs characterization of the black population, when he calls them ñblack hounds,ò and by extension, the narrativeôs characterization of Ed contradicts Maryôs original dismissal as well.

Edôs child-like response becomes the source for the townôs healing process. Ed begins to transform as he marches off with the Union regimen as servant to the troops. He answers the watching crowdôs mockery of him with "óNemmine, you people, nemmine. You got to git somebody else to ring yo' ol' bell nowô' (53). Though Dorbury at first resists Edôs self-imagined role as more than the townôs bell-ringer, it comes to embrace him in his new role. ñThere came a time when [the townspeople] wept at the thought of that black buffoon; the town nigger, the town drunkard, when in the hospital and by deathbeds his touch was as the touch of a mother;

when over a blood-swept field, he bore a woman's dearest and nursed him back to a broken life. But no more of that. The telling of it must be left to a time when he who says aught of a negro's virtues will not be cried down as an advocate drunk with prejudiceò (53). While the town will always see him in part as ñthe town nigger, the town drunkard,ò Ed has become far more. The narrative never again mentions Edôs drinking; he has sobered up in his new role. Instead of the derisive ñNigger Ed,ò the narration from this point refers to Ed as ñNegro Ed.ò

Ed subsequently declines the invitation of a former townsman to join him in rebuilding the South, ñwhere there are lots of your people,ò and ñyou wonôt be teasedò (310). He instead chooses to remain in Dorbury, where his circumstances have changed with the townôs needs. The townspeople still see Ed in relation to their own reactionary perspective, but he is now framed in a more sympathetic context, as comforter of the Warôs sick and dying. Mothers ñbegged him to come in and talk to them about their sons who had been left on some Southern field, wives who wanted to hear over again the last words of their loved onesé And so they gave him a place for life and everything he wanted, and from being despised he was much petted and spoiled, for they were all fanaticsò (312). The town remains condescending, and Ed is still treated as a pet, but his new position reflects his newly perceived value. He continues to metaphorically rings the townôs bell, and the townspeople continue to use Ed as an object of the citizenôs emotion-laden perceptions and needs. But as the townôs comforter instead of its buffoon, Ed reaps the material rewards of having ña place for life.ò He chooses to take advantage of his bettered circumstances, given that both Northerners and Southerners see him exclusively in their own terms. But, ñNemmine, you people, nemmine.ò A major difference between the drunken buffoon and the sentimental healer is that the latter position confers the advantages of being ñpetted and spoiled.ò This is a big difference materially, if not idealistically. It is not exactly a choice; Ed makes do,

given the circumstances. Although Ed remains confined by the townôs fanatical needs, his ability to rise to the occasion and transform himself in difficult circumstances ultimately gets the best of the bargain.

Dunbarôs narrative satirizes the belief by Dorburyôs citizens in Ed as representation of degraded black character, when in fact he delivers the loving touch and comfort the townspeople are incapable of providing for themselves. He neither escapes from nor triumphs over the townôs view of him ï they continue to ñpetò him, and to consider him ñthe town nigger, the town drunkard.ò But his ñchildò-like character also fills the role of healer the town requires, allowing Ed to leave his buffoonish role and assume a role more socially and materially rewarding. In the narrativeôs view, Ed is neither triumphant nor degraded; he is instead as compromised and compromising as Dorbury itself, a true member of the community.

Dunbarôs next novel, *Sport of the Gods,* [44] more directly articulates intoxication in black life as a result of destabilizing social pressures, rather than an endemically weak black character. In *Sport of the Gods*, the Hamilton family is destroyed by their desire to believe in two representations of security: first, a myth of the plantation idyll,[45] and then a myth of Northern urban salvation.[46] As the novel begins, Berry Hamilton works as a butler for the patriarchal Oakley family. He and his family live happily in a cottage on the prosperous plantationôs grounds. The drama begins when Berry is falsely imprisoned for stealing from his employer despite twenty years of faithful service. Oakley automatically assumes Berry is guilty because he is black, despite Berryôs proven history of loyalty as well as the clues that Oakleyôs brother has both motive and opportunity and is, in fact, the actual thief. Berry is thrown into jail and the remainder of the Hamilton family moves North after being tossed off the Oakley plantation in disgrace.ñThey had heard of New York as a place vague and far away, a city that, like Heaven, to

them had existed by faith aloneé ò (77). The Oakleys look to New York to replace the plantationôs promise of security and home. On arrival in New York, however, the narrative notes, the provincial has ña feeling of loneliness, almost of grief, that with all of these souls about him he knows not one and not one of them cares for him. After a while he will find a place and give a sigh of reliefò (82). The sense of estrangement fades as one settles in. ñThe subtle, insidious wine of New York will begin to intoxicate himé The Bowery will be his romance, Broadway his lyric, and the Park his pastoral, the river and the glory of it all his epicé ò The sentimental romance describing New York is comparable to the plantation romance which blinded Berry to his employerôs capacity for betrayal. Both are comparable to intoxicationôs focus on romance and security, an illusion that fights the alienating insecurity that Oakleyôs betrayal and New Yorkôs estrangements represent.

Berryôs son Joe finds solace from these insecurities when a shady neighbor befriends him, and introduces him to the Banner, a local bar. ñThe Banner was only one of a kind. It stood to the stranger and the man and woman without connections for the whole social life. It was a substitute--poor, it must be confessed--to many youths for the home life which is so lacking among certain classes in New Yorkò (117). The naïve Joe fails to recognize the depth of this ñsocial cesspool, generating a poisonous miasma and reeking with the stench of decayed and rotten moralitiesò (118). His nervous uncertainty about fitting in, however, is quieted by the illusions and delusions fostered by this environment. He meets ñSadness,ò one of the barôs hustlers. In his need to feel included, Joe cannot recognize the mockery of sentiment with which Sadness explains his name. ñóA distant relative of mine once had a great grief. I have never recovered from it.ôJoe was not quite sure how to take this; but the others laughed and he joined them, and then, to cover his own embarrassment, he did what he thought the only correct and

manly thing to do,--he ordered a drinkò (113). Alcoholôs warmth fills him and eases his uncertainty. ñThey took a drink. There was quite a line of them. Joe asked the bartender what he would have. The men warmed towards him. They took several more drinks with him and he was happyò (114). The prose here simplifies to focus on Joeôs immediate present. This simple, straightforward rhetoric is in stark contrast to the narrativeôs profuse descriptions of Joeôs sentimental agonies of desire and loss from earlier passages, such as when he finds employment for the first time: ñHe began his work with heart elate. Now he had within his grasp the possibility of being all that he wanted to be. Now Thomas might take him out at any time and not be ashamed of himò (109). Joeôs hopes and fears concerning what ñmightò be possible are tormenting insecurities. In contrast, the phrasing describing Joeôs drinking experience at the Banner allows Joe to simply be: ñhe was happy.ò

This feeling is as intoxicating as the liquor and inseparable from it. Unfortunately for Joe, the experience of security does not accompany his secure feeling. As the novel progresses he grows increasingly frustrated and unremittingly drunk. One night, Joe stumbles upon Sadness speaking with Skaggs, a white ñcelebrityò reporter who wants to make clear he is not slumming, but perfectly at home in the bar. ñI get more inspiration than I could get at any of the greater clubs in New Yorké I 'd rather come down here and fellowship right in with you fellows. I like coloured people, anyway. It's natural. You see, my father had a big plantation and owned lots of slavesé ò (121). Everyone else knows Skaggs is a ña monumental liar.ò His claims of fellowship are part of the delusional atmosphere: ñé he calmly believed his own lies while he was telling them, so no one was hurt, for the deceiver was as much a victim as the deceivedò (122). Skaggs actually grew up on a Vermont farm. Joeôs reliance on alcoholôs false security reflects his inability to perceive Skaggsôs tall tales and his false friendship. Skaggs cares nothing for Joe; he

is only interested in getting a good story for his paper. As Joe relates the tale of his familyôs tragic expulsion from the South and his own downward spiral, Skaggs ignores Joeôs violent threats to kill a faithless girlfriend, and instead focuses on the mention of Berryôs imprisonment. ñGreat story, ain't it? Come, come, wake up here. Three more, Jack. What about your father?" Skaggs considers at first that Joe may have framed Berry himself. This could be a ñbig sensation for my paper.ò When he realizes the story is not *that* sensational, he decides to investigate anyway. Skaggs travels South and uncovers the truth, exposing Oakleyôs crime in a headline that reads: ñA Burning Shame! A Poor and Innocent Negro made to Suffer for a Rich Manôs Crime!... A Universe Reporter to the Rescue!!ò (238).

The drunken Joe is left behind, ñhelplessò and ñpitiable.ò His girlfriend rejects him and he indeed kills her. The bar patrons, Joeôs supposed friends, dismiss him as ñOnly one more who had got into the whirlpool, enjoyed the sensation for a moment, and then swept dizzily downò (212). The irony here is that no one wants to know about Joeôs sad situation; had he bothered, Skaggs may have saved *both* Joe and Berry from prison. Instead, Skaggs only cares about which part of the story may be twisted to sell a heroic rescue story that will satisfy the publicôs sensational appetite for easy moralizing. The headlineôs scandalized tone is ironically self-serving.

Skaggsôs headline is repudiated by the narrativeôs direct condemnation of those who manipulate the meaning of tragic events to their own ulterior motives. Such moralizing or politicization of harrowing events, the narrative implies, reflects the heartless actions of characters who use people like the Hamiltons for their own ends. Joe is seen by Skaggs and the Bannerôs patrons as ñOnly one more who had got into the whirlpool, enjoyed the sensation for a moment, and then swept dizzily down. There were, indeed, some who for an earnest hour

sermonised about it and said, ôHere is another example of the pernicious influence of the city on untrained negroes. Oh, is there no way to keep these people from rushing away from the small villages and country districts of the Southé ôò (212). The narrative here rebukes political and religious posturing that looks no further than Joeôs drunken example as support for the mistaken belief that African American should stay in the South. The Hamiltonsô problem is not one of location. The problem is an overall lack of empathy and inclusion no matter where a black family finds itself. Black people are exploited for the national communityôs moral and ideological ends, subject to what ñThey wanted to preach,ò or to gain through moralizing manipulations. For Joe, drink offers an illusory retreat from a justifiable insecurity. His social environment is composed of manipulated representations; there is nothing to rely on. Joe drinks himself into a stereotype of drunken self-destruction waiting for him in the watching eyes of the Bannerôs patrons. He is only ñone of many.ò Dunbarôs narrative exposes how shallow the bar patronsô dismissal of Joe is, and emphasizes this point with the above warning to the reader not to dismiss Joe in similar terms.

Both Joe and *The Fanatics'* Ed are perceived to represent stereotypes, characterizations that have been read as straightforward representations as opposed to ironic ones. In their desire to become part of the social environment, these characters play to their communityôs exploitative expectations. Ed especially responds to the public view that he act the buffoon, resulting in the evocation of a minstrelsy performance. In Dunbarôs narratives, however, the depiction of public perception is key to differentiating character figuration from stereotypical assignments of behavior. Dunbar had harsh words for ñintelligent peopleé unable to differentiate dialect as a philological branch from the burlesque of Negro minstrelsy.ò[47] Nonetheless, the specter of minstrel-derived representations haunts his works. If his novels make for uncomfortable reading,

they are meant to; Dunbar invokes the character of intoxicated black men in order to confront the stereotype of the angry, drunk and violent mob mentality that was believed by the public to inform black character in general.

If Dunbarôs work suggests minstrelsyôs problematic representations, James Corrothersôs only full-length fiction, *The Black Cat Club*, directly exploits them. Dickson Bruce notes that Corrothersôs book received little criticism for its depictions when published in 1902.[48] However, ñé for readers at a later time, the caricatures are so broad, and the stereotypes so pervasive, that, despite its ties to folk sources, *The Black Cat Club* has been very hard to fit into most historical paradigms for African-American writing, particularly those emphasizing, rightly, issues of protest and liberation.ò[49] At the same time, this odd prose fictionôs presentation of Club membersô transgressive behavior suggests a potential for productively liberated meaning and communication across communities, and the possibility for a dialectic between form and reform.

The Black Cat Club follows the exploits of a group of intoxicated, riotous, slang-speaking black men staging an incendiary public image for material gain. The story features Sandy Jenkins, the slang-speaking ñpoet laureate of the Chicago levee.ò The book begins with Sandy organizing his ñBlack Cat Club,ò which is touted in Chicagoôs journals and newspapers as ñthe most peculiar literary society on earthò (16). The Clubôs nine members resemble characters lifted straight out of Sandyôs dialect poetry, which is reproduced in many of the bookôs chapters. Each chapter highlights a meeting of the club, during which members tell stories passed down from the plantation and an enslaved past. They also host mock debates of wildly misinterpreted political and philosophical subjects, and visit other locales to perform minstrel-type shows promoting the Clubôs reputation. As the story proceeds, Sandy positions himself to ascend to the

middle class by inviting key community figures to these events. The novel ends with the groupôs temperance reformation at a local church. Sandy and his group renounce their alcohol-drenched, violent past, and Sandy marries his sweetheart, the daughter of a meatpacker whose business Sandy will inherit.

The name ñSandy Jenkinsò is lifted directly from Frederick Douglassôs *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Sandy was the superstitious slave who inspired Douglass to fight for his freedom. In Douglassôs tale, Sandy represents the slave mentality Douglass specifically rejects in order to rise to self-realization, representing the self-created American man who throws off plantation cultureôs superstitions. *The Black Cat Club* reverses the value given to Sandyôs superstitious mentality in Douglassôs text; in Corrothersôs story, Sandy negotiates his way to middle-class material splendor by exploiting the popular taste for his embodiment of plantation cultureôs urban legacy, in dialect-speaking, hard-drinking, razor-slashing representations. Corrothersôs appropriation of Sandy Jenkins underscores the target of Corrothersôs caricatured figures: public promotion of minstrelsyôs stereotypes. Dickson Bruce states that the book deserves both credit and censure for stories told ñin a manner that fully captures the forms of banter and verbal play often identified with African-American folk communities. On the other [hand], *The Black Cat Club* frequently lapses into stereotyped-based situations and, especially, characterizations that owe more to minstrelsy than to African-American lifeò.[50] The narrative caricatures Sandy and his Clubôs behavior as a direct representation of minstrelsyôs sensational material as expressed in Sandyôs poetry.

The Black Cat Club is sub-titled ñNegro Folk-Lore and Humor.ò The best of its dialect-accented character renderings recreate the tall tales and ghost stories circulated by slaves, and handed down since before the War. The worst of the book lifts Club membersô behavior straight

from the minstrel stage: Club members drink heavily, fight raucously and brandish their ever-present razors, a staple of minstrel songs.[51] In the first chapter, ñThe Club Introduced,ò Sandy insists that Club meetings revolve around ñwatermelons, ôpossums, sweet tatahs, pie, coônpone, pôok chops, chicken and intoxicating liquors.ò[52] Club meetings are held in ñBilly Spooksôò tavern, and the first of Sandyôs poems, recited at the end of Chapter I is titled ñDe Cahvinô,ò in which two men slash each other to death with razors: ñé bofe at last in mincemeat fell./But in de midst ob dat brown hash/de razahs still contrived to clashé ò (25).

The Black Cat Club exploits this drunken, violent, dialect-speaking black stereotype as a matter of plot. Sandyôs ambitions are staged to promote his middle-class aspirations before a complicit ï and often a mocking ï audience. The Clubôs violent drunkenness is viewed as entertainment by these complicit audiences who are characterized in the story as abetting the Clubôs socially ambitious performances.[53] The minstrel performance serves as public relations; alcohol consumption suits the publicôs expectation of this ñstampò of a certain characterôs appetites. Sandy gives the people what they want; and so does Corrothers.

Corrothers himself later rejected *The Black Cat Club* altogether. In his 1916 autobiography, *In Spite of the Handicap,*[54] Corrothers states: ñI have grown to consider the book a very poor one, and I regret exceedingly that it was published.ò In telling his life story, Corrothers contrasts his own ñsober, respectableò behavior with the drunken rowdiness of a ñrazor-toting classò composed of violent black men who on the surface bear a striking resemblance to *The Black Cat Club*ôs characters. Kevin Gaines notes that Corrothersôs autobiographical account supplies conservative religious morality as the safe alternative to the violent black drunks of this dangerous class. Gaines states that ñaggression was encoded in Corrothers's use of dialect, as he deployed minstrel stereotypes of primitive, disorderly black

men whom he occasionally mastered in his narrative through physical violence.ò[55] Corrothersô ñself-serving use of minstrelsyò is at times ñrefiguredé with sympathetic representations of urban black vernacular culture,ò but for the most part, the autobiography demonstrates a ñlogic of class stratification to divisive extremes.ò Moral standards guard the class gates; in *In Spite of the Handicap*, Corrothers distinguishes between ñsavageò black men and good Christians, lamenting that controlling the former disaccommodates the latter. In one passage, he laments the invasion of ñRowdy Negroesò on trains, who are ñfull of bad liquor, and bent on a fight.ò These men ñsit down and drink more whiskey, lurch through the car, insult respectable coloured women and mené obscenely cursing, with pistol or knife in hand. It is no wonder that white Southern legislators have sought by prohibitive laws to protect their own men and women from such disgusting and dangerous displays of black savagery as thisò (120). Such condemnable behavior is contrasted to the ñdecent and intelligent coloured peopleò who are then legally forced to share these unacceptable menôs fates. Corrothers believed the black community should be as appalled as the white community. He would later reject *The Black Cat Club* in part because it collapses the distinction between the ñdangerous displaysò indicated in the above passage, and the space occupied by ñdecent and intelligent coloured people.ò *The Black Cat Club* instead presents Sandy and his crowd not simply as ñRowdy Negros,ò but conscious of the public relations value in their behavior. These characters function not as simple representations (as such figures do in his autobiography), but as caricatures of the representation that minstrelsy stages.

Corrrothersôs autobiography anachronistically laments that *The Black Cat Club* was never meant to be a representation of black life per se,[56] but pure fiction. The book was reportedly born of a slow news cycle when, as a young journalist, Corrothers needed some extra money. In fact, he originally feared that his ñperfidyò in submitting the original piece would be called out.

Instead, his editor encouraged him, and *The Black Cat Club* emerged as a series of articles that Corrothers published in the 1890s while working for the Chicago *Journal.*

> "It's good stuff," said the managing editor, "and we want you to write something about that fellow every week."
> "But he doesn't exist!" I confessed. "I ð I made the whole thing up," I explained.
> "Oh, we knew that!" declared the editors. "But make up some more. We'll help you with the dialect," they added when I admitted that I didn't know much about that. (138)

Corrothers emphasizes here that the characters are non-existent creations, born from the urging of (white) editors who responded positively to Corrotherôs first article caricaturizing Sandy Jenkins. According to this account, Corrothersôs dialect inscription is more the work of the editors who ñgave me a book in dialect so that I might study that form of speech.ò Corrothers explains his fictional work as a means of furthering his career, and making some money by pandering to the audience.

The Clubôs prolific alcohol use is part of an image. In Sandyôs Club, intoxication facilitates social relations as much as it breaks them down. When there are disagreements, Sandy is quick to smooth them over with alcohol facilitating the negotiation. An early argument over who is to be Club secretary, for example, is settled when Sandy commands the two men to ñóto a dram outen ma bottle and be frênôs!ôò (44). Drinking establishes and reinforces social bonds within the Club. It also sets up the reform performance in the bookôs last chapter, a performance that achieves Sandyôs ultimate goal of acceptance into the middle class. Sandy is, above all, a performer, capable of identifying and courting all types of audiences.

The setting for his public ascension through reform is introduced from the start, when minstrelsy and reform are both introduced as public postures. Immediately after Sandyôs press release has gone public, the Club receives a number of letters. In responding to them, Sandy demonstrates his ability to direct his Clubôs interaction with the public, as well as his canny

ability to negotiate social relations and read between the lines for his own benefit. The first letter is sent by Mrs. Woodby-Jenkins. As ñan indignant colored woman who did not approve of the club,ò she writes, ñóYour ñBlack Cat Clubò with its disgusting orgies and horrid antics, belongs to a past generation. We who are trying to lift the race up to a higher plane of civilization are disgusted by such uncircumspect and undignified conduct. I suggest you disband your club, reform, and take ten years solitary confinement ï in schoolôò (50). The stiff grammar reflects the worst of uplift mentality, in that Mrs. Woodby-Jenkins populates a community ñWeò with those condemning Sandy to a social no-manôs land. In proposing banishment, Mrs. Woodby-Jenkins allows no room for a dialogic exchange. The Club responds in kind by throwing the letter out.

Sandy does not reject the idea of reform, but the idea of closed-off communities. The second letter, from Reverend Jehoshaphat Johnsing the Thirdly, opens up communication. In contrast to the disapproval expressed by Mrs. Woodby-Jenkins, Reverend Johnson writes, ñYou doubtless know of the great work of reform which our church is doing among the colored people of the levee districté Knowing your great influence over this large class of unfortunate people, we write to enlist your sympathy in our workôò (47). The Reverend describes the Club not as an isolated object of reform, but as a subject effecting influence, joined with Johnsing in larger community concerns. In his letter, the Reverend imagines the Club in a position of power that flatters Sandyôs self-image. The Reverend goes on to entreat the Club to remember that ñyoung men may enjoy *this* worldôs goods *for a little season*, but they will all vanishé ôò He invites them to his churchôs revivals. Then, Johnsing laments the churchôs impoverished state, intimating that his motive for writing is at least in part a material ambition similar to Sandyôs. Sandy recognizes a like-minded achiever. The moral reform/religious message is delivered as a

socially inclusive invitation between men with similar material goals. Reform is performed to enable the Reverendôs social ambitions, much as minstrelsy is performed to enable Sandyôs.

Sandyôs ambition is ultimately reformist; even now, when his ñlittle seasonò of rowdiness is not yet done, it is in service to transformative potential, and not simply a hedonistic celebration. This is demonstrated during the Clubôs meeting on the North Side, after Sandy is invited by a letter from a German tavern owner. ñMine name vas Shake Schneider, und I geebs a von zaloon py de Nordt seid outò (46). He signs off with ñgoodpy.ò This letter introduces the North Side encounter as predicated on a question of dialect representation, and a consequent capacity for communication across different groups. This is most clearly (or, confusedly) illustrated in the chapter ñBei Der Nort Seit Oudt.ò

In this chapter, the Club meets at Schneiderôs tavern. The intoxicated atmosphere found there facilitates communion between these disparate groups, and Sandy is revealed as a master communicator. The text presents Schneiderôs letter, his speech, and the textual inscriptions of the German character as of a piece; all convey in the same hearty welcome the German embodies. His letterôs warmth and dialect is reinscribed in the sign at the door of his tavern: ñHon. Santypo Shenkins unt his Crate Plack Gat Glubs/Vill meedt here to-night!/Coot music! Lots um fun!/Coom evôrypodys!/Ein class um peeré ò (66). Sandy and his group respond to the placard by flourishing the signs of their own character; they take out their razors. Sandy leads his group in, commanding: ñGenamums ob de Black Cat Club, fall in line! Single file! Draw razahs! March!ò Schneider greets them in a welcoming speech loaded with the same dialect as his letter and the sign, all conveying a similar effusive message. ñôMr. Shinkins, I vas cladt to meedt you undt der crate Plack Gat glub. Vat you trink?ôò (67).

Corrothers was to recount in his autobiography his embarrassment when submitting a German dialect poem to an editor in hopes of being published. ñI remember still how broadly the courteous editor smiled, as he rejected it ð not, I know now, at what I imagined its irresistible humor; but ð at *me*ò (64-65). This embarrassment is probably more understandable to current readers than the idea of transgressed boundaries that ñBei Der Nort Seit Oudtò attempts to convey. As Margaret Atwood stated, ñThis kind of dialect now makes good liberals cringe.ò Holger Kersten points to Atwoodôs remark in explaining why books such as *The Black Cat Club* are so difficult to read now, but Kersten also points to Corrothersô original hope for his dialect work, arguing ñin favor of accepting certain types of nonstandard language as legitimate forms of literary expressioné a writer creates for himself new forms and patterns of literary expression in order to free himself from the strictures of the literary tradition...ò[57] Corrotherôs dialectic inscriptions in this chapter attempt to reveal these speech patterns as at once attached to specific communities, but also to suggest their transformational potential in communicating across social groups.

The meeting between Sandyôs Club and the Germanôs tavern involves testing the boundaries of representational capacity in a contest to appropriate each otherôs dialect. With alcohol facilitating communication and establishing the groupsô willingness to overcome differences, the dangers, absurdities and successes of misappropriating dialectôs representations demonstrate this exchangeôs transgressive nature. Schneider first announces his friends will begin the ñliderary brocramò with ña nigger song.ò The narrative notes that ñLittle Hansé proceeded to murder the old Negro melodyò (71). In answer to this, Sandy produces and the text reproduces a doggerel of German dialect, set down in the very accents Schneider has been using, but attributed to Sandyôs recitation. Given Sandyôs heretofore strong black dialect accent, the

textôs representation of his German-inflected oral presentation underscores Sandyôs successful capacity to assume the German mode of expression. How valid is this verse as a representation of German dialect, in Sandyôs imitative hands? How valid is the characterization of an ñold Negro melodyò as a ñnigger songò? Sandyôs recitation is seen as ñfaithfulò by his audience. When asked where he learned to speak this way, Sandy replies that he learned from ñan ole Dutchman dat went around wid sourkraut in his ears!ò (76). In performing each othersô verses, both Schneider and Sandy touch upon the exploitative misrepresentations that generate the reproductions, locating meaning not in the verseôs inherent form, but in the audienceôs acceptance of that formôs mastery.

The extreme limit of this exchange is reached when one tipsy performance ñprecipitated a riot, and for five minutes Dutchmen and Negroes were scrambling together and pulling noses, ówithout regard to race, color, or previous condition of servitudeôò (72-3). The complete overthrow of social differences is expressed as a brawl in which all boundaries are overcome. The boundaries are so overcome, in fact, that the quote offset within this description is lifted from the Civil Rights Act of 1866.[58] This violent misrepresentation of the Actôs formal intent appropriates its originating spirit out of text and into the context of this meetingôs social agenda. The Actôs original rhetoric is appropriated completely out of its formal context, its intention appropriated to an inappropriate setting, yet one its ideals nonetheless addresses.

But if Corrotherôs story may be appreciated for depicting a cross-cultural communication (albeit a questionably appropriate one), its depiction of black performance to established white civic representatives is much more uncomfortable. In ñThe Great Debate,ò the Club agrees to invite an audience of paying professionals to their Debate. Sandy is primarily interested in members of ñde Boaôd oô Tradeò who attend; in order to get them there, the meeting is opened to

other curious members of the public. These include a minstrel performer who observes to sharpen his own stage performance,[59] an evangelist interested in helping the poor (with Sandy and his crew representative objects of his charity), a local journalist looking for a headline, and even two curious policemen. The trade men see Sandyôs direction with the Club as promising his future ñas a leader among your peopleò (196). While the Club enters the debate ñ*excited*… by a temptation to óshow offô before the guestsò (179), the guests are ready to exploit the Clubôs performance to their own ends.

In the German tavern chapter, Sandyôs mastery of dialect appropriation and the textual violation of the Civil Rights Act suggested a potent space of transgressive transformation at Sandyôs command. Here, however, textual misrepresentations result in violent misunderstanding.

> ñAnô de Bible say,ò continued Loudmouth,
>
> óAht am long, and time am movin.ô
>
> An hit donô nothinô ôbout courage. Courageôll nevah git you into de congregation oô de righteous! An I donô hab to quote no Shakespere, ner any other kin oô spear! Donô hab to mess wid no poetry ôt all! Donô hab to go outside oô de lids oô de Holy Bible to prove a good runôs better ônô a bad stanô! Look at de chillunô oô Isôal! Didnôt dey run outen deô lanô de Egypt! Anô wuznôt dat a good run? (187)

Saskatchewan Jones takes Loudmouthôs argument not as a reference to the Bible, but as a misappropriation directly insulting his valor. In addition, audience members come prepared to misinterpret the Clubôs performance and read their own interpretation into events; the resultant drunken brawl between Club members gives them the perfect opportunity to do so. The evangelist is ñunused to such scenes, and frightened beyond measure,ò (195) but ñdetermined to get his moneyôs worth.ò The minstrel performer is busy taking notes. As the debate horrifically unfolds into a razor slashing that sends the losing Club member to the hospital, ñthe reporter was dashing off his story, page after page,ò to be later published as ñHorrible Midnight Murder at the

Black Cat Club.ò Like Dunbarôs Skaggs, the reporter exaggerates an aspect of the story in order to serve the public appetite for sensational fare.

While Sandy has made headway with the Board of Trade, that success has come at the expense of the Club membersô feelings and flesh. He reconciles his Club in a remarkably sober chapter titled ñReconciliation and Remembrances,ò but the Clubôs ñlittle seasonò is done, as predicted by Reverend Johnsing in his letter urging reform.

The Clubôs reform is performed in Johnsingôs church. In a final performance of assimilation, Sandy achieves his ultimate goal, ascending to the middle class by renouncing his past (drunken) behavior and marrying his sweetheart Sybil. Through her, he obtains both a respectable wife and business. Sandy directs his Club to capitulate to their new socially respectable, middle-class role. To reap the material benefits, the Club surrenders to the religious audienceôs expectations, and pledges fidelity to a productive morality. The Club members allow themselves to be written upon by the churchôs social standards, and the Club is described as in tune with the ñold, old storyò of religious reform. This capitulation to convention is illustrated in a narrative which focalizes the congregationôs reaction to the Clubôs performance, as opposed to focalizing through the Club membersô performative experience. Contributing to this sense of the Clubôs acquiescence to the viewing audienceôs reading, the narratorôs verb syntax in describing this performance is passive. An act is described for what it ñwas,ò not for its active potential. For instance, Johnsonôs piano playing ñwas delicate, the phrasing artistic; the technique, accurate. In fact, the whole performance was so entirely beyond what the people were expecting that it took them completely by stormé ò (245).

With its profane and hard-drinking reputation, the Clubôs capacity for assimilation into the Churchôs social circle comes as a surprise to the congregation. However, the Great Debate

made clear the Club has hit its limit as a transformative public relations tool. It moves to this final stage of reform in a predefined religious setting, no longer re-forming, but reformed. The reform performance is pronounced upon by the watching congregation instead of experienced through the Club memberôs impressions. For now, the Club has married the middle class community, its ñlittle seasonò of drunken excess over. Roustabout Thompson summarizes the rules for being ñright happyò to the rest of the Club. These include, ñóDonô drink, donô gamble, and donô hab anybody órounô yoô house ôat willôò (260). The club members vow to work for Sandy and abide by the middle-class rules, in the same way they respected Sandyôs original Club rules commanding whiskey and watermelon at Club meetings.

The narrativeôs last word, however, questions the effectiveness of these new social strictures in predicting the (ex) Clubôs charactersô future trajectory. Do these prescribed rules represent actual reform? Loudmouth, the ñex-preacherò says that he will work for Sandy only to ñgit ômongst his good eatinôs foh nothinôò and plans to start a mission next to Sandyôs house that Loudmouth can ñómake a mint oô money outenôò (262). And Simon, still bitter due to the scars he carries from the Great Debate fight, refuses to join the others. Despite the formal ending in a wedding and the reformerôs productive life, the final line of Roustabout Thompson qualifies his earlier, happier summation as well.

> ñWell,ò remarked Saskatchewan Jones, as they separated for the night, ñwhen de balance uv us gits up to Sandyôs new place, itôll be puôty much de same ole crowd.ò
> ñSame ole crowd,ò echoed Roustabout Thompson, as he waddled slowly away.

Reform is not the ultimate solution for all the Club.

In his autobiography, published two years before his death, Corrothers offers what he considered a more socially responsible vision concerning the confluence of alcohol and social

ambition, one in keeping with temperanceôs moral standards.[60] He recounts his memory of the Reverend Charles Grandison, who shared Corrothersôs belief that the ñwhites would never extend to us the full commercial and social privileges which other races enjoyò (102). Grandison worked tirelessly to establish black American communities in Africa, funded through public support. Corrothers relates that a disappointed ambition was responsible for Grandison falling victim to the ñRum demon.ò

> But there was a reason back of it all: Grandison, who upon the public platform seemed "A Prince in Black,ò noble and masterful as Frederick Douglass, sagacious as Booker Washington, as correct and courteous as Dunbar, with a ruggedness all his own, was boundlessly ambitiousé he grew restive and desperate under the thought that he was forever doomed to be ñ*nothing but an American Negro*ò one of a helpless and despised race ð a thing held down, apart, and hopeless. 'It was not the mere liquor, nor the bestial drunkenness he loved. 'Twas a Lethe-draught he sought, as he staggered brokenly under the black shadow that rests upon a race. (115)

In equating Grandison with Douglass and Dunbar, Corrothers depicts his own Representative Man in Grandison, the former president of Bennett College who succumbs not to a ñbestial drunkenness,ò but to disappointment. The problem is not an inherently weak character; in fact, Corrothers notes, up to that point Grandison had represented the most moral of men, one well aware of alcoholôs dangers. But alcohol filled a void of thwarted social ambition. It is solace when the American dream of self-definition and reformôs potential dies. Such a sympathetic portrayal of the black drinking figure as a result of disappointed dreams questions the nature of existent social limitations and prescriptions, and represents the beginnings of a re-figuration that was to become more and more predominant in the twentieth centuryôs growing modernist sensibility.

Notes

[1] See also *Gender and the American Temperance Movement of the Nineteenth Century*, for Holly Berkeley-Fletcherôs description of the ñtemperance-abolition nexusò which was ñwell-established from the origin of both movements through the participation of individual reformersò (48).

[2] Garrison began his career as editor of the *National Philanthropist,* a temperance journal, and made the move to abolition seamlessly. This is detailed in *William Lloyd Garrison, 1805-1879: The Story of his Life Told by his Children,* beginning on page 79.

[3] For an overview of Douglassôs image, see John Stauferôs ñFrederick Douglassôs Self-Fashioning and the Making of a Representative American Man.ò

[4] The Douglass quotes in this paragraph are taken from his lecture, ñWhy is the Negro Lynched?ò

[5] From "The Race Problem: Miss Willard on the Political Puzzle of the South," *The Voice*, 28 October 1890.

[6] Douglass represented Haiti at the Fair. He argued black people be allowed entry to fair grounds, which resulted in a ñColored Peopleôs Day.ò Ida B. Wells, who did not attend the World Fair in protest against the idea of a ñColored Peopleôs Day,ò later noted that Douglassôs subsequent presentation of the case for civil rights "had done more to bring our cause to the attention of the American people than anything else that had happened during the fair" (32). See Anna Paddon and Sally Turner, ñAfrican Americans and the World's Columbian Exposition.ò

[7] Inspired by Dunbarôs work in dialect, Corrothers later stated in his autobiography that ñI saw, after I had read a few of [Dunbarôs] pieces, that certain thoughts could not be expressed so well in any other way as in dialectò (136). ñAn Indignation Dinnerò is probably Corrothersôs most successful dialect poem; it continues to be anthologized.

[8] Yacovone notes that arguments regarding 19th century temperance focus on white leadership and organizations, and ignore the black communityôs support. Stating that black temperance was strongly rooted in a self-interested ñstruggle for autonomy and freedom,ò Yacovoneôs argument traces black temperance interests to civil concerns. Yacovone therefore extends the earlier argument by William and Jane Pease who ñcharacterize black temperance as an essentially bourgeois response to white racism, dominated by the belief that blacks ócould afford neither the economic drain of intemperance nor the social image of tipplingôò (281).

[9] Temperance and abolition rhetorical parallels have been attributed to an overarching religious and moral meta framework used by Northern reformers. Researchers subsequently assumed that temperance was not strong in the South because temperance philosophy was inextricably linked to a Northern abolition agenda. See W.J. Rorabaughôs *The Alcoholic Republic,* page 31. In *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800-1933*, Thomas Pegram cites Southern hostility following the war as well as ñthe regionôs fervent attachment to Jacksonian

principles of individualism and a suspicion of government powerò (125 Pegram). In *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement*, Joe Coker compares a weak antebellum Southern support (as seen in a lack of temperance pledges) to the strong church-supported prohibition movement that followed. Coker also credits the ñtraditionally Yankee reform movementò as the source of Southern apathy. In ñóDrinks He to His Own Undoing: ôTemperance Ideology in the Deep South,ò Douglas Carlson points out that in the South, ñespecially after 1840, temperance efforts were more significant than scholars have recognized and virtually identical to the larger national movementò (659-660).

[10] Detailed in Walton and Taylor, ñBlacks and the Southern Prohibition Movement.ò

[11] Marginalization of the black temperance community reflects national racist exclusions. This was even true in the abolition movement; in ñRecovering the Voices of Marginalized Abolitionistsò in *The Humblest May Stand Forth: Rhetoric, Empowerment and Abolition,* Jacqueline Bacon details the predominance of white male rhetoric that informs study of nineteenth century abolition. In reality, she writes, African Americans rhetorically positioned themselves in ways that preceded white abolition stances by many years, and in fact influenced the understood abolition leaders, men such as William Garrison. David Blightôs *Race and Reunion*, Chapter 7, ñThe Literature of Reunion and its Discontentsò analyzes how national leaders and cultural figures participated in the post-Civil Warôs ñpolitics of forgetting,ò a cultural reunification of white interests at the expense of the black communityôs needs. In addition, see John Fobanjongôs *Understanding the Backlash Against Affirmative Action*, Chapter One: ñHistorical Evolution of the Backlash Against Affirmative Action,ò for a general overview, and Heather Cox Richardsonôs *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901*, Chapter 6, ñThe Un-American Negro,ò which identifies a self-interested Northern working class at the heart of fears concerning perceived threats to the ñAmerican system of free labor based on individual enterpriseò (184).

[12] In ñóAs Gold Is Tried In The Fire, So Hearts Must Be Tried By Pain ô: The Temperance Movement in Georgia and the Local Option Law of 1885,ò Michael Wagner argues that in Georgia, at least, despite the racist exclusions by the WCTU and Templars, the prohibition laws ñwould not have been possible without the help from black voters and the assistance of black mothers and wives who helped to sway the men's votes. Citizens in Georgia had learned to cross racial, social, and economic lines to work together toward a common goalò (54). And in *Temperance and Racism: John Bull, Johnny Reb, and the Good Templars,* David Fahey points out the dependence of African American organizations upon white opinion and activism to facilitate the goals of uplift ideology.

[13] Du Bois proposed a ñtalented tenthò of black leadership serving as models for the remaining 90% of the population. The tenth would integrate into American cultureôs leadership and open the way for the rest of the race. See Du Boisôs ñThe Talented Tenth: Memorial Address.ò Booker T. Washington, on the other hand, believed that integration would best be accomplished from the bottom up. African Americans should secure themselves financially and demonstrate core American material values, before white culture would allow them to assimilate. See ñThe Atlantic Exposition Address,ò Chapter XIV in Washingtonôs *Up From Slavery,* particularly pages 153-156. Most critics agree the debate between Du Bois and Washington was not about

the merits of assimilation which they both supported, but how integration was to be accomplished. See ñSeparating as Individual Emigrations: Despairing Black Nationalists of the United Statesò pages 28-34 in *Separation, Assimilation, or Accommodation: Contrasting Ethnic Minority Policies*, in which Terrence Cook contrasts Du Boisôs position with Frederick Douglassôs and Washingtonôs. Cook points out that all these men nonetheless wished to defeat segregation in general and the Jim Crow laws in particular.

[14] In *Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem*, published in 1899, John Koren and Henry Walcott Farnham point out that the black population was demographically least prone to drunkenness. See Chapter VI: ñThe Relation of the Negroes to the Liquor Problem.ò

[15] Black voting patterns in regard to prohibition laws were not predictable, and African Americans seemed responsive to the liquor question framed in terms of liberty and civil rights as opposed to moral commands. Hanes Walton and James Taylor point out in ñBlacks and the Southern Prohibition Movementò that black voters were open to arguments from either side.

[16] In a letter to William Garrison dated October 28, 1845, Douglass compares his warm reception at a temperance gathering overseas to the pervasive racism at home. ñNo one seemed to feel himself contaminated by contact with me. I think it would be difficult to get the same number of persons together in any of our New-England cities, without some democratic nose growing deformed at my approachò (60). John Crowley summarizes Douglassôs overall position toward temperance when he writes in ñSlaves to the Bottle: Goughôs *Autobiography* and Douglassôs *Narrative*,ò that ñDouglass could even agree with those who argued that bondage to alcohol was an especially virulent reform of slaveryé What Douglass could *not* abide was the racism of the temperance movement itselfò (128).

[17] From ñóMr. Editor, If You Pleaseô: Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, and the End of the Abolitionist Imprint,ò page 621.

[18] For a general overview of Douglassôs overseas tour, see Fulkerson, Gerald: ñExile as Emergence: Frederick Douglass in Great Britain, 1845ï 1847.ò

[19] From Douglassôs March 30, 1846 speech in Paisley, Scotland. Yale University has a database of Douglassôs overseas temperance speeches. They can be found under the subject heading ñTemperanceò at http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/subject.htm#444

[20] In Cork on October 20, 1845.

[21] This quote is from Douglassôs *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* the third version of his autobiography (published in 1881), page 249. It is taken from a letter he wrote to Garrison, which was originally published in the March 27, 1846 edition of Garrisonôs *Liberator*.

[22] Douglass was particularly incensed by the 1842 Philadelphia riots. On August 1, 1842, a local black temperance society organized a parade celebrating the anniversary of West Indiesô freedom from slavery. The marchers were attacked by a working class mob, and a significant portion of the black community was subsequently destroyed through fire and rioting. There were never any

repercussions nor reparations, financial or otherwise. See Elizabeth Geffenôs ñViolence in Philadelphia in the 1840ôs and 1850ôs in *Pennsylvania History;* and Emma Jones Lapsanskyôs ñóSince They Got Those Separate Churchesô: Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia.ò Douglass addressed the event specifically at a speech in Glasgow, Scotland, on February 18, 1846, lamenting the vicious attack. The speech is in the Yale archive: http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1068.htm

[23] The quotes which follow are from Coxôs letter, published in the *New York Evangelist* on August 8, 1846.

[24] An account of Coxôs letter and Douglassôs response can be found in *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* pages 246-250. The epistolary exchange was later reprinted as a pamphlet published by the American Anti-Slavery Society, and can be found in Boston Public Libraryôs archive as well as archive.org. *Correspondence Between The Rev. Samuel H. Cox, D.D., of Brooklyn, L.I. and Frederick Douglass, A Fugitive Slave.* New York: Office of the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1846.
http://www25.us.archive.org/stream/correspondencebe00coxs#page/n0/mode/2up

[25] In *The Proceedings of the World's Temperance Convention*, page 49.

[26] In *The Proceedings of the World's Temperance Convention*, page 50. Delegatesô conversations were recorded and transcribed by Thomas Beggs, secretary for the WTC, who had been appointed to compile and narrate the *Report of the Convention*. This account is his selection and interpretation of events, together with transcribed speeches and exchanges. The description of Coxôs objection as ñirrelevantò is Beggsôs interpretation.

[27] Sekora describes more fully the falling out between Garrison and Douglass as a result of Garrisonôs restrictions on Douglassôs self-expression, or, ñbeing kepté on a very short leashò (611). Garrisonôs ecumenical stance toward reform was in accord with Douglassôs in the beginning. Later, however, Garrison and Douglass disagreed over the validity of the U.S. Constitution and whether or not it endorsed slavery (See Leslie Freidman Goldstein, ñMorality & Prudence in the Statesmanship of Frederick Douglass: Radical as Reformerò). In *Lincoln's Defense of Politics: The Public Man and His Opponents in the Crisis Over Slavery* (ñChapter Nine: Frederick Douglass: Antislavery Constitutionalism and the Problem of Consent,ò 125-146), Thomas Schneider writes that Douglass disagreed with Garrisonôs stance on the American Constitution. Sekora and others have argued that the split had at least as much to do with Douglassôs desire for self-determination which Garrison limited. William McFeeley explores Douglassôs desire to direct his own work as editor of *The North Star;* see Chapter 13 of McFeeleyôs *Frederick Douglass*. Others have argued that Douglass simply grew out of Garrisonôs guidance; David Blight calls Garrison a ñfatherly figure in Douglassôs life,ò whereas Gerrit Smith, to whom Douglass dedicated *My Bondage and My Freedom* ñwas his mentorò (*Keeping Faith in Jubilee: Frederick Douglass and the Meaning of the Civil War*, 47). For more on Douglassôs break from Garrison and his establishment of his paper *The North Star* in 1847*,* see page 402, ñThe North Star,ò in *Slavery in the United States: A Social, Political, And Historical Encyclopedia, Volume 2*.

[28] This emphasis on depicting the slaveôs rationality reflects Douglassôs own growing self-awareness. See Sekora for a detailed analysis of Douglassôs increased textual mastery of the first person narration in his autobiographical accounts.

[29] In ñSlaves to the Bottle,ò John Crowley details Douglassôs efforts to elect dry politicians and advance prohibition laws.

[30] *Clorindy, the Origin of the Cakewalk*, produced in 1898, was the first Broadway musical with an all-black cast. William Marion Cook recruited Dunbar to help him with the dialog and lyrics; the dialog was later cut. See Allen Wollôs *Black Musical Theatre: From Coontown to Dreamgirls*, pages 7-10.

[31] Bone chiefly criticized Dunbarôs ñromanticò interests as precluding confrontation with the ñthe pressing problems of the rising Negro middle class.ò He dismissed Dunbarôs social criticism as too ñsubtle.ò See *The Negro Novel in America*, 41-43.

[32] Gatesôs comments are from the foreword to *In His Own Voice: The Dramatic and Other Uncollected Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar,* page xii. Gates argues Dunbar was ña writer of great range, wit, subtlety and ironyò who deserves credit as a dialect/minstrelsy poet. For studies focusing on Dunbarôs work as complex negotiation between predominant social values and his attempt to create a realist dialect-based rhetoric, see Gene Andrew Jarrett: ñóWe Must Write like the White Menô: Race, Realism, and Dunbar's Anomalous First Novel,ò and Jarrettôs introduction to *The Complete Stories of Paul Laurence Dunbar*. Gavin Jones in *Strange Talk: The Politics of Dialect Literature in Gilded Age America* states that Dunbarôs work produced ñthe mixed results of both confirming racial conventions and refiguring them, from within, with his vernacular black differenceò (207). See also Lillian and Greg Robinson, ñPaul Laurence Dunbar: A Credit to His Race?ò for a history of Dunbarôs reputation.

[33] ñA Negro Poet. Paul Lawrence Dunbarôs óLyrics of Lowly Life.ôò *New York Times,* February 6, 1897. Dunbarôs middle name is misspelled in the article title, a common mistake Dunbar loathed, though it is correctly transcribed as ñLaurenceò in the review itself.

[34] Studies of Dunbarôs novels and prose fiction generally view his rhetoric as ironic commentary. Gregory Candelaôs ñWe Wear the Mask: Irony in Dunbar's The Sport of the Godsò and Casey Ingeôs ñFamily Functions: Disciplinary Discourses and (De)Constructions of the ófamilyô in óThe Sport of the Godsôò both examine Dunbarôs critique of the racist culture in the novel. In ñPaul Dunbar and the Mask of Dialect,ò John Keeling suggests that ñwe take Dunbar's adaptation of dialect and Plantation Tradition conventions as a starting point for critical practice rather than as proof of the literature's dubious valueò (27). Joanne Braxton also sees Dunbar as ñan important transitional figure in black literatureò (x). Studies of his poetry, especially the early dialect works, argue a racist complicity inseparable from the poems. In ñThe Advent of óThe Niggerô: The Careers of Paul Laurence Dunbar, Henry O. Tanner, and Charles W. Chesnutt,ò Matthew Wilson describes Dunbarôs work as ñinevitably buying into a racialized discourse, one that permeated the genres he chose to work in and which determined the reception of his workò (20-21). See also Scott Childress, Reynolds. ñPaul Laurence Dunbar and the Project of Cultural Reconstruction.ò

[35] Dunbar explained his alcohol use as a coping mechanism for the tuberculosis that was to kill him, and many critics go along with this self-assessment. Another popular explanation is that Dunbarôs drinking was the result of his struggles in the literary profession. Joanne Braxton writes that ñBy 1902, Dunbar was becoming addicted to alcohol (which had been prescribed for tuberculosis), and his marriage was falling apartéò At the end of his life he was ñsuffering terribly from tuberculosis, alcoholism, and the belief that he was a failure as a poetéò (iv). Braxtonôs comments reflect the general consensus that Dunbarôs alcohol dependence was part of a downward health spiral and caused by other problems (such as chronic indebtedness). There is some disagreement as to the genesis of Dunbarôs drinking; Eleanor Alexander notes that Dunbarôs abuse of alcohol was well known as early as 1895. ñPaulôs meager income was further drained by reckless spending and steady drinkingé the small circle of African American intelligentsia kept few secrets. Paulôs close friends knew his vices and were both solicitous and angry with him. ówont you give up that cussed drink, Paul?ô asked a longtime Dayton friend. óYou are weakening your constitutionéYou have debts,ô Paulôs correspondent reminded him. ñYou cannot pay your way and drink as you do.ô Then, in a final attempt at persuasion, she tied him to his destiny, writing: óUnless you alter your mode of living, your race will never have cause to be proud of their poetôò (94-95.)

[36] This incident is recounted by Lida Keck Wiggins, on pages 92-94 of *The Life and Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar*.

[37] Du Bois, W.E.B. "The Talented Tenth." In *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day* (1903).

[38] Washington, Booker T. ñNegro Crime and Strong Drink,ò 28.

[39] In Williamôs account, pages 93-94.

[40] ñUnpublished Letters of Paul Laurence Dunbar to a Friend,ò 73-76

[41] Howells, ñIntroduction,ò *Lyrics of Lowly Life,,* xiii-xx.

[42] Critics have long dismissed Ed as simply a stock figure. The 1901 review in *Southern Workman* is typical: ñIt is perhaps a part of Mr. Dunbar's art and of his sense of proportion that the Negro plays so small a part in this book; but wherever he is brought in, it is with the sympathetic touch of one who recognizes his shortcomings as the result of circumstances, and sees his gropings after the new life of freedom.ò Robert Boneôs assessment from the 1960s is much harsher. He states that Dunbar resorted to "caricature in his treatment of minor Negro characters" and that his stereotypic portraits of black characters only served to reinforce existing prejudices about African-American ñshortcomings.ò

[43] Dunbarôs protest against the violence of Northerners against southern black slaves retreating from slavery is further examined in Larson, Charles R.: ñThe Novels of Paul Laurence Dunbar,ò and Hughes, Jennifer, ñThe Politics of Incongruity in Paul Laurence Dunbar's óThe Fanatics.ôò

[44] *The Sport of the Gods* was first published in the May, 1901 issue of *Lippincott's Magazine*, and appeared in book form in 1902.

[45] The ñplantation romanceò with its consolatory, sentimental vision of the antebellum Southôs mutually supportive, harmonious master-slave relations came into vogue in the post-Reconstruction period. See David Blight in *Race and Reunion*, Chapter 7, ñThe Literature of Reunion and its Discontents,ò which details literatureôs participation in the ñpolitics of forgetting,ò a cultural reunification at the expense of the black community. Elizabeth Hale, in *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*, accounts for the rise of sentimentality concerning the ñOld South,ò as imagining the past a place of safety and retreat from the threatening present. Popular fictional romances furthered this popular mythology. An early example is Caroline Lee Henzôs *The Planter's Northern Bride,* published in 1854 in direct response to *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* This idyllic vision of the Southôs master-slave relationship continued following the war, in books such as Thomas Nelson Pageôs *In Ole Virginia*, published in 1872 as a collection of stories previously published in *Century* (the magazine which later first published Dunbarôs poetry). The most critically noted story in the collection is ñMarse Chan,ò told through the point of view of a dialect-speaking ex-slave who has nothing but praise for his former master, a man who was a model of chivalry and virtue. Darker versions of this mythology include Thomas Dixonôs *The Clansman: An Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan* (1905), which was later filmed as *Birth of a Nation.* William Stanley Braithwaite caustically remarked on this ñColor Line type of fictionò in ñThe Negro in Literature,ò describing it as ñviciously used for the purposes of propagandaé ò (184) See also Bertram Wyatt-Brownôs ñThe Evolution of Heroesô Honor in the Southern Literary Tradition.ò

[46] Black urban culture also provides a setting for James Corrothersôs *The Black Cat Club*, set in Chicago. For information regarding black urban culture in the period entailed in these novels, see Davarian Baldwin: *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, & Black Urban Life*, and Marcy Sacks: *Before Harlem: The Black Experience in New York City Before World War I.*

[47] Jarrett, Gene Andrew, 304.

[48] In fact, the bookôs contemporaneous reviews were quite positive. *Colored American Magazine*ôs April 1902 edition features Stanley Braithwaiteôs opinion, which reads in part: ñThe club-men are loveable. There is so much good nature behind the actual impression of their doings in moments of bad feeling and unreasonable temper, one cannot help but somehow ally them with the typical Negro of the same stamp.ò

[49] In *Black American Writing from the Nadir: The Evolution of a Literary Tradition*, pages 665-666.

[50] ibid., 665.

[51] The ñrazor-totinô niggerò appears in many minstrel songs, such as the ñBully Songò in *The Widow Jones* (1895), which includes the lines, ñSome coon across my smeller swiped a watermelon rinô/I drawed my steel dat gemmen to finô/I riz up like a black cloud and took a look

arounô/There was dat new bully standinôon the ground./Iôve been lookinôfor you nigger and Iôve got you found./Razors ôgun a flyinô, niggers ôgun to squawké ò See Woll, pages 2-3.

[52] The ñWatermelon Manò minstrel performance is also a staple. Michael Bennett Leavittôs *Fifty Years in Theatrical Management* (1912) details the career of J.W. McAndrews, known as ñThe Watermelon Man,ò a white man who legendarily appropriated the act from a black man he met on the street, literally taking the clothes from his back and wearing them on stage, ñAfter disinfecting them.ò See also William L. Van Deburgôs *Black Camelot: African-American Culture Heroes in Their Times, 1960-1980*, for descriptions of minstrel characters as ñphysical grotesquesò with ñdemeaning personal namesò who routinely insult each other, and whose mouths are filled with ñwatermelon, whiskey or chickenò when not ñengaged in loose talk, braggadocio, or uninhibited childlike expressions of gleeò (34). In addition, the phrase ñDown de Lineò from Sandyôs press release may refer to a line often appearing in minstrel song lyrics. They appear in ñDarktown is Out Tonight,ò from *Clorindy, or the Origin of the Cake Walk* (1898), the musical Dunbar helped to create: ñHey dere Sal, come on gal! Jine dis promenade!/Tek mah ahm, What's de harm? Needn't be afraid!/Dar's old Dan, watch that man, comin' down the lineé ò The lyrics also include a call to ñFetch out yo razahs.ò The sheet music may be found reproduced here:
http://digital.library.msstate.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/SheetMusic/id/26027/rec/3

[53] In 1902, the popularity of minstrel performances was at its height, even as it came under attack by African American leaders. Frederick Douglass led the protest early on; in the October 27, 1848 edition of his newspaper *The North Star,* he wrote that blackface minstrelsy performers were ñfilthy scum of white society, who have stolen from us a complexion denied to them by nature, in which to make money, and pander to the corrupt taste of their white fellow-citizens.ò The protest continued through 1925, when Montgomery Gregory described the transition during the late 19th c. in minstrelsy as a change from ñseriously moralistic drama to the comic phaseé These comedians, made up into grotesque caricatures of the Negro race, fixed in the public taste a dramatic stereotype of the race that has been almost fatal to a sincere and authentic Negro dramaò (155). More recently, scholarship has considered minstrelsy for its complex cultural status. Eric Lott sees early minstrel work as an attempt to establish a folk expression similar to Whitmanôs poetry, ñto celebrate the popular sources of a national cultureò (in ñThe Seeming Counterfeitò 224). Minstrel performance, Lott states, was culturally positioned by white men as a transgressive exploration of ñthe permeability of the color lineò (*Love and Theft* 6). Robert C. Tollôs *The Minstrel Show in Northern America* frames minstrel shows and content from their inception as ñimages of Negroes shaped by white expectations and desires and not by black realitiesé ò (vi). Tollôs study traces the roots of this racist caricature but also demonstrates the opportunities these shows allowed black performers. In particular, chapter 8, ñPuttinôon the Mask,ò describes the way in which black minstrel actors and songwriters managed to modify the typical ñcaricature,ò by focusing on sentimental longing for missing family and a sustaining African American community, ñomitting whites from their nostalgic songsò (245).

[54] Most assessments of Corrothersôs life and work rely on Corrothersôs own autobiographical account as a primary source. Both *The Concise Oxford Companion to African American Literature* and the *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance: A-J* follow his autobiographical account fairly closely.

[55] In ñAssimilationist Minstrelsy as Racial Uplift Ideology: James D. Corrothers's Literary Quest for Black Leadership,ò page 342.

[56] The Preface to *The Black Cat Club* actually implies just that, that this is a ñseries of character studies of Negro life as it may be observed in the great cities of the Northò (7). Corrothersôs later statements emphasizing the bookôs fictional basis contradict these remarks.

[57] See ñThe Creative Potential of Dialect Writing in Later-Nineteenth-Century America,ò page 96.

[58] The Civil Rights Act of 1866 reads, in part (italics mine): ñThat all persons born in the United States and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States; and *such citizens, of every race and color, without regard to any previous condition of slavery or involuntary servitude*, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall have the same right, in every State and Territory in the United States, to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be parties, and give evidence, inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property, and to full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property, as is enjoyed by white citizens, and shall be subject to like punishment, pains, and penalties, and to none other, any law, statute, ordinance, regulation, or custom, to the contrary notwithstanding.ò From *The U.S. Justice System: An Encyclopedia*, page 859.

[59] The popular story of appropriation of black performances by white minstrel actors is enacted by this audience member. The first white minstrel performer to appropriate blackface was T.D. Rice; an account of his use of a black man named ñCuffò may be found on page 7 of *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy*, where the reprinted 1867 *Atlantic Monthly* account is described as ñprobably the least trustworthy and most accurate account.ò

[60] In the autobiographical account, Corrothers stresses his debt to both religious and temperance community leaders, especially Frances Willard, head of the Womenôs Christian Temperance Union, who financed Corrothersôs education at Northwestern. See pages 93-114 of *In Spite of the Handicap* for a full account of Willardôs influence. In crediting her work and character, Corrothers completely ignores Willardôs publicly stated racist remarks concerning the drunken ñdark-faced mobs,ò which Douglass found so troubling.

Coda: Anticipating the Modern

As America moved into the twentieth century, temperance reform reached its apotheosis with the Volstead Act and legalization of national Prohibition. The dreamed-of reformed future had arrived. But not only did many existent social problems remain, many more appeared. Literature responded, not, as commonly believed, through a wholesale, alcoholic rejection of reformist sensibilities. Instead, literary narratives expanded examinations concerning the failure of reformôs idealizations to address particular charactersôsituations. Modern texts continue to examine characters struggling with a longed for but unobtainable socially unified ideal, with alcohol themes continuing to represent estrangement from normative social assumptions. Often, twentieth century alcohol-themed literature turned its eyes to the pastôs reformist culture as a means of articulating Modern societyôs uncertainties and ambiguous relations.

F. Scott Fitzgeraldôs *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922) wonderfully captures Modernismôs complicated relationship to its nineteenth century forebearsôreformist sensibilities. In this novel, Anthony Patch is a young man determined to inherit his grandfatherôs fortune without succumbing to the old manôs social vision. Old Patch acquired his fortune as a Civil War veteran who then ñcharged onto Wall Streetò (10) but later sought to ñconsecrate the remainder of his life to the moral regeneration of the world.ò He becomes ña reformer among reformers,ò attacking ñliterature, liquor, vice, art, patent medicines and Sunday theatresò alike. Old Patch wants more than to rise to the top through battle; he now wants to reform the entire world in his own vision. Patchôs reformism is posed not as a youthful, robust engagement, but as an old manôs attempt to impose the social demands of a dying age upon the new; he demands his

grandson ñaccomplish something,ò but denigrates Anthonyôs vague self-image. Anthony, both his grandfatherôs progeny and voice of a new generation, defines himself by opposing his grandfatherôs reformism. Fitzgerald defines the ñLost Generationò as mediating between the social terms inherited from the previous generation, and the search for a new vision in a troubled world. Anthony rebels against his grandfatherôs demands that he buckle under; he resorts to alcoholism as a way of resisting his grandfatherôs socially anemic vision.

Traditional readings of Modern literatureôs depiction of alcohol practice gesture to the theme of rebellion against social uniformity defined as temperanceôs middle-class productive ideal. Studies such as Tom Dardisôs *The Thirsty Muse: Alcohol and the American Writer* and note the prevalence of alcoholism among writers such as Ernest Hemingway, Jack London and William Faulkner, writers who describe the Modern ageôs social desiccations. Dardisôs study examines and ultimately rejects the Modernist claim that ñcreativity flowers at its fullest when the constrictions inhibiting everyday life are swept aside by alcoholò (4). In this view of the Modern sensibility, intoxication enables resistance to prevailing social demands. As represented in Fitzgeraldôs rejection of the reformist past, Modernism is said to articulate with new vigor a rebelliousness born of alcoholôs antisocial potentiation. Modernism rejects a nineteenth-century reformist vision demanding social uniformity, and instead sets out to articulate a non-conformist position represented by alcohol practice.

What Modernism forged, however, was a vocabulary that much of nineteenth-century literature stopped short of articulating. In depicting characters struggling with and against temperanceôs utopian vision, Modern texts explore social disruptions and life on the cultural margins, through heroes who both resist and condone socially unifying terms. Jack Londonôs *John Barleycorn* (1913) frames a solution to alcoholôs despairing nihilism in nineteenth-century

reformist terms; he wishes that ñmy forefathers had banished John Barleycorn before my timeò but believes that a prohibition enforced by wives and mothers will guarantee ñthere will be no hardship worked on the coming generationé It will mean life more abundant for the manhood of the young boys born and growing upé ò (5) Even as he admits temperanceôs reformist framework as the solution for an antisocial despair rooted in alcohol use, London insists that he is the exception. ñOf courseé mine is no tale of a reformed drunkard. I was never a drunkard, and I have not reformedò (127). London insists his own case is one of individual exceptionalism, despite his promotion of a normative social solution for alcohol-related problems. The final chapter of *John Barleycorn* subsequently repudiates the very solution Londonôs narrative holds out for the rest of humanity. Instead, ñI decided coolly and deliberately that I should continue to do what I had been trained to want to do. I would drink ï but oh, more skilfully, more discreetly, than ever before. Never again would I be a peripatetic conflagration. Never again would I invoke the White Logic. I had learned how not to invoke himò (128). In Londonôs ñalcoholic memoirsò (*not*, London points out, the memoirs of an alcoholic) London views himself as the exception to the general social rule; he has battled the nihilistic John Barleycorn and come out the victor. Londonôs tested will has prevailed over antisocial forces, and bends them to his power. While temperanceôs reformist sensibilities retain a place in society, London vaults himself into heroic triumph over natural forces against which the average mortal requires societyôs protective vale. Much like its nineteenth-century literary counterpart, alcohol-themed Modernist literature places at its heart the struggle between individual experience in alcohol-based environments and demands of social uniformity. As the Modern movement grew, narrators began to presume a reader who will, as London requests, ñwalk with me in all sympathyò (6). The representation of alcohol involvement is no longer an expression of the antisocial, but a socialized rejection of

temperanceôs definitive social solutions. *John Barleycorn* composes a narrator expressing dissatisfaction with reformôs demands, and mediates a position for the reader to share outside of a reformist framework while still acknowledging reformôs unifying potential. This early Modern work does not recompose the thematic struggle of alcohol-themed American literature from reform solution to antisocial rejection, but instead repositions the narrator-reader construct to acknowledge the dialectic between reformôs imagined social unification, and the articulation of intoxicationôs seductive experience.

Hemingway expressed a conflicted rejection of Americaôs normative social demands by physically locating his heroes in Europe. *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) balances a dialectic of alcoholic experienceôs exigencies with a continued longing for a social union that never comes. In the bookôs final scene, Jake finds Brett in Madrid. Both are in retreat from the consequences of a month spent drinking in Pamplona with their fellow ex-patriots and the local community. This afternoon in Madrid is spent in alcohol-based rituals (Brett toasts ñBung-o!ò repeatedly) that cover a deeper despair. When Brett begins to cry as she explains past regrets, Jake can only offer monosyllabic responses; their solution is to relocate to another bar and return to desultory conversation, but Brett cannot escape her regrets. Jake has no response but to change the subject; focus on alcoholic rituals and meaningless observations steers the discussion away from a problem with no real solution.

> "It's funny what a wonderful gentility you get in the bar of a big hotel," I said.
> "Barmen and jockeys are the only people who are polite any more."
> "No matter how vulgar a hotel is, the bar is always nice."
> "It's odd."
> "Bartenders have always been fine." (247-248)

The alcohol-based rituals of an intoxicating present answer social consequences inherited from the past by ignoring them; the intrusion of a moralizing history is answered with a retreat into

alcoholic silence. The textôs final lines underscore that these charactersô union in an antisocial forgetfulness is only possible as a romantic fantasy: ñóOh, Jake," Brett said, ówe could have had such a damned good time togetherôé õYes,ô I said. ólsn't it pretty to think so?ôò (251)

Focalized through Jakeôs point of view, the story suggests that the charactersô desire to retreat from the pastôs consequences is an idealized impossibility. Likewise, Fitzgeraldôs *The Beautiful and Damned* ends with Anthony Patch a broken-down, wheelchair-bound alcoholic. Anthony has finally inherited his grandfatherôs millions, but his attempt to escape Old Patchôs expectations has destroyed him. Modern charactersô rejection of the past through alcohol may therefore be read as more wish than fulfillment.

Negotiation with a nineteenth-century sensibility concerning alcohol is not limited to Modernismôs so-called ñalcoholicò writers, but appears as a consistent theme. Jean Toomerôs *Cane,* a work signaling the advent of the New Negro Movement, depicts scenes of the black manôs confrontation with his enslaved past. The ñKabnisò chapter, spanning one-third of the text, focalizes through the perspective of Ralph Kabnis, an educated Northerner who has arrived in Georgia to teach. His intellectual progressivism confronts the continued manifestation of slaveryôs legacy answered by a Southern faith-based lament. Kabnis feels ñhaunted,ò and takes to drinking. He searches for answers in the company of two working class black men who instruct him in the realities of being black in the South, where neither education nor class signify over race. Kabnis rejects his learned temperance ideology so that he can share the company of these men over a bottle of liquor. He is subsequently fired from his educational institution for violating its temperance code. Alcohol allows Kabnis to occupy a no-manôs land between the unrealizable ideal of the Northôs intellectual solutions, and the Southôs faith-based aestheticized acceptance. Both positions mediate the past without arriving at a desirable future. He can take no

comfort in the Southern black manôs religion engendered by slaveryôs legacy, and he is left out in the cold by the Northôs reformist, white-washed vision. Kabnis instead exists within a stagnate present, suspended by alcohol from having to choose between unsatisfying social responses.

Kabnisôs despair frames his situation in negative terms; his intoxicated suspension between North and South mediates an uncertain future in light of the pastôs exigencies. His struggle points to Modern literatureôs figuration of the alcohol theme as opening up space in which to consider unsatisfying responses to ongoing social issues inherited from the past. Characters continue to struggle with intoxicated experience in light of traditional reformist visions, but Modern literature articulates more sympathetic narrative perspectives in relation to this struggle. Far from representing a rejection of the ideas nineteenth-century literature mobilized concerning the alcohol theme, Modern literature continues to struggle with the social problems alcohol represents, extending narrative perspective into the cultural margins where the anti-hero speaks.

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