

OUT OF THE MANY, ONE:
READING THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, 1776-1865

BY

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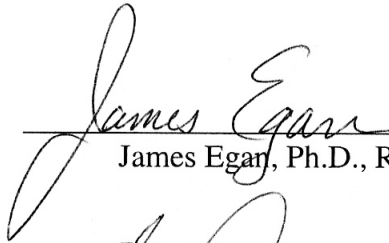
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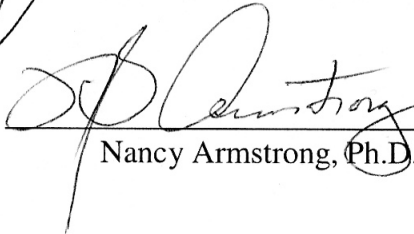
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Vitae

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Introduction

“Out of the Many, One” Reading the Federal Republic, 1776-1865

“It is required of a nation which combines wide differences of characteristics that each shall have its own representation. A Republic of Letters may be a confederacy of individualities, as well as a Republic in politics may be a confederacy of states”—
William Coggeshall (1859)

This dissertation explores the relationship between early American literature and the political philosophy of federalism between the founding of the republic and the Civil War. Scholars have long been interested in the relationship between literature and nationalism during this period. In general, most of them have argued that literary texts played a unifying role in the early republic, helping citizens to transcend their political, social, and geographic differences and come together as a nation by establishing a sense of shared values, interests, and experiences. Benedict Anderson’s argument that the circulation of printed texts made it possible for a diverse and widely separated set of readers to see themselves as part of an American “imagined community” represents one of the most well-known versions of this view. Other critics offer slightly different readings, arguing that early American literary texts helped unite the nation by creating a shared language of republican eloquence and civility, promoting bonds of sentiment and sympathy, or facilitating the creation of a republican public sphere.¹

¹ This represents a broad summary of some of the dominant arguments concerning early American literary culture which would include the work by Cathy Davidson, Jane Tompkins, Michelle Burnham, Russ Castronovo, Michael Warner, Christopher Looby, and Sandra Gustafson, among many others. For a general overview of these “unifying” arguments and their place of readings regarding the relationship of literature and nationalism in the history of early American literary studies, see Winfried Fluck, “From Aesthetics to Political Criticism: Theories of the Early American Novel” in *Early America Re-explored*, ed. Klaus H. Schmidt and Fritz Fleischmann (New York: P. Lang, 2000): 245-6.

In contrast to the prevailing argument that early American literature helped define the nation by drawing different groups of people together, I argue that such literature defined the nation by drawing people apart—encouraging readers to imagine the United States as a composite space defined by its many social, cultural, and political differences. In making this argument, I turn to the political philosophy of federalism. As a federal republic, the United States became a unified nation through the equal representation of its constituent parts. As a result, instead of being defined by its homogeneity, the United States was defined by its variety—a model of unity exemplified by the motto *e pluribus unum*, out of the many, one.

Under this federal model, the early United States was a complex space of political and social orders, which all involved representations of individual state interests; at the same time, such interests were organized in the service of collective national goals. As David Waldstreicher describes it, federalism asked citizens to think of the United States as “both regionalist *and* nationalist simultaneously” (248). James Madison addresses this duality at length in the “Federalist 39”—a condition he traces directly to the language of the Constitution.

If we try the Constitution by its last relation to the authority by which amendments are to be made, we find it neither wholly NATIONAL nor wholly FEDERAL. Were it wholly national, the supreme and ultimate authority would reside in the MAJORITY of the people of the Union; and this authority would be competent at all times, like that of a majority of every national society, to alter or abolish its established government. Were it wholly FEDERAL, on the other hand, the concurrence of each State in the Union would be essential to every alteration that would be binding on all. The mode provided by the plan of the convention is not founded on either of these principles... The proposed Constitution, therefore, is, in strictness, neither a national nor a federal Constitution, but a composition of both.

This vision of the United States as a union that was neither “wholly federal” nor “wholly national” is the starting point for this dissertation. Over the course of the late eighteenth

and early nineteenth centuries, the United States would continue to be defined and represented as a complex “composition” of both national (centralized) and federal (state-based) impulses and principles. Within this project, I will consider the ways in which citizens engaged with this dual, and, at times, contradictory character of the nation, looking specifically at the role that literary texts played in helping citizens, not only negotiate but also re-imagine the relationship between the local and the national in the federal republic.

From the beginning, defining the federal republic was a literary problem. Encouraged to enact their federal identities by articulating their local ones, citizens often turned to literary texts as a means of expressing and circulating their regional characteristics and interests within a national context. While, on the one hand, these literary representations provided readers with a clearer conception of the size and scope of the federal nation, on the other hand, these texts also provided readers with a heightened sense of the degree of differences within the nation—an awareness that inevitably led to sectional tensions and conflicts. In imagining the federal nation, citizens were constantly engaged in the process of interpreting written representations of local and regional differences. “Because the [meanings] of nation and the regions were in such flux,” notes David Waldstreicher, “one day’s happy identification of region and nation could be the next day’s intractable political dilemma” (249).

In addition to the problems posed by interpreting local representations of the federal imagination, citizens also struggled with the challenges of interpreting the language of federalism itself. Although the Constitution created a framework for organizing the United States as a federal republic, its language left the specific

relationship between local and centralized forms of expression and authority relatively undefined—as Madison describes it, neither “wholly national” nor “wholly federal.” For some, this ambiguity regarding the form and function of American federalism was considered to be positive and productive, creating a federal nation that was flexible enough to adapt to the demands of representing and organizing the interests of a republic as large and diverse as the United States. By combining elements of both a strong centralized government and a decentralized federal system, Madison argues that this composite structure represented by the Constitution offered a system of checks and balances through which the central government and the states would ultimately be able to work together while counteracting the potential excesses of each.²

Others, however, felt this dual character of the Constitution was more problematic. In a 1788 speech, Patrick Henry criticized the Constitution precisely for its potential ambiguities which, he believed, offered two competing, rather than complementary, models for exercising authority in the federal nation.

[T]he fate of this question and of America may depend on this. Have they said, We, the States? Have they made a proposal of a compact between states? If they had, this would be a confederation. It is otherwise most clearly a consolidated government. (“Speeches from the Virginia Ratifying Convention,” June 4, 1788).

By pushing delegates to clarify the meaning of the plural pronoun “we” in the preamble of the Constitution, Henry points out how the language of the Constitution potentially

² James Madison’s description of the dual character of the Constitution in “Federalist 39,” for instance, was written in defense of the Constitution’s flexible structure. By combining elements of both a strong centralized government and a decentralized federal system, Madison, along with many of the other Federalists, argued that this composite structure represented by the Constitution offered a system of checks and balances through which the central government and the states would ultimately be able to work together while counteracting the potential excesses of each. For more on the Constitutional language of federalism, see Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788-1828*, (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1999); Lance Banning, *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*, (Ithaca: Cornell UP 1995).

refers to two different conceptions of federal nationhood. On the one hand, if “we” refers to the people, the Constitution defines the United States as a nation united by the representation of different *individuals*—a model of federal unity which privileges the power of the central government as the primary representative of the nation’s interests. On the other hand, if “we” refers to “the states,” then the nation emerges as a union of different regional *communities*—a model of unity that would accord the states greater authority in drafting and enacting national policies. While both interpretations (“we the people” and “we the states”) ultimately represent federal systems of government, each results in a different understanding of federal unity, and each promotes a different style of federal practice—differences that are entirely contingent upon the way citizens choose to define and interpret the meaning of the word “we.”

Henry’s arguments about the significance of the term “we” are typically framed as evidence of the differences between Federalist and Anti-Federalist politics of the time. What I find particularly compelling about his statements is the way Henry characterizes the United States as a nation whose character depends upon its figuration in writing. In organizing and governing the United States as a federal republic, citizens were encouraged to pay particular attention to the ways in which they used and interpreted federal language. As Henry himself concludes, “The question turns, sir, on that poor little thing—the expression, We, the people, instead of the states,” and, over the next few decades, citizens would devote considerable attention to the process of composing and interpreting federal “expressions,” looking specifically at how different forms of writing and different strategies of reading could both produce and transform the ways that citizens took part in the federal republic.

Drawing on these ideas, this dissertation examines how literary texts both participated in and revised federal conceptions of the United States from the late 18th through the early 19th centuries. On the one hand, by representing the nation as a composite and heterogeneous space, I argue that early American literary texts promoted the development of a “federal literacy” whereby citizens learned to read national differences in productive and equitable terms. In fostering this federal literacy, however, literary narratives also challenged and transformed federal discourse, raising questions about the limits of representing diversity and re-negotiating the complex relationship between local and national forms of expression. I examine a series of antebellum novels and periodicals in relation to this dual function, exploring how the works of Royall Tyler, Catharine Sedgwick, Timothy Flint, James Hall, and other western writers and editors reproduced and reformulated federal principles in the context of post-ratification politics, westward expansion, and the rise of sectional tensions in the decades preceding the Civil War.

Critical Contexts: Re-defining National Difference

By reading early American literature through the lens of federalism, this project ultimately seeks to address a critical misreading of the nation in early American literary studies. Over the past few decades, the concepts of nation and nationalism have increasingly come under pressure. Instead of viewing the nation as a concept that is politically, culturally, and geographically fixed, contemporary scholarship has emphasized the extent to which national categories and distinctions are “ideologically constructed,” “permanently unstable,” and “intrinsically ambiguous,” drawing attention

to the many omissions, exclusions, and forms of coercion implicated in nationalist discourse.³ The rise of transnational studies has further unsettled national boundaries, emphasizing the extent to which nations are defined by complex interrelationships and networks of exchange.

In revising the nation, critics have primarily focused on diversifying it, replacing the idea of the homogeneous, unified community with a more multi-dimensional portrait—envisioning the nation as “a complex and irreducible array of discourses, institutions, policies, and practices” (Rowe, 2). Within this framework, scholars have drawn particular attention to the variety and volatility of the early republic, emphasizing the ways in which the nation was shaped by the presence of many social, cultural, and political communities, whose interactions “proceeded from many different directions, at varying degrees of influence and intensity” (Singh, 14). In emphasizing this heterogeneity, however, such criticism has tended to approach the concept of “difference” in relatively limited terms, focusing almost exclusively on categories of race, class, and gender.⁴ Other forms of variation, particularly with respect to the presence of local and regional differences, have remained outside the scope of this revisionist process.

³ Quotations selected from Donald Pease, “New Americanists: Revisionist Interventions Into the Canon,” *boundary 2* Vol. 17, No. 1 (1990): 6; Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt. *Postcolonial Theory and the United States*. (Jackson: U Mississippi P, 2000) 13; Etienne Balibar, “Racism and Nationalism,” in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, ed. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (London: Verso, 1991): 46.

⁴ Cathy Davidson provides a useful overview of this turn toward “diversifying” the nation in her “Preface” to the “No More Separate Spheres” issue of *American Literature* (Sep. 1988): 443-463. In this essay, she notes how critical studies have come to examine the nation as a construction shaped by different factors such as “race, sexuality, class, region, religion, occupation and other variables” (443). The subsequent essays included in the collection, however, focus overwhelming on issues of race, class, and gender, as opposed to the “other variables” she lists here.

More recently, however, scholars have begun to pay closer attention to the role that local distinctions and variations played in defining and configuring the early nation. As Peter Onuf writes, the early United States represented a diverse range of “*localities* as well as individuals” (36), and over the past ten years, a number of historians have sought to emphasize the extent to which the early nation was “defined through a collection of local experiences played out in a variety of similar but distinctive polities” (Greene 249).⁵ On the whole, these critics tend to view the local and regional diversity of the early nation as a legacy of the nation’s colonial history. Although the former American colonies had all been part of the same British empire, the colonies themselves were, as Richard Beeman notes, “extraordinarily disconnected from one another, displaying among themselves and within themselves significant varieties of political behavior” (3). When the former colonies joined together to form an independent nation, these colonial distinctions transferred over to the newly created states, thus creating a nation defined by “high levels of local peculiarities” that would ultimately operate, “not as a body politic but as an association of bodies politic” (Greene, 238).

By thus reading the local differences of the early nation as a manifestation of its colonial past, critics have tended to approach the study of these local or regional spaces in postcolonial terms, drawing on the insights of contemporary postcolonial theorists to

⁵ Jack P. Greene, Eliga H. Gould, Robin Einhorn, and Adam Rothman recently commented extensively on the status of local and state representation in studies of the early U.S. in a recent roundtable discussion featured in the *William and Mary Quarterly* (April 2007). For discussions of the diversity and disconnected character of the former British colonies, see David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1997); Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788-1828* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1999), Peter Onuf, “Federalism, Republicanism, And The Origins Of American Sectionalism” in *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins UP, 1996); Annmarie Zagari, *The Politics of Size: Representation in the United States, 1776-1850*, (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1987); Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States* (Athens, Ga: U Georgia P, 1986).

examine how American localities both represent and resist structures of imperial power and control.⁶ Specifically, representations of early American regions and states have been read in relation to the concept of “settlement” colonies, where the exercise of imperial power becomes complicated by the development of close cultural and historical ties between colonizing authority (in this case, the central U.S. government) and the colonized space (the region or the state). Within this model, critics read the regional spaces of the nation as exhibiting the same “anxieties” and “ambiguities” of other settler colonies, a perspective that encourages us to view all representations of American local cultures “through the prism of longstanding tensions concerning their entangled and complex relation to the concept of empire” (Watts, *Colony* xv).⁷

Colonialism, however, is not the only way to read the local and regional differences of the early republic. By focusing too narrowly on the United States’ transition from colony to nation, these critics neglect the ways in which the representation of local differences might be aligned with another mode of political discourse that also

⁶ Jack P. Greene takes up the issue of reading local spaces as an extension of the United States’s colonial history in “Colonial History and National History: Reflections on a Continuing Problem,” featured in the recent roundtable discussion featured in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 64, Issue 2 (April 2007). Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt trace the development of postcolonial studies in the United States observed in their introductory essay for *Postcolonial Theory and the United States*: “U.S. studies in the 1990s gained immensely from dialogue with the emergent field called ‘postcolonial studies... as “many of the concepts associated with postcolonial studies... such as double-consciousness, mobility, hybridity, revision; a third space that is neither assimilation nor otherness; histories of coalition building and transnational diasporic connections” proved enormously influential in addressing questions of “race, ethnicity, and empire” in the study of American literature and culture. (Singh and Schmidt, 3-4). See also Lawrence Buell, “American Literary Emergence as a Literary Phenomenon” *American Literary History* 4 (1992): 311-442; Peter Hulme, “Including America,” *ARIEL* 26.1 (1995): 117-23; Robert Blair St. George, *Possible Pasts: Becoming Colonial in Early America*. (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000).

⁷ For more on settler colonialism, see Watts, Edward. *Writing and Postcolonialism in the Early Republic*. (Charlottesville, Va: UP of Virginia, 1998); *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*, Edward Watts and Malini Johar Schueller, eds. (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003); Peter Hulme, “Including America,” *ARIEL* 26.1 (1995): 117-23.

contributed to the emergence of strong local communities and distinctions—namely, federalism. In this regard, rather than reading representations of local spaces as evidence of “the profound continuities between the colonial and national segments of the American past,” this project attempts to read those same spaces in relation to their continuities with the emergence and development of the federal nation. In this regard, this project participates in the ongoing move to emphasize the role that locality played in the early nation, while at the same time offering a different political paradigm for interpreting those different spaces.

Currently, most studies focusing on the local and regional dimensions of the early United States have been written by historians, rather than literary critics. When considering representations of local difference, literary critics tend to focus much later in the nineteenth century, when writers such as Hamlin Garland, Sarah Orne Jewett, and Mary Wilkins Freeman were producing what would become known as “regionalist” or “local color” fiction. Often characterized as a literary precursor to realism, this regional literature has typically been characterized as a distinctly postbellum mode of writing which emerged in response to the divisive consequences of the Civil War and the increasing industrialization that took place in the U.S. during the late nineteenth century—a sentimental mode of writing that, for many, was an attempt to negotiate the loss of rural communities and histories in the face of industrial and urban development.⁸

⁸ For more on this later period of regionalism, see Marjorie Pryse, “Reading Regionalism: The ‘Difference’ It Makes,” in *Regionalism Reconsidered: New Approaches to the Field* (1994). Important examples of this approach include Donna Campbell, *Resisting Regionalism* (Athens: Ohio UP, 1997), Sherry Inness and Diana Royer, *Breaking Boundaries: New Perspectives on Women’s Regional Writing* (Iowa City: Iowa City UP, 1997), and Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse, *Writing out of place: Regionalism, Women, and American Literary Culture* (Urbana: U Illinois P, 2003).

The critical absence of local and regional considerations from studies of the early United States, however, cannot merely be explained by the tendency to read regionalism as a late nineteenth century, proto-realist discourse. Instead, this absence can be explained by a larger tendency to view literary texts as a means of transcending, rather than reproducing differences in the early republic—a tendency that can be traced back to the postwar criticism of figures such as F.O. Matthiessen, R.W.B. Lewis, Richard Chase, and Perry Miller who saw American literary texts as representative of a unified national character. “Fascinated with the idea of America,” writes Leo Marx, these critics were primarily interested in “reading the society and culture of the United States *as a whole*,” an outlook that necessarily precluded them from recognizing the ways in which the nation was understood and represented as a matrix of diverse and differentiated localities.⁹ This is not to say that this earlier period of criticism completely neglected the category of the region. In fact, literary representations of spaces such New England, the South, and the American west remained a significant area of focus, particularly for critics such as Henry Nash Smith, Perry Miller, and Leo Marx who explored literary representations of the American landscape.¹⁰ In examining these different regional spaces, however, these critics tended to read them symbolically, as mythic settings or “tropes” for the articulation of collective national beliefs and values. In this regard, instead of encouraging readers to view the nation as a

⁹ Leo Marx, “Believing in America,” *The Boston Review: A Political and Literary Forum* 26.6 (Dec. 2004), 11. Notable examples of this postwar liberal approach include Richard Chase, *The American Novel and Its Tradition*. (New York: Doubleday, 1957); F.O. Matthiessen. *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman*. (New York: Oxford UP, 1941); R.W.B. Lewis, *American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*. (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1955); Perry Miller. *Errand Into the Wilderness*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1956).

¹⁰ This metaphorical reading of regional spaces was a hallmark of the “myth-and-symbol” school of criticism that shaped literary studies throughout the 1940s through the 1960s. See Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: American West as Symbol and Myth*. (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1950); Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden* (New York: Oxford UP, 1964).

diversified social and political space, regional representations emerge as yet another means of providing readers with a sense of “an original Americanness.”

During the 1980s and 1990s, a critical shift took place. Abandoning the essentialist mode of criticism represented by the myth and symbol school model, the “new Americanists” criticized this impulse to read literature as a reflection of a unified and liberal American essence. Rather than approaching literary texts as “works of art embodying enduring themes,” these critics began to situate literature within larger political and cultural discursive systems—a move which encouraged readers to re-examine literary texts as representations possessing “agency in the political world.”¹¹ As mentioned earlier, this shift in perspective ultimately led critics to examine the nation in more diverse and multi-dimensional terms— a shift which, on the surface, seems to open the door for thinking about the nation in terms of its local and regional diversity. Despite their emphasis on exposing and exploring the heterogeneous conditions of the nation, however, the new Americanists devoted little attention to this particular category of difference. The question then arises—why?

A possible answer lies in the way that critics continue to perceive the concept of early American nationhood. Although contemporary critics have dismissed the idea that the nation is defined by some sort of original American “essence,” many of the critical narratives that have emerged from this new Americanist paradigm continue to conceive of the nation in terms of an imagined homogeneity. This tendency is most evident in the emphasis placed on examining the national dimensions of U.S. literature in relation to the

¹¹ Jane Tompkins, *Sensational Designs* (New York: Oxford UP, 1985) 13. For more on the political and cultural turn within early American studies, see Donald Pease (16), “New Americanists: Revisionist Interventions into the Canon” *boundary 2*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1990).; Winfried Fluck, “From Aesthetics to Political Criticism,” *Early American Re-Explored*. Ed Klaus Schmidt and Fritz Fleischmann, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, 200): 225-257;

politics of the public sphere and the discourse of sympathy and sentiment. Critics who focus on the unifying influence of the public sphere, for instance, tend to argue that the circulation of printed texts enabled citizens to establish connections rooted in a shared sense of values and experiences—allowing citizens, “though the act of reading” to transcend their sense of individual particularity and “become a part of an arena of national people” (Warner, xiii).¹² Other critics, meanwhile, focus on the “affective” power of literary discourse, exploring how texts engage with the rhetoric of sympathy and sentiment to “imagine the new republic as a kind of affectively consolidated collectivity” (Coviello, 454).¹³ In making these arguments, these studies remain rooted in the assumption that literary discourse provided citizens with a way of creating a kind of common ground—a ground, as Michael Warner notes, that “cannot be realized except through mediated imaginings” (xiii)—where readers could somehow overcome or transcend their differences and come together as a people united by a sense of shared experience.

Such readings, however, are ultimately anachronistic. The idea of the United States as a nation defined by shared sense of similarities—the model of unity that has informed most literary studies of early America—is primarily a late nineteenth century construction. Only after the Civil War would citizens come to imagine the nation in terms of a shared and singular culture—a shift exemplified by the post-bellum transformation

¹² See also Larzer Ziff, *Writing in the New Nation* (1993), Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance* (1993), Thomas Gustafson, *Representative Words: Politics, Literature, and the American Language, 1776-1865* (1993) and more recently, Elizabeth Maddock Dillon *The Gender of Freedom* (2004).

¹³ See Ivy Schweitzer’s *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature* (2006), Glenn Hendler, *Public Sentiments: Structures of Feeling in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (North Carolina, 2001); Bruce Burgett, *Sentimental Bodies: Sex, Gender, and Citizenship in the Early Republic* (Princeton UP, 1998); Elizabeth Barnes, *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (New York: Columbia UP, 1997); Julia Stern, *The Plight of Feeling: Sympathy and Dissent in the Early American Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997);

of the “United States” from a plural to a singular noun. Prior to this, citizens were much more inclined to view the nation in composite terms, as a union of distinctive local communities defined more by a sense of differences than similarities. In the second part of this introduction, I will explore this composite conception of American unity in more detail, looking specifically at how this conception of unity is rooted in the political discourse of federalism. For now, I want to make the following point—that the critical tendency to overlook the prevalence and the significance of local differences in the early republic is symptomatic of the way in which critics have misread the terms of national unity during the antebellum period. As I intend to show, there is a fundamental difference between viewing the United States as a national republic and viewing the United States a federal republic, and by changing the terms in which readers perceive terms of social and political unity in the early United States, this project ultimately attempts to help critics recover the United States in its plural sense and, in doing so, read the local differences of the nation differently.

In concluding this discussion, I want to comment briefly on the relationship of this study to the two critical paradigms that have shaped the field within the past fifteen years—transnational criticism and imperial critique. Each of these approaches have introduced new directions both for interrogating the category of the nation and exploring the relationship between national, local, and international spaces within the early United States. In each case, however, both approaches end up returning to the idea of the uniform nation-state as the central cornerstone for their critical interrogations, either downplaying or misrepresenting the role that local differences played within the nation during this time.

In focusing on the federal dimensions of the early republic, this project particularly aligned with the methods and motives of transnational criticism—a mode of inquiry that is equally invested in imagining the nation in more heterogeneous terms by looking across the Atlantic. Nevertheless, for as much as transnational approaches have led critics to re-imagine the United States as the product of a complex system of international interactions and exchanges, within this model, this approach often ends up re-inscribing the concept of the monolithic nation by reading moments of transnational exchange as taking place between nations, rather than regions. In other words, when examining the transatlantic dimensions of U.S. culture, critics tend to view those exchanges in terms of nation-to-nation encounters (the United States and England, the United States and France, the United States and Spain, etc), as opposed to considering the ways in which transnational relationships might also have been imagined and figured in more local terms (the West and Scotland, the South and Castile, New England and London, etc).¹⁴

By exploring early American literature through the lens of federalism, this project is such an attempt to examine the early United States as a product of both transnational and transregional moments of exchange. In addition to bringing a more regional focus to ongoing studies of transnational engagements, this project also seeks to turn the insights and methods of transnational criticism inward to re-imagine how the United States itself

¹⁴ For a few representative examples of this transatlantic impulse, see Paul Giles, *Transatlantic Insurrections: British Culture and the Formation of American Literature*. (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 2001), Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993), W.M. Verhoeven, ed. *Revolutionary Histories: Transatlantic Cultural Nationalism, 1775-1815* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), Robert Weisbuch, *Atlantic Double-Cross : American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson* (Chicago: U Chicago P 1986) and various essays collected in *Possible Pasts: Becoming Colonial in early America*, ed. Robert Blair St. George (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2000).

was shaped by networks of exchange extending not just across the Atlantic, but also across the Rio Grande, the Alleghenies, the Potomac, and the Mississippi River.

In pursuing this trans-regional approach, this project also offers a new way of engaging with another critical paradigm that has shaped early American studies—reading the U.S. in terms of imperialism. Since the early 1990s, critics have sought to address what Amy Kaplan famously described as “the absence of empire from the study of American culture, and the absence of the United States from the postcolonial study of imperialism.” This move brought new attention to the categories of the local and the regional in the early United States, and, to date, most studies addressing local and regional relations in the antebellum period do so in the context of examining the nation’s imperial or postcolonial dimensions.¹⁵ In pushing for a more localized understanding of early America, for instance, Jack Greene argues that such a perspective will better illuminate the extent to which our “national stories merely represent an extension of the colonial story” (240). Likewise, critics such as Edward Watts, Jennifer Rae Greeson, Michelle Burnham, Priscilla Wald, and Malini Johar Schueller have similarly explored how the local and regional emerge as “colonized” spaces in the early republic, viewing “local cultures through the prism of longstanding tensions concerning their entangled and complex relation to the empire of which they had been parts” (Watts, xv).¹⁶ While reading the regional and the local through an imperial lens has produced an important

¹⁵ This imperial/colonial focus stands in contrast to studies of late 19th century regionalism, where the representation of regional spaces is more often examined in relation to critical discussions of realism and/or gender relations. See David Jordan, ed. *Regionalism Reconsidered: New Approaches to the Field*. (New York: Garland Publishers, 1994) and Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse, *Writing Out of Place: Regionalism, Women, and American Literary Culture* (Chicago: U Illinois P, 2000)

¹⁶ See Watts, *An American Colony* (2002); Edward Watts and Malini Johar Schueller, eds. *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003); Jennifer Rae Greeson, “Colonial Planter to American Farmer: South, Nation, and Decolonization in Crevecoeur,” in *Messy Beginnings* (2000); Michelle Burnham, “The Periphery Within: Internal Colonialism and the Rhetoric of U.S. Nation Building “ in *Messy Beginnings* (2000);

body of criticism, however, a number of critics have recently begun to question whether American studies has become overly dominated by this imperial paradigm. In a recent review essay, Susan Gillman discusses “the exhaustion of the imperial turn,” arguing that, fifteen years beyond the publication of *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, the constant emphasis on “rectifying the absence of empire” has resulted in a formulaic approach to U.S. history, culture, and politics—an approach that is “condemned repeatedly to discover and announce empire’s presence” rather than introduce “new directions and possibilities” (196).

Ultimately, by reading early American literature in relation to federalism, this project does attempt to introduce some “new possibilities and directions” for reconsidering this imperial paradigm. Within the current model, domestic relations are primarily understood in terms of center and periphery, whereby the western and southern parts of the nation are considered subject to the imperial influences of the east coast. Federalism, however, offers a different structure for considering power relations within the early republic. Instead of reading all domestic relations in terms of the colonizing influence of the east, federalism allows us to reconsider the United States in terms of less hierarchical processes of interaction and exchange. In expanding the federal republic, for instance, citizens turned to the concept of “incorporation” to describe the relationship of newly acquired territories to the rest of the nation. This policy would be formalized in the Louisiana Purchase Treaty, which decreed that

The inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the Union of the United States and admitted as soon as possible according to the principles of the federal Constitution to the enjoyment of all these rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States, and in the mean time they shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and the Religion which they profess.

Without question, this concept of federal “incorporation ” has imperial implications. The process of bringing new territory into the nation inevitably involved practices of domination, oppression, and exploitation, and, in this regard, many critics have argued that federalism is simply another term for American imperialism—providing yet another example of how American imperial practices were often masked through the use of an “exceptional” rhetoric.¹⁷ While extending the republic under the banner of federalism did result in policies of subjugation and marginalization, however, it is problematic to equate federal expansion with imperial expansion so easily. To “incorporate” is not simply to lay claim to territory in order to dominate it. A close look at the terms through which federal expansion was represented and imagined in the antebellum U.S. shows that incorporation involved bringing spaces into the nation in ways that would make them seem both recognizably and acceptably national (as opposed to “colonial”)—while at the same time ensuring that the different interests and practices of those new spaces would be represented and protected. At stake in this project, then, is an examination of how federal discourse offers a model of expansion that is both similar to but also different from traditional models of imperial dominance—a model that allows us to complicate, rather than simply replicate, the current terms of imperial analysis.

In concluding this section, I just want to say a few words about the larger process of reading literature and politics alongside one another. That literary discourse is, inherently, a form of political discourse is clearly a well-established idea. Reading the literature of the early republic in such close relation to a single particular political philosophy, however, becomes more problematic, namely because this narrow focus runs

¹⁷ Edward Watts, for example, reads Jefferson’s incorporation policies in imperial terms in *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture* (Athens: Ohio UP, 2002).

the risk of collapsing the political and literary spheres into one. Although literary and political spheres drew on the same federal logic and rhetoric, literary engagements with federalism are ultimately different from political engagements with federalism, and in presenting this project, my goal is not to characterize literature as a reflection or register of federal political developments. Instead, this project seeks to emphasize what Michael Warner describes as the “reciprocal determinations” of literature and politics, an approach that considers both how “changes in political culture...refashioned the textuality of print” and also how “the textuality of print determined the character of political culture” (xii). Likewise, in reading American literature in relation to federalism, I do not intend to claim that federal discourse is the only way in which to understand and interpret the literature productions and relationships within the early and antebellum republic. As Christopher Looby writes, studies examining the “nationalizing” characteristics of early tend to present their analysis in terms of “totalizing arguments.” “Such critical totalization is what is potentially misleading about the print-culture thesis and any number of other compelling accounts of the literature of the new nation, accounts that attempt to organize our understanding...around a single concept,” he writes (5). The following project has thus been undertaken with these ideas in mind, and at this point, I will shift my focus to offer a more specific introduction to the historical context of federalism in the early republic. In doing so, my goal is not to present federalism as an explanatory background for understanding the literature of the early republic, but rather, to provide a sense of the conditions that shaped the development of both literature and politics in the early republic.

The Problem of Unity and the Philosophy of Federalism

From the beginning, the United States posed challenges for conventional conceptions of national unity and identity. Historically, nations have been defined in relation to a certain degree of domestic uniformity or homogeneity. This idea can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle, who both maintained that the establishment of a stable and cohesive nation depended upon cultivating and preserving some level of sameness amongst its citizens, particularly with regard to moral values and education. During the Enlightenment, political theorists such as Rousseau, Locke, and Montesquieu continued to define the nation in relation to a sense of political or cultural sameness.¹⁸ This conception of national unity and identity as contingent on domestic homogeneity finds continued expression today, most notably in the work of political theorists such as Ernest Renan, Ernest Gellner, John Breuilly, and Michael Hechter who likewise define nationalism in relation to some degree of political and cultural sameness, whether it be experienced in the form of a shared and uniform sense of language, religion, race, or history.¹⁹

Upon declaring their independence from England, however, the colonists of British America had very little grounds on which to claim political or social collectivity.

“In spite of some of the sources of unity among its residents...[such as] a common

¹⁸ See Jacob T. Levy, "Beyond Publius: Montesquieu, Liberal Republicanism, and the Small-Republic Thesis" *History of Political Thought* Forthcoming, 2006. Patrick Coby, "Aristotle's Three Cities and the Problem of Faction," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Nov. 1988), pp. 896-919

¹⁹ Ernest Gellner offers an example of this view, "Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating...[and] two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation." See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), See also Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" in Eley, Geoff and Suny, Ronald Grigor, ed. 1996. *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) pp. 41-55. See especially pp. 52-54; John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Chicago: U Chicago P), 1985; Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford UP, 2000).

language [and] shared legal and constitutional tradition, ...the American colonies were, in fact, extraordinarily disconnected from one another, displaying among themselves and within themselves significant varieties of political behavior,” writes Richard Beeman. In addition to this political variety, the former colonies represented a wide range of different landscapes, economies, customs, and histories. A high rate of immigration and the prospect of future expansion further contributed to this diversity and, given the extent of these political, social, and geographic differences, many doubted that this heterogeneous space could ever be organized into an independent and unified nation.²⁰ As one early critic of consolidation wrote,

Whosoever seriously considers the immense extent of territory comprehended within the limits of the United States, together with the variety of climates, productions, and commerce, the difference of extent and number of inhabitants in all; the dissimilitude of interest, morals, policies in almost every one, will receive it as an intuitive truth that a consolidated republican form of government therein can never *form a perfect union*.²¹

As citizens met to debate the future of this newly independent region, however, a potential solution to this problem of diversity was found in the political philosophy of federalism. Drawn from the political philosophies of Montesquieu, Locke, Hume, and Rousseau, federalism is a mode of political organization where national sovereignty is constitutionally divided between a central governing authority and constituent political units such as states or provinces. By dividing authority in this way, a federal system

²⁰ For discussions of the diversity and disconnected character of the former British colonies, see David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1997); Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788-1828* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1999), Peter Onuf, “Federalism, Republicanism, And The Origins Of American Sectionalism” in *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins UP, 1996); Annmarie Zagari, *The Politics of Size: Representation in the United States, 1776-1850*, (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1987); Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Politics of the British Empire and the United States* (Athens, Ga: U Georgia P, 1986).

²¹ Cato, “Letter III,” *New York Journal*, Oct. 25 1787

makes it possible to represent a diverse range of domestic interests within a political structure that consolidates and configures those interests in the service of larger, collective goals. As Montesquieu writes in *The Spirit of Laws* (1752),

This form of government is a convention by which several petty states agree to become members of a larger one...[it] is a kind of assemblage of societies that constitute a new one, capable of increasing by means of further associations...such a degree of power as to be able to provide for the security of the whole body (Book VIII, Ch. XVI).

As an “assemblage of societies,” a federal system of government effectively departs from conventional conceptions of nationhood. Instead of representing the nation as a political body united by the existence of a uniform set of social, economic, or political practices, a federal republic represents the nation as a composite political body whose unity derives from the representation of many different interests. Thus, under federalism, the nation is not imagined in homogeneous terms-- as a political space defined by a set of shared practices, values, and beliefs. Instead, federal nations emerge as political entities whose “unity” is defined (somewhat counter-intuitively) by the equal representation of many different practices, values, and beliefs.

If federalism ultimately represents a model of unity founded in difference, however, political philosophers stressed the importance of limiting the range of differences represented within a federal system. In *The Spirit of Laws*, for example, Montesquieu maintains that federal representation can only succeed in a relatively small republic where the range of domestic differences will inevitably be more limited and thus, more easily consolidated and controlled.

It is natural for a federal republic to have only a small territory; otherwise it cannot long subsist... In an extensive republic the public good is sacrificed to a thousand private views; it is subordinate to exceptions, and depends on accidents,

while in a small one, the interest of the public is more obvious, better understood, and more within the reach of every citizen (Book VIII, Ch. XVI).

This argument—often referred to as the “theory of the small republic”—illustrates the extent to which early proponents of federalism ultimately perceived national unity to be founded on relations of similarity and uniformity. While federalism offers a means of producing a more diverse, yet stable system of governance, Montesquieu, like most political theorists of the 18th-century, was unwilling to push the concept of federal unity too far. Only in a small state, where domestic differences are more likely to be minor, familiar, and closely related (“more obvious and better understood”), can a system of federal representation produce unity—in contrast to a larger republic where the representation of differences would prove to large to be negotiated—and by thus arguing that federal representation should be restricted to a small republic, Montesquieu perpetuates the assumption that national unity and stability ultimately depend upon a sense of social and political similarity.²²

In the United States, however, citizens would develop a very different understanding of the terms of federal unity. From the beginning, the former colonists turned to federalism as a means of organizing their newly independent space. The first attempt to organize the United States as a federal system took place under the Articles of Confederation, proposed in 1777 and passed in 1781. Under the Articles, the members of the various states agreed to “enter into a firm league of friendship with each other for the common defense, the security of their liberties, and their mutual and general welfare” (Article III) while simultaneously ensuring that each state would “retain its sovereignty,

²² For further discussions of the theory of the small republic in early U.S. politics, see Paul Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1992), 573-616; Peter Onuf and Nicholas Onuf, *Federal Union, Modern World: The Law of Nations in an Age of Revolutions, 1776-1814* (Madison: Madison House, 1993), 80-87.

freedom, and independence” (Article II). The subsequent failure of the Articles, however, seemed to lend credence to the idea that federalism could not succeed in a large republic. When delegates met to discuss the status of the confederation in 1787, opinions were split over whether to replace the Articles with a more rigorous federal system or abandon the idea of unifying the colonies under a consolidated federal government altogether. Given the instabilities created by the Articles of Confederation, many believed that the United States was simply too large and too diverse ever to be unified under a federal system. In fact, many feared that, in a country as large and diverse as the United States, the federal structures put in place to unify the nation would inevitably end up reproducing the disorder and disruption they were intended to mediate.

In a republic, the manners, sentiments, and interests of the people should be similar...and, if we apply this remark to the condition of the United States, we shall be convinced that it forbids that we should be one government. The United States includes a variety of climates. The productions of the different parts of the union are very variant, and their interests, of consequence, diverse. Their manners and habits differ as much as their climates and productions; and their sentiments are by no means coincident...Of consequence, a legislature, formed of representatives from the respective parts, would not only be too numerous to act with any care or decision, but would be composed of such heterogeneous and discordant principles, as would constantly be contending with each other (Brutus I, *New York Journal*, Oct. 18 1787).

At the heart of these arguments against federal consolidation, then, lies the assumption that the representation of “numerous,” “heterogeneous,” and “discordant” interests will inevitably produce disunity and disorder. Supporters of the federal Constitution, on the other hand, would adopt a very different view of the consequences of representing all this variety. Much like those who opposed the establishment of a centralized federal system, supporters of federalism freely acknowledged that the system of federal representation put forth under the revised Constitution would inevitably produce an extremely heterogeneous legislature composed, as Alexander Hamilton described it, of “dissimilar

ingredients.” Instead of viewing this dissimilar republic as a source of conflict and disorder, however supporters of the Constitution recast the representation of differences as a source of unity and stability. As James Madison famously argues in the “Federalist, No. 10,”

Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other....Hence it appears, that the same advantage...is enjoyed by a large over a small Republic.

By asserting the advantages of a “large” over a “small” republic, Madison not only attempts to reclaim federalism as a viable political model for a republic as large as the United States, he encourages citizens to depart from conventional understandings of national stability and unity, whereby the establishment of a strong national body is assumed to be contingent upon a sense of collective homogeneity or uniformity. Instead of characterizing domestic differences as a threat to unity that must be somehow diminished or overcome, Madison argues that the representation of differences offers an ideal means of both producing and protecting a unified and equitable republic. Only by representing a wide range of different people, places, and practices would citizens be able to produce a republic capable of acting in the interests of all its citizens, rather than creating a divisive republic controlled by a few select groups. In this regard, Madison ultimately encourages citizens, not just to represent but to continually cultivate a wide range of differences within the nation so as to ensure the stability of the republic into the future.

Madison’s arguments in defense of a diverse and expansive republic were by no means uncontroversial. During the debates surrounding ratification, many attacked the idea that federal representation would lead to a greater sense of unity or stability—at least

as it was proposed under the new Constitution. This “consolidated republican form of government,” wrote one prominent critic, will undoubtedly “form an unkindred legislature...which, composed of interests opposite and dissimilar in their nature, will in its exercise, emphatically be, like a house divided against itself” (Cato III, *New York Journal*, 1787). Still others argued that the model of federalism proposed under the Constitution would ultimately stifle and suppress the differences it claimed to protect and promote. For these critics, the pressures of negotiating the multiple and competing interests of the new nation would inevitably require the central government to assert its authority over the states and, in doing so, undermine their autonomy. “It is the opinion of the ablest writers on the subject that no extensive empire can be governed upon republican principles, without that such a government will degenerate to a despotism,” wrote “Agrippa” (Letter IV, Dec 3, 1787). Dissenters at the Pennsylvania Ratifying Convention voiced similar concerns, “We dissent, secondly, because the powers vested in Congress by this constitution, must necessarily annihilate and absorb the legislative, executive, and judicial powers of the several states, and produce from their ruins one consolidated government, which, from the nature of things, will be *an iron handed despotism*” (“The Address and Reasons of Dissent of the Minority of the Convention of Pennsylvania to their Constituents,” 1887).²³

²³ These debates over the extent to which the federal nation would be alternately strengthened or weakened by the process of representing its expansive interests tended to break down according to what has traditionally been termed “Federalist” (pro-Constitution) and Anti-Federalist (anti-Constitution) positions. More recent scholarship has sought to complicate these distinctions, arguing that Federalist and Anti-Federalist positions were much less uniform and unified than has often been represented, particularly regarding the consequences of representing the nation’s diversity. In pointing to Anti-Federalist opposition to Madison’s (and other Federalist) arguments, however, it is important to recognize that the Anti-Federalists were not against the principles of federalism per se. Instead, they objected to the model of federal governance proposed under the Constitution which many believed was too rigid and centralized to adequately represent the nation’s diverse communities and still maintain a stable union, despite Federalist

If the Constitutional debates were dominated by doubts about the viability of federal representation, however, the idea that the United States could both survive and prosper as a union of differences gained greater acceptance and legitimacy following ratification. As Saul Cornell writes, by the mid-1790s, citizens increasingly supported the idea that this “federal system offered a useful means of dealing with the economic and cultural diversity of American life” (180). Suspensions that the bicameral Congress would be too “numerous” and “discordant” to govern were allayed (somewhat) by the successful passage of a comprehensive Bill of Rights. More than simply convincing citizens that the members of a diverse and expansive legislature could work together effectively, the passage of the first ten amendments went a long way toward assuring citizens that the United States would continue to preserve and protect the sovereignty of the different communities and interests represented within it, thus remaining, as Madison described it, “a People made up of the many states.”²⁴

Throughout the 1780s and 1790s, citizens became more and more willing to embrace this vision of the nation as a union composed of multiple “ingredients”—a legitimacy exemplified by the proliferation of federal seals, emblems, and other drawings in the 1790s which sought to represent the nation as a union composed of its multiple parts. Within these drawings, care was taken to include individual markers standing in for each of the different states, emphasizing the extent to which the states were bound

arguments to the contrary. See Cornell’s *The Other Founders*, and Gary Rosen, *American Compact : James Madison and the Problem of Founding*, (Lawrence : UP Kansas, 1999)

²⁴ The passage of the 10th Amendment, which states that the “powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively” was particularly instrumental in shoring up public confidence in the federal structure of the new government. For more on the relationship of the Bill of Rights and federalism, see Cornell’s *The Other Founders*, and Gary Rosen, *American Compact : James Madison and the Problem of Founding*, (Lawrence : UP Kansas, 1999). Madison quotation taken from his initial speech introducing his support for a Bill of Rights on June 8, 1789, see *The Annals of Congress*, House of Representatives, First Congress, 1st Session, 448-460.

together, yet also always separate and distinct from one another. The potential instability implied by this separation, however, is contained by the fact that each individual state marker is always portrayed in equal terms. The one exception here is the original drawing for the national seal (fig. 1) where the markers of the different states are arranged in what might be perceived as some sort of hierarchical order. The unequal implications of this design was one of the reasons it was ultimately rejected as the final official seal.

Subsequent representations would strive for a more equitable arrangement.

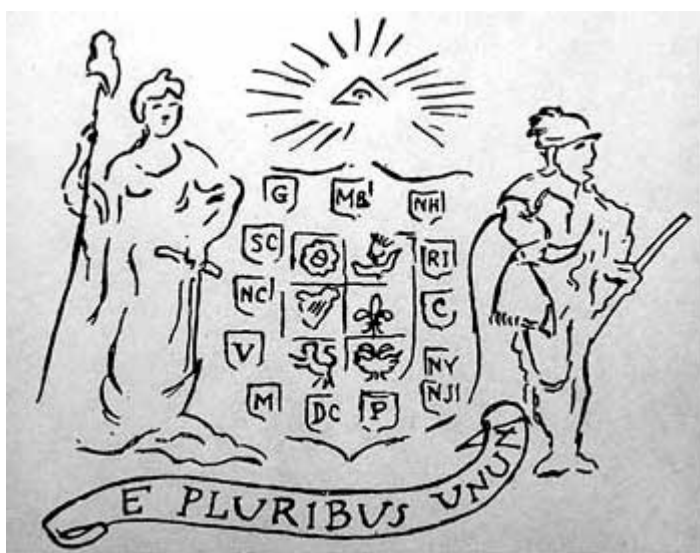


Fig. 1: Pierre Eugène Du Simitière's Sketch of First Design for the Great Seal (1776)

In addition to these visual representations, the extent to which U.S. citizens came to embrace a distinctly *federal* conception of American unity became manifest in the outpouring of local and regional forms of expression in the early decades of the republic. Because the nation's authority and legitimacy derived from the representation of the interests of its constituent states, representing oneself as a federal citizen was a matter of first representing oneself as a devoted member of one's own particular state. As a result of this close relationship between local representation and national unity, the late

eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries saw the emergence of what David Waldstreicher refers to as “remarkably nationalist regionalisms,” whereby citizens turned to local forms of expression—such as parades, public ceremonies, and the publication of toasts, poems, and other local writings—as a means of enacting a federal American identity (248).²⁵

For as much as representing local identities and emphasizing local distinctions was perceived as a means of supporting a federal model of unity, however, this mode of expression also led to tension and conflict. “By providing a context and language for identifying regional identities and interests, conceiving of American nationality in such expansive terms inevitably heightened sectional consciousness,” notes Peter Onuf (14). As citizens sought to demonstrate their federal allegiance through public forms of local expression, their actions were, at times, seen as a threat to the federal unity they were intended to support. When New Englanders celebrated their regional identity by emphasizing their Puritan and Revolutionary heritage, for instance, their attempt to position themselves as a distinctive part of the federal nation was often perceived as an attack on southern and western distinctiveness, dangerously implying that those living outside of New England “possessed no real claims to the legacy of the Revolution” (Waldstreicher, 258). There is a fine line between fostering a celebratory and unifying regionalism and promoting a divisive sectionalism, and the members of the different

²⁵ The “Federal Processions” that took place throughout the states in the aftermath of ratification exemplified this spirit of federal representation. The largest processions were held in Portsmouth, NH, Boston, Baltimore, New York Philadelphia, and Charleston, SC, and citizens used these processions as occasions to showcase their own local identities and particularities within a context designed to highlight their simultaneous sense of national belonging. “As a field of festivity” writes Laura Rigal, the Federal Processions were meant to represent “a visually extended...republic;... its visual reach articulated the miniature with the gigantic--the most minutely particular and local with a “mammoth” or extended view [of the nation]” (276). Laura Rigal, *“Raising the Roof”: Authors, Spectators and Artisans in the Grand Federal Procession of 1788*. *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (October 1996) 253-277.

states continued to enact their federal identities by articulating their local distinctions, citizens were continually caught up in the process of interpreting the significance of regional representation.

Three specific political crises—the Whiskey Rebellion, the chartering of the first Bank of the United States, and the passage of the Jay Treaty—brought the issue of federal interpretation to a head in the late 1790s. By pitting the authority of the central government against the authority of the states, these events exposed problematic ambiguities concerning the meaning of federal practice and principles under the Constitution. In the case of the Whiskey Rebellion, when a group of Pennsylvania farmers rebelled against the central government to protest a national tax, citizens debated whether this assertion of local authority represented a just exercise of the nation's federal principles or whether it represented a fundamental violation of them. Similarly, when Congress passed legislation to create the national bank and, later, to approve John Jay's controversial treaty with Great Britain, citizens questioned whether these actions represented a legitimate use of federal power to protect the interests of the states (implied by the Constitution) or whether such legislation constituted an "unwarranted" abuse of the nation's federal structure by "infringing upon the rights of the states."²⁶

²⁶For a more detailed analysis of the Whiskey Rebellion, see Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1986); James Roger Sharp *American Politics in the Early Republic* (New Haven : Yale UP 1993), and Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders* (1999), especially pp. 200-218. For the crisis of interpretation brought on by the Bank of the United States, see James Madison's remarks on the "Constitutionality of a National Bank," (Feb 2, 1791), cited in Sharp (39). For more specific critical discussions of both the Bank and Jay Treaty controversies, see Elkins and McKittrick (especially Ch. 9); Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997); and Todd Estes, "Shaping the Politics of Public Opinion: Federalists and the Jay Treaty Debate." *Journal of the Early Republic* (2000) 20(3): 393-422.

In absence of clear Constitutional guidance for interpreting the legitimacy of these various “federal” acts, Americans turned to the many texts written *about* the composition and ratification of the Constitution in an attempt to develop a clearer sense of the scope and significance of American federal authority. From the late 1790s through the mid-1800s, hundreds of newspaper articles, essays, pamphlets, speeches, and letters related to the Constitutional debates were reprinted and re-circulated, with some works—such as the speeches and proceedings of the various state ratifying conventions—appearing in entirely new and specialized editions.²⁷ “The range of sources invoked to establish the original understanding of the federal constitution was staggering,” writes Saul Cornell. “Virtually all of the available texts produced during ratification had the potential to be reinterpreted and reread in the struggle to ascertain the meaning of the Constitution,” a process that inevitably resulted in a “proliferation of different readings” (222).²⁸

In this regard, defining the federal nation in the early United States was not just a political issue—it was also very much a literary issue. Instead of determining the significance of federal policies and principles strictly through legislative or legal channels, citizens both defined and participated in the federal nation through the production, circulation, and interpretation of texts.²⁹ In the early decades of the republic,

²⁷ For a thorough overview of the many different publications and re-printings of the ratification debates and convention proceedings, see James H. Hutson, “The Creation of the Constitution: The Integrity of the Documentary Record,” in *Interpreting the Constitution: The Debate Over Original Intent*, Jack N. Rakove, ed. (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1990): 151-178.

²⁸ Despite their ideological differences, for instance, the two proto-parties of the period—namely the Federalists and Democratic Republicans-- drew on the exact same pool of supplemental documents to support their respective interpretations concerning the scope and structure of the federal government, regardless of whom had written or interpreted them in the past. A multitude of ironies emerged from these debates [as] Federalists approvingly quoted the works of former Antifederalists” and vice versa, observes Cornell (221).

²⁹ Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, notes Cornell, the form and practice of American federalism would continue to be shaped by the contentious process of determining “which, if any, texts would be used to identify the original understanding of the Constitution” and “defining the appropriate interpretive strategies [for] explicat[ing] those texts” (221). For more on the “extra-textual” processes of Constitutional

this practice was primarily used by the members of the political elite, who drew on the political writings of the founding period as a means of interpreting the federal Constitution. Over time, however, citizens would turn to a much wider range of texts and reading practices as a means of defining the terms of federal citizenship. The practice of defining federalism through the politics of print gradually “permeated popular culture,” notes Michael Merrill, and over the course of the early 19th century, print culture would come to be seen as a powerful means, not merely for elucidating the meaning of federalism, but for enacting federal principles on a local level.³⁰

Although the public sphere was always considered an important medium for constructing and articulating a national identity, by the early 1800s, an active and expansive public sphere was considered particularly crucial for supporting the nation’s federal identity. Members of the emerging Democratic-Republican party were particularly vocal about the close relationship between federalism and the development of a vibrant public sphere.³¹ “The healthful existence of this state requires that it should always possess [a public sphere] with considerable latitude and extensive sphere of operation, and that it should ever be approached without the utmost deference of circumspection,” wrote Tunis Wortman, a strong supporter of federalism whose influential *Treatise, Concerning Political Enquiry and the Liberty of the Press* (1800)

interpretation, see Jefferson Powell, “The Original Understanding of Original Intent,” in *Interpreting the Constitution: The Debate Over Original Intent*, Jack N. Rakove, ed. (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1990): 53-116; and see James H. Hutson, “The Creation of the Constitution: The Integrity of the Documentary Record,” in *Interpreting the Constitution: The Debate Over Original Intent*, Jack N. Rakove, ed. (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1990): 151-178.

³⁰ Merrill and Wilentz offer a useful discussion of the extent to local citizens increasingly saw the process of reading and writing in the public sphere as a means of defining and enacting federal principles in their introductory essay on William Manning in *The Key of Liberty: The Life and Democratic Writings of William Manning* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993), 50-53.

³¹ Although he began his political career as a Federalist, Madison’s objections to the increasing consolidation of national power under the Washington and Adams administrations led him to join forces with Jefferson to establish the anti-consolidationist Democratic Republican party in the 1790s (Cite reference).

stressed the importance of maintaining an active public sphere within a federal republic (180-81). By providing a forum for citizens to represent, exchange, and, most importantly, reflect upon the different viewpoints and interests of the nation, an active public sphere would enable citizens to comprehend and experience the nation as a “union or aggregation of individual sentiments.” In this regard, concludes Wortman, the experience of producing and circulating texts would provide readers with a way of recognizing the nation in diverse, rather than singular terms, thus promoting a sense of the nation that “particularly harmonizes with our Representative System”(246).

James Madison was equally vocal in characterizing the public sphere as “the ultimate guardian” of the federal system.³² More than simply providing a means for citizens to better recognize and represent the federal unity of the nation, Madison saw the public sphere (and not Congress) as the primary space where citizens could put federal principles into practice. In an essay titled “Political Reflections” (1799), Madison expresses his objection to “the doctrine that has so ardently been propagated by many, that in a republic people ought to consider the whole of their public duty discharged when they have chosen their representatives.”³³ Instead of simply relying on representatives to protect local interests while also finding ways to act “in the interests of the Many,” Madison encourages citizens to promote and support federal union through the public exchange of ideas. By representing and circulating local opinions, an active public sphere would provide “the strongest evidence of attachment [of the states] both the

³² Madison discusses this issue explicitly in an essay titled “Government and the United States,” published in *The National Gazette*, February 4, 1792, reprinted in *Liberty and Order: The First American Party Struggle*, ed. Lance Banning (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004). See also James H. Read, *Power Versus Liberty : Madison, Hamilton, Wilson, and Jefferson* (Charlottesville : UP of Virginia, 2000); Garret Ward Sheldon, *The Political Philosophy of James Madison*, (Baltimore : Johns Hopkins UP, 2001).

³³ “Political Reflections,” originally published in the *Aurora General Advertiser*, February 23, 1799. Reprinted in *The Papers of James Madison*, Vol. 17, Ed. David B. Mattern, J.C.A. Stagg, Jeanne K. Cross, and Susan Holbrook Perdue (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991).

Constitution to the Union, since it is only by maintaining the different governments and departments within their respective limits, that the blessings of either can be perpetuated,” wrote Madison (“Report of 1800”). In this regard, more than simply reflecting the federal order of the nation, the public sphere could provide a means of maintaining the federal government, serving, in effect, as a kind of supplemental, informal federal legislature.³⁴

Recognizing the extent to a diverse and active public sphere could foster federal sensibilities, many sought to establish formal networks for exchange and create an infrastructure to facilitate, not just commerce, but the circulation of texts between the different parts of the republic. As James Madison wrote,

Whatever facilitates a general intercourse of sentiments, as good roads, domestic commerce, a free press and particularly a *circulation of newspapers through the entire body of the people* ...is favorable to liberty (“Charters,” *National Gazette*, Jan 18, 1792)

Again, this push to create a more formal and interconnected public sphere was primarily articulated by members of the emerging Democratic-Republican party, who would proceed to establish formal networks of local societies to facilitate the active exchange of ideas.³⁵ Although at first, emphasis was placed on the importance of circulating political opinions and ideas, over time, citizens came to embrace a broader understanding of the federal republic of letters that involved the circulation of a wider range of works.³⁶

Scholars such as David Waldstreicher, Peter Onuf, Colin Bonwick, and Jeffrey Pasley,

³⁴ See Lance Banning, *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell UP 1995); Kevin R. Gutzman, “A Troublesome Legacy: James Madison and the Principles of ’98,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, XV (1995): 569-589.

³⁵ As Saul Cornell notes, the rise of the Democratic Republican societies was a “linchpin” in their larger strategy to cultivate and, ultimately, control the political force of the public sphere. Between 1793-94, over forty-six Democratic Republican societies were formed, encompassing cities from Vermont through South Carolina. For more on scope and activities of these societies, see Philip S. Foner, *The Democratic Republican Societies, 1790-1800*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976).

³⁶ See Foner, 15-20 and Waldstreicher, Chapter 3 “National Characters,” especially 130-140

have examined how print culture allowed forms of local representation to take on a larger significance with respect to the national republic.³⁷ “Print transformed toasts, holiday celebrations, and parades from quaint local customs into vital forms of political communication” notes David Waldstreicher. “Spread by print,” local events “reverberated nationally,” allowing citizens to learn about the differences within the nation and develop a sense of connection to them, thus promoting a sense of national unity without imparting a sense of uniformity (42,18).³⁸

Drawing on this idea, this dissertation offers an extensive study of the different ways that early American literature helped produce and transform federal conceptions of the nation throughout the early republic. As I hope to show, the circulation of literary texts— whose content inevitably brought readers into contact with a wide range of different American people, places, and experiences—effectively encouraged citizens to see the nation as a matrix of distinct and separate spaces. At the same time, however, the circulation of these literary texts also introduced conflict and tension within the federal nation, at times testing and exposing the limits of federal unity. In this regard, I will

³⁷ See Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes*, Peter Onuf, “Federalism, Republicanism, And The Origins Of American Sectionalism;” Colin C. Bonwick, “American Nationalism, American Citizenship, and the Limits of Authority, 1776-1800.” *Federalism, Citizenship, and Collective Identities in U.S. History*. Eds. Cornelius A. Van Minnen and Sylvia L. Hilton. (Amsterdam: VU University P, 2000): 29-42; Jeffrey L. Pasley, “The Cheese and the Words: Popular Political Culture and Participatory Democracy in the Early American Republic,” in *Beyond the Founders*. Eds. Jeffrey L. Pasley, Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher. (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 2004): 31-49.

³⁸ The writings of William Manning provide a particularly interesting example of the extent to which citizens (and not just the political elite) viewed the circulation of texts as a primary means of supporting and enacting federal principles. Manning would compile his views on the power of the public sphere in a political treatise titled, *The Key of Liberty*, which was written in the late 1790s. Within this work, Manning outlined a plan for establishing a national literary network, whereby each state would maintain formal literary societies intended to ensure the constant production and circulation of local works. Although *The Key to Liberty* was never published in full in Manning’s lifetime, critics have recently drawn attention to it as a means of examining the extent to which citizens viewed the federal republic as a nation whose stability depended on the representation and circulation of a wide range of written texts. See Michael Merrill and Sean Willenz, *The Key of Liberty: The Life and Democratic Writings of William Manning* (Cambridge; Harvard UP, 1993); Samuel Eliot Morison; “William Manning’s The Key of Libberty” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., Vol. 13, No. 2. (Apr., 1956): 202-254.

explore both the possibilities and instabilities at stake in imagining a federal republic of letters. In what ways did the circulation of literary texts both support and undermine federal conceptions of the nation? How did the circulation of literary texts transform the discourse of federalism itself? And, moreover, what are the consequences of revising our own critical perspectives to re-imagine the early republic in federal terms?

The project is broken up into the following four chapters. The first chapter positions Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive* (1797) in the context of post-ratification debates about the form and function of federal representation. Written in 1797, *The Algerine Captive* offers an excellent example of how early American novels encouraged readers to cultivate a "federal literacy." The novel itself is split into two parts—the first volume describing Updike Underhill's failed attempts to find a place to settle in the United States and the second describing Underhill's experiences as a slave in Algiers. Each volume, in turn, presents readers with a remarkably diverse and disconnected portrait of both the United States and Algiers, ultimately characterizing both societies as the site of a wide range of different manners, habits, attitudes, and beliefs. While critics have often characterized the variable structure and content of the novel as an aesthetic flaw, signifying a lack of skill or time on the part of Royall Tyler, this chapter argues that the diverse and disjointed character of the novel is precisely the point. By representing the world as a composition of equitable political, social, and religious differences, *The Algerine Captive* imagines an alternative form of political and social unity, one which requires readers to redefine the concept of nation as an equitable "union" of different people, places, and practices.

The second and third chapters explore how the historical romance reconfigures the terms of federalism in the context of westward expansion. As the nation grew to include communities beyond the original boundaries of the republic, citizens required new strategies for reading and interpreting national differences. Catharine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* (1827) and Timothy Flint's *Francis Berrian* (1826) offer two different models for integrating these new communities into the nation's federal narrative. While Sedgwick uses a Puritan colonial setting to examine how the expanding nation could include and legally protect its Native American residents, Flint draws on the events of the Mexican Revolution to explore the possibilities of accommodating the American southwest, and by exploring the differences between these two novels, these chapters investigate the ways in which literary texts engage with the federal concept of "incorporation," whereby the inhabitants of newly acquired territories were to be admitted "as soon as possible...to the enjoyment of all these rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States."

The final chapter focuses on the emergence of an increasingly active western literary culture in the 1830s and 1840s, focusing on the rise of regional annuals and periodicals such as *The Western Souvenir*, *The Western Monthly Review*, and *The Illinois Monthly Magazine*. On the one hand, these distinctive regional literatures seemed to embody the nation's federal ideals—creating a federal republic of letters that mirrored the republic of states. On the other hand, the celebration of these local literatures also marks a shift in the terms of federal representation. Rather than enabling citizens to see the nation as a matrix of different, yet complementary communities, the state-specific forms of federal discourse increasingly represented regional differences in incompatible terms,

and in this chapter, I examine how western writers and editors sought to mediate this tension by trying to promote, not so much a federal literature, but a federal mode of literary criticism.

Chapter I

“All Parts of the Union I Considered My Home” The Federal Imagination of *The Algerine Captive*

My ardent wish is that my fellow citizens may profit by my misfortunes. If they peruse these pages with attention they will perceive the necessity of uniting our federal strength to enforce a due respect among other nations. Let us, one and all, endeavor to sustain the general government...Our first object is union among ourselves. For to no nation besides the United States can that antient saying be more emphatically applied: BY UNITING WE STAND, BY DIVIDING WE FALL
—*The Algerine Captive* (1797)

Toward the middle of *The Algerine Captive*—Royall Tyler’s 1797 novel about the national and international misadventures of a New England physician— an unusual exchange takes place. Shortly after his capture and enslavement in Algiers, Updike Underhill agrees to meet and talk with a “Mahometan priest.” At first glance, the stage seems set for a typical conflict between East and West. Underhill enters the room ready to defend “the sacred truths of our holy religion against the insidious attack of the mussulman priest” and the Mollah enters ready to assert the equally sacred truths of Islam (Tyler 131). The scene that follows, however, fails to produce the expected clash. Instead of presenting Christianity and Islam as belief systems at odds with one another, the subsequent dialogue characterizes the two religions as different, yet ultimately compatible, modes of expression. Each time Underhill makes a point intended to “prove” the superiority of Christianity— namely that it is “divinely inspired,” “supported by miracles,” and blessed by “wonderful increase”— the Mollah responds with the equal assertion, “so is ours.” “Your argument I allow to be forcible,” he repeatedly tells Underhill, “but grant us also the use of it” (132).

In highlighting the similarities between these two religions, however, the Mollah never completely equates them. Throughout the dialogue, he continues to stress their differences, noting that Christianity and Islam are defined by different texts, different histories, different prophets, and different doctrines. Rather than characterizing these differences as points of contention, the Mollah encourages Underhill to see them as alternative expressions of compatible ideas. When Underhill condemns Islam for “holding a sensual paradise,” for instance, the Mollah counters that, “in your bible...your prophet refers to the time when he should drink new wine in his father’s kingdom.” In this regard, although Christians and Muslims may have different conceptions of the afterlife, “a sensual heaven is no more imputable to us than to you,” he states (135). When Underhill attempts to differentiate Christianity from Islam on the basis of its adherence to the principles expressed in the Bible, the Mollah replies that, although Islam is rooted instead in the teachings of the alcoran, both texts “contain many excellent rules of life” and share the distinction of being derived from “the finger of the Deity” (135). The dialogue ends with the Mollah encouraging Underhill to read the alcoran— not because it will reveal the superiority of one belief system over another, but because such a reading will reveal the extent to which these two religions represent parallel versions of a similar message. The Mollah says,

Read, then, this spotless book. There you will learn to love those of our faith and not hate those of any other...In a word, you will learn the unity of god which, notwithstanding the cavil of your divines, your prophet, like ours, came into the world to establish and every man of reason must believe (135-6).

Here, instead of fostering conflict, the experience of reading about a different religion produces a greater sense of community. Rather than reading these texts as antitheses of one another, the Mollah encourages Underhill to see them as different manifestations of

equivalent beliefs (“that every man of reason must believe”)—an understanding that ultimately leads Underhill to view Islam in more tolerant terms.

Although Underhill comes to recognize underlying similarities between Christianity and Islam, this dialogue does not prompt him to treat them as one and the same. At the end of this encounter, Underhill is quite adamant about maintaining his own Christian faith and differentiating himself from the Mollah. What does change, however, is his attitude toward Islam and the people of Algiers. From this point forward, Underhill comes to view Christianity and Islam as complementary, rather than mutually exclusive systems of belief. What initially begins as a scene of conversion (with Underhill feeling pressured to replace one set of beliefs with another), becomes a scene of conversation as Underhill learns to accommodate a wider range of acceptable beliefs and practices. As the novel proceeds, Underhill develops an increasingly tolerant attitude toward the many religious and cultural differences he encounters. Whereas before this dialogue, he tended to characterize his captors as “barbaric infidels,” he gradually learns to approach the different people and customs he meets with interest and respect—an attitude that ultimately earns him more freedom and success in Algiers than he was ever able to achieve in the United States.

As it turns out, the dialogue is just one of a number of moments where both Underhill and the reader are encouraged to develop a more tolerant view of social, political, and ethnic differences. Over the course of the novel, Underhill comes into contact with a range of people whose beliefs and practices differ from his own. Likewise, the novel draws upon a wide range of different styles and genres—adopting the conventions of picaresque satire, sentimental captivity narratives, colonial historiography,

theatrical dialogues, and travelogues, moving from humor to sympathy to didacticism to political analysis, and back again. Critics have often commented on the “patchwork” quality of the novel, characterizing it as “rambling,” “episodic,” and “discordant.”³⁹ These critics generally read the disordered character of the text as a reflection of the discordant and disordered character of the post-Revolutionary republic. As Cathy Davidson describes it, *The Algerine Captive* serves as a “mirror that shows up American distortions...extend[ing] and exaggerat[ing] the same hierarchies dividing the American political and social scene” (*Revolution* 302). Edward Watts similarly reads the novel as “reveal[ing] the paradoxes and self-destructive nature” of political and social life in the post-Revolutionary republic (78), and Jared Gardner reads the novel as exemplifying the “factionalist violence” that characterized the early nation.

These critics ultimately argue that Tyler’s text attempts to register and then resolve some of the nation’s internal conflicts and thus bring some sort of coherence to its diverse and conflicted space. Cathy Davidson argues that the novel relies on its “diverse and divided” character as a means of defining the stable republic through contrast. By exposing “the problems of an American democracy,” writes Davidson, the novel eventually “returns us—individual readers—back to the republican values of individual responsibility, individual conscience, and individual action within and for the good of the commonwealth” (*Revolution* 303). Edward Watts and John Engell also argue that the novel’s representation of the disordered republic serves as an ironic mode of critique that is intended to prompt the emergence of greater unity and stability. By depicting a chaotic

³⁹ For discussions of the diversity of the novel, see Cathy Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1986); Jared Gardner, *Master Plots: Race and the Founding of American Literature, 1787-1845*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998); Edward Watts, *Writing and Postcolonialism in the Early Republic*, (Charlottesville: UP Virginia, 1998).

republic, he writes “Tyler means to identify the nation’s inability to communicate with itself as a barrier to the more complex merging necessary to the creation of the ideal state promised by the Revolution” (85). Jared Gardner, Joseph Schöpp, and Jennifer Margulis focus on the novel’s depiction of cultural and racial differences in Algiers and the American South, arguing that the representation of these “other” spaces serves to “chastise and unify the nation” by defining the United States against its social, political, and racial opposites (Gardner 51).⁴⁰

These critical accounts ultimately characterize the heterogeneity of the nation as a problem that needs to be resolved. In the end, they contend that the novel seeks to criticize and correct the disruptive republic it represents—encouraging citizens to find ways to instill a greater sense of unity and stability in the “disharmonious” republic (Davidson, *Revolution* 249). Against these prevailing interpretations, this chapter argues that the novel’s disruptive account of diversity is precisely the point. Instead of viewing the novel’s heterogeneous character as the reflection of a national problem, I propose that this diverse portrait of the United States exemplifies national unity. *The Algerine Captive* requires readers to revise their understanding of national unity, replacing a model of unity founded on similarity with one founded on the representation of differences. As a result of this revision, the novel ultimately participates in the production of a federal conception of the nation, both supporting and reconfiguring the concept of unity in difference set forth in the federal Constitution.

⁴⁰ In addition to Davidson, Watts, and Gardner, see John Engell, “Narrative Irony and National Character in Royall Tyler’s *The Algerine Captive*” *Studies in American Fiction* 17:1 (Spring 1989): 19-32; Jennifer Margulis, “Spies, Pirates, and White Slaves: Encounters with the Algerines in Three Early American Novels.” *The Eighteenth-Century Novel* 1 (2001): 1-36; Joseph C. Schöpp, “Liberty’s Sons and Daughters: Susanna Haswell Rowson’s and Royall Tyler’s *Algerine Captives*” *Early American Re-Ecplored: New Readings in Colonial, Early National, and Antebellum Culture*, Eds. Klaus H. Schmidt and Fritz Fleischmann, (New York: Peter Lang, 2000): 291-308.

As discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, the early United States, as a federal republic, was primarily imagined as a composite space defined more through the representation of its domestic differences than its similarities. More than simply representing the nation in terms of its diversity, citizens of the early republic were also encouraged to continue to cultivate different interests and practices within the nation as a means of ensuring its future stability and productivity. As James Madison writes in “Federalist, No. 10”:

Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other....Hence it appears, that the same advantage...is enjoyed by a large over a small Republic.

According to this perspective, the larger and more diverse the nation would become, the more stable, secure, and productive it would be. Over the course of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, citizens became increasingly invested in testing the viability of this federal model of unity, in political, in social, and— as is the case in *The Algerine Captive*— in literary contexts.⁴¹

In this chapter, I will explore how a text like *The Algerine Captive* helped to imagine and support this ideal of the expansive federal republic. Ultimately, by encouraging readers to view different people, places, and practices in equitable (as opposed to oppositional) terms, the novel produces what I call a “federal literacy,” which enables citizens to read the nation as a composite, yet unified space. More than simply fostering a federal conception of the nation, however, *The Algerine Captive* also challenges and reconfigures the terms of federal discourse in the early republic. This

⁴¹ For a detailed discussion of federalism, particularly with respect to the representation of diversity and the debates surrounding the process of defining and enacting federal principles in the early republic, please see the introduction to this dissertation.

chapter ultimately examines how the novel exposes and critiques the limits of federal tolerance—encouraging citizens to develop a more inclusive model of federal difference, one that is capable of extending the nation to include racial, rather than just regional differences.

**“Exhibiting Our Own Manners”:
Federal Representation in *The Algerine Captive***

In the preface of *The Algerine Captive*, Updike Underhill discusses the link between the process of reading novels and the act of imagining a federal nation. He begins by first identifying “books of mere amusement” as an important medium for defining and unifying the citizens of the republic. He writes, “one of the first observations the author of the following sheets made upon his return to his native country...was the extreme avidity with which books of mere amusement were purchased and perused by all ranks of his countrymen” (5). By characterizing this “extreme avidity” for books as one of his country’s most noticeable and widespread characteristics, Underhill identifies the novel as a means of drawing citizens “of all ranks” together while, at the same time, distinguishing Americans from the rest of the world. “The diffusion of a taste for any species of writing through all ranks in so short a time would appear impracticable to a European,” he writes, adding that “[i]n no other country are there so many people, in proportion to its numbers, who can read and write” (6).

If reading and writing have the potential both to define and distinguish an American national community, Underhill also argues that such potential can only be realized if Americans are willing to read and write works that represent the people, places, and practices of their own nation. He laments the popularity of British and

European books which threaten to transform this American “avidity” for reading into a destabilizing practice.

While this love of literature...is pleasing to the man of letters, there are two things to be deplored. The first is that, while so many books are vended, they are not of our own manufacture. If our wives and daughters will wear gauze and ribbands, it is a pity they are not wrought upon our own looms. The second misfortune is that Novels, being the picture of the times, the New England Reader is insensibly taught to admire the levity, and often the vices of our parent country... impress[ing] on the young mind an erroneous idea of the world in which she is to live (6).

By reading works that represent places other than their own country, Underhill fears that citizens will come to undervalue and potentially even reject their native home. More than simply providing citizens with “an erroneous view of the world,” he writes, reading European works threatens to “render the homespun habits of [our] own country disgusting,” and, in order to prevent this, he stresses the need for citizens to produce more novels “of own manufacture.” “There are two things wanted,” he states, “[t]hat we write our own books of amusement and that they exhibit our own manners” (6). Only by purchasing and perusing books that represent the local character and customs of the United States will this avidity for reading help produce a unified and distinctive citizenry.

If the text of *The Algerine Captive* is Underhill’s answer to this call for a more representative American literature, the question thus arises—what kind of nation does this novel represent? In calling for the emergence of more locally-focused literature that is wrought upon “our own looms” and represents “our own manners,” Underhill seems to imply or at least presuppose that there is some sort of collective American identity that exists to be represented in the first place—a collectivity implied by his constant use of the possessive plural term “our” (“our manners” “our customs,” etc). As the novel proceeds, however, the United States emerges as a very diverse and disconnected society, made up

of many different communities which exhibit very few common manners or customs. Underhill soon discovers that the lifestyles and values of the residents of New England are decidedly different from the residents of Pennsylvania and the residents of South Carolina. Even within each of these regional communities, Underhill finds a wide range of differences in the way that his fellow citizens talk, act, and view the nation. Unable to find a place to settle within this diverse space, Underhill eventually abandons the United States altogether and attempts to seek his fortune abroad. From this point forward the novel shifts its focus entirely, offering a detailed and descriptive account of the manners and customs of the people of Algiers, rather than the people of the United States. In this regard, the novel that was initially presented as an attempt to offer readers “a portrait of our manners, hitherto unattempted” eventually begins to undermine, if not outright reject, the possibility of presenting such a portrait at all.

How, then, should we read this apparent discrepancy between the novel’s nationalist agenda and its diverse, disorganized, and, eventually non-American focus? While on the surface, the form and content of *The Algerine Captive* might seem to run counter to the national aims stated in the preface, a closer look shows that the novel’s representation of variety and difference, both at home and abroad, does become a way of representing the nation—albeit in counter-intuitive ways. Ultimately, by presenting the travels of Updike Underhill, *The Algerine Captive* asks readers to reconsider the terms in which they understand the meaning of national unity and cohesion—pushing them to embrace a conception of the United States as a nation defined by its differences rather than its collective similarities.

The novel itself is divided into two volumes. The first half chronicles Underhill's travels throughout the United States as he attempts to find a permanent place to settle, and the second half tells the story of Underhill's adventures as a captive slave in Algiers. Despite the many differences between these two volumes (and I will have more to say about those differences later in the chapter), in the end, both share a common focus. Each illustrates a process of transformation as Underhill revises his conception of the nation to embrace a more expansive and diversified view. Instead of viewing different practices, opinions, and beliefs as a source of conflict, Underhill increasingly comes to view diversity as an important source of stability and cohesion. And, by presenting Underhill's transformation in a narrative that constantly moves between different genres and styles, the novel likewise encourages readers to change the ways in which they read and interpret differences. Ultimately, it is Underhill's newly acquired ability to read differences equitably that enables him to return to the United States and at last lay claim to his American identity. "I now mean...to contribute cheerfully to the support of my government which I have learnt to adore...and thus secure to myself the enviable character of a useful physician, and good father, and a worthy FEDERAL citizen," he writes (225). In the next two sections, I will examine this transformation in more detail, looking specifically at how Underhill's revisionist approaches to the U.S. and Algiers prompt readers to imagine the nation in decidedly federal terms.

Volume I: Re-reading the Federal Nation

The novel's revisionist tactics begin in the opening chapters as Underhill sets about re-writing the nation's colonial history, replacing the conventional narrative with a

more variable and multi-voiced version of the American past. In an effort to align himself with the nation's founding Puritan heritage, Underhill opens his narrative by trying to redeem the good name of his "honoured ancestor" – the unfortunate Captain John Underhill who was disgracefully expelled from the Massachusetts colony on charges of adultery. In order to reclaim Captain Underhill's reputation as "an ardent lover of liberty, civil and religious," Underhill presents his readers with an alternative account of his ancestor's expulsion. Written by Captain Underhill himself and "pasted on the back of an Indian deed," "Brother Underhill's Epistle" (as the document is known) exposes the charge as a fraud, attacking the leaders of the Massachusetts colony for making false accusations and criticizing them for their unjust, autocratic style of governance.

I said I wished a copy of there charge—Sir Harry Vane said, there was no need of any coppie, seeing I knew I was guiltee...I said nay, I did not look at the woman lustfully...I said where is the law by which you condemne me...Hugh Peters replied that he had such a law in his minde, but *had not* writtene it downe [and] Sir Harry Vane said, it is sufficient (17-18).

By offering a completely different account of this scene of expulsion, "Brother Underhill's Epistle" disrupts a popular and prevailing historical narrative regarding the nation's colonial heritage. As Jared Gardner notes, during the early republic, citizens often turned to Puritan colonial history "to provide a genealogy and a historical justification" for the nation the United States would subsequently become (38). Throughout the late 18th century, this history was widely represented and perceived as setting a "precedent" or "foundation" for the later republican values of liberty, justice, tolerance, and equality. By characterizing Massachusetts as a place "disappointed of libertie," however, Captain Underhill's text disrupts this foundational genealogy, supplementing the traditional celebratory narrative with a much more critical account.

Underhill acknowledges that his ancestor's account disrupts conventional views of the colonial period. He points out, for instance, that his ancestor's version of history differs from the histories written by other "candid American authors," most notably Jeremy Belknap whose *History of New Hampshire* he cites specifically as being "in error" with regard to these events (11).⁴² In pointing to the discrepancy between the two texts, Underhill encourages Belknap to "rectify this mistake" by including the revised story of his ancestor's expulsion "in the next edition." While such a correction, he notes, will no doubt "cause pain" to some readers who hesitate "to speak evil of...the piety of our forefathers," Underhill stresses the importance of representing this new version of events, despite its disruptive character. Rather than using history as an occasion to praise the virtues of the past, Underhill argues that the nation will be better served by providing a more "candid" and "impartial" historical view (18).

More than simply providing a "corrected" narrative, the inclusion of Captain Underhill's letter also asks citizens to change the way they read and represent the nation's developing history. In contrast to the formal historical texts through which citizens typically represent and acquire their knowledge of the past—texts, for instance, such as Belknap's *History of New Hampshire*—the inclusion of Captain Underhill's narrative presents American history from a different perspective (namely, the first-person view of a colonial dissident) and in a radically different form ("pasted on the back of an Indian deed"). In doing so, *The Algerine Captive* encourages readers to adopt a much more

⁴² Jeremy Belknap's three-volume *History of New-Hampshire*, which was published between 1784 and 1792, was one of the first chronicles of American history to be written by a U.S. citizen. It was widely perceived as offering a definitive account of the nation's colonial history, providing citizens with an opportunity to inquire, as Belknap wrote in his preface, "into the original settlement, progress, and inclusion of the country which gave [them] birth" (vii). For more on Belknap's *History*, see Sidney Kaplan, "The History of New-Hampshire: Jeremy Belknap as Literary Craftsman," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Jan., 1964): 18-39.

complex, multi-layered account of the nation's past. Reading Underhill's narrative, for example, draws attention to the different voices and different communities occupying the colonial landscape, recasting the nation as a history defined by the presence of political and religious dissenters, Native Americans, and other non-British colonists, most notably the Dutch who ultimately offer Captain Underhill a "better countre" in which to exercise his "love of liberty."

Underhill must contend with the fact that including these different perspectives will inevitably bring many "dark spots" in the nation's past to light. Representing a more diverse American history thus requires citizens to reflect more critically on their colonial past—a process that, on the surface, might seem to disrupt the narrative of freedom and liberty on which many believed the nation to be founded. "It is with great reluctance I am induced to publish this letter, which appears to reflect on the justice of the proceedings of our forefathers. I would rather, like the sons of Noah, go backwards and cast a garment over our fathers' nakedness," admits Underhill (18). Nevertheless, in the end, Underhill argues that, to disrupt the traditional narrative of the past is not necessarily to undermine it. By providing readers with a more "candid" account of the different perspectives and experiences that shaped the nation's colonial history, Underhill hopes to better "transmit" "the sentiments of independence [and] that love of liberty which...enabled us to obtain our own glorious freedom"—in this case, articulating the nation's foundational values through an example from when those values were threatened by the very institutions that were supposed to guarantee them (19).

Just as the opening chapters encourage readers to re-read the nation's past with an eye for its differences and disjunctions, Updike Underhill's subsequent adventures

continue to offer a narrative of national revision. From the beginning, Underhill seems to have a myopic view of what it means to be an American citizen. Due to the advice of his own instructors, Underhill comes to believe that the best way to become a successful member of American society is to obtain a classical education. As a young man, he thus embarks upon an ambitious plan of study, modeled on the curriculum of Oxford and Cambridge, assuming that studying the works of ancient Greece and Rome will transform him into a model American, similar to figures such as George Washington, John Witherspoon, and the Adamses.

In fine these gentlemen considered the classics the source of all valuable knowledge... and [thought] nothing more necessary to accomplish a young man for all that is profitable and honorable in life, than a profound knowledge of Homer. One of them gravely observed that he was sure General Washington read Greek; and that he never would have captured the Hessians at Trenton, if he had not taken his plan of operation from that of Ulysses and Diomedes seizing the horses of Rhesus.

One of them prognosticated that I should be a general, from the fire and force with which I recited Homer's battles... Another augured that I should be a member of congress, and equal the Adamses in oratory... a third was sure that I should become a Witherspoon in divinity from the pathos with which I declaimed Jupiter's speech to all the gods (26).

Despite these patriotic “prognostications,” Underhill’s education fails to transform him into a productive and independent citizen, primarily because he proves unwilling to adapt his education to accommodate the everyday situations and communities he encounters within the nation. His first attempt to earn a living as a farmer in his native New Hampshire ends in failure because his academic experiences have not equipped him to work with tools or with farm animals. Instead, the novel pokes fun at his attempt to transfer, quite literally, the world of his books to the world of the farm. “Alas! A taste for Greek had quite eradicated a love for labour. Poring so intensely on Homer and Virgil

had so completely filled my brain with the heathen mythology...[that] I gave Greek names to all our farming tools, and cheered the cattle with hexameter verse” (29).

Following this first failed experiment, Underhill next tries to “keep school in a neighboring town.” As a country schoolmaster, he assumes that he will at last be able to achieve the authority, respect, and independence his education had initially promised to bring.

How my heart dilated with the prospect...[I] anticipated my scholars seated in awful silence around me, my armchair and the birchen scepter of authority...I expected to be overwhelmed with the gratitude of their parents for pouring the fresh instruction over the minds of their children...I anticipated independence from my salary...and expected to find amusement and pleasure among the circles of the young (31).

Once again, however, Underhill’s expectations are overturned. Instead of encountering a roomful of respectful pupils, he discovers that his students are a “ragged, ill-bred set.” Instead of meeting grateful parents, Underhill finds himself treated like a servant whose primary duty is to keep his pupils “out of harm’s way.” Instead of financial independence, Underhill discovers that his pay will not be delivered “until the next autumn, and then not in cash, but in produce” (33-4). And finally, instead of acquiring acceptance and enjoyment in the “circles” of the community, Underhill finds he cannot communicate with his fellow citizens at all, “Their conversation I could not relish,” he writes, “mine they could not comprehend” (32).

On the one hand, Underhill’s failure to fit in with his new community is meant to be humorous, providing a familiar satire of academic pedantry that was particularly popular in the 18th century, drawing on the traditions of Cervantes, Rabelais, *Candide*,

Sterne, and Butler.⁴³ More than simply satirizing Underhill's academic posturing, however, the novel also criticizes his inability to expand or adapt his view of the world to admit the validity of any perspective other than his own. This first becomes evident in his refusal to converse with his fellow townspeople. When the subjects of horse-racing and quilting, come up, Underhill contributes to the discussion by "descant[ing] upon Xanthus, the immortal courser of Achilles" and "introduc[ing] Andromache, the wife of the great Hector, at her loom; and Penelope, the faithful wife of Ulysses, weaving her seven years web." When the men respond that "they had never heard of 'squire Achilles" and the women receive his comments "with a stupid stare," Underhill makes no effort to bridge the gap between them. Instead, he chooses to "enforce my observations, by recit[ing] above forty lines of Greek, from the Odessey, and then beg[inning] a dissertation on the *caesura*," thus refusing acknowledge or accommodate their own local perspectives (33). Meanwhile, in contrast to Underhill's behavior, the townspeople make an effort to include Underhill, despite his incomprehensibility. At the end of the evening, "it was hinted to me, that I might wait on Miss Mima home," Underhill reports. Rather than accepting this invitation, however, he refuses on the grounds that he has no desire to try to translate the language of courtship into terms she can understand. "But as I could recollect no word in the Greek, which would con[s]true into *bundling*, or any of Homer's heroes, who *got the bag*, I declined," he writes (33). Secure in his own limited perspective, Underhill makes no effort to accommodate any alternative customs or ways

⁴³ For a useful overview of this style of satire in the 18th century specifically, see Pedro Javier Pardo García, "Satire on Learning and the Type of the Pedant in Eighteenth-Century Literature," *BELLS: Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies*, 2004: 1-11.

of thinking—a decision that ultimately prevents him from becoming an accepted member of the community.

Underhill's refusal to adopt a more flexible and interactive approach to the world becomes even more problematic in his management of the school. As a result of his classical education, he views the classroom as a space to be governed by a single, supreme authority. He characterizes his relationship to his students in monarchical terms, imagining his "scholars seated in awful silence around me, my arm chair, and my birchen septre of authority" (30). This model of order, however, does not offer a successful way of "governing" his pupils, and Underhill is quickly rejected by his "ragged, ill bred" students who revolt against his scholastic regime and seize control—a rebellion that is described in political terms. "To have my throne usurped, in the face of the whole school, shook my government to the centre," writes Underhill (32). This moment marks an important turning point in the novel. By "shaking" Underhill's single-minded, authoritarian approach, *The Algerine Captive* suggests that citizens need to develop an alternative model for both governing and instructing the residents of the nation. If Underhill's classical education has led him to cultivate a mindset that is too narrow, self-centered, and inflexible to cope with the people and places he encounters within the nation—producing a "government" that inevitably leads to the destruction of the school—then what type of education is needed to produce both successful citizens and a stable, cohesive community? What type of training or "governance" can bring order to the nation without subjecting citizens to the authority of a single, dominant view? From this point forward, Underhill gradually begins to change the way he perceives and interprets the world around him. Instead of expecting the rest of the nation to conform to

his own particular views and values, he becomes much more willing to tolerate and engage with different practices and beliefs. Following the debacle at the schoolhouse, Underhill embarks upon a series of travels as he searches for permanent employment, and with each successive move, he grows more comfortable with the process of incorporating and accommodating perspectives other than his own.

An example arises when, in one particular town, Underhill is challenged to a duel. After writing a young lady an ode in “the manner of the Greeks,” Underhill receives what seems an incomprehensible letter inviting him to “do...the onnor of wasting a few charges of powder” in return for “them thar very extraordinary pare of verses you did yourself the onnor to address a young lada of my partecting acquaintance” (47). At first, drawing solely on his own frame of reference, Underhill misinterprets this letter, believing it to be both “an approbation” and a polite request for “an explanation of...[his ode’s] peculiar beauties” (48). In contrast to his previous attitude, however, Underhill proves less inclined to assume that his interpretation represents the most authoritative reading. He thus shows it to another local man who, having been “born in South Carolina, understood the whole business.” “You have been bred in yankee land,” he tells Underhill, “I must indoctrinate you,” and he proceeds to explain to Underhill both the literal and implied meaning of the letter—noting how, although on the surface, its language challenges Underhill to fight to the death, the letter should ultimately be read as an invitation to take part in the *performance* of a duel. “Your antagonist...will be sure not to hit you, on his own account,” he informs Underhill. “There is no more danger in these town duels than in pounding our great mortar” (48, 50).

Once again, this comes across as a humorous moment, with the novel poking fun at both the mock seriousness of dueling and Underhill's own naiveté. At the same time, however, within the comedy lies an emphasis on the importance of learning to recognize and interpret local customs and codes. By learning how to read this dueling challenge through the eyes of a Southerner (as opposed to relying strictly on his own academic "yankee" perspective), Underhill not only avoids a potentially dangerous misunderstanding, he gains the previously unobtainable acceptance and respect of his new community. "My acceptance of the challenge, however unintentional, established my reputation among the bucks and belles," states Underhill, "...and I verily believe that if I had spouted a whole Iliad in the ball room, no one would have ventured to interrupt me for I had proved myself a MAN OF HONOUR" (51).

Significantly, in gaining such acceptance, Underhill does not fundamentally change his own character. Although he performs his expected role in the duel, as soon as it is over, he goes right back to his former habits, citing texts at length in Latin and Greek and continuing to differentiate himself from his fellow citizens on the basis of his scholarly interests. Whereas before such behavior earned him exclusion and rejection, however, his willingness to respond and participate in the duel causes the townspeople to treat his differences with greater tolerance and respect. In this regard, the process of learning to understand and cooperate with different regional practices produces, not just more tolerant individuals, but a more diverse *and* stable community.

If developing a more expansive and tolerant perspective helps Underhill gain greater social acceptance, he still has problems obtaining financial success. In this case, Underhill's professional difficulties are the result of his inability to differentiate himself from his peers. After failing as a farmer and a schoolmaster, Underhill decides to become a doctor, only to discover

that most towns already have at least three or four doctors in residence. Despite this overabundance, the majority of these doctors seem able to make a living by publicly differentiating themselves from one another. In one town, for instance, Underhill describes four different doctors, “a learned, a Cheap, a Safe, and a Musical Doctor” (64). Rather than competing with one another, each is able to earn an independent living precisely because each represents a particular and distinctive style of medical treatment. The “learned doctor,” for instance, is known for “carr[ying] a favorite practical author...and a pair of money scales,” while the cheap doctor, known for “prescribing large doses of the most powerful drug,” is “called the cheap doctor because he always speedily cured or killed.” The safe doctor is a man “who dealt altogether in simples” and was never known to administer a medicine more powerful than a “buttered flip” Finally there is the musical doctor who “was not celebrated for being learned, safe, or cheap” but who was “well-gifted in prayer” and “liked to tell a jovial story” (66).

Critics have generally taken a fairly harsh view of these doctors, identifying them as “liars,” “cheats,” and “idiots.”⁴⁴ Jennifer Margulis, for example, argues that the novel’s representation of these doctors as “charlatans” serves as a critique of the rampant opportunism and exploitation that followed the end of the Revolution as citizens took advantage of the unstable currencies and flexible social, economic, and political structures (17). With the single exception of the learned doctor who knows nothing about the practice of medicine, however, I would argue that the other doctors in the text are not necessarily liars or cheats. Although their treatments might not always be effective, the cheap, the musical, and the safe doctor do not misrepresent themselves or their skills. In fact, they very reliably provide the services for which they are known—which is part of

⁴⁴ For discussions of the doctors as a critique of “false representation” in the early republic, see Jennifer Margulis, “Spies, Pirates, and White Slaves: Encounters with the Algerines in Three Early American Novels” *The Eighteenth-Century Novel* 1 (2001): 1-36; Cathy Davidson and Arnold E. Davidson., “Royall Tyler’s *The Algerine Captive*: A Study in Contrasts,” *ARIEL* 7.3 (July 1976): 53-67, Edward Watts, *Writing and Postcolonialism in the Early Republic*, (Charlottesville: UP Virginia, 1998).

the reason they are able to coexist so equitably. In this regard, while *The Algerine Captive* may be satirizing the medical profession for the ineffectiveness of all forms of treatment in general, the novel's account of the success of so many doctors in one location seems to support the idea that representing difference and variety can, at times, be a sustainable and profitable enterprise.

Within this context, it is Underhill's inability to differentiate himself from his peers that prevents him from achieving equal success, even though he has more legitimate medical training and is likely a much better physician than his peers. Instead of establishing his own name or becoming known for a particular medical skill or style, Underhill simply goes to work for the "learned doctor," a decision that fails to provide him with the reputation he needs to make a successful living. "The people generally supposed me a young man of moderate talents," he writes, "whom the learned doctor might make something of, in a course of years" (70). Without a way to define and represent himself in relation to a distinct and independent mode of medical practice, however, Underhill simply cannot attract the patients he needs to earn a living.

Underhill's next decision to move to "the southern states" marks his growing awareness of the important role that diversity plays in ensuring American security and success. In fact, his decision is motivated specifically by a desire to make his own distinctive regional characteristics more visible and valuable. He writes,

I had often heard the southern states spoken of, as the high road to fortune. I was told that the inhabitants were immensely opulent, paid high fees with profusion, and were extremely partial to the characteristic industry of their New England brethren...[and so] "I sat out...intending, after a few years of successful practice, to return in my own carriage and close a life of reputation and independence in my native state (74).

Here, Underhill's logic illustrates the extent to which he has come to view the nation in composite terms—as defined by different communities. Unable to distinguish himself from his fellow physicians in the North, he chooses to move South where his regional differences will earn him the distinction he needs to practice successfully. This productive view of cross regional interaction was a common federal motif. The concept of a “federal union” was “predicated on the perception of the fluidity and dynamism of interdependent [state] interests,” writes Peter Onuf (*Origins* 27). By thus “facilitating free movement between the states” citizens would be able to promote their different regional skills and interests in ways that would complement, rather than compete with one another (14). As Hamilton writes in 1787, constantly promoting an “unrestrained intercourse between the States,” would “prove [to citizens] that their interests are infinitely blended and interwoven,” and thus, “by a kind of reaction mutually beneficial, promote each other” (“The Federalist” No.11).⁴⁵

Just as Underhill seems poised to promote this federal logic, however, the novel suggests that there might be a problem with this model of unity. Although Underhill arrives in the South eager to capitalize on his regional distinctiveness, he soon discovers that many of the practices he encounters there threaten to erode his values and sense of identity.

I attempted to obtain practice in the town of F---, in Virginia, but in vain. The very decorum, prudence, and economy, which would have enhanced my character at home, were here construed into poverty of spirit. To obtain medical practice, it was expedient, to sport, bet, drink, swear, &c. with my patients. My purse forbad the former; my habits of life the latter (83).

⁴⁵ This federal emphasis on trans-regional interaction found particular expression in the government's plan for developing an extensive transportation network during this time. For more on this, see John Lauritz Larson, *Internal Improvement: National Public Works and the Promise of Popular Government in the Early United States*, (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 2001).

For Underhill, the different social environment of the South proves to be completely incompatible with his own sense of acceptable practices and values. In expanding his perspective to recognize and include Southern differences, he would have to fundamentally change his own character—something he is unwilling to do.

Underhill's encounter with the different people and habits of the South thus disrupts the trajectory of the novel. Up to now, the ability to recognize and interact with differences—whether historical, social, or professional—has had productive consequences. While learning to tolerate some degree of diversity can lead to unifying and mutually beneficial relationships, in the South, Underhill discovers that certain forms of regional difference cannot be represented or tolerated without producing conflict. This becomes most evident in his encounters with slavery.

After watching a minister beat his slave before attending the Sunday service, Underhill identifies slavery as the limit of his national tolerance. Not only does Underhill represent slavery as fundamentally at odds with his New England sensibilities, he points to the danger of including such a practice within the nation. Inevitably, he and every federal citizen is implicated in the abuse.

The whole of this extraordinary scene was novel to me. Besides a certain staple of New England I had with me called conscience made my situation, even in the passive part I bore in it, so awkward and uneasy that I could not refrain from observing to my friend my surprise at the parson's conduct in chastising his servant immediately before divine service. My friend was so happily influenced by the habits of these illiberal, enlightened people that he could not even comprehend the tendency of my remark...and [observed] that if it has been his slave, he would have killed the black rascal (80).

For Underhill, slavery compromises both his own character and the character of the nation. In addition to his own feelings of awkwardness and guilt, Underhill remarks on the extent to which slavery has adversely “influenced” the character of his friend.

Although his friend was originally from New England, he no longer shares Underhill's feelings of remorse and outrage at this scene. By learning to tolerate slavery, an unbridgeable divide emerges between Underhill and his fellow countryman who, as Underhill notes, is not even able to "comprehend the tendency of my remark." In this respect, Underhill's encounter with the particular "habits" of the South not only threatens his individual standards of justice and order, but also erodes his sense of national community.

Ultimately, the differences Underhill encounters in the South prove to be so incompatible with his "habits of life" that he decides to leave the U.S. entirely.

I quit my home, for all parts of the union I considered as home, to tempt the perilous ocean, and encounter...a total separation from my friends and parents...[in order] to acquire practical knowledge in my profession [and] to obtain property (84).

By thus quitting the nation, in all its "parts," Underhill seems to repudiate the federal vision of the nation that, up until now, he has been increasingly willing to accept. After learning to expand his perspective to view the United States in plural rather than singular terms, Underhill concludes his domestic adventures by illustrating the destructive and divisive consequences of incorporating southern practice into the nation. In this regard, the novel suggests that there are limits to the degree of social and political differences that a federal nation can support. For as much as Underhill benefits from learning to accommodate different histories, social rituals, and professional variations, the regional habits of the South mark the limit of his ability to view the nation in more diverse terms. To defend slavery as a regional practice is, for Underhill, an unacceptable extension of federal tolerance because it threatens the stability of the nation as a whole. In other

words, if federalism ultimately produces a nation where slavery becomes permissible, then Underhill feels no choice but to reject the federal nation “in all its parts.”

“Let Experience Solve It”: Testing the Limits of Federal Unity in the Early Republic

As it turns out, the questions *The Algerine Captive* raises about the limits of federal diversity echo ongoing questions regarding the stability and viability of the federal union that emerged in the late 1790s. The controversies surrounding the Whiskey Rebellion, the Jay Treaty, and the Bank of the United States challenged citizens to reconsider the relationship between local and national authority in the federal republic.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the rise of other modes of local expression—most notably through the rise of the Democratic-Republican societies—raised further concerns over whether representing local differences served to promote or undermine national unity.⁴⁷ While on the one hand, figures such as Madison, Jefferson, and other members of the emerging Democratic-Republican party argued that the representation of a diverse range of local

⁴⁶ For a more extensive discussion of the ways in which the Whiskey Rebellion, Jay Treaty, and Bank crises raised challenges regarding the form and practice of federalism, please refer to my introduction. Additional resources include Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); James Roger Sharp, *American Politics in the Early Republic*, (New Haven: Yale UP, 1993), and Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders* (1999), especially pp. 200-218. For the crisis of interpretation brought on by the Bank of the United States, see James Madison’s remarks on the “Constitutionality of a National Bank,” (Feb 2, 1791), cited in Sharp, 39. For more specific critical discussions of both the Bank and Jay Treaty controversies, see Elkins and McKittrick (especially Ch. 9); Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997); and Todd Estes, “Shaping the Politics of Public Opinion: Federalists and the Jay Treaty Debate” *Journal of the Early Republic* 20:3 (2000): 393-422.

⁴⁷ As Peter Onuf notes, under the federal Constitution, “Americans were taught to believe that the goal of republican government was to secure the rights and interests of localities as well as of individuals” (36). As a result of this close relationship between local representation and national unity, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw the emergence of what David Waldstreicher refers to as “remarkably nationalist regionalisms,” whereby citizens turned to local forms of expression—such as parades, public ceremonies, and the publication of toasts, poems, and other local writings—as a means of enacting a federal American identity (248).

interests would provide “the strongest evidence of attachment to both the Constitution and to the Union,” on the other hand, figures such as George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and members of the emerging Federalist party feared that overemphasizing these differences would eventually “serve to organize faction...and put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of...a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community.”⁴⁸

In the midst of this, Washington’s decision not to seek a third term in office further exacerbated concerns over the status of American national unity. Washington’s fame as a Revolutionary War hero had allowed him to serve as a unifying figure during the early years of the republic, and, without his leadership, many feared that the nation—with all its differences—would quickly fall apart.⁴⁹ Washington addressed this tenuous stability of the union in his “Farewell Address.” After first identifying unity as the “main pillar” supporting the nation’s independence, safety, and productivity, Washington warns citizens about the “causes which may disturb our Union,” among them the cultivation of strong local loyalties (our “geographic discriminations”) and the formation of organized political parties. In identifying the dangers posed by local loyalties and political factions, however, Washington does not encourage citizens completely to eliminate these influences. Ultimately, Washington, like the majority of the founders, asserts the value of

⁴⁸ For more on the scope and activities of the rise and influence of the Democratic-Republican societies and their newspapers’ impact on the public sphere, see Philip S. Foner, *The Democratic Republican Societies, 1790-1800*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976); Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1999); Lance Banning, *The Sacred Fire of Liberty: James Madison and the Founding of the Federal Republic*, (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995); Kevin R. Gutzman, “A Troublesome Legacy: James Madison and the Principles of ’98,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, XV (1995): 569-589.

⁴⁹ “No other American...had the loyalty and trust of both Northerners and Southerners that he did,” writes James Sharp, “...[and] the strains of sectionalism, ever present since independence, were bound to be aggravated by his leaving” (150).

maintaining “shades of difference” within the nation, arguing that such differences can lead citizens to cultivate productive and unifying relationships based on interdependency and mutual respect, rather than a sense of similarity. He specifically mentions “commercial enterprise” and “the general diffusion of knowledge” as forms of exchange that will help the members of “every part of our country feel an immediate and particular interest in union.” Washington, however, cautions citizens against letting their local affiliations override their loyalty to the nation as a whole. He concludes his address with an open-ended question regarding the limits of the nation’s federal unity. “Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere?” he asks. “Let experience solve it.”

The divisive election of 1796 offered an immediate test of Washington’s concluding challenge. Due to the election laws of the time, the close results between John Adams (who received 71 electoral votes) and Thomas Jefferson (who received 68) led to a “split-ticket” administration, where the president and vice-president were aligned with different political agendas and philosophies.⁵⁰ Although neither was officially affiliated with a specific political party, support for each candidate clearly split along regional and factional lines, with Adams as the Federalist choice of the New England and Mid-Atlantic states, while Jefferson held the near-unanimous support of the Democratic-Republican South.⁵¹ As a result, when Adams and Jefferson took office, public opinion was equally divided as to whether the new administration would be able to hold the

⁵⁰ Although “political parties” had not yet become as formally organized as they would in the election of 1800, and neither Jefferson or Adams officially ran on a specific party ticket, the differences in their political views and affiliations marked the divide between what would later become the Federalist and Democratic-Republican parties. See Sharpe, p. 154.

⁵¹ Adams collected two thirds of his votes north of Pennsylvania, an area where Jefferson failed to capture a single vote; see Sharpe, 154.

nation together, particularly given the sharp differences in their political views and sectional blocs of support. As noted newspaper editor Thomas Cooper would write, however fair the election was in practice, its results threatened “to stretch to the utmost the constitutional authority of our Executive and introduce the political evils of [factionalism].”⁵²

At the same time, however, the unusual alliance of Adams and Jefferson also created an opportunity for reconsidering and revitalizing the federal ideal of “unity in difference.” As Elkins and McKittrick note, the Adams administration began with a renewed spirit of “rapprochement” (529).⁵³ Instead of immediately antagonizing one another, Adams and Jefferson made numerous public statements pledging to pursue a politics of “balance” and “conciliation” and govern together in a spirit of compromise and cooperation with “a respectful attention to the constitutions of the individual States, a constant caution and delicacy toward the State governments, [and] an equal and impartial regard to...their various political opinions...and denominations” (Adams Inaugural Address, 1797). In this regard, the early years of the Adams/Jefferson administration was often framed as a return to the federal ideals envisioned under the Constitution.⁵⁴

⁵² Thomas Cooper, *Northumberland Gazette* (1799), quoted in James Morton Smith, “President John Adams, Thomas Cooper, and Sedition: A Case Study in Suppression” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Dec., 1955), 439.

⁵³ For a detailed discussion of the federal politics and rhetoric employed in the Adams administration, see especially Elkins and McKittrick’s chapter XII “John Adams and the Dogma of ‘Balance’” in *The Age of Federalism*.

⁵⁴ This spirit of federal cooperation and tolerance would be extremely short-lived. The passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts exacerbated tensions between the Federalist and Democratic-Republican parties, and the relationship between Adams and Jefferson would grow increasingly hostile and contentious, as evidenced by the divisive election of 1800. Nevertheless, although the Adams/Jefferson administration would ultimately prove to be problematic, I am interested in exploring the possibilities of federal cooperation that were raised in the first year of their administration, particularly given that *The Algerine Captive* was published before the divisive consequences of their collaboration had become clear.

It is in the context of this political environment, then, that we can return to Underhill's apparent rejection of the nation at the end of Volume I. Just as citizens were questioning whether the representation of variety would lead to greater American unity or instability, *The Algerine Captive* (published one year after the Adams/Jefferson election) is similarly invested in testing the federal model of unity in difference. On the one hand, if representing the nation in all its parts ultimately requires citizens to accept and protect the practice of slavery, the novel seems to imply that disadvantages of federal representation ultimately outweigh the benefits—producing a composite nation to which Underhill does not want to belong. On the other hand, however, the novel is not willing to abandon the concept of “unity in difference” entirely. In Volume II, Underhill again explores the consequences of developing a more diverse and expansive understanding of social and political unity—this time outside of the United States in the “barbaric” country of Algiers. Once again, the novel attempts to recuperate federalism as a political and social discourse that can succeed in the United States by presenting the religious and cultural differences of Islamic Algiers in more compatible and equitable terms. Volume II shows its readers how to begin to think and act like a federal citizens by encouraging them to interpret differences more broadly and move beyond a state-centered conception of federalism to one that is more open to the inclusion of racial and cultural differences.

Volume II: Toward a Federal Literacy

The differences between Volume I and Volume II of *The Algerine Captive* are striking.⁵⁵ Not only does Volume II take place in a completely different setting—first in London, then in Algiers—it also offers a complete shift in style and tone. In place of the picaresque satire that defines Volume I, Volume II moves between satiric, sentimental, and didactic modes, adopting the stylistic conventions of captivity narratives, historical and geographical textbooks, and travelogues. Critics have often argued about the significance of this marked change in form and focus. The majority concentrates on Tyler’s decision to set the second half of the novel in Algiers, a region that was a source of growing attention due to mounting tensions between the U.S. and the Barbary States. No longer protected by British commerce treaties, American ships were increasingly vulnerable to attack by pirates from Algiers, Morocco, Tunis, and Tripoli. By the end of the 18th century, notes Paul Baepler, “the Barbary captivity narrative had begun to establish itself as a recognizable genre” (6).⁵⁶

In addition to noting the historical dimensions of this shift in focus, critics have argued that the abrupt transition and differences between Volume I and Volume II provide a means of clarifying and defining the republic through national contrast. Jared Gardner, for instance, argues that the second volume serves as a kind of “antithesis” to the United States, with Algiers providing a symbolic space for U.S. citizens to address their own post-revolutionary concerns about race, class, liberty, and republican government. “In the Algerian of the 1790s, Tyler constructs a composite threat, safely

⁵⁵ As Jared Gardner notes, there seems to be a “radical disjunction” between these two sections (37).

⁵⁶ *The Algerine Captive* was, in fact, one of the earliest examples of this emerging genre. Paul Baepler provides an excellent introduction to the history and form of this genre in *White Slaves, African Masters: An Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives*, (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1999).

located outside the physical landscape of America, with which to confront the young nation's darkest fears," writes Gardner. "The metaphor of Algerian captivity provided a chance at resolving the conflicts of American society...that would both chastise and unify the nation through the dichotomous metaphors of race: dark and pure, corrupt and chosen" (51).

Other critics view the shift from the first to the second part as a means, not of defining, but of criticizing the social and political conditions of the United States. Cathy Davidson, for instance, argues that the second half of the novel serves critically to reflect American problems in a foreign context. "Algiers...becomes a distorted mirror version of America," she writes, "...[where] the class, religious, political, and racial hierarchies in Algiers simply extend and exaggerate the same hierarchies dividing the American political and social scene" (*Revolution* 302). Jennifer Margulis offers a similar reading, although, instead of viewing Algiers as a negative mirror of the U.S., she reads it as providing a positive cultural model for the U.S. to follow. "Instead of perpetuating stereotypes and emphasizing the barbarity of North Africans," she writes, *The Algerine Captive* "present[s] a surprisingly sympathetic portrait of dark-skinned, slave-holding characters," a portrait that ultimately offers "a strong indictment of American education" while also exposing "some of the fundamental freedoms that have been curtailed in the United States" (2, 21-25).

Like these critics, I, too, argue that the differences between Volume I and Volume II provide a means of re-contextualizing the early United States. Rather than focusing on the differences (or similarities) that arise when comparing these two different places, however, I am interested in the ways in which the novel models strategies for reading and

representing its own different spaces. Despite their discrepancies in content and form, both volumes present a narrative of revision— Underhill shifts from a narrow and singular conception of society to embrace a more expansive and tolerant perspective. Ultimately, the key difference between these two parts lies in the fact that, in the second volume, Underhill’s process of revision is much more pronounced and productive than in the first volume. In this regard, I would argue that, rather than serving as a counterexample to define or critique the United States, the “Algerine” portion of the text, like the first part, provides a model of interpretation that is designed to teach readers how to think and act as federal citizens.

Recalling the dialogue between Underhill and the Mollah discussed at the beginning of this chapter, I noted how Underhill begins to develop a more tolerant and equitable view of religious differences. This moment has a significant effect on the form and trajectory of the rest of the text. Before his meeting with the Mollah, Underhill presented his narrative along the lines of a conventional Barbary captivity narrative, where the relationship between the captor and the captive is portrayed in a typical “us versus them” model—the “free American citizen” in the hands of “barbarous infidels.” Following their dialogue, however, Underhill begins to re-think his initial assumptions, not just about Islam but about all aspects of Algerine society. Upon concluding that the majority of his assumptions were conceived “in error,” he decides to change the format of his narrative so as to provide an instructional, rather than a judgmental account. Abandoning the conventions of the sentimental captivity narrative, Underhill reframes his tale as an educational one, designed, as he states, to “improve the understanding of my

reader with what I really know” rather than “amuse them” with personal anecdotes or fictional exaggerations (Tyler 173).⁵⁷

In keeping with this objective, he repeatedly interrupts his first-person account to present a series of detached, third-person reports on Algerine history and culture which are supposed to provide his readers with an “authentic” account of the “customs, habits, and manners of a people of whom so much is said and so little known at home” (173). By thus presenting Algiers in this more academic or, as Underhill describes it, this more “objective” form, the novel requires readers to alter their critical approach to the representation of Algiers. Instead of prompting them to respond to the narrative with a moral judgments, the educational form of Volume II encourages readers to approach Algiers in more impartial and open-minded terms. “I have interspersed reflections which I hope will be received by the learned with candour,” Underhill writes, indicating his hope that his “succinct notices” will translate into useful knowledge rather than cultural conflict.

A particularly notable example of how Underhill tries to alter the way we read difference occurs when he presents his readers with a “Mahometan Sermon.” Underhill presents it as a word-for-word transcript, rather than summarizing it or integrating it into his own personal narrative. The sermon stands alone, presented “to the candid reader as a curious specimen of their [Muslim] pulpit eloquence and as, perhaps, conveying a more satisfactory idea of their creed” (191). By thus presenting this sermon as a “specimen” for the candid reader, Underhill attempts to transform the way his readers approach the ideas contained within it. While his American audience might initially assume that a

⁵⁷ For more on the conventions of sentimental captivity narratives, see Michelle Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature*. (Hanover, N.H., UP of New England, 1997).

“Mahometan Sermon” would contain beliefs wholly alien and heretical to their Christian perspectives, the form of the sermon itself asks readers to approach the Islamic creed as an object for careful and rational consideration.

The sermon is organized under a series of general headings, each stating a tenet of Islam followed by a more detailed description of how each belief derives from the alcoran. The headings are as follows (191-93):

“God Alone Is Immortal”
 “God Alone is Omniscient”
 “God Alone in Omnipresent”
 “God Alone is Omnipotent”
 “God Alone is Merciful”
 “God Alone is Just”
 “God Alone is One”

At first glance, this list of Islamic beliefs looks very much like a list of Christian beliefs. While readers may have initially approached the sermon expecting to encounter a wholly different creed, this familiar catalogue encourages them to view Islam in more compatible terms. Although important differences between the two faiths remain—represented by the scriptural discussions following each heading (which refer to different prophets, histories, and spiritual geographies)—the headings encourage readers to view those differences equitably and approach Islam with greater tolerance, rather than hostility.

Equally significant is the way Underhill presents the sermon as a notable example of eloquence. Critics such as Christopher Looby, Jay Fliegelman, and Sandra Gustafson have examined how eloquence was particularly valued in early American speech and writing, serving as “an instrument and embodiment of a new Anglo-American republican

authority” (Fliegelman, 54).⁵⁸ By characterizing this Algerine sermon as an example of their “pulpit eloquence,” Underhill thus implies that there is much for Americans to value in this Islamic mode of expression. Although the sermon—which the novel presents as an example of a “dignified elocution”—may articulate a different religion, it does so in terms more acceptable and laudable, not just to a Christian American audience, but to a republican American audience.

As Underhill continues to revise his perception of Algiers, he comes to recognize the value, not simply of tolerating differences, but of exchanging information about different practices and views. In the process of learning about the Algerine legal system for instance, Underhill discovers ways in which such practices might benefit the United States: “I was made acquainted with the Algerine mode of distributive justice...where instant decision relieved the anxiety and saved the purses of the parties.” He contrasts this with the American system where “the lengthy bill of cost, [and] the law’s delay...had taught me to view the judicial proceedings of our country with a jaundiced eye” (190). By informing his readers of this difference between the two countries, Underhill intends his description to promote changes back home. “I present it to my fellow citizens [that], if it is generally pleasing, it might be introduced among us” (190). Just as Underhill finds value learning about the different legal practices of Algiers, the Algerines benefit from learning about his different medical skills. “Applications vulgarly common in the United States were viewed with admiration” in Algiers, writes Underhill, “sometimes, the physicians themselves would condescend to consult me...[and] I often had the

⁵⁸ For discussions of the role of “eloquence” in the early republic, see Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance*, (Stanford, Stanford UP, 1993); Christopher Looby, *Voicing America: Language, Literary Form, and the Origins of the United States*, (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1996); Sandra Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power*, (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 2000).

gratification of observing that they administered my prescriptions with success” (148-9). Here, developing a more tolerant approach to differences fosters an active and complementary exchange of ideas.

So where does this lead us? What is accomplished by presenting American readers with the story of a citizen who learns to view Algiers as a different, yet compatible and complementary space? Moreover, what is accomplished by presenting this story in a form that encourages readers to do the same? Ultimately, there is more at stake here than simply promoting good relations between the United States and Algiers. In the end, it is precisely this ability to read differences differently that enables Underhill to return to the United States and, at long last, take his place within the nation.

In her study of the rhetoric of equality in the late eighteenth century, Amanda Emerson notes that the high degree of social, political, economic, and geographic differences in the early United States led citizens to redefine the ways in which they represented “equality” within the federal republic. Instead of representing the idea of equality in terms of sameness, citizens began to conceive of equality in terms of the “equitable representation of orderly differences enforced by impartial laws” (91). Abandoning “a vision of themselves as internally homogenous,” writes Emerson, Americans increasingly defined themselves through “the impartial regulation of internal differences”—a mode of representation that supported the federal structure and ideology on which the nation was founded (91).

Likewise, in the case of *The Algerine Captive*, it is Underhill’s ability to view differences impartially and equitably that eventually enables him to return to his own diverse nation and find a way to live and work within it. As mentioned earlier in the

chapter, it is only *after* Underhill returns from Algiers that he is able to lay claim to his identity as an American citizen. Prior to his Algerine adventures, he was unable to find a home in the United States; he eventually chose to abandon the nation entirely, both because he could not earn a living there and because he was unwilling to tolerate southern slavery. His failure to succeed derived from his inability and, ultimately, his refusal to accept the heterogeneity of the nation. On the one hand, this inability indicates a problem with Underhill's own perspective—he cannot earn a living or find a place to settle precisely because he is reluctant to acknowledge or embrace any opinions or perspectives other than his own. On the other hand, Underhill's refusal to accommodate the southern practice of slavery also reflects critically on the United States—illustrating the extent to which representing different interests and practices can compromise the stability of the nation as a whole.

Following his experiences in Algiers, however, Underhill has no problem returning to embrace the nation he previously found so problematic.

I now mean to unite myself to some amiable woman, to pursue my practice as a physician...to contribute cheerfully to the support of our excellent government which I have learnt to adore...and thus secure to myself the enviable character of an useful physician, a good father, and a worthy FEDERAL citizen (225).

How, then, do we account for Underhill's transformation from ex-patriot to worthy federal citizen? The answer lies in his new manner of approaching and interpreting differences. Whereas before, Underhill approached those who thought and acted differently from himself as a source of conflict and division, his adventures in Algiers taught him to view religious, racial, political, professional, and social differences as not only acceptable, but necessary for national stability. Equipped with this new

understanding, he is thus able to return and reclaim his place in the United States, a nation “which [he has] learnt to adore in schools of despotism.” Specifically, Underhill makes a point of declaring his intentions, not just to become a worthy citizen, but a worthy FEDERAL citizen—“federal” being one of the only words to be entirely capitalized within the text. That Underhill specifies the specific type of identity he plans to embrace is significant, indicating his commitment to embrace a specific type of American citizenship that is grounded in recognizing and taking part in a nation defined through the representation of its many parts.

Underhill characterizes his narrative as a means of fostering a federal conception of the nation. “My ardent wish is that my fellow citizens may profit by my misfortunes,” he writes, and “if they peruse these pages with attention they will perceive the necessity of *uniting our federal strength* to enforce a due respect among other nations” (225, emphasis mine). In making this claim, Underhill once again implies that there is a link between federal unity and the ways in which citizens come to read and interpret differences. By dramatizing Underhill’s transformation and by encouraging readers to view different practices and customs equitably through its narrative form, *The Algerine Captive* promotes a mode of literacy that is intended to convince readers of the promise and possibilities of the federal union.

Surprisingly, when addressing the novel’s conclusion, critics tend to gloss over Underhill’s references to federalism—interpreting his final statements as a bold, ironic, or “clichéd” expression of nationalism without commenting on Underhill’s specific use of term “federal.” In doing so, these critics effectively read his use of the term “federal” synonymously with “national,” a slippage that overlooks Underhill’s commitment to a

particular *type* of union.⁵⁹ Given the controversies and uncertainties surrounding the stability of federal union in the early republic (uncertainties that were particularly heightened in the months surrounding the 1796 election), Underhill's emphasis on embracing and promoting a distinctly *federal* conception of unity and citizenship would have had a particularly strong resonance for his readers. By proclaiming his desire to become a "worthy FEDERAL citizen" and convince readers of the necessity of "uniting our federal strength," Underhill asserts his commitment to imagining the nation in federal terms, as a union of many different parts. He also reclaims federalism as a viable and productive model for imagining and governing the nation. This is all the more powerful given his earlier critique of federalism.

What then becomes of the thorny issue of slavery, which is flagged early on as a potentially destructive and divisive consequence of federal representation? Does Underhill's concluding embrace of the federal nation indicate a newfound willingness to condone slavery as part of his newfound embrace of differences? Does slavery emerge, as it did for the founders, "a necessary evil" in the process of producing a federal republic?

Given that, for at least half the novel, Underhill is himself caught up in the "unjust bonds of slavery," reading the concluding section as an tacit acceptance of the institution of slavery seems problematic. In fact, while he is in Algiers, Underhill regularly (and understandably) rails against the "evils" of such a system, and his opposition is further heightened by his increasingly expansive and tolerant view of differences. The more he

⁵⁹ In the critical studies previously cited by Gardner, Watts, Davidson, Margulis, Schöpp, for instance, only Davidson comments specifically on the novel's use of the term "federal," and even then it is only in passing, noting that the "federalism" here recommended is open-minded, pluralistic, democratic, and utterly opposed to oligarchy or autocracy, to one people's dominating over one another" (*Revolution and the Word*, 303), an account of federalism that seems overly simplistic, given the intense political and social debates over the meaning and practice of federalism at this time. In general, all of these critics view Underhill's use of the term "federal" as a synonym for "national."

comes to view the Algerines in equitable terms, the less inclined he becomes to treat others harshly on the basis of perceived differences. and he later encourages his countrymen to do the same. “A slave myself, I have learned to appreciate the blessings of freedom,” he states. “May my countrymen ever preserve and transmit to their posterity that liberty which they have bled to obtain; and always bear it deeply engraven upon their memories that, when men are once reduced to slavery, they can never resolve, much more achieve, anything that is virtuous or great” (144-5). In this regard, by presenting his own tolerance and admiration for the Algerine “infidels,” Underhill pushes his countrymen to reexamine the way in which they treat the Africans in their own midst.

Specifically, Underhill encourages his fellow citizens to reject slavery, not simply on the grounds of their own individual principles, but rather, as a means of remaining consistent with their national sense of identity.

If they are deaf to the pleadings of nature, I will conjure them, for the sake of consistency, to cease to deprive their fellow creatures of freedom, which their writers, their orators, representatives, senators, and even their constitutions of government have declared to be the unalienable right of man (106).

By thus characterizing opposition to slavery as a policy consistent with the principles of freedom modeled by the federal government, Underhill attempts to alter the terms by which citizens understand the representation of “difference” in the federal nation. Rather than viewing the United States as a composition of distinct localities, defined through the representation of multiple *state* interests, Underhill pushes his readers to conceive of the nation as a composition of different racial and cultural communities—a model of unity that makes it possible to continue to embrace the diverse federal republic without protecting and promoting the practice of slavery. In the end, Underhill is more interested

in imagining a union composed of different types of citizens, rather than simply different types of localities—a model of unity that, in many ways, seems to gesture more toward a cosmopolitan conception of the nation than a federal one—at least insofar as the federal republic was defined in these early decades. In any case, *The Algerine Captive* ultimately illustrates the extent to which literary texts were engaged in exploring the federal unity of the early republic. Through this text, it is possible to see how the process of reading differences was a means of supporting a federal conception of the nation, while also offering a means of transforming the terms of federal representation.

Chapter II

Federalism and Literature in the Age of Expansion: Part I Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* (1827)

Preface

In 1827, while living in the Ohio Valley region of the United States Frances Trollope became ill with malarial fever. As she recovered, she passed the time by reading an assortment of American novels, an experience she describes in *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832):

Several American novels were brought me. Flint's *Francis Berrian* is excellent; a little wild and romantic, but containing scenes of first-rate interest in pathos. *Hope Leslie* and *Redwood*, by Miss Sedgwick, an American lady, have both great merit; and I now first read the whole of Mr. Cooper's novels. By the time these American studies were completed, I never closed my eyes without seeing myriads of bloody scalps floating around me; [and] long, slender figures of Red Indians crept through my dreams with noiseless tread.

I open with this anecdote because Mrs. Trollope and her convalescent reading list provides a useful snapshot of the changing demographic and literary conditions of the United States in the 1820s. As an Englishwoman who moved to Ohio in search of a better means of supporting her family, Trollope was part of a mass migration to the western United States that took place from the early 1800s onward. As more states were added to the union—between 1803 and 1821, seven new states would be admitted⁶⁰—thousands of Europeans immigrated to the United States, along with the many U.S. citizens who opted to leave their home states and move into the new territories. In addition to these new settlers, the western territory was already home to a wide range of communities, which included hundreds of Native American tribes as well as hunters, trappers, and

⁶⁰ These included Ohio (1803), Louisiana (1812), Indiana (1816), Mississippi (1817), Illinois (1818), Alabama (1819), Maine (1820), and Missouri (1821).

many different creole communities. As a result, by the mid-1800s, the United States had become a republic that was much larger and more diverse than it had been during the post-Revolutionary era, encompassing a much larger scope of people, landscapes, and practices than had previously been imagined.⁶¹

In conjunction with the growth of the nation was the growth of American literary culture. Over the course of the early 1800s, writing and publishing became an increasingly productive and profitable enterprise. The popularity and success of writers such as Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper led to the emergence of a more active and open literary marketplace, and as demand for American novels and stories grew, writers became increasingly able to support themselves through their publications. The 1820s saw the rise of “professional authorship” in America, resulting in a boom in literary production that would last over the next thirty years.⁶² Over the course of this period, the profession of authorship would likewise undergo significant transformations, moving beyond the dominance of figures such as Irving and Cooper to encompass the work of women, African-Americans, Native Americans, and writers from the western states.

In this regard, Mrs. Trollope’s reading list presents us with a telling portrait of her literary times, encompassing the work of the nation’s most well known and well

⁶¹ Rosemarie Zagari and Edward Watts offer a useful discussions of the changing demographics of the nation in this era in *The Politics of Size: Representation in the United States, 1776-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987) and *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture*. (Athens: Ohio UP, 2002). As Watts notes, “The Ohio Valley was demographically much more complex than the East. A non-Removed Native American presence, a powerful eastern and central European immigrant population, and a strongly southern working and yeoman class made it a strikingly diverse place where different European and Native languages were spoke within several counties” (118).

⁶² For more on the emergence of a professional literature culture during this period, see William Charvat, *The Profession of Authorship In America 1800-1870*, ed. Matthew Buccoli. (Columbus: Ohio UP, 1968) and Michael Davitt Bell. *Culture, Genre, and Literary Vocation: Selected Essays on American Literature*. (Chicago: U Chicago P, 2001)

established writer (Cooper), as well two new emerging literary voices—Catharine Maria Sedgwick, a young writer from Massachusetts whose two prior publications, *A New England Tale* and *Redwood* had earned considerable praise and attention as “admirable manifestations” of the “elegant” and “ameliorating influence of our female literature,” and Timothy Flint, a up-and-coming western writer whose popular travelogue *Recollections of the Past Ten Years* (1826) was critically acclaimed for its vivid representations of the western territory. As one early reviewer wrote, “We recollect no other author, except Irving, who has painted American scenery with equal power.”⁶³

By reading these books alongside one another, Trollope was not simply looking for a pleasant way to pass the time—although she certainly derived pleasure from the experience of reading them. In addition to her literary enjoyment, Trollope also felt that reading these works would give her a better sense of the literature and culture of her adopted home—as she describes it, reading these books was part of her “American studies.” Following her example, the following two chapters will offer a comparative analysis of the two “newer” works Trollope mentions—namely Sedgwick’s *Hope Leslie* and Flint’s *Francis Berrian*, both of which had been recently published when Trollope embarked on her convalescent literary survey. In reading these works, my goal, like Trollope, is to approach these texts as a means of “studying” the nation, reading these novels in order to discover what they have to say about the increasingly expansive political, social, and literary contexts of which they were a part.

⁶³ Description of Sedgwick’s work taken from a 1827 review of *Hope Leslie* published in the *North American Review* XXV, April 1828:403-420. For Berrian, see review of *Francis Berrian, or the Mexican Patriot* in *American Review*, XXIV, January 1827: 210-212. For more on Flint’s early reputation, see W.H. Venable’s chapter “Timothy Flint,” in *The Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley: Historical and Biographical Sketches*. (Cincinnati: Clarke, 1891).

For Trollope, the process of reading these American novels ultimately fills her mind with thoughts of violent “Red Indians” who creep through her dreams in the form of troubling racial stereotypes. By characterizing the sinister presence of Native Americans as the most dominant impression left by her readings, Trollope’s comments point to a fundamental concern—the issue of contending with the presence (or in this case, the encroachment) of differences within the nation. While Trollope’s comments focus specifically on the issue of racial difference, the novels she cites also explore the consequences and possibilities of including women, European immigrants, former slaves, Creoles, and Mexicans within the nation. In exploring *Hope Leslie* and *Francis Berrian*, I will look specifically at the ways in which these novels address the growing diversity of the nation in relation to the concept of the federal nation. What does it mean to represent a federal nation whose domestic differences are becoming more pronounced and visible? How do you represent a federal nation when different racial, ethnic, religious, and social groups come to occupy the same space? Is the inclusion of different communities threatening, as Trollope perceives it here? Or can the inclusion of differences be more promising and productive? And under what terms?

Reading Federalism in the Age of Expansion

In the first chapter of this dissertation, I examined how post-Revolutionary literary texts participated in the production of a federal imagination. Looking specifically at *The Algerine Captive*, I argued that the form and content of that novel—which encouraged readers to view differences in complementary and equitable terms—promoted a mode of literacy that helped make a federal conception of the nation work. If

reading novels such as *The Algerine Captive* helped readers think and act like federal citizens, however, this novel ultimately imagines a federal nation where differences—religious, social, ethnic, etc—remain clearly separated from one another. Although Underhill embraces the federal nation by learning to read all its different parts equitably, at no point does he ever entertain the attempting to integrate or assimilate into any of the different communities he encounters. In the end, Underhill returns to his native New England, equipped with a greater awareness of and appreciation for the diversity of the nation, yet ultimately content to keep those differences at a distance. In this regard, *The Algerine Captive* concludes by defining the federal citizen as an individual who recognizes and respects the nation’s differences, but who does not necessarily need to contend with those differences on a daily or local basis.⁶⁴

By the mid-1800s, however, it was no longer possible to conceive of the federal nation in such compartmentalized terms. The expansion of the United States—first under the Northwest Ordinances of 1784 and 1787 and later through the Louisiana Purchase of 1803—radically transformed the composition of the federal nation. When citizens initially created the federal republic, they faced the task of uniting a set of well-established, independent, and self-governing communities. The resulting republic was very much imagined as a union of separate and relatively autonomous states. As historian Fulmer Mood writes, with the passage of the Articles and later the federal Constitution, “former Pennsylvania colonists...saw themselves as citizens of the republic (and later state) of Pennsylvania. And so with other former subjects in other former colonies: they

⁶⁴ For more on the differences between the federal composition of the early republic versus the expanded republic, see Sanford Levinson and Bartholomew Sparrow, eds. *The Louisiana Purchase and American Expansion*. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), focusing specifically on Levinson and Sparrow’s introductory essay and Peter Onuf’s essay, “‘The Strongest Government on Earth,’ Jefferson’s Republicanism, the Expansion of the Union, and the New Nation’s Destiny,” 41-68.

too became the citizens of independent republics, each republic or state having its own flag, its own great seal, and its own coat of arms” (Mood, 18).⁶⁵

Although expansion was always considered to be an important and necessary part of maintaining the federal republic, the prospect of adding new spaces formerly outside the nation seemed potentially disruptive, threatening to alter both the character and the balance of power established by the original Union. Diverse and un-organized, these new territories lacked the kinds of distinct, collective identities and histories represented by the original thirteen states. Furthermore, while the citizens of those original states entered the federal union by mutual consent, the inhabitants of the new territories were, in many cases, brought into the United States through conquest or treaty—a model of inclusion rooted more in compulsion than consent.⁶⁶

These concerns prompted legislators to pay particular attention to the manner in which these new territories were to be brought into the republic. The Northwest Ordinances of 1784 and 1789 (which set the precedent for all future U.S. expansion policies) represented an attempt to extend the nation in ways that would be as least disruptive as possible. To this end, the Northwest Ordinances included provisions for breaking the territory up into states that were as equally apportioned as possible, ideally,

⁶⁵ Under the federal Constitution, writes Peter Onuf, “Americans were taught to believe that the goal of republican government was to secure the rights and interests of localities as well as of individuals” (Origins, 36). For more on the local dimensions and divisions in the early republic, see David Walstreicher’s chapter “Regionalism, Nationalism, and the Geopolitics of Celebration,” in *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes* (1997).

⁶⁶ Expansion policies and powers were allocated to Congress in Article IV of the Constitution. While many politicians and citizens would voice concern over the prospect of expanding the new nation too much and too soon, expansion was widely perceived as an important and inevitable step for the new nation. Furthermore, given the federal structure of the United States, the nation’s early expansionist policies were widely perceived in positive terms, as a means of strengthening the nation’s unity and prosperity. Through expansion, the United States could truly become the “extended sphere” advocated by figures such as James Madison, defined and protected by “a greater variety of interests.” For more on the debates about the potential dangers and benefits of U.S. expansion see Gordon T. Stewart, “The Northwest Ordinance and the Balance of Power in North America,” in *The Northwest Ordinance: Essays on its Formulation, Provisions, and Legacy*. Ed. Frederick D. Williams (East Lansing, Michigan State UP, 1988): 21-38.

as Jefferson initially suggested “so that each state shall comprehend, from South to North two degrees of latitude.”⁶⁷ Although this initial plan for equal apportionment did not work out, subsequent agreements emphasized the importance of creating states that the new states were roughly comparable in size so as to ensure that each would enter the union “on equal footing” with one another.⁶⁸ In the end, the fourteen states originally proposed under the 1784 Ordinance, was reduced to “no more than five [states] and less than three,” a reduction that was ultimately intended to promote the equitable configuration of the space. Meanwhile, in addition to creating equally apportioned states, the Northwest Ordinances also included provisions to ensure that the (white, male) residents of the newly admitted states would be accorded the same rights and benefits as those given to all legal citizens of the United States.⁶⁹ In this regard, the expansion policies set forth in the Northwest Ordinances were designed to replicate, as closely as possible, the form and character of the original thirteen colonies, extending the federal principles of equal rights and equal representation westward and mapping the federal structure of the nation directly onto the landscape itself. As Anne Baker notes, in organizing the Northwest Territory, citizens sought to give the landscape a “shape and structure that would reflect the beliefs, values, and aspirations” of the new federal nation

⁶⁷ Thomas Jefferson, “Report of a Plan of Government for the Western Territory” (1784).

⁶⁸ “Northwest Ordinance” (1789), included in *The First West*, ed. Edward Watts and David Rachels (New York: Oxford UP, 2002): 118-122.

⁶⁹ In extending equal rights and privileges to the residents of the newly admitted territories, the Northwest Ordinance also established a precedent for the systematic exclusion of Native Americans and other non-white groups. For more on the racial and exclusionary dimensions of the Northwest Ordinance, particularly in relation to its impact on other U.S. expansionist policies, see Jack N. Rakove, “Ambiguous Achievement: The Northwest Ordinance,” in *The Northwest Ordinance: Essays on its Formulation, Provisions, and Legacy*. Ed. Frederick D. Williams (East Lansing, Michigan State UP, 1988): 1-20.

(4).⁷⁰ In this form, stated the Ordinance of 1787, the new territories shall be organized in a manner “consistent with the general interest of the confederacy.”

The addition of the Northwest Territory proved to be a relatively smooth and successful process, contributing to an economic boom and fostering greater confidence in the stability of the Union. As noted in both public and political circles, the expansion of the nation as proposed under the Ordinances was largely perceived as an event “necessary to the happy establishment of the federal union,” notes Robert Hill (41). The fact that the newly added territory was relatively small and represented an area that was accessible, well-mapped, and inhabited by a population—both European and Native—which had already established close ties with the United States through trade and security alliances likely contributed to the successful addition and integration of this territory.⁷¹

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803, however, would strain the policies and principles of federal expansion almost to their breaking point. In contrast to the acquisition of the Northwest Territories, the Louisiana Purchase, which more than doubled the size of the United States, required the nation to accommodate a much wider range of nationalities, ethnicities, languages, religions, and government structures, within a territory that, for most U.S. citizens, was both unfamiliar and unexplored. As a result of the Purchase, the United States no longer represented a small, east-coast centered

⁷⁰ In *Heartless Immensity: Literature, Culture, and Geography in Antebellum America* (Ann Arbor: U Michigan P, 2006), Baker considers the federal dimensions of Land Ordinances in even more detail, examining how “the Land Ordinance of 1785 provided a system for organizing western land...that required land to be surveyed before it was settled, and it divided the land into square townships...that were in turn divided into thirty-six one-square mile lots.” In doing so, she argues, the “spatial organization” of the landscape was designed to enhance and reinforce the federal principles of local sovereignty and equal representation in the physical spaces of the nation (5).

⁷¹ For a comprehensive history of the Ordinance and its aftermath, see Robert S. Hill, “Federalism, Republicanism, and the Northwest Ordinance,” *Publius*, Vol. 18, No. 4, (Autumn, 1988): 41-52; Peter Onuf, *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance* (Bloomington, U Indiana P, 1987).

republic whose cultural roots were primarily connected to Great Britain. Instead, the United States now represented a transcontinental nation with cultural and political connections to France and Spain, whose residents no longer shared a colonial and Revolutionary heritage. Given the magnitude of these changes, citizens began to raise questions about the consequences of American expansion—would this act of expansion contribute to the stability and success of the federal nation? Or did it threaten to transform the nation beyond recognition?

Recognizing these concerns, Thomas Jefferson took steps to re-align the acquisition of the Louisiana territory with the founding goals of the republic. In his second inaugural address, he responded to his critics by asserting that the Purchase had been made in the interests of the Union as a whole.

I know that the acquisition of Louisiana had been disapproved by some from a candid apprehension that the enlargement of our territory would endanger its union. But who can limit the extent to which the federative principle may operate effectively? The larger our association the less will it be shaken by local passions; and in any view is it not better that the opposite bank of the Mississippi should be settled by our own brethren and children than by strangers of another family? With which should we be most likely to live in harmony and friendly intercourse?

In addition to invoking James Madison's arguments concerning the virtues of a large and expansive republic to defend his expansionist policies, Jefferson's speech also echoes the challenge raised by Washington in his Farewell Address ("Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it"). By drawing on the words of these two early leaders, Jefferson's Second Inaugural was thus a rhetorical attempt to recast the Purchase as an extension of the nation's original federal principles.

In realigning the Purchase with the federal rhetoric of the post-Revolutionary period, Jefferson also drew on the extension policies set forth on the Northwest

Ordinance to set forth a plan for “incorporating” the new territory a manner that was consistent with the nation’s federal character. As described in Article II of the Louisiana Purchase treaty,

The inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the Union of the United States and admitted as soon as possible according to the principles of the federal Constitution to the enjoyment of all these rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States, and in the mean time they shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and the Religion which they profess.

By mandating that the inhabitants of the ceded territory would be “incorporated” into the federal union, Jefferson and his supporters sought to both convince Americans that the new territory could become a part of the national body without disrupting the unity or character of the whole. Rather than radically altering the composition of the nation, Jefferson’s insistence that the new territory would be admitted under the same terms and conditions guaranteed to all the states and that the new residents would enjoy the same rights and privileges as all U.S. citizens was intended to reassure residents that this act of expansion would preserve, rather than alter, “the principles of the federal Constitution—producing a nation that, while larger, was still fundamentally the same.”⁷²

Others, however, were more suspicious of this policy of incorporation, believing that the act of that extending “all these rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States” would irrevocably alter the nation. To begin with, many felt that the acquisition of the territory was, in itself, a violation of the nation’s federal principles.

Although the expansion was clearly authorized under the Constitution, many argued that

⁷² For a further discussions of Jefferson’s relationship to the concept of incorporation, see Peter J. Kastor, *The Nation’s Crucible: The Louisiana Purchase and the Creation of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Peter Onuf, “The Strongest Government on Earth,” Jefferson’s Republicanism, the Expansion of the Union, and the New Nation’s Destiny,” in *The Louisiana Purchase and American Expansion*. Sanford Levinson and Bartholomew Sparrow, eds. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2005: 41-68.

Jefferson's methods for obtaining the Louisiana territory circumvented the system of checks and balances put in place to regulate such acts of expansion. Rather than consulting with Congress on the issue of the treaty, Jefferson authorized the Purchase solely on his own executive authority, a move that, for many, represented a "lust for dominion" that threatened to transform the United States from a federal republic into an imperial power.⁷³

In addition, many citizens also believed that Jefferson's policy of incorporation would ultimately reconfigure the national body, as opposed to simply extending and replicating it. Reviving post-Revolutionary arguments about the viability of federal representation in a large republic, these critics argued that the process of incorporating the Louisiana Territory would require the United States to extend citizenship to a much wider range of different nationalities, religions, languages, and legal codes than had ever been imagined under the federal Constitution—an extension that would effectively transform the United States into a nation that was "foreign" to itself (Brown, 70). Figures such as John Quincy Adams, Manasseh Cutler, Timothy Pickering, and George Cabot publicly denounced the Louisiana Purchase for contributing to the "dissolution and re-composition of the Union." As John Quincy Adams wrote,

It ma[kes] a Union totally different from that which the Constitution had been formed. It gives despotic power over territories purchased...It makes French and Spanish laws a large part of the laws of the Union. It introduced whole systems of legislation abhorrent to the spirit and character of our institutions...[all] by an administration which came in blowing a trumpet against implied power.⁷⁴

⁷³ Everett Brown offers a thorough discussion of reactions to the Louisiana Purchase in his detailed study, *The Constitutional History of the Louisiana Purchase: 1803-1812*. (Berkeley, U of California P, 1920). Quotation above taken from Gouverneur Morris, quoted in Brown (31). See also Peter Onuf, 'The Strongest Government on Earth,' Jefferson's Republicanism, the Expansion of the Union, and the New Nation's Destiny."

⁷⁴ John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs*, V, 364-365 (October 20, 1820), quoted in Brown, p. 30. Again, see Everett Brown, *The Constitutional History of the Louisiana Purchase: 1803-1812*, for a thorough account

Although the furor over the legitimacy of the Louisiana Purchase would eventually subside, debates concerning its consequences would continue to intensify. With the addition of each new state (and indeed, throughout the entire admission process), citizens continually argued over whether the inclusion of this or that aspect of a community would produce “a Union totally different from that which the Constitution had formed.” These arguments stemmed from a range of concerns, from the potential problems of incorporating non-English speakers, Catholics, French Creole communities to the difficulties involved in accommodating an Napoleonic legal system and the complex Mississippi trading relations.⁷⁵ By far, however, the two most divisive issues raised by incorporating the Louisiana territory concerned the Native American presence and the practice of slavery.

At the time of the Purchase, there were thousands of Native American communities in the acquired territory, the majority being members of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek tribes. From the beginning, conflicts rose over the prospect of bringing these groups into the nation. Although the U.S. made a few token gestures to invite Native American to take part in the nation on a very limited basis by establishing a few schools and administrative offices, it quickly became clear that the U.S. government was more interested in incorporating tribal lands than in incorporating the members of the tribes themselves. Instead of finding ways to maintain and protect the

of reactions to the Treaty and its impact on the federal union, particularly Ch. 2 “The Constitutional Right to Acquire Territory: Contemporary Opinions,” 14-35.

⁷⁵ Two recent anthologies provide an excellent overview of many of the issues at stake in incorporating the Louisiana territories, Sanford Levinson and Bartholomew Sparrow, *The Louisiana Purchase and American Expansion*. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2005) and Patrick G. Williams, S. Charles Bolton, and Jeannie M. Whyne’s *A Whole Country in Commotion: Louisiana Purchase and the American Southwest* (Fayetteville: U Arkansas P, 2005).

presence of the “Five Tribes,” Presidents Jefferson, Madison, Adams, and Monroe supported a policy of “voluntary migration,” encouraging Native tribes to sell their land and move beyond the official boundaries of the nation.⁷⁶ Although numerous conflicts arose as Native Americans fought to hold claim to their lands (most notably during the Creek and Seminole Wars), by the mid-1820s, the majority of tribes had been divested of their lands through various treaty negotiations. The 1823 *Johnson v. M’Intosh* decision—which denied the legitimacy of Native American land claims altogether, assigning the U.S. government full possession rights on the basis of a “doctrine of discovery”—further contributed to disenfranchisement the nation’s Native American residents, laying the groundwork for the official removal policies of the 1830s. In this regard, the process of “incorporating” Native Americans into the federal nation resulted, in practice, in their gradual expatriation.⁷⁷

Even more divisive was the issue of slavery. Throughout the process of ratifying the Constitution and organizing the newly formed United States, citizens struggled to strike a balance regarding the representation and protection of slavery among the various states. A tenuous equilibrium was created through agreements such as the “three-fifths” compromise. Meanwhile, the fact that the nation was almost evenly divided between slave and free states at the time the Constitution was ratified also helped to ease some of

⁷⁶ See S. Lyman Tyler, *A History of Indian Policy*. (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Interior, 1973) and Claudia B. Haake, *The State, Removal and Indigenous Peoples in the United States and Mexico, 1620-2000* (New York : Routledge, 2007).

⁷⁷ Between 1814 to 1824, the U.S. government negotiated eleven treaties which divested various members of the Creek, Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw tribes of their eastern lands in exchange for lands in the west. Although the tribes were unwilling to give up their land, many hoped that signing these treaties would eventually allow them to retain a significant portion by appeasing the U.S. government. Such expectations, however, were soon denied, and by 1825, the United States has gained control over three-quarters of Alabama and Florida, as well as parts of Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky and North Carolina through treaty negotiations alone. For more on the antebellum acquisition of Native American land, see Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Treaties: The History of a Political Anomaly*. (U California P, 1994) and Ronald N. Satz,, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era*. (Lincoln, Neb.: U Nebraska P, 1975).

these tensions, and over the next few decades, citizens would strive aggressively to maintain that balance.⁷⁸ Expansion and the rapid incorporation of new territories, however, threatened to alter this fragile stability, and with the addition of each new state, citizens carefully scrutinized its political, economic, and social character to determine its position in relation to the question of slavery. Tensions surrounding the issue of slavery and expansion exploded in 1818 when Missouri applied for admission as a slave state, an addition that would upset the current balance of eleven slave states versus eleven free. The subsequent compromise, which preserved political equilibrium by admitting Missouri as a slave state at the same time as Maine, which was free, ultimately heightened tensions regarding the consequences of future expansion. As Thomas Jefferson wrote, “I considered [the Compromise] at once as the knell of the Union. “It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence... and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper.” The Missouri Compromise would, in fact, mark the beginning of a complete halt to the admission process. Following the admission of Missouri and Maine in 1821, the issue of incorporating new states into the nation would prove to be so divisive that no new states would be admitted until over sixteen years later, when Arkansas would enter the union as the twenty-fifth state in 1836.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ The fact that Rhode Island would not ratify and officially join the United States until 1790 meant that, at the time the Constitution was officially ratified, there was an even split between six slave states (Delaware, Georgia, Virginia, Maryland, and North and South Carolina) and six free states (New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts).

⁷⁹ Robert Pierce Forbes provides an excellent study of the politics and history surrounding the Missouri Compromise in the context of antebellum expansion in his recent book, *The Missouri Compromise and its Aftermath*, (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 2007). See also Noble E. Cunningham, *The Presidency of James Monroe* (Lawrence, Kan: U Kansas P 1996), especially chapter 7 “The Missouri Compromise,” 87-104.

Incorporating the Nation: *Hope Leslie* and *Francis Berrian*

It is in the context of this deadlocked situation, that I want to situate the novels that will be the focus of these next two chapters—*Hope Leslie* and *Francis Berrian*. As the process (and prospect) of incorporating new communities into the nation became too destabilizing to pursue, these novels take on the politics of expansion, examining the consequences and possibilities of bringing different communities into the space of the American home and, vice versa, in moving American citizens outward to become a part of this new national space. Before moving into a specific analysis of each novel, I wanted to briefly set up the terms for comparing these two texts, looking specifically at the different ways each engages with the concept of federal incorporation.

As narratives of expansion *Hope Leslie* and *Francis Berrian* represent two very different approaches. *Hope Leslie* explores the consequences of including Native Americans within the domestic space of the nation, drawing on the colonial setting of Puritan Massachusetts to examine the issue of expansion in relation to the foundational history of the nation. In contrast, *Francis Berrian* examines the consequences of expansion and incorporation in relation to more recent events, setting his novel in the context of the Mexican struggle for independence to explore the possibilities and risks of extending the federal nation to the American southwest. In this regard, while *Hope Leslie* is ultimately focused on the impact of bringing differences inward, examining how federal incorporation affects the character of American families and homes, *Francis Berrian* is more interested in exploring the consequences of looking outward, exploring how the process of extending the nation's borders can produce new relationships, forms

of interaction, and models for citizenship that can regenerate (rather than simply reconstitute) the nation as a whole.

In presenting these narratives, these novels raise serious questions about the practice and the consequences of incorporation—what does it mean, they ask, to try to bring new people and places into the nation “on equal footing with the original states”? As Representative James Elliot of Vermont put it in an 1804 speech to Congress, the policy of incorporation was, from the beginning, “of a novel, singular, and curious nature,” and throughout the antebellum period citizens would continually debate what it meant to declare that the residents of the new territories “shall be incorporated” into the United States (Lawson and Seidman, 20, 34). Did incorporation ask citizens to mold new territories into mirror images of the existing states? To what extent did incorporation allow for the addition of new practices and ideas? Was incorporation a policy of assimilation? Of accommodation? Of integration? And which groups or communities were ultimately eligible to be incorporated into the nation? Which were to be excluded from this process?⁸⁰

Although the politics of incorporation became a dominant issue in the antebellum republic, critics have rarely examined American expansion in terms of incorporation. Instead, scholars have primarily approached the issue of antebellum expansion through an

⁸⁰ Everett Brown offers a comprehensive account of the different ways in which members of Congress and members of local state and territorial governments interpreted the terms of incorporation. Of particular interest for members of Congress was the manner in which the residents of the territories were to be “trained in a knowledge of American laws and institutions,” notes Brown. Meanwhile, residents of the states remained much more concerned about ensuring the equal representation of their own respective interests. See *The Constitutional History of the Louisiana Purchase* (1920), especially Chapter V “The Status of the Acquired Territory and Chapter VI “The Government of the Acquired Territory.” Anne Baker and Gary Lawson and Guy Seidman also offer useful discussions of the concept of incorporation in *Heartless Immensity: Literature, Culture, and Geography in Antebellum America* (Ann Arbor: U Michigan P, 2006) and *The Constitution of Empire: Territorial Expansion and American Legal History*. (New Haven: Yale UP, 2004), respectively.

imperial framework—a critical perspective that grew out of a larger movement to address “the absence of culture from the history of U.S. imperialism” and “the absence of empire from the study of American culture” that emerged in the early 1990s (Kaplan, 11)..

Within this critical paradigm, scholars turned specifically to instances such as the Louisiana Purchase as a means of illustrating how the United States can be seen as an “empire in denial.”⁸¹ Under this framework, the concept of “incorporation” has primarily been read as a strategy of domination and coercion, serving as yet another example of how the United States sought to mask its imperial designs through a rhetoric of “exceptionalism.”⁸²

While the imperial focus of American studies has undoubtedly produced a large and important body of criticism, scholars have recently begun to question whether the field has become overly dominated by this particular paradigm. In a recent review essay, Susan Gillman discusses “the exhaustion of the imperial turn,” arguing that the constant emphasis on “rectifying the absence of empire” has resulted in a formulaic approach to U.S. history, culture, and politics—an approach that is “condemned repeatedly to

⁸¹ Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease’s *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke UP, 1993) set the tone for this “imperial turn” in the early 1990s (quotation cited above take from Kaplan’s introductory essay for the collection, “Left Alone with America,” 11). Other major works of “imperial” critique include Lawrence Buell, “American Literary Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon” *American Literary History* 4 (1992): 311-442; Hulme, Peter. “Including America,” *ARIEL* 26.1 (1995): 117-23; Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism* (U Pennsylvania P, 1997); Edward Watts, *Writing and Postcolonialism in the Early Republic* (Charlottesville: U Virginia P, 1999) and *An American Colony* (Athens, Ohio P, 2002); Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt. *Postcolonial Theory and the United States*. (Jackson: U Mississippi P, 2000); John Carlos Rowe, *Literary Culture and U.S. Imperialism*. (New York: Oxford UP, 2000).

⁸² Edward Watts, for example, reads Jefferson’s incorporation policies in imperial terms in *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture* (Athens: Ohio UP, 2002). See also Anne Baker’s *Heartless Immensity* and Stephanie LeMenager’s *Manifest and Other Destinies: Territorial Fictions of the Nineteenth-Century United States*. (Lincoln: U Nebraska P, 2004).

discover and announce empire's presence" rather than introduce "new directions and possibilities."⁸³

By reconsidering the discourse of "incorporation," however, it becomes possible to begin re-thinking the history and representation of American expansion outside of a strictly imperial framework. This is not to say that the concept and practice of incorporation is completely devoid of imperial dimensions. In the process of bringing new people and places into the nation, the discourse of "incorporation" was definitely implicated in acts of imperial domination and control. At the same time, however, it is problematic to assume that "incorporation" and "imperialism" mean the same thing. In incorporating new territory, the residents of the United States ultimately sought to make these new spaces recognizable as acceptable and integral parts of the nation— producing, not colonies, but federal *states*. There is a difference between colonizing a space and transforming it into a constituent state—a difference that has often been glossed over in recent studies of antebellum expansion. By focusing on the discourse of incorporation, particularly as it was imagined and represented through novels such as *Hope Leslie* and *Francis Berrian*, it becomes possible to re-read the nation, not strictly through the lens of imperialism, but also through a federal model of interaction and integration.

⁸³ For Gilman's critique of the field, see her review essay "The New, Newest Thing: Have American Studies Gone Imperial?" *American Literary History*, 17.1 (2005):197-214. A few examples of recent studies illustrating the continued dominance of the imperial paradigm, see Andy Doolen's *Fugitive Empire: Locating Early American Imperialism* (2005) and Gretchen Murphy's *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire* (2005). Although these works offer compelling arguments about antebellum literature and politics, these readings are ultimately subsumed under the critical goal of "exposing" the antebellum U.S. as an "empire in denial."

Composed of Discordant Materials: Re-imagining the Federal Family in *Hope Leslie*

At this point, we can now turn attention to *Hope Leslie*. Published in 1827, but set in seventeenth-century colonial Massachusetts, *Hope Leslie* is a historical romance that draws upon the nation's past history of cross-cultural conflict to engage with the antebellum politics of expansion, incorporation, and federal representation. Critics have often commented on both the popularity of the historical romance at this time, particularly with its emphasis on situating narratives in the colonial past. Throughout the early 19th century, notes Jared Gardner notes, citizens often turned to Puritan colonial history "to provide a genealogy and a historical justification" for the nation, setting a "precedent" for the values of liberty and justice on which the United States would subsequently be founded (38). By thus setting novels in the context of the "foundational" period, antebellum historical romances provided citizens with a way of "read[ing] nationalism *genealogically*—as the expression of an historical tradition of serial continuity."⁸⁴

Specifically, the events of the novel take place in the aftermath of the Pequot War, and the story revolves around the dual adventures of two heroines— Magawisca, the daughter of a Pequot chief, and Hope Leslie, the daughter of a respected Puritan family. Similar to the character of Updike Underhill in *The Algerine Captive*, Hope Leslie and Magawisca struggle to find ways to forge more compatible and tolerant relationships between their different communities. Unlike Underhill, however, Magawisca and Hope

⁸⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991), 194-5, as quoted in *Covenant and Republic*, (14). For more on the Puritan setting of U.S. historical fiction, see George Dekker, *The American Historical Romance*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), Lawrence Buell, *New England Literary Culture: From Revolution Through Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986), and Philip Gould, *Covenant and Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

Leslie must learn to contend with this diversity in a space where political, racial, and religious differences cannot be easily separated or bounded. Instead, these characters must contend with a space where these differences coincide, and in doing so, the novel addresses the consequences of incorporating differences into the immediate space of the American home. Ultimately, in negotiating these differences, Hope and Magawisca discover that their desire to create a more inclusive and integrated community conflicts with their desire to protect and preserve their original families. By tracing this tension between transforming traditional community bonds and preserving them, the novel explores the problematic consequences of inclusion in an age when differences were becoming increasingly numerous and mobile in the ever-expanding United States.

Following an introductory chapter that presents William Fletcher's experiences in England prior to his emigration to America, the events of the novel are set in motion with a scene of expansion—namely, the expansion of William Fletcher's family. In the second chapter, the formerly homogenous Fletcher home—comprised of Mr. Fletcher, his wife, and their young children—grows to include two new sets of children: Hope and Mary Leslie (the English daughters of Mr. Fletcher's former fiancé) and Magawisca and her brother Oneco, two Pequot natives sent to assist in managing this newly expanded household. In both cases, the addition of these new figures is the result of a legal rather than blood ties—Hope and Mary enter the family because their mother “left a will committing her children to [Fletcher's] guardianship” while Magawisca and Oneco enter the family under the direct orders of Gov. Winthrop who had promised their mother that he would see to their care (21). Nevertheless, despite the lack of a “natural” or blood connection between the children and their new home, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher take pains to

ensure that they feel welcome as “permanent members” of the family (27). Even though Magawisca and Oneco technically enter the Fletchers as domestic help, they, along with the Leslie sisters, are treated with compassion, friendliness, and respect. Over time, Mrs. Fletcher comes to consider all four of them as her own “children”—“neither strangers or servants” (62), and in return for her love, Hope, Mary, Magawisca, and Oneco eventually develop strong feelings of love and sympathy for their adopted home. The novel repeats this process when Mary Leslie is later adopted into the Pequot tribe, and by dramatizing these moments of expansion and inclusion, the novel explores what happens when formerly homogeneous communities—in this case the colonial, Puritan Fletcher family and the native Pequot tribe—come to include the members of different religious, racial, and cultural communities that formerly existed outside their boundaries.

The trope of the extended family was often used to consider the consequences of federal expansion in the United States. Between the early 1800s through the late 1820s, numerous essays, speeches, and articles on the subject of expansion appeared in newspapers, broadsides, and pamphlets. Within these conversations, writers on both sides of the issue often likened the situation of the expanded United States to that of “marriage to a woman of numerous family.”⁸⁵ While critics of expansion used this trope to explore the negative consequences of incorporation, building on this image to illustrate the financially and socially disruptive consequences of taking charge of a family that was not

⁸⁵ Everett Brown offers an extensive bibliography of these articles and pamphlets, see *The Constitutional History of the Louisiana Purchase: 1803-1812*. (Berkeley, U of California P, 1920): 198-201. This particular quotation is selected from David Leonard, *An oration, delivered at Raynham, Massachusetts, Friday, May 11th, 1804, on the late acquisition of Louisiana, at the unanimous request of the Republican citizens of the County of Bristol* (Newport, R.I. O. Farnsworth, 1804). Other examples that employ a similar trope include Tucker St. George (Silvestris), *Reflections on the cession of Louisiana to the United States* (Washington City: Samuel Harrison Smith, 1803); Allan Bowie Magruder, *Political, Commercial, and Moral Reflections on the Late Cession of Louisiana to the United States* (Lexington, Ky: D. Bradford, 1803); David Ramsay, *An Oration on the Cession of Louisiana to the United States: delivered on the 12th May, 1804, in St. Michael's Church, Charleston, South-Carolina* (Charleston, W. P. Young, 1804).

originally one's own, others used this metaphor as a means of representing the expansion of the nation in more acceptable or, as one writer put it, "natural" terms. Although marrying "a woman of numerous family" may seem disruptive and "imprudent" for some, others used this same trope to argue that such a marriage could produce a stable and viable family. Returning to the example of *Hope Leslie*, this novel similarly draws upon the idea of the extended family as a means of addressing these same ideas .

Although the Fletcher family is not necessarily expanded through marriage, the novel plays with the idea of expanding the traditional, nuclear family (represented by Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher) to include figures who had formerly been outside of their original family unit. By dramatizing the effects of this inclusion, not just on the Fletcher's colonial society, but specifically on the stability and unity of the *family* itself, the novel asks readers to consider the consequences of federal expansion, not just in political and economic terms, but in relation to American domestic space.

Returning now to the specific scene of familial expansion, the initial arrival of the Leslie sisters and the Pequot children transforms the Fletcher family from a homogeneous household connected by blood and shared religious and political ties into a household filled with members with different cultural, political, religious, and racial affiliations. In supporting this new "family" (composed, as Mrs. Fletcher writes, "of discordant materials"), its members must find new ways to cultivate connections and establish bonds of unity with one another, and in dramatizing this process, the novel asks readers to consider whether this diverse and reconstructed household can succeed.

For a time, the answer seems to be yes. As the narrator remarks, "little community at Bethel proceeded more harmoniously than could have been hoped from the discordant

materials of which it was composed” (29). Mrs. Fletcher describes the positive and productive interactions of the different members of her new family in a letter to her husband, paying particular attention to the central role that Magawisca and Oneco play within it. While Everell teaches Magawisca to speak and read in English (a skill “in which she hath made such marvelous progress”), Magawisca “in her turn, doth take much delight in describing to him the customs of her people, and relating their traditionary tales,” which “captivat[e] his youthful imagination” (32). Oneco also becomes a valued member of the household, helping Mrs. Fletcher by entertaining the younger children and joining forces with Everell to hunt food for the family, “Everell has much advantage from the woodcraft of Oneco: [and] the two boys daily enrich our table...with the spoils of air and water” (34). Meanwhile, despite her “shrinking timid character,” Mary Leslie also becomes an accepted and valued member of the family, particularly for Oneco who develops a special devotion to her. Indeed, the only figure who doesn’t seem to fit into this little community is Mistress Grafton who, as Mrs. Fletcher reports, remains “strangely out of place here—fitter for a parlour bird, than a flight into the wilderness.” Her commitment to the religious beliefs, fashions, and social customs of her native home in England ultimately prevent her from becoming a part of her new colonial household.

Despite the apparent harmony of the expanded Fletcher home, however, this union of “discordant materials” soon becomes problematic. When Mrs. Fletcher praises Magawisca by comparing her to “the lofty Judith and the gracious Esther,” for example, she is startled when Everell suggests a different biblical comparison. “Oh, mother! is she not more like the gentle and tender Ruth?,” he asks (33). Everell’s metaphor suggests a very different model of inclusion than that implied by Mrs. Fletcher’s original

comparison. By likening Magawisca to Judith and Esther, Mrs. Fletcher associates her with characteristics of intelligence, virtue, and compassion commonly linked to these Biblical figures. More specifically, however, she also likens Magawisca to two women who, when placed in new circumstances, did their best to protect and defend their people, ultimately earning the respect of their new communities precisely because of their loyalty to and protection of their original roots. Thus, while on one hand, her comparison marks the extent to which Magawisca has become an admired and accepted member of the family, it does so in a way that continues to identify Magawisca as a figure of difference. In contrast, Everell's assertion that Magawisca is more like Ruth—a woman who abandoned her native home to follow her mother-in-law into a new land where she would eventually settle permanently, finding marriage and happiness—suggests a model of inclusion where native identities and differences are much more mutable. Rather than preserving Magawisca as a figure of permanent difference, Everell's metaphor suggests that, like Ruth, she can potentially be wholly integrated into this new family through marriage—a revision that prompts Mrs. Fletcher to call for an immediate separation. "To him she may be," she writes to her husband, "and therefore it is, that innocent and safe as the intercourse of these children now is, it is...most wise to remove the maiden from our dwelling. Two young plants that have sprung up in close neighbourhood may be separated while young, but if disjoined after their fibers are all intertwined, one, or perchance both, may perish" (33).

Mrs. Fletcher's reaction points to two specific (and problematic) consequences of inclusion—the threat of racial miscegenation and the threat of dual sympathies. For as much as Mrs. Fletcher approves of the close relationship that develops between Everell

and Magawisca when they are busy teaching one another about their different languages, stories, and skills, the prospect of a more intimate union marks the limit of her willingness to tolerate domestic diversity. In this regard, the heterogeneity of the Fletcher household is acceptable only insofar as it leads to the exchange of cultural knowledge (linguistic, domestic, and literary). That Magawisca's inclusion might lead to interracial attraction and marriage—thus resulting in the permanent presence of Magawisca, not just in the Fletcher home, but within the Fletcher bloodlines—ultimately transforms Mrs. Fletcher's perception of her “discordant” household from a site of harmony and promise to a potential source of threat. The inclusion of differences, while it may be productive for the family in the short term, is ultimately destructive in the long term, and by insisting that these Magawisca and Everell no longer be allowed to grow “in close neighbourhood” Mrs. Fletcher implies that, in order to remain stable and productive, communities must remain racially homogeneous, with clear boundaries imposed and maintained between their members.

Critics have often commented on the racial politics of this novel, pointing to Mrs. Fletcher's apprehensions as evidence of the extent to which *Hope Leslie* ultimately supports conception of an American republic founded on basis of racial exclusion.⁸⁶ In addition to problem of potential miscegenation within this novel, however, is the problem of interconnected feelings—a subject that has been examined in less detail. Although Mrs. Fletcher stresses the need to prevent these “two young plants” from becoming “intertwined” in the first place, she also acknowledges the danger of trying to separate them once a close relationship has been formed. “[I]f disjoined after their fibers are all

⁸⁶ See, for example, Judith Fetterley analysis in “My Sister, My Sister,” and Maureen Tuthill's reading of Native Americans in “Land and Narrative Site in Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*.” *American Trancendental Quarterly* 19.2 (2005): 95-113.

intertwined,” she cautions, “one, or perchance both, may perish” (33). Through this metaphor, Mrs. Fletcher implies that the danger of introducing different “plants” into the same “neighbourhood” lies not solely in the creation of a new form of union, but in the creation of relationships that will pull its members in new directions and lead to a confusion of roots and boundaries. By taking one plant that was formerly able to grow on its own and intertwining it with another, Mrs. Fletcher worries that these new bonds will eventually cause its component parts to lose control of their respective growth and direction. According to this metaphor, for the members of two different communities to develop strong connections is to ultimately place their native origins and identities at risk, and to avoid this loss of self and stability, Mrs. Fletcher advises separating Magawisca and Everell before these new bonds can begin to take hold.

Ultimately, the creation of “intertwined” feelings becomes the most disruptive consequence of expansion and inclusion in this novel—more so than the threat of racial miscegenation. This problem is most clearly illustrated through the character of Magawisca. Initially, Magawisca resists developing any feelings of sympathy or connection toward the Fletcher family. Her reaction stems from the fact that she has been brought into the Fletcher family against her will. Having been captured during the massacre of their father’s tribe, Magawisca and her brother enter the Fletcher family on the direct orders of Governor Winthrop, who had promised their dying mother that her children would be “well cared for” (21). Viewing her presence in the Fletcher home as a form of enforced captivity rather than a form of extended “care,” however, Magawisca reacts to the family with opposition and hostility, rejecting their initial attempts to integrate her into their colonial world. She goes out of her way to represent and preserve

her native identity within the Fletcher household, refusing to alter her dress, religious beliefs, or domestic habits, thus clarifying the differences between her native identity and theirs, while continually asserting where her loyalties ultimately lie. Although Mrs. Fletcher tries hard to “instill in her mind the first principles of our religion” and introduce her to daily “household matters,” for instance, “to these [Magawisca’s] eye is shut and her ear is closed, not only with that blindness and deafness common to natural man, but [with]...an aversion which...doth continually remind me of Hannibal’s hatred to Rome, and is like that in wrought with filial piety” (32).

Over time, however, the Fletchers’ attitude toward Magawisca and the manner by which they try to make her feel a part of the family cause her to change her feelings toward them. From the beginning, Mr. Fletcher encourages his family to welcome Magawisca and her brother into their home as their intellectual equals. “Surely you do not doubt that these Indians possess the same faculties we do,” he states, and on this basis, he encourages his wife and children treat Magawisca and Oneco with dignity and respect. Although Magawisca and Oneco are admitted to the family as “servants,” they not abused or mistreated. “You are welcome among us...[and] you shall have no hard service to do” Mrs. Fletcher says to Magawisca. As sign of a token of this respect, Magawisca and Oneco are “permitted to retain” most of their native “particularities” with respect to their language, religious beliefs, and manner of dress—many of which, as mentioned earlier, Magawisca and Oneco use to benefit the family as a whole. Although at first, Mrs. Fletcher confesses that her tolerant and respectful attitude toward her Pequot servants was primarily motivated by a sense of “duty,” as time goes by, she develops a much stronger sympathetic connection to them, particularly to Magawisca whom she

increasingly comes to view and treat more like one of her own children than as domestic help. “My heart yearneth toward this poor heathen orphan girl,” she writes to her husband, “...[and] all my woman’s nature feeleth for her,” (33).

As a result of this kind and equitable treatment, Magawisca gradually develops a closer relationship with the Fetchers. In place of her initial feelings of opposition and hostility, she begins to feel a greater sense of connection to the family. At first, these feelings are motivated by a sense of obligation. When Mrs. Fletcher shows the same love and kindness to Magawisca that she shows to her own children, for example, Magawisca feels obligated to respond in kind. “Thou has been more than true...thou hast been kind to me as the mother-bird that shelters the wanderer in her nest,” Magawisca tells Mrs. Fletcher, and as a result, she now feels it is her “duty” to act in a similar way toward the Fetchers—to “deal as truly by thee” as they “have ever dealt by me” (39). Eventually, Magawisca’s sense of obligation toward the Fetchers deepens into love. When Mrs. Fletcher declares “Magawisca, you are neither a stranger nor a servant. Will you not share our joy? Do you not love us?” Magawisca responds with an equal assertion of loyalty and love, “‘Love you!,’ she exclaimed, clasping her hands, ‘love you! I would give my life for you!’”(62).

Magawisca’s declaration indicates the extent to which she has come to feel connected to the Fletcher family. Bound to them, not just by feelings of obligation but also by love, she is willing to sacrifice her own life in order to act in their interests—a radical departure from her earlier view of herself as a captive “in the house of [her] enemies” (26). In declaring her affections for and devotion to the Fetchers, however, Magawisca does not wholly align herself with them. Throughout her time in the Fletcher

household, she remains firmly committed to her native identity, and she expresses this affiliation by constantly wearing the “badge of her tribe, a tuft from the wing of the monarch-bird [that] was her father’s crest” (46). As a result, as the novel progresses, Magawisca emerges as a character who belongs to two communities at once. On one hand, she both views and represents herself as a loyal and committed member of the Pequot tribe. On the other hand, she also sees herself as a loving and devoted part of the Fletcher family, and while she does not consider herself a permanent member of her newly adopted community, her feelings of love and sympathy for them prompt her to want to protect and preserve both the Fletchers and her close relationship to them. “Oh,” she laments when she considers the prospect of losing them, “I do not like to see any thing so beautiful pass so quickly away” (63).

Magawisca’s growing feelings of dual affiliation soon lead to conflict. Linked to both her native family and her adopted family through bonds of love and loyalty, Magawisca is placed in the difficult position of having to represent and protect the interests of two different communities at once. Given the history of distrust and violence that exists between the Pequots and the colonists, however, any attempt to negotiate between the two becomes impossible. When Everell asks why Magawisca rarely speaks of her native past, she explains that silence on this subject is necessary to maintain their friendship, “Our hands have taken hold of the chain of friendship,” she states, “and I feared to break it by speaking of the wrongs your people laid on mine”(46). Although the Fletchers had nothing to do with the massacre of Pequots, the violence committed by the Massachusetts colonists is such that it would overpower any bond of friendship, should that history be publicly represented. In order to preserve her valued friendship with the

Fletchers, Magawisca must thus obscure, to a certain extent, her tribe's history. Although she never goes so far as to forget or deny the colonial violence that destroyed her tribe, her feelings of friendship for the Fletchers nevertheless alter her willingness to express that history, and in this respect, the novel points to the problematic silences and omissions that emerge when trying to negotiate dual sentiments.

These feelings are brought to a crisis when Nelema drops a "rattlesnake skin" at Mrs. Fletcher's feet. "Deeply skilled in the ways of her people," Magawisca instantly recognizes this as a sign that her father is planning an attack (39). Whereas once she would have rejoiced at the prospect of this violent revenge, this news now causes her "mind [to be] racked with apprehensions and conflicting duties, the cruelest rack to an honourable mind" (55). Specifically, her dilemma arises from the dual affections and sympathies she has developed while living within the Fletcher home. Should she act in the interest of the Fletchers and tell them the meaning of the rattlesnake skin, thus returning the love and affection she has received from them? Or should she remain silent in order to protect her beloved father and tribe, sacrificing her new friends in the process? In making her decision, Magawisca struggles to determine which community has a greater hold on her sentiments.

Magawisca's first impulse had been to reveal all to Mrs. Fletcher; but by doing this, she would jeopardy her father's life. Her natural sympathies, her strong affections, her pride, were all enlisted on the side of her people; but she shrunk as if her own life were menaced, from the blow that was about to fall on her friends. She would have done or suffered anything to avert it, anything but betray her father (55).

Here, Magawisca recognizes that her sympathies operate at cross purposes to one another. While her feelings of “affection” and “sympathy” are positive and productive in themselves, when experienced in connection with two different communities at once, her feelings of sympathy and affection become destructive. For Magawisca, to act according to her “natural sympathies” is, simultaneously, to betray those sympathies, and by dramatizing this conflict, the novel points to dangers of expanding the national “family” to include too many new members.

Trapped in this impossible position, Magawisca does her best to act in the interests of both communities. She warns the Fletchers of the possibility of an attack without revealing any specific details, hoping to give them enough advance warning to protect themselves, without revealing her father location. “That which I may speak, without bringing down on me the curse of my father’s race, I will speak,” she promises Mrs. Fletcher, but that “is all I may say” (39). This compromise, however, does little to resolve her “opposing fears,” and her divided feelings soon become a source of anxiety not just for herself, but for the other members of the Fletcher household. When the servants Digby and Jennet learn of Magawisca’s interpretation of the rattlesnake skin, they immediately encourage the family not to trust her, believing that the power of blood ties will overcome any feelings she has acquired for her new home. “I don’t know that, Mr. Everell,” Digby tells Everell when he first hears of Magawisca’s warning, “she’ll first be true to her own people...Like to like, throughout all nature” (43).

In contrast, however, Everell Fletcher dismisses this argument, asserting that Magawisca’s well-developed sense of justice and virtue will lead her to act in the best interests of her new home. “She is true and noble-minded,” he tells Digby, “[and] I am

certain that if she knows of any danger approaching us, she is seeking to avert it,” (43). Everell’s repeated statements of confidence and trust in Magawisca indicate the extent to which he believes that newly established ties of love and friendship can be just as strong as her bonds to her native family. As proof of this, he continually expresses his “confiden[ce] that she would in no way aid or abet any mischief that her own people might be contriving against them,” “assur[ing] her again and again of his entire trust in her”(46). To his dismay, however, his constant assurances of his loyalty and trust, “seemed rather to aggravate than abate her distress”(46). Once again, Magawisca’s divided feelings transform what would ordinarily be comforting and positive sentiments into a source of pain and distress.

Ultimately, there is no way to abate Magawisca’s conflicted feelings, and when Mononotto finally attacks, her attempt to act in the interest of both communities results in only in feelings of betrayal on both sides. Magawisca’s divided sentiments find expression the moment her father appears on the scene. At first, Magawisca and her brother immediately respond with shouts of joy and recognition, “‘My father! My father!’ burst from the lips of Magawisca and Oneco” (63). In reaching out to welcome her father, her actions simultaneously serve as an act of defense, “Springing forward with her arms uplifted, as if *deprecating* his approach, she sunk down at her father’s feet” (63, emphasis mine). In place of the joyful welcome her actions initially indicated, this scene becomes a moment of grief and supplication as she begins to plead for the Fletcher’s lives,

Save them—save them— she cried, the mother—the children—oh they are all good—take vengeance on your enemies—but spare—spare our friends—our benefactors—I bleed when they are struck—oh command them to stop! (63)

Here, Magawisca's feelings of sympathy and affection for the Fletcher family are expressed in no uncertain terms. Her feelings of connection to the Fletchers are so strong that, again, she equates her physical body with their fate. As she tells her father, any acts of violence any acts committed against them, she feels herself ("I bleed when they are struck"), and by invoking this connection, she hopes to convince her father to spare their lives based on his own feelings of love and sympathy for her. In this regard, rather than revoking her ties to her native family, Magawisca's attempt to save the Fletchers actually relies upon asserting the strength of her native familial ties. Falling to Mononotto's feet out of respect for his authority, Magawisca asks him to save the Fletchers, not out of a sense of sympathy for them, but because of his love for her. Specifically, she attempts to create these feelings of sympathy by describing the care and respect she received with the Fletchers.

Yonder roof and she pointed toward Bethel, has sheltered thy children—the wing of the mother bird was spread over us—we ate of the children's bread; then why hast thou shed their blood?—why art thou leading the son into captivity? Oh spare him!—send him back—leave one light in the darkened habitation (74).

By pointing out the care and protection she received under "yonder roof," Magawisca encourages her father to see the Fletchers as she does—as an extended version of her family. Mononotto, however, refuses to respond to Magawisca's pleas. Rather than inspiring him to sympathize with the Fletchers, Magawisca's comments cause him to become even angrier toward them. Given the violence enacted against his tribe by the larger colonial community, Mononotto views the Fletcher's kind treatment of his children as an affront, rather than an occasion for mercy. Instead of responding as a kindly and grateful father (as Magawisca hopes and expects), he attacks Magawisca for trying to prompt him to feel a sense of sympathy or obligation toward the Fletchers, ultimately

viewing her pleas on behalf of the Fletchers as a treacherous expression of betrayal.

“‘One, echoed Mononotto, ‘did they leave me one? No—my people, my children, were swept away...and there where our pleasant homes were clustered , is silence and darkness,” “Magawisca, has thy brother vanished from thy memory...Dost thou use thy mother’s words...to plead for one of the race of her murderers? Is not her grave among my enemies? Say no more, I command you...thy kindness but sharpens my revenge” (74,75)

Mononotto’s criticism reiterates Magawisca’s fundamental problem. Her dual sympathies for both the Fletchers and the Pequots destroy, rather than preserve her connection to these communities. Instead of contributing to productive and peaceful relations, Magawisca’s expressions of love and feelings of kindness “sharpen” revenge, thus inverting the traditional consequences of sympathetic feelings. Eventually, Magawisca’s divided feelings not only lead to violence and anger, they also result in her physical destruction. At the moment Mononotto is about to enact his revenge by executing Everell, she “interpose[s] her arm” between them to prevent the fall of his hatchet. At first glance, Magawisca’s intervention might seem to imply that she has decided to defy her father and align herself permanently with her adopted family, the Fletchers—her act of self-sacrifice serving as evidence of “the power of [her] love”(94). At the same time, however, Magawisca’s act is also motivated by her feelings for her father. From the moment of the attack, Magawisca is troubled by the intensity of his vengeance, believing his actions to be out of character with his traditional values and sense of justice. She repeatedly expresses her inability to recognize her father in his behavior, “My father—my father!—where is my father’s look and voice? Mononotto has

found his daughter, but I have not found my father,” (74). By interposing her arm between Mononotto and Everell, she hopes, not just to save Everell, but to regain her father by restoring him to his compassionate, forgiving self, hence her command to Mononotto, not simply to “stop” but to “Forbear!” This choice of words is significant. To practice forbearance involves more than just exercising restraint. Forbearance also involves thoughtful consideration and, ultimately, a willingness to tolerate the presence of something previously considered objectionable. By asking her father to “forbear” in his treatment of Everell, Magawisca appeals both to Mononotto’s moral and intellectual sensibilities, calling on him to exercise his judgment and recognize Everell as a figure who could (and should) be tolerated, not executed. Such a command is very different than had she demanded that her father stop. By commanding her father to immediately cease his actions, her words would not only constitute a complete rejection of his authority, they would also imply his actions to be clearly in the wrong. By asking him to “forbear” in his treatment of Everell however, Magawisca continues to indicate her respect for his authority and her faith in his sense of justice. In this respect, Magawisca’s “interposition” does not necessarily represent an absolute decision in favor of one community over another, as critics such as Amy Strand and Maureen Tuthill suggest.⁸⁷ Instead, this moment represents yet another attempts by Magawisca to act in a way that will benefit the members of both her native and her adopted families.

Given that Magawisca’s interposition results in the loss of her arm, however, the novel once again makes it clear that trying to act in the interests of two different communities doesn’t work. For the rest of the novel, Magawisca’s maimed body serves

⁸⁷ See Amy Dunham Strand, “Interpositions: *Hope Leslie*, Women’s Petitions, and Historical Fiction in Jacksonian Am.” *Studies in Am Fiction* 32.2 (Autumn 2004):131-165 and Maureen Tuthill, “Land and Narrative Site in S’s *HL*.” *American Trancendental Quarterly* 19.2 (2005): 95-113

as a reminder of the destructive consequences of developing dual sympathies, a condition that was initially produced by the attempt to welcome and include Magawisca within the Fletcher home. Eventually, Magawisca abandons her attempt to negotiate between her two homes, and decides to align herself with her native tribe permanently. Shortly after losing her arm, Magawisca vows to “sacrifice her tenderness for Everell and her grateful recollections of his lovely mother ...on the altar of national duty,” (195). From this point onward, she makes an effort to avoid all contact with the world outside her tribe, and devotes herself entirely to her father, becoming “his constant companion...as obedient to the impulse of his spirit as the most faithful are to the fancied intimations of the Divinity” (194).

As the novel proceeds, however, feelings between Magawisca and the Fletchers once again become “intertwined.” When Magawisca meets secretly with Hope Leslie to talk about reuniting (briefly) with her sister, Magawisca at first takes great pains to assert that her actions are motivated by solely by her promise to Nelema, and not by a sense of affection for Hope Leslie and the Fletchers. “She [Nelema] made me swear to perform her promise to you,” she states, when Hope asks why she has come to see her, thus representing her actions as an act of kindness rooted solely in her sympathy for her fellow tribe-member (187). As Hope pleads for the permanent return of her sister, however, Magawisca’s feelings of sympathy for her former family return, “there was a chord in Magawisca’s heart that needed but the touch of tenderness to respond in harmony; her pride vanished and her indignation gave way to sympathy” (188).

Once again, however, Magawisca’s dual feelings get her into trouble, and while extending Mary’s visit to allow Hope more time with her sister, she is caught and

imprisoned under the charge of being a native spy. This time, however, the strong bonds of love and sympathy that have developed between herself and the Fletchers become the means of her salvation, and Hope and Everell help her to escape, the novel again raises the possibility of integrating the native and the colonial communities in peaceful and productive terms. Shortly after Magawisca's rescue, Everell invites her to remain within the colonial community and become a part of his extended family. "And why not now, Magawisca, regard me as your brother?" he asks, "the present difference of the English and the Indians is but a vapour that has, even now, passed away.... Promise us that you will return and dwell with us... we will walk in the same path, the same joys will shine on us, and, if need be that sorrows come over us, why we shall all sit under their shadow together" (330). Despite her strong and continuing feelings of love for Hope and Everell, Magawisca however, rejects this proposal, believing that any attempt to integrate these two worlds and place them "on the same path" will only lead to continued conflict. "It cannot be—it cannot be," replied Magawisca, the persuasions of those she loved not, for a moment, overcoming her deep invincible sense of the wrongs her injured race had sustained.... the Indian and the white man can no more mingle and become one that day and night" (330). Here, Magawisca acknowledges that even her strong feelings for "those she loved" cannot overcome the history of violence and injustice that stands between them, hence she insists upon a complete and irrevocable separation.

Most critics read this scene as moment where the novel unequivocally defines the United States in racial terms, endorsing a "white" conception of nation and citizenship. "Though Sedgwick clearly constructs *Hope Leslie* as an alternate history of relations between whites and Native Americans... nothing in [the] text suggests that Sedgwick can

imagine a future for Magawisca within America” writes Judith Fetterley, who criticizes the novel for re-inscribing the racist logic of the trope of the “Vanishing American” (509). While racist dimensions of this final scene are important here, it is ultimately historical memory, not racial difference, that marks the impossibility of incorporating Magawisca into this proto-American community. Although Everell invites her to enter his family on equal terms (to walk the same path, sit in the same places, and share the same experiences), Magawisca realizes that such equality is impossible as long as her memory of past abuses remains.

When one considers the conclusion in these terms, the ending of the novel seems more invested in politics of federal inclusion rather than racial exclusion. Everell’s invitation for Magawisca to join his family and share the same experiences sounds very much like the language of incorporation used to describe the expansion of the American republic by which “the inhabitants of the ceded territory “ were to be “incorporated in the Union of the United States admitted as soon as possible according to the principles of the federal Constitution to the enjoyment of all these rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States.” *Hope Leslie*, however reveals the extent to which history makes the extension of American federal citizenship problematic. The past leaves a permanent mark in this novel that cannot be easily overcome. Even as the Fletchers attempt to erase this past legacy of violence and injustice by making Magawisca feel as “neither a stranger or a servant” but a beloved member of the family, she recognizes that her presence will serve as a constant reminder of the conflict between these two groups, providing a “legible record of her birth and wrongs” (23). To extend the national family to include Magawisca is to extend the narrative of the nation’s past to include a legacy of

injustice and abuse—an extension that threatens to undermine the founding values of the republic.

Nelema, an “old Indian woman” who lives at the edge of the Fletcher property, expresses this problem of accountability early in the novel, disrupting a scene of domestic tranquility to warn the family of the unavoidable dangers of trying to welcome Magawisca, Oneco, and even herself into their community. After first acknowledging that the Fletchers have always treated her with care and respect, (“I have had kindness from thee, thy blankets have warmed me, I have been fed from thy table, and drank of thy cup,” she describes her memories of the Pequot wars, informing Mrs. Fletcher that these memories of destruction and violence will eventually place all members of the colonial community in danger, even those who are innocent. “They spared not our homes...there where the old men spoke, where was heard the song of the maiden, and the laugh of our children; there now are all silence, dust, and ashes... [thus] when the stream of vengeance rolls over the land, the tender shoots must be broken, and the goodly tree uprooted” (37). By intruding on their happy home to remind them of this, Nelema provides yet another indication that the peaceful cohabitation and integration of native and colonial peoples represented by the Fletcher family cannot ever be permanent. Instead, the legacy of the past casts “a dark cloud” over this household, emphasizing that the stability and tranquility of this composite space can only be temporary.

As a side note, by thus asserting impossibility of incorporating the Native Americans into the nation on the basis of this history of injustice and abuse *Hope Leslie* provides an interesting counterargument to claims that Native Americans could not be incorporated into the nation on the grounds of their inherent political, social, and racial

incompatibility. As President Monroe would write in 1825, “Experience has clearly demonstrated that, in their present state, it is impossible to incorporate [the Indians] in such masses, in any form whatsoever into our systems” (Maddox, 6). While *Hope Leslie* ultimately supports such a statement, it offers readers a different (and more critical) view of the reasons behind the “impossibility” of incorporation.

The Federal Family II: Segregating Domestic Differences

If the novel presents an argument about the impossibility of union through incorporation in the example of Magawisca, then the novel seems provides a counterexample in Mary Leslie, a character who is successfully incorporated into her adopted community—in this case, the Pequot tribe. In this case, Mary experiences the same process of incorporation as Magawisca, only in reverse. Like Magawisca, Mary is forcibly placed into a new home after her “native” family is brutally massacred and, also like Magawisca, she develops a close sense of connection to her new family. Whereas Magawisca struggles (unsuccessfully) to resolve her feelings of dual affiliation for her native and adopted homes, Mary Leslie experiences no such conflict. She devotes herself completely to her new home, adopting its language, dress, and rituals and becoming as “dear to Mononotto as if his own blood ran in her veins” (227). Unlike Magawisca, who continues to bears the mark of her native identity within the Fletcher home, Mary completely abandons her former identity, changing her name and realigning her feelings solely with her adopted tribe. As Magawisca describes it, Mary “like water, retains no mark” of her former history. “[Y]our sister cannot speak to you and understand you,” she

tells Hope. “I cannot send back the bird that has mated to its parent nest; the stream that has mingled with other waters to its fountain” (192, 187).

Through this example, the novel suggests that the members of two different communities can be successfully incorporated—provided there is complete assimilation on one side. While incorporation brings happiness and security to Mary, however, her adoption by the Pequots remains just as problematic as Magawisca’s entrance into the Fletcher family. Much as Mononotto viewed Magawisca’s sympathies for the Fletcher family as a betrayal, Hope Leslie views Mary’s attachment in the same way. When she first hears of her sister’s assimilation to the tribe, “her broken utterance of ‘Oh, my sister! My sister!—My dear mother!’ emitted but imperfect glimpses of the ruined hopes, the bitter feelings that oppressed her” (227). Later “[w]hen...she saw her in her savage attire, fondly leaning on Monaco’s shoulder, her heart died within her, a sickening feeling came over her, an unthought of revolting of nature”(188). Here, Hope’s “bitter feelings” do not merely represent a sense of personal loss. For her, Mary’s bond with the Pequot tribe represents a betrayal of her “real” family. She repeatedly characterizes Mary’s transformation as an affront to the memory of their mother, “who lost her life in brining her children to this wild world, to secure them in the fold of Christ” (188). From this point forward, Hope devotes herself to trying to “win back [her] sister” in an attempt to restore her original familial bonds. In the end, however, she cannot overcome the strength of Mary’s new sympathies and, resigning herself to the fact that Mary now “has the feeling of the natives,” she recognizes “there will now always be “a new and impassable gulf between them” (266, 228-230).

Thus, although *Hope Leslie* briefly imagines the possibility of creating a new American community founded on the cooperation and integration of the beliefs and manners of different people, the novel concludes by imagining an American future grounded in the separation of its different component communities.⁸⁸ When Mary refuses to remain with her sister and returns to the Pequots, for instance, Hope resigns herself to their “inevitable” separation. In the end, all of the characters choose to align themselves permanently with one community or another, and in doing so, the novel reveals deep anxieties about continuing to imagine the nation in heterogeneous terms. In this respect, *Hope Leslie* presents us with a reversal of the federal concept of *e pluribus unum*. While the novel began by creating a new American family composed of the members of many different communities, it ends by dismantling that union of many and replacing it with a union that is a much more homogeneous and insular—represented by the marriage of Everell and Hope. Through their union, the novel defines national unity as a condition that is produced, not by the inclusion of differences, but through their exclusion. While the character of Magawisca implies that differences can still be valued and celebrated within the republic, the novel presents readers with a federal model where boundaries between different communities must be created and preserved.

From Liberalism to Federalism: Critical Contexts

In concluding this chapter, I want to briefly situate this reading of the novel in relation to previous critical accounts. Despite a long period of neglect, *Hope Leslie* has

⁸⁸ Here is worth noting that the heterogeneous communities set forth in this novel are not just composed of Native and English people, but also those of different religious and ethnic backgrounds, name the Anglican Dame Grafton, the catholic Rosa and Philip Gardiner and his French and Italian companions—none of whom are allowed to become a permanent part of the colony.

experienced a significant critical revival over the past twenty years, particularly following its re-publication as part of Rutgers's *American Women Writers* series. Within this body of scholarship, two dominant critical narratives have emerged.⁸⁹ On one hand, critics have tended to read *Hope Leslie* as a politically progressive text, one that both critiques and "subverts" the restrictive race and gender norms of the early republic by challenging patriarchal structures and questioning racist attitudes. In doing so, this mode of criticism ultimately characterizes the novel as an attempt to revise the terms of American citizenship, "substitut[ing] a female-identified value system based on Christian beneficence and empathy for the traditional male-identified form of rule marked by legalistic authoritarianism" (Karafilis 330).⁹⁰

The second critical tendency (which, in many ways, is closely related to the first) is to read the novel as part of the emergence of a liberal tradition in American politics and culture. According to this argument, the central tension in the novel is the conflict between "the individual and the community" (Karafilis, 330). By focusing on Hope and Magawisca's struggles to balance their personal desires with their sense of public duty, writes Ivy Schweitzer, these critics read the novel as an attempts to "integrate...a discourse of civic responsibility derived from classical republicanism" with "a discourse of rights derived from liberal theory"—a reading represented, in various forms, by critics

⁸⁹ Judith Fetterley reviews this critical revival in "My Sister! My Sister!": The Rhetoric of Catharine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*," *American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 70 (3): 491-516. For a useful summary of this new body of criticism, see Maria Karafilis, "Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*: The Crisis Between Ethical Political Action and US Literary Nationalism in the New Republic," *ATQ* Vol 12, issue 4 (Dec. 1998): 327-346.

⁹⁰ See Maria Karafilis, "Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*: The Crisis Between Ethical Political Action and US Literary Nationalism in the New Republic," *American Transcendental Quarterly*, Vol 12, issue 4 (Dec. 1998): 327-346. Other examples of this progressive reading include studies by Nina Baym, Sandra Zagarell, Susan K. Harris, Cheri Louise Ross, Christopher Castiglia, and Carolyn Karcher.

such as Ivy Schweitzer, Philip Gould, Judith Fetterley, Nina Baym, and Gustavus Sadler, among others. (Schweitzer, 168).

To some extent, these readings of the novel are symptomatic of the critical climate of the late 1980s and 1990s as critics sought to re-read and recover the literature of this period with an eye for its former silences and omissions, as well as for its political power. To characterize *Hope Leslie* as a subversive text and associate it with the emergence of a liberal American tradition offered a way of reclaiming or redeeming its political and literary value. Such readings, have more to do with the identity politics of the late twentieth century than the political and social climate of the early nineteenth century, and in response to progressive readings, more recent criticism has sought to re-situate *Hope Leslie* in relation to the politics of its historical period. Focusing specifically on the novel's use of colonial history, for example critics such as Philip Gould, Amy Strand, Lloyd Pratt, Jeffrey Insko, and Ivy Schweitzer have examined how historical novels like *Hope Leslie* operate as "culturally specific expressions of the post-Revolutionary era" (Gould, 7), producing readings that explore the novel's relationship to antebellum historiography, nineteenth-century republican ideology, women's political movements in the Jacksonian period, Indian removal policies, and the discourse of friendship.⁹¹

By reading *Hope Leslie* in relation to the antebellum politics of incorporation and expansion, my own approach is rooted in this critical move. In doing so, however, I also

⁹¹ See Philip Gould, *Covenant and Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996); Lloyd Pratt, "Dialect Writing and Simultaneity in the American Historical Romance," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*. 13.3 (2002). 121-142; Jeffrey Insko, "Anachronistic Imaginings: *Hope Leslie* 's Challenge to Historicism," *American Literary History*. 16.2 (2004). 179-207; Amy Dunham Strand, "Interpositions: *Hope Leslie*, Women's Petitions, and Historical Fiction in Jacksonian Am." *Studies in Am Fiction* 32.2 (Autumn 2004). 131-165; Ivy Schweitzer, *Perfecting Friendship : Politics And Affiliation In Early American Literature*, Chapel Hill: University of NC Press, 2006.

wish to contend with the traditional liberal reading of the novel in more direct terms.

While critics have consistently viewed *Hope Leslie* as a novel that tries to re-imagine the relationship between the individual and society, I would argue that the novel is more interested in exploring the relationship between individuals and *multiple* societies. To read the novel as a struggle to negotiate individual interest and public duty ignores the extent to which the idea of a single American “public” is being brought into question here. Rather than enacting the emergence of liberal individuals, *Hope Leslie* ultimately represents characters that remain community, more than individually, focused. As families expand to include new members, however, the concept of community in this novel becomes less distinct and defined. Instead of asking whether one should continue to act in the interest of the greater community, this novel asks how one can act in the interest of multiple different communities at once, and in this respect, *Hope Leslie* is ultimately more invested in examining the form and consequences of an expanded American federalism, rather than the emergence of a new American liberalism.

Chapter III

Federalism and Literature in the Age of Expansion, Part II Timothy Flint's *Francis Berrian, or The Mexican Patriot* (1826)

Published just a few months before *Hope Leslie*, Timothy Flint's *Francis Berrian, or The Mexican Patriot* (1826) is yet another text that explores the consequences of federal expansion in the antebellum United States. In contrast to a novel like *Hope Leslie* which looks inward (or, rather, eastward) to examine the effects of expansion on the nation's existing domestic sphere, *Francis Berrian* looks outward to consider the new possibilities and relationships created when citizens are able to move within a larger and more diverse national space.

The novel was written by Timothy Flint, a former minister who would become one of the most prolific and most well-known writers of the early American west. His autobiographical account of his experiences as an emigrant in the Mississippi Valley region—*Recollections of the Past Ten Years* (1826)—was both a popular and critical success, earning him a reputation as one of the leading literary voices of the western territories. The west would remain the primary focus of his writings. All five of his novels—*Francis Berrian* (1826), *The Life and Adventures of Arthur Clenning* (1828), *George Mason, the Young Backwoodsman* (1829), *The Lost Child* (1830), and *The Shoshonee Valley: A Romance* (1830)—are set in either the Ohio or Mississippi territories. In addition, Flint also wrote and edited several prominent western periodicals and compiled what would become one of the most definitive geography texts of the

region, the two-volume *A Condensed Geography and History of the Western States; or, The Mississippi Valley*, which was published in 1828.⁹²

Although Flint is primarily known today for his work as a geographer and editor, this chapter examines his role as one of the first writers to represent the space of the expanded nation in fictional terms. *Francis Berrian*, for example, is widely considered to be the first American novel to be set west of the Mississippi River. By examining the way in which this novel portrays not only the west but the role of American citizens within the expanded republic, this chapter examines the extent to which literary narratives transformed perceptions of American federalism in both domestic and international spheres.⁹³

Briefly, *Francis Berrian* tells the story of a young New Englander who leaves home to explore the territories beyond the Red River Valley region. After an extended stay with various communities in the American southwest (roughly encompassing modern-day Louisiana, Texas, and New Mexico), Berrian moves to New Spain where he becomes a freedom fighter in the Mexican struggle for independence. After helping the Mexican rebels to victory, Berrian marries his Mexican sweetheart and returns triumphantly to the United States, where he decides to spend the rest of his life in

⁹² Timothy Flint's role as editor of the influential *Western Monthly Review* will be the subject of the next chapter. For biographical material regarding Flint, see John E. Kirkpatrick, *Timothy Flint, Pioneer, Missionary, Author, Editor 1780-1840* (Cleveland, Arthur H. Clark Co., 1911); James K. Folsom, *Timothy Flint* (New York: Twayne, 1965); W.H. Venable, *The Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley: Historical and Biographical Sketches*. (Cincinnati: Clarke 1891).

⁹³ Critical studies of Flint's novels have been relatively few and far between. Most studies of *Francis Berrian*, for instance, discuss the novel in terms of its relationship to other (fictional and non-fictional) literary representations of the southwest. In *The Rise of the American Novel* (1948), for example, Alexander Cowie argues that the western focus of *Francis Berrian*'s represents a "new note" in the history of American letters. For more discussions of *Francis Berrian* in relation to the emergence of a western literary tradition, see Rufus W. Griswold, *The Prose Writers of America* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1847); John T. Flanagan, "Mexico in American Fiction Prior to 1850" *Hispania* Vol. 23 (1940): 307-318; Frederick Stimson, "*Francis Berrian*: Hispanic Influence on American Romanticism" *Hispania*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (Dec 1959) 511-516.

transit—traveling back and forth between the United States and Mexico while making his home in both locations. “In this way we mean to imitate the birds of passage,” he states, “and with them take our migrations from the south to the north, and the reverse” (II, 38).

Flint’s particular inspiration for this novel came from his close friendship with Henry Adams Bullard, a former Harvard classmate who joined with the Mexican rebel forces during the early in years of the struggle. Bullard later settled in Alexandria, Louisiana (where Flint also lived between 1823 and 1827), and his experiences in Mexico, particularly in the abortive San Antonio revolt of 1813, provided useful background material for *Francis Berrian*. Flint acknowledged this debt by dedicating the novel to Bullard, whose tales inspired “no inconsiderable portion of these adventures” (iii). Even though he acknowledges Bullard as the inspiration for “the idea of the following work,” however, Flint still concludes his dedication by asserting the novel’s fictional dimensions. Although the novel is rooted in historical events, Flint stresses that history has provided only the “germ.” The story itself is a work of his own creation, a “monument” raised through his own wishes and efforts (iii).⁹⁴

What, then, is accomplished by presenting this fictional narrative of an American citizen who leaves New England to seek his fortune, not just outside the conventional models represented by his lineage, but eventually outside of the nation itself? By presenting this story of a mobile and westward-oriented patriot, *Francis Berrian* attempts to redefine both the federal citizen and the federal nation. In this chapter, I will explore some of the ways this transformation comes about, focusing first on the novel’s

⁹⁴ For background on Henry Bullard and Flint’s relationship with him, see Dora J. Bonquois, “The Career of Henry Adams Bullard, Louisiana Jurist, Legislator, and Educator,” *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 23 (1940), in addition to John. E. Kirkpatrick, *Timothy Flint, Pioneer, Missionary, Author, Editor 1780-1840* (Cleveland, Arthur H. Clark Co., 1911); James K. Folsom, *Timothy Flint* (New York: Twayne, 1965).

representation of Francis Berrian and second on the novel's engagement with the Mexican Revolution. Through the figure of Francis Berrian, we encounter the quintessential Yankee—“born not far from Boston” and “reared in the strictest form of puritan institution” (I, 20). Although Berrian initially abandons that heritage, his experiences in the west and his involvement in the Mexican struggle for independence eventually lead him to reclaim his revolutionary lineage—albeit in radically different terms. By dramatizing this process, the novel effectively re-writes American identity in terms of a new set of locations, histories, and relationships, re-orienting both the citizen and the nation in terms of transcontinental, rather than transatlantic patterns of interaction and exchange.

Francis Berrian also presents a different account of what it means to incorporate new territory into the United States. As he travels throughout the country, Berrian encounters a range of new communities that have become a part of the expanded American space, from the watermen of Louisiana, to the bands of Creole muleteers who move back and forth throughout the west, to the Comanche tribes that reside in the farthest corners of the southwest. Upon meeting each, Berrian takes it upon himself to learn as much as possible about their customs, dialects, values, and beliefs, keeping a detailed journal about his experiences that he refers to throughout the text. As I will show in this chapter, rather than looking for ways to make these communities more like himself, Berrian does his best to find ways to adapt his own customs and opinions to better fit into each place that he visits.

By the end of the novel Berrian has developed close connections to a range of different communities. In contrast to *Hope Leslie* where the establishment of dual

connections and sympathies undermines unity and led to destructive feelings of betrayal, *Francis Berrian* presents multiple ties in more productive terms. Rather than calling his loyalty to home and nation into question, Berrian's ability to inhabit new places and develop new relationships beyond the boundaries of his original American family becomes the foundation for his success. In this respect, *Francis Berrian* is a novel that is much less anxious about the consequences of expansion and inclusion in the United States. Instead of finding ways to make differences fit within the nation, the novel is more interested in adapting the nation to better accommodate the difference communities it has come to include. As a result, *Francis Berrian* ultimately presents us with a new version of the federal citizen and the American family, both of which are no longer tied to a single location and which are supported, rather than unsettled, by multiple affiliations.

Finally, the last section of this chapter examines the novel's focus on the Mexican struggle for independence. In addition to exploring the role of the citizen in the expanded republic, *Francis Berrian* asks readers to consider the place of the federal United States in relation to a larger conception of "American" space—encompassing both North and South America. At the time the novel was published, the United States was in the process of re-orienting its foreign policy to focus attention more on the western hemisphere. James Monroe's 1823 declaration that the western hemisphere was no longer "to be considered as subjects for future colonization by European powers" and that "any attempt...to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere" would be viewed as an act of aggression "upon all" served to reposition the United States within a trans-

hemispheric, rather than a transatlantic, sphere of influence.⁹⁵ By situating the novel within the context of the Mexican Revolution, Flint encourages readers to see the United States, not just as an expanded federal nation, but as part of an expanded federal hemisphere.

The novel also provides us with an opportunity to reconsider the relationship between federalism and imperialism. Although Berrian's involvement with the Mexican independence movement leads him to help re-create Mexico in the image of the United States, he rejects the idea of extending the United States to encompass this new "American" territory. In the end, the residents of both nations maintain and respect the boundaries between one another—a relationship that stands in marked contrast to the hostile relations that would later emerge during the Mexican-American War, when the U.S. came to view Mexico more as an asset than an ally. By focusing on the earlier Mexican Revolution, however, *Francis Berrian* provides us with an opportunity to consider the extension of the nation's federal principles during a time when Mexico was perceived as a "sister republic," rather than, as many would later argue, "a part of our manifest destiny."⁹⁶

⁹⁵ The "Monroe Doctrine," as it would later become known, was expressed as part of President Monroe's 1823 seventh annual message to Congress on Dec. 3, 1823. See *Annals of Congress*, Senate, 18th Congress, 1st Session. Monroe's declaration that the western hemisphere was closed to future European colonization and that the United States would remain neutral and, ultimately, isolated from the international affairs of Europe would have a lasting effect on American foreign policy. Ironically, the Monroe Doctrine, despite its anti-colonial agenda, would be used to justify the United States's aggressive expansionist policies under President Polk in the 1840s. For more on the political and social impact of the Monroe Doctrine, see Ernest R. May, *The Making of the Monroe Doctrine* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1975); Frederick Merk, *The Monroe Doctrine and American Expansionism, 1843-1849* (New York: Knopf, 1966); Gretchen Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke UP, 2005).

⁹⁶ The transformation of Mexico from republican neighbor to a potential object of possession began to take place in the complex aftermath of the Mexican Revolution. As Augustín Iturbide and Antonio López de Santa Ana struggled for control of the Mexican republic, President Adams and, later, President Jackson, increasingly came to view Mexico, less as an ally and more as a territorial asset. The crises over the succession and proposed annexation of Texas permanently altered U.S./Mexican relations, resulting in the territorial struggle that took place in the form of the Mexican American War. See Joseph Wheelan,

Reorienting the Federal Citizen

As is evident from its title, *Francis Berrian, or the Mexican Patriot* is invested in revising the concept of American patriotism, providing readers with a new model of federal citizenship that is no longer rooted in the history and heritage of post-Revolutionary New England. In dramatizing the successful adventures of Francis Berrian, a figure who leaves his ancestral home to seek his fortune in the west, *Francis Berrian* ultimately redefines the U.S. citizen as a more mobile and flexible figure, one able to be a part of multiple communities without compromising a sense of national unity or identity.

This revision of citizenship begins, not with the character of Berrian, but with the conventions of the novel itself. In the opening chapter, the novel's nameless narrator (who meets Berrian on a steamboat and invites him to tell the story of his life) introduces the narrative as a historical romance, although not of the usual sort. Like most historical romances of the period, the narrator begins the novel by characterizing Berrian's story as a tale of "romantic feeling and adventure," rooted in "true history" and intended to "inspire dreams of patriotism" and "feelings of benevolence" (I, 12-13). The novel breaks with convention, however, by setting this romantic tale of history first, in the American southwest, and second, in the very recent past (the events of the novel ostensibly take place between 1820-21, only six years prior to the contemporary time frame of its readers).

As discussed earlier, most antebellum historical romances were set in the colonial period, most often in New England but, at the very least, somewhere within the original

Invading Mexico: America's Continental Dream and the Mexican War, 1846-1848 (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2007); John Edward Weems, *To Conquer a Peace: The War Between the United States and Mexico* (New York: Doubleday, 1974); Seymour V. Connor, *North America divided; the Mexican War, 1846-1848* (New York, Oxford UP, 1971).

thirteen colonies. In doing so, these historical romances sought to create nationalist narratives, encouraging citizens to “read nationalism *genealogically*—as the expression of an historical tradition of serial continuity.”⁹⁷ By disrupting these conventions and presenting readers with a historical romance that is not only set outside of the original space of the nation, but is also set within the relatively recent events of the Mexican independence struggle, *Francis Berrian* resituates the genealogy of the nation in relation to a completely different place and a different political history. Specifically, *Francis Berrian* displaces New England and the British colonial past as the foundation for this particular story of American patriotism, reorienting the nation in relation to a new narrative of American history—a history rooted in the experience of westward expansion and tied to the development of trans-American, as opposed to trans-Atlantic, relationships.⁹⁸

The reorientation initiated by the novel’s historical and geographic focus is then continued by the life and adventures of Francis Berrian himself. Through Berrian, the novel re-writes the figure of the American patriot, beginning with his rejection of his New England home. Although Berrian opens his narrative by acknowledging the formative impact of his Puritan heritage and his own pride in his New England roots, Berrian confesses that he is “dissatisfied” with the idea of a permanent future there.

⁹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991), 194-5, as quoted in *Covenant and Republic*, 14. For more on the Puritan setting of U.S. historical fiction, see George Dekker, *The American Historical Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), Lawrence Buell, *New England Literary Culture: From Revolution Through Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986); Philip Gould, *Covenant and Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

⁹⁸ Critics at the time commented on the disruptive and unusual characteristics of this novel, particularly with respect to its geographic and temporal setting. As the *North American Review* would note, “Our author has made a mistake of much greater consequence, in fixing the period of the story so near our own times. The adventures of Francis Berrian are of themselves sufficiently marvelous, but when they are related as happening in the years 1821 and 1822...our thoughts are driven, in spite of themselves, from the tale before us to actual history, and we are compelled at every step to recollect the discrepancy between them” (*North American Review*, January 1827, 211).

Despite “the solid independence and greatness which I should be sure to attain at home,” he is not interested in “fitting myself any profession” that is available to him there, namely that of a minister, lawyer, justice, doctor, or merchant” (21). Instead, he imagines his future in the southern and western regions of the United States, believing that the virtues and education he acquired in Massachusetts will serve him even better in the western parts of “this new and boundless country” (20). Deciding to pursue his “romantic and visionary project in the Wilderness of the west,” he departs from the traditional path set forth for him by his New England roots, re-situating his permanent future and identity firmly in the western territories—“I knew only that I had a presentiment of future wealth, greatness, and happiness to befall me somewhere in that region,” (20).

Berrian’s desire to move west is not cast as a complete rejection of his New England heritage. Instead, the novel represents his westward leanings as a manifestation of his “solid Yankee virtues” (Folsom, 108). When describing his intentions to move West, for example, he links his determination to the New England spirit of independence and steadfastness. “When my resolutions were once formed, I inherited from my father inflexibility of purpose. My father had so often applauded this trait in my character and with no small satisfaction had so often traced the lineage of this virtue to himself, that he could poorly blame me for the exercise of it in the present case” (21). By moving west, then, Berrian is ultimately portrayed as embodying his original “Yankee” identity, rather than betraying it. The novel redefines what it means to act like a New England patriot.

In the end, the novel validates Berrian’s decision re-situate his future in the west by depicting his triumphant and, more significantly, his *temporary* return home at the end of the narrative. In previous chapters of this dissertation, we have seen several characters

who abandon their native home, only to suffer for it and eventually return willingly and permanently, having learned a lesson about the perils of living outside their original communities. Magawisca and Updike Underhill, for instance, are two cases in point. In *Francis Berrian*, on the other hand, Berrian suffers no negative consequences for his decision to leave his native New England. Instead, he returns in triumph, accompanied by his “fine foreign wife, my grand equipage” and various other markings of “wealth and importance.” As opposed to the criticism and disapproval he meets upon choosing to leave his home, he is now greeted with cheers and admiration, and, in depicting this homecoming scene, the novel creates a sharp contrast between the adventurous and “much admired” Berrian and his “envious” New England compatriots. Instead of representing the New England community as the model for American industry, integrity, and success, this scene casts Berrian as the figure the New Englanders wish to imitate. They repeatedly ask Berrian to “tell [his] story and [his] travels,” to which they react with “extremes...[of] respect and fondness” (275). As Berrian describes it, upon returning, he was treated as “a prophet in my own country,” eagerly sought out for advice on how to succeed in the future United States, particularly as it was developing in the western and southern regions (276).

Although he returns to New England as the new model of American patriotism and success, Berrian is not interested in re-settling there permanently. He enjoys the “air of tranquility and repose [that] prevailed in the old place,” stressing that his presence there will only ever be temporary. “In this way we mean to imitate the birds of passage, and with them take our migrations from the south to the north, and the reverse,” he states (38).

By refusing to fix a single permanent residence for himself or his family, Berrian redefines American citizenship outside a relationship to a fixed, particular place. In place of the model of citizenship represented by his father, Francis Berrian's dual residency allows him to retain his connection to the space of the nation's colonial past, while relocating his future promise and development in the southwest regions of the continent.

At the same time, however, Berrian does not situate his future solely in the West. Instead, he defines himself and his family in relation to their constant movement between these locations. He is not a New Englander, a westerner, or a Mexican émigré, but a citizen defined primarily by constant motion and an ability to adapt to multiple places. Thus, his American family is one that will be raised in transit—as comfortable on “steam and canal boats” as anywhere else.

With this mobility comes an increased need for knowledge about the different communities within the nation and a willingness to engage and integrate different ideas and practices. Berrian's travels lead to him to interact with Creole communities in regions of Louisiana, trappers and muleteers from the Texas area, and various southwestern native tribes, in addition to his interactions with the many inhabitants of Mexico. In dealing with so many “people of a different character and [their] foreign pursuits,” Berrian seeks to approach these communities with an open and tolerant attitude, “free of the prejudices and unfounded impressions” he finds in so many of his compatriots (108). His narrative is not just a “story” but an “intensive study,” designed to impart “a great deal of exact and important local knowledge” for the various places he visits, so as to enable those who read his narrative to find useful and productive ways to approach these communities in the future (160).

Berrian presents his observations in the detached style of a reference work, offering detailed and highly organized descriptions of the languages, religious beliefs, agricultural practices, political systems and artistic productions of each community, alongside descriptions of local plants, types of foods and methods of preparation, local festivals, dance styles, and fashions. *Francis Berrian* mimics the style of Flint's popular socio-geographic texts—*Recollections of the Last Ten Years* (published in 1826, the same year as *Francis Berrian*) and *A Condensed Geography and History of the Western States* (1828).⁹⁹ Widely praised for their “thorough” and “vibrant” descriptions of the history, geography, and demographics of the Western territories of the United States, these non-fictional works catalogued the wide range of social, political, and economic practices within these many communities, with the ultimate goal of “making [the citizens of the United States] acquainted with one another and the beauty and resources of their own great country” (x). Just as the goal of these works was to supply readers with better information about the United States and thus “brin[g] about an intimacy of good feelings between the elder sister, whose fair domain is the east country...and her younger sister, whose dotal portion [is] the western woods,” the informational style of *Francis Berrian* serves a similar instructional purpose, designed to correct impressions “founded either in ignorance or misrepresentation,” that had shaped American perceptions of these regions (25, 33).

This encyclopedic or reference-style presentation of the customs and characteristics of other communities should seem familiar. As examined in the first

⁹⁹ In fact, Flint is much better known for his works of geography and social history than for his work as a novelist. John Kirkpatrick discusses the encyclopedic or reference-style form of composition in the majority of Flint's works in detail, particularly with respect to the positive critical reception of these works. John E. Kirkpatrick, “Literary Traits and Estimates,” in *Timothy Flint: Pioneer, Missionary, Author, Editor* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1911), 248-266.

chapter of this dissertation, *The Algerine Captive* adopts a similar format when presenting the political and cultural environment of Algiers. By presenting differences in the informational form of a history text or travelogue, *The Algerine Captive* ultimately encourages readers to develop a more tolerant and cooperative reading of variety—a style of literacy that participates in the production of a federal conception of American unity. Considering the equally detailed reference-style accounts of Creole, Comanche, and Mexican communities in *Francis Berrian*, I would argue that the non-fictional, travelogue-like elements play a similar role. In offering Berrian’s adventures as a series of intensive political and cultural “studies,” the novel’s form encourages readers to approach the text—like Berrian—open-mindedly, more focused on amassing “a great deal of exact and important local knowledge” about different communities than in simply dismissing or devaluing these communities as either unimportant or inferior.

Over the course of the novel, Berrian’s “intensive studies” do prompt him to view the communities he encounters with greater tolerance and respect. When he meets the French Creole communities of the Mississippi Valley region, he is at first “repulsed” by these “southern men, manners, and things.” After a “closer inspection” of their “very peculiar ideas and manners,” however, he comes to admire many of their agricultural and hunting practices and social events, in some cases becoming “almost as fond of [these practices] as they were themselves” (I, 34). Berrian’s “earnest studies” of the Comanche produce similar results. While living with the tribe, he presents a series of detailed observations about council politics, religious ceremonies, marriage rituals, hunting, farming, and trading methods (which vary by season), as well as examples of “Indian eloquence” (I, 56). And although these observations certainly do not cause him to view

the Comanches as his equals, they do make him more comfortable with and respectful of their beliefs and practices. “They are of fine persons...courageous, fierce, and independent,” he writes, forgetting “at once that [he is] a stranger in a strange land” (I, 60, 54).

While Berrian clearly finds the Spanish colonial government to be unacceptable, he proves “willing to exercise mutual forbearance” with respect to most of the other religious and cultural differences he encounters. Berrian concludes that any differences between Catholicism and his own religious beliefs can be dealt with without conflict: “I have seen enough of dispute about difference of opinion...there is enough that is common to every form of Christian faith and profession to unite us in the deeds of beneficence and feelings of charity” (254). In addition, he also comes to respect and appreciate Mexican art, architecture, theater, food, and manners of celebration. The opportunity “to make myself acquainted with this great and interesting country was not offered in vain,” he writes, and the more he learns about “the natural and artificial curiosities” of the country, the more he is able to “shake off [his] prejudices” (I, 160, 165).

Berrian’s respectful view of Mexican life and culture is facilitated by his willingness to learn Spanish. He begins his language study almost immediately after arriving in Mexico. His diligence, combined with his “previous knowledge of French and Latin “soon made [him] a master of the Spanish,” he writes, allowing him to perceive “the talents and virtues, as well as the taste and literature” of the Mexican people (II, 163). In addition to helping him develop a greater familiarity (and sense of affinity) with Mexico, his bilingual skills also earn him respect amongst the Mexican creole community

(II, 163). “The fluency and correctness with which I spoke their language turned [many] thoughts upon me,” notes Berrian. Here, his willingness to adopt the Spanish language transforms public opinion from suspicion to trust, eventually allowing him to develop a close and friendly relationship with the future leaders of the new Mexican republic, as opposed to being kept outside their revolutionary circles.

Over time, Berrian’s example begins to affect those around him, particularly Doña Martha who, after observing Berrian’s behavior, feels compelled to expand her own knowledge beyond her homeland. “Since I have been acquainted with this man, I have learned to read English and I have been deeply engaged in the American history,” she writes, and, as a result of these studies, she eventually becomes better able to understand “the different manners in which different people see different things” (II, 193, 261). Upon arriving in the United States, she puts her interest in reading about “different people and different things” into practice, carefully observing the manners of her adopted American home which she finds to be “so totally unlike [those] of a Spanish town” (II, 231). Like Berrian, her studious and open-minded approach leads her to become more accepting of the differences she sees. As Berrian writes,

She on her part comprehended our manners at once and by a wise and regulated conformity won a general tribute of goodwill...With respect to our discipline and manners, she has all the hearty admiration of an ancient Puritan. She says, “My dear Francis, I admire the cleverness and industry of your young women, I reverence those institutions, especially your free schools, which spread intelligence and emulation through the community. [And] my heart is affected with the kindness of your ordinances in regard to the suffering and the poor, and your numerous and efficient charities” (II, 277).

In exercising this “reverence” for American life, however, it is worth noting that Martha does not completely adopt the manners of her American townspeople. Similar to Berrian’s attitude in Mexico, Martha’s respect and tolerance for American ways does not

result in her conversion or complete assimilation. As Berrian writes, hers is a “regulated conformity,” and even though she admires her adopted New England community, she continues to hold on to her Catholic beliefs. “She regularly goes with me to our worship and is solemn in her deportment there, [and] is charmed with our singing and our young minister,” writes Berrian, but “...returns to the religious strictness of observance in the forms of her own worship” in her daily practice (II, 277).

Despite her refusal to conform completely to New England norms, Martha’s adherence to her Spanish manners and Catholic faith does not result in rejection. Instead of viewing her as an outsider, the town embraces her, even going so far as to imitate some of her styles and customs. “The respect for my Martha was sincere and real,” writes Berrian, “She was, literally, a study among my fellow towns-women. There was a visible affectation of Spanish costume and manner among them...[as] they even tried to catch her air, walk, and manner” (II, 277). In this regard, Martha alters the character of her adopted New England home, transforming it from a place of “unchanging order” where “the farthest peregrination [is] to Boston” into a more dynamic and heterogeneous place that is both influenced by and connected to transcontinental histories, customs, and relations, rather than just transatlantic and colonial ones (II, 273).

In addition to altering the composition and perspective of their New England community, the transnational marriage of Berrian and Doña Martha also transforms the composition of the American family. Instead of raising their family according to either American or Mexican customs, they choose to preserve the differences represented by their union in the education of their children. “By the marriage settlement, if we have sons, they are to be educated as protestants and the daughters, more or less, as Catholics,”

states Berrian (II, 277). More than simply educating their children to represent two different religious faiths, however, Berrian and Martha take pride in raising their children to embody aspects of both their U.S. and Mexican backgrounds, as seen in the example of their firstborn son who is described as both the “exact imagine of my dear Martha” and “the exact image of his papa”— “a happy union of Spanish and Yankee” who “but little more than two years old, can already scold papa and mamma in two languages” (II, 264).

As a “happy union of Spanish and Yankee,” the Berrians thus present the reader with a new way of envisioning the American family. Bilingual, bicultural, and constantly on the move, the Berrians depart from the model of family and home that Berrian grew up with—a model that was rooted in a Puritan cultural tradition and firmly tied to one place: “the place in which his forefathers, his relatives, and all his friends have found rest” (II, 272). The novel attempts to re-imagine the form that the U.S. household will take within the context of American expansion and foreign policy shifts set in motion by the Monroe Doctrine—a household that, like the Berrians, must necessarily become more heterogeneous and transitory as the United States continues to direct its attention toward the west.

Somewhat surprisingly, although this family is created through the union of two different nations and cultures, the novel does not raise the issue of miscegenation in relation to the Berrian marriage. Although Martha is typically described as being of a darker “complexion” than Berrian (of “an almost imperceptive shade of olive”), the novel does not portray her as being of a different race. Instead, she is simply described as having different “manners” than Berrian, as opposed to having different blood. Likewise, by characterizing Martha as the daughter of a Spanish aristocrat (as opposed to being

Mexican-born), the novel de-emphasizes the bi-racial implications of their union by situating them firmly within a shared European lineage. In contrast, miscegenation does become an issue earlier in the novel when Berrian takes up residence with the Comanches. When one of the native women falls in love with him and proposes marriage, Berrian never seriously entertains the possibility of this union, rejecting the idea that “such a regard from such a person could have any influence” upon him (I, 69). Thus, while the novel supports the idea of expanding the American family to include a more diverse range of beliefs and practices, it is not willing to expand it to include everyone. At the same time, however, given the high esteem and admiration accorded to the transnational marriage of Berrian and Martha, the hybrid composition of their family is meant to be viewed in positive terms, as a productive transformation of the American home rather than a corruption of American identity.

In the end, this image of the Berrian family as “a happy union of Spanish and Yankee” seems to support the idea that incorporation can work as a viable and productive means of engaging with an expanded nation. Rather than introducing threatening changes that undermine the stability of the American home or the character of the American citizen, incorporating new people and practices into both his national and domestic range of experiences allows Berrian to become a “secure and amiable citizen,” achieving success far beyond what would have been possible had he chosen to remain “rooted in the land of my forefathers.” Again, an interesting irony emerges in this distinction. Although Berrian chooses to “uproot” himself from his New England home and re-situate himself in relation to a different set of regions, histories, and traditions, he regularly maintains that he is remaining true to the “spirit of independence” “honesty,” and

“practicality” that “all people there [in New England] are sure to possess” (II, 276). In this regard, the novel recasts Berrian’s decision to incorporate new ideas and practices as evidence of his “Americaness,” rather than evidence of his disloyalty. By leaving his original Yankee home, he is better able to become the type of American citizen he was “born” to be.

Likewise, in addition to revising the terms in which we recognize the “American patriot,” the novel’s formal characteristics create new expectations for American readers. The novel attempts to change the way in which readers understand what it means to represent and interpret an American text. This becomes evident in the bilingual character of the novel. Although the novel is written in English, it is filled with Spanish words and phrases. In some cases, the novel presents these words and phrases in an instructional context, providing Spanish terms for particular foods (tortillas, gisado, mescal), social gatherings (tertulias, fandangos), and other common terms (cortejos, provincias internas) along with a brief description of their meaning in English. At other times, however, the novel includes many extended quotations in Spanish without comment or translation, particularly in its epigraphs. Like many novels of this period, each chapter of the novel opens with an introductory quotation from another piece of well-known literature. While *Francis Berrian* contains a few epigraphs taken from the works of familiar English writers such as Oliver Goldsmith and Lord Byron, the vast majority are drawn from Spanish writers such as Quevedo, Cervantes, and Lope de Vega, all of which are presented in the original Spanish, with only a few accompanied by a brief translation. The

poet Quevedo in fact introduces the novel with a title page quotation that appears without an English translation.¹⁰⁰

By including so many passages in Spanish, the novel—from the very beginning—assumes the existence of a bilingual readership. What is significant here is that, by including such a large amount of un-translated Spanish within the text, Flint *expects* his readers to have a working knowledge of the language. Spanish, for him, should be a familiar part of the American cultural experience. Much as passages in French, German, or Latin were often included, un-translated, in other texts of this period (based on the assumption that knowledge of these languages would be well within the range of an upper-class, educated citizen), Flint's extensive use of un-translated quotations is an attempt to assert the value and necessity of the Spanish language. In other words, if American readers were unable to read the Spanish sections in the text, then the inclusion of these passages ultimately implies that they should be. Through its linguistic diversity, the novel anticipates a multi-lingual American public.

While the Spanish-language dimensions set *Francis Berrian* apart from other novels of the period, its bilingual elements were in keeping with changes taking place in the linguistic environment of the nation during this time. Following the Louisiana Purchase, the United States had to contend with a large population of non-English speaking residents. As a result, writes Kristen Silva Gruesz, “the Spanish language [took on] a meaningful literary presence” within the United States in the early nineteenth century, “gestur[ing] toward a slowly evolving Latino presence in the national sphere”

¹⁰⁰ The Quevedo quotation is as follows: “Y si te acercas mas a nuestras dias, / O Clito, en las historias / Verás, donde con sangre las memorias / No estuvieren borradas, / Que de horrors manchadas / Vidas tantas están esclarecidas, / Que leerás mas escándalos que vidas,” which, roughly translated, means “And if you come close to more of our days, in the histories you will see where the memories with blood, have no borders, and the horrors of battle, so much as life is enlightened, you will read more scandals than life.”

(xi, 3). During the antebellum period, for example, a number of Spanish-language newspapers appeared, many of which enjoyed a wide circulation, not only in the southwest territories, but also in eastern cities such as New York and Philadelphia.¹⁰¹ A number of publishing houses specializing in the publication of Spanish-language texts were also founded at this time, primarily in Philadelphia, and, in 1826, one of the first, full length American novels written entirely in Spanish was published—*Jinoténcal*, a work of historical fiction, which tells the story of the Spanish conquest of Mexico under Cortés. In addition to the publication of these novels and periodicals, texts devoted to Spanish language instruction also became increasingly popular. A quick glance through the lists of “New Publications” in the *United States Literary Gazette*, for example, reveals the prevalence of Spanish primers, dictionaries, and language instruction manuals in the antebellum literary market. Prominent U.S. writers such as William Cullen Bryant played an instrumental role in promoting the publication of Spanish-language literature in the United States, while also participating in the development of what Gruesz calls a new kind of “hemispheric imaginary” whereby citizens came to imagine the nation as a more diverse and non-European republic (37).¹⁰²

Francis Berrian participates in this expansion of the U.S. literary environment, all the while helping to redefine the American reading public as one capable of engaging with linguistic and cultural differences. Rather than respecting the different people and

¹⁰¹ Prominent U.S. Spanish language newspapers of the period included *El Misisipí* (New Orleans), *El Mensajero Luisianés* (New Orleans), *La Gaceta de Texas* (San Antonio), *El Habanero* (Philadelphia) and *El Mundo Nuevo* (New York). The Hispanic dimensions of U.S. periodical culture have been the subject of increased critical attention through the ongoing “Recovering U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage” project. For more, see Kristen Silva Gruesz *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino-American Literature* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002).

¹⁰² In addition to Gruesz’s work, Anna Brickhouse offers an excellent study of the Hispanic dimensions of antebellum literary culture in *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004).

places of the nation from afar, *Francis Berrian* encourages its readers to engage with these differences directly. Through the example of Francis Berrian and the bilingual dimensions of the text, this novel argues that the expanded federal nation will not simply be composed of different and distinct communities. It implies that the individual American citizen and household will be “federal” in its composition as well.

Imagining the Federal Hemisphere

In addition to revising the terms of federal citizenship, *Francis Berrian* also examines the place of the federal nation within an international context. Approximately half of the novel takes place in Mexico where Francis Berrian becomes a leader in the Mexican fight to obtain independence from Spain. It is through this involvement that Berrian earns his titled description as “the Mexican Patriot.” Nevertheless, although Berrian closely aligns his sympathies, his support, and his identity with the republic of Mexico, the novel ultimately represents his international engagements as an expression of his commitment to the United States. This section will examine how the extra-national setting of the Mexican Revolution provides a means of reasserting the value of federal principles in a re-imagined federal hemisphere.

The Mexican struggle for independence, a long process which took place between 1810 and 1821, has often been overlooked within both historical and literary studies of the period. Instead, studies of the antebellum relationship between the United States and Mexico tend to focus on the events and consequences of the Mexican-American War, which took place later in the 1840s and 1850s. The countries’ relations have primarily

been understood in imperial or proprietary terms, whereby Mexico is understood as a space that the United States aggressively sought to appropriate and control.

This history, however, does not fully represent the relationship between the United States and Mexico during the early nineteenth century. In the decades prior to the Mexican-American War, the United States and Mexico maintained a much more collaborative and “familial” relationship; Mexico was often portrayed as the “sister republic” to the United States. By dramatizing the events of this earlier period, a novel like *Francis Berrian* presents us with an opportunity to re-read American engagements across the border during a time when Mexico was viewed as an American ally rather than as a territorial asset.

The Mexican Revolution (as it was popularly known) was part of a larger series of independence movements that took place throughout Spanish America in the early 19th century. Between 1810 and 1824, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Mexico all successfully obtained their independence from Spain. These revolutions were subjects of intense interest in the United States. Newspapers and magazines regularly included reports of major battles and developments, as well as biographies of rebel leaders. In addition, annual news compilations such as the *Niles Weekly Register* and *The American Annual Register* devoted entire sections to coverage of “our South American neighbors,” including full summaries of the most recent political, social, and economic developments on a country-by-country basis.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ For more on the history of U.S. coverage of the Mexican Revolution, as well as other Latin American independence movements, see Stewart Brewer, *Borders and Bridges, A History of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006); Michael Kryzaneck, *US-Latin American Relations* (NY: Praeger, 1990); and Lester Langley, *America and the Americas: The United States in the Western Hemisphere*, (Athens: U Georgia P, 1989).

Within the United States, these movements were widely represented as a validation of the nation's own struggle for independence, affirming the legitimacy and success of the American Revolution and subsequent emergence of the federal republic. As the editors of the *American Annual Register* wrote in an 1827 report on the "new republics" of South America, "Their recent existence, the similarity of their origin and institutions to our own, [and] their community of interest with ourselves, in many remarkable respects—constitute claims on our attention of the strongest description" (*American Annual Register* 1827, 167).

Given its close proximity to the United States, the Mexican independence movement was a subject of particular interest for American writers and readers. In addition to the regular newspaper coverage, a number of books specifically devoted to the subject of Mexico and its recent rebellion circulated widely, most notably William Davis Robinson's *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1820), Joel Poinsett's *Notes on Mexico* (Philadelphia, 1824), Nicholas Mill's *The History of Mexico from the Spanish Conquest to the Present Era* (London, 1824), and John M. Niles's, *A View of South America and Mexico* (New York, 1827). All four books were widely read and reviewed in the United States, and, in their prefaces, each points to "the deep and peculiar interest felt by the people of the United States in everything relating to that country, particularly with respect to the causes and character of the revolution," as the primary motivation for their publication (Poinsett, v).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Reviews featured in periodicals such as *The United States Literary Gazette*, *The Analectic Magazine*, *The Eclectic Review*, *The Portfolio*, *The North American Review*, and *The London Magazine* attest to the popularity and critical success of these works. Meanwhile, Robinson, Mills, and Niles, for instance, both identify Mexico as a "subject of great importance to the citizens of the United States" (Robinson 210).

Covering the Mexican conflict and its aftermath, each of these works draws close parallels between Mexico and the United States. Although William Davis Robinson devotes a few brief paragraphs to a discussion of the differences between “the contest of the North American colonies for independence compared to the South Americans,” his work, like the other three mentioned above, primarily represents the Mexican independence movement as a re-enactment of the American Revolution (53). “We conceive that the independence of Mexico will be an event next in importance to the whole civilized world to that of the declaration of independence of the United States on the 4th of July 1776,” he writes. All four works regularly liken Spain, in Mills’s words, to “the despotic authority of our own former Parent Country,” and each draws comparisons between Mexican and American revolutionary leaders, with Mexican heroes such as Guadalupe Victoria, Javier Mina, Augustín Iturbide, and Antonio López de Santa Anna being referred to as “miniature” versions of William Penn, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine, George Washington, and Lafayette (Mills, 231).¹⁰⁵

Likewise, in portraying the Mexican Revolution as a parallel version of the American Revolution, these texts also portray the newly formed Mexican republic as a duplicate version of the United States—representing, as Nicholas Mills writes, “a federal government, nearly analogous to that of the United States” (280). In *A View of South America and Mexico*, John Niles devotes particular attention to an article-by-article comparison of the Mexican and the U.S. constitutions to illustrate the “striking

¹⁰⁵ *The Niles Register*, for example, regularly included articles and transcripts of speeches that likened Mexican leaders to U.S. revolutionary heroes. The resemblance between Augustín Iturbide and George Washington was especially prevalent in the early years of the conflict, and the close association posited between these two leaders would later contribute to U.S. outrage when Iturbide usurped control of Mexico and declared himself emperor—a move that many U.S. citizens viewed as a betrayal of republican values. For more on the parallel representation of the leaders of the Mexican and the American Revolutions, see George Rives, *The United States and Mexico* vol. I (Scribners and Sons, 1913) and Joel Poinsett, *Notes on Mexico* (London: J. Miller, 1825).

similarity” between the “confederative structures” set forth in these two documents (118). Like the United States, he writes, the Mexican constitution will produce “a successful federal republic composed of many and various elements” (127). As further illustration of the close resemblance between the two nations, Niles, Mills, and Poinsett regularly refer to Mexico as either the “Mexican United States” or the “United Mexican States,” and, throughout the 1820s, the use of these terms became quite common, emphasizing the extent to which Americans came to view Mexico as a similar version of their own country.¹⁰⁶

As the first fictional account of the Mexican Revolution, *Francis Berrian* likewise portrays Mexico as a proto-American space, destined to become, as Berrian describes it, “a young and virtuous republic, true to its own glory and the sacred principles of liberty, and flourishing in all the arts of peace and humanity” (II, 155). Upon arriving in Mexico, Berrian is struck by the similarities between the “the corrupt and blinding despotism” of the Spanish colonial government and “the injustices faced by my own countrymen in years past” (I, 103). After noticing “the incipient spirit of republicanism” among the Mexican rebel forces, Berrian encourages the residents of New Spain to overthrow their colonial government and follow in the example of “my country, its institutions, the spirit of its government, and its present condition” (II, 103).

As the novel proceeds, the Mexican struggle is increasingly aligned with the American revolutionary project. One of the leaders of the rebel forces, General

¹⁰⁶ A number of historians have commented on the parallels drawn between Mexico and the United States in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution. As John Ross writes, “Mexico’s break with the Mother Country was often linked to the delivery of the thirteen colonies from the English Crown” (20). For more on the U.S. as a federal model for Mexico, see John Ross, *The Annexation of Mexico: From the Aztecs to the IMF, One Reporter’s Journey Through History* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1998) and George Rives, *The United States and Mexico 1821-1848* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1913) 42-45.

Guadalupe Victoria, informs Berrian that his strategy is to imitate the leadership and tactics of General George Washington. “I love even the language in which Washington and his great compatriots spoke,” he tells Berrian, “That dialect is the consecrated idiom of freedom, and of independent and noble thinking” (II, 99). By expressing his desire to speak the language of “Washington and his great compatriots,” Victoria seeks to characterize himself as Washington’s revolutionary successor, continuing to advance the republican principles set forth in the American struggle and contributing to the emergence of a Mexican republic set in a distinctly American mold. Like Victoria, the members of the rank-and-file also seek out and “welcom[e], with a full heart, every native of the country of Washington,” actively encouraging all Americans currently living in and around Mexico to join with the rebel forces and, through their example, show them how to fight a successful revolution and establish a successful republic. Under the influence of these “educated and well principled young men, who had imbibed the free air, the independence, and freedom of that great and rising country,” the Mexican rebels eventually hope to replace their “corrupt and fettered country” with a “young and virtuous republic, true to its own glory and the sacred principles of liberty, and flourishing in all the arts of peace and humanity” (II, 103, 155).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Throughout the Mexican struggle, the United States government opted to remain officially neutral to avoid antagonizing Spain. Unofficially, there was a great deal of sympathy in the United States for the Mexican cause. Many citizens and even a number of government officials offered or authorized clandestine support to the Mexican rebels in the form of smuggled supplies and ammunition. Meanwhile, the rhetoric of similarity that linked the Mexican struggle to the American Revolution prompted many U.S. citizens, like John Bullard, to join forces with the Mexican cause. For these enlistees, fighting on the side of the Mexican insurgents was perceived as a means of continuing the American patriotic cause. For more on American involvement in the Mexican Revolution, see Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr. and Gene A. Smith’s *Filibusters and Expansionists: Jeffersonian Manifest Destiny, 1800-1821* (Tuscaloosa, AL: U Alabama P, 1997); Everett S. Brown, “Letters From Louisiana, 1813-1814,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (Mar., 1925): 570-579, and J.C.A. Stagg, “The Madison Administration and Mexico: Reinterpreting the Gutiérrez-Magee Raid of 1812–1813” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 59, no. 2 (April 2002): 449-480.

Just as the Mexican rebels identify with the United States, Francis Berrian increasingly identifies with the Mexican forces. “You will find for the time to come, my fortunes in some sense identified with the patriots, to whose cause I joined myself in their incipient efforts at emancipating the great Mexican republic” he writes, adding that “a number of adventurers from the United States...[also] enlisted under the same standard with the Creoles” (II, 244, 249). Through their combined efforts, this hybrid Mexican-American army succeeds in establishing an early version of the new republic within the space of their rebel headquarters. As Berrian describes it,

A place more favorable to every thing, could not be sought under such circumstances. There was perfect shelter from the elements, and impregnable security...there were children, servants, negroes, mulattoes, samboes, Indians, domestics, and wives, of all nations and colours...The clatter of plates, chimed in with the roasting of beef, and the hissing of boiling vessels in the rear. The united sound of voices through the whole establishment, was not unlike that of a numerous flock of blackbirds at the North, when perching on a tree...No doubt, but we had our miniature Washingtons and Bolivars within...[who looked] with abomination on the thought that such a vast and beautiful country should continue to be the plaything bauble of a stupid tyrant, embroidering petticoats for the Virgin and living at a distance of two thousand leagues (II, 259-62)

Berrian’s description of the harmonious heterogeneity of the Mexican headquarters, particularly the “united sound of voices” from “all nations and colors,” echoes the language used to describe the federal union of the United States. Berrian’s emphasis on the “shelter” and “security” afforded by this “medley” of people further invites this connection, recalling the way in which federal representation was repeatedly invoked in the United States as a means of protecting and ensuring the security of the nation’s diverse communities. That Berrian cites the Mexican headquarters as a source for creating and sustaining “miniature Washingtons and Bolivars” further characterizes it as

a proto-federal American space. Moreover, by referring to the presence of all these miniature Washingtons and Bolivars, the novel reinforces the expectation that the Mexican patriots will likewise go on to produce a new and independent nation modeled on the federal structure and republican principles of the United States.

In this regard, it becomes clear that Berrian's "identification" with the Mexican cause is ultimately a means of reasserting his identity as an American patriot. In the end, it is his commitment to the values on which the United States was founded, rather than a sense of loyalty or connection to the Mexican people, which leads him to take up arms on their behalf. "I am a patriot from principle," he states, "and so I made my inward vows to the cause of liberty in New Spain" (243). By participating in the Mexican Revolution, Berrian is able to lay claim to the revolutionary heritage that he initially put behind him when he decided to leave New England. As a Mexican freedom fighter, he takes part in the establishment of an independent republic, much as his own forefathers did. Just as, earlier in the novel, Berrian characterized his decision to move west as a manifestation of his "Yankee" values and heritage, so too does his involvement with Mexico emerge as a means of realizing his traditional Yankee roots, albeit in a different and unexpected way. In addition, then, to redefining the traditional American citizen as a mobile and westward-oriented individual, *Francis Berrian* also redefines the American patriot as a figure who is invested in the politics, not just of his own nation, but of his neighbors. Within this novel, the American patriot is not a citizen with an insular focus. The American patriot is a citizen who sees himself as a part of a larger, hemispheric community.

Although Berrian wants to participate in the process of re-creating a new version of the United States across the border, he is not interested in conquering the emerging Mexican republic or in making it a part of an even larger United States. Instead, he stresses the need to maintain a separation between the nations—a cordial separation, but a separation nonetheless. This becomes evident when, at the end of the novel, Berrian is offered a permanent position in the Mexican army, “a command only subordinate to the commander in chief.” He declines this position of power, thus excusing himself from taking a more active role in Mexico’s nation-building process. As his wife later reports, “he said that he had taken up arms not for himself...and that having seen the nation restored to the full possession of its liberties, and not having the honor to be a native of the country, he wished to tender his resignation” (II, 243). Similarly, General Victoria, the great admirer of Washington, declines an offer to emigrate to the United States and take up a position in the American army he admires so much. Like Berrian, he also declines. “Though I love and venerate that country,” he tells Berrian, “I will never fly from my own” (II, 102). Although each patriot retains a close bond on the basis of his shared political values and structures, each ultimately remains committed to his respective republic, rejecting the idea of joining together to create an even larger American confederation.

Francis Berrian concludes with a re-configuration of the trans-American political space. Replacing the formerly colonial-dominated space of South America with “a new order of things,” the novel redefines the western hemisphere as a union of distinct “*Republicas*,” each founded on “the voice[s] of their people” (235). In this respect, the novel represents federalism, not just as a means of creating national unity, but of

establishing productive international alliances. The U.S. and Mexico emerge as sister republics, bound by their shared commitment to federal and republican ideals, and not subordinated to the other.

By presenting this federal vision of the Americas, the novel takes part in ongoing conversations about U.S. foreign policy and the place of the nation on the international stage. In 1823, President Monroe presented a declaration that sought to draw a clear line separating the affairs of the western hemisphere from those of Europe. Within this document, the United States asserted that countries of North and South America were no longer “to be considered as subjects for future colonization by European powers” and that “any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere” would be viewed as an aggressive act, “dangerous to our peace and safety.” Although the so-called “Monroe Doctrine” would not be aggressively put into force until the 1840s, it ushered in a new period of hemispheric isolation as the United States sought to cut ties with Europe and develop “more immediate connection[s]” with the republics of Central and South America.¹⁰⁸ As a result of this shift in international policy, “many statesmen in the United States [became] enamored with the idea of a hemisphere of republics in the west to counter the hemisphere of monarchies in the east, a hemisphere that could be influenced politically and economically [by the United States],” notes Stewart Brewer (35). Within this newly imagined international sphere, the United States could emerge as the primary sphere of influence, stepping out from the “shadows of Europe,” as one

¹⁰⁸ During the 1840s, the Monroe Doctrine was officially invoked by President Polk as justification for a more aggressive program of westward expansion. Following this, the doctrine would later be invoked in relation to the removal of Spain from Cuba in 1852, and again in the 1860s to protest Napoleon III’s invasion of Mexico. It was during this conflict that the policy was first referred to as a “doctrine.” Since then, application of the doctrine has repeatedly been expanded to authorize extended U.S. involvement in South American affairs, most notably under President Grant in the 1870s and President Roosevelt in 1904. T.D. Allman, *Unmanifest Destiny: Mayhem and Illusion in American Foreign Policy* (Garden City, NY: Dial, 1984).

Congressman wrote, to create a network of “like-minded” nations (Kryzanek, 23). Such an environment, wrote John Niles, will be “highly gratifying to the citizens of the United States, and cannot fail of having important and beneficial influence on our commerce, manufactures, and politics...strengthen[ing] the bonds of friendship” with “our brethren nations” (Niles, 107-8).¹⁰⁹

By presenting readers with a concluding vision of U.S. and Mexico as co-operative “sister” republics— separate yet bound together by a shared political heritage and mutually productive economic and diplomatic relations—*Francis Berrian* conveys two important points. First, it reasserts the value and viability of federal governance, identifying it as a model that can succeed in an expanded American context. Although the bulk of the novel does not deal with the expanded federal space of the United States itself, by characterizing the United States as a country whose federal characteristics become objects for imitation elsewhere, the novel effectively validates the federal structure and principles of the United States, thus characterizing federalism as a successful model for establishing unity and order in other formerly colonized spaces.

In addition, the novel encourages American citizens to re-imagine their nation in relation to transhemispheric, rather than transatlantic cultures. As discussed previously in chapter two, literary texts of the period tended to draw on the United States’s British colonial history as a way of articulating nationalist narratives and constructing national identities. By re-orienting the U.S. in relation to a different narrative of colonial history—a narrative firmly rooted in the western hemisphere—*Francis Berrian* encourages readers to see the United States as influential and authoritative within an international sphere.

¹⁰⁹ For more on the impact of the Monroe Doctrine on U.S./Latin American relations, see Gretchen Murphy, *Hemispheric Imaginings: The Monroe Doctrine and Narratives of U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke UP, 2005) and Michael J. Kryzanek, *US-Latin American Relations* (NY: Praeger, 1990) 23.

This process of reorientation also requires readers to reconsider the concept of federal unity in a larger context. By aligning the U.S. and Mexico on the basis of their shared revolutionary histories and federal structures, the novel implies that the spread of federal principles and governance will bring greater success and unity to both nations, leaving them better able to protect themselves against “the corrupt and blinding despotism” of Europe and thus assure a mutual future rooted in “the sacred principles of liberty” (II, 155).¹¹⁰ In this sense, *Francis Berrian* presents us with a different understanding of American federalism, one which creates not just national unity but *international* union and stability.

¹¹⁰ In addition to ensuring the protection of freedom and liberty in the western hemisphere, proponents of the Monroe Doctrine also stressed the extent to which the policy would help protect the republics of the Americas by allowing for the creation of profitable networks of commercial exchange. While *Francis Berrian* does not dwell on this in great detail, the economic benefits were a major focus in works like William Davis Robinson’s *Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1820), Joel Poinsett’s *Notes on Mexico* (Philadelphia, 1824), John M. Niles’s, *A View of South America and Mexico* (New York, 1827).

Chapter IV

Imagining a Federal Republic of Letters: Regional Representation in the Antebellum West

A New Souvenir

Bound in green silk and marketed as “a Christmas and New Year’s Gift for 1829,” *The Western Souvenir* was one of many gift books published in the United States between the late 1820s and 1850s. These decorative texts were meant to provide a celebratory survey of the year’s most valued literary “treasures.”¹¹¹ As such, they were often supplemented with elaborate engravings and bound with expensive materials such as leather, silk, and velvet. Annuals like these were originally a European phenomenon, and they became especially popular in England in the early 1800s. Anxious to capitalize on this lucrative market, U.S. publishers began issuing and aggressively marketing their own annuals in the mid-1820s, ushering in a gift book “vogue” that would last for over thirty years.¹¹²

More than simply commemorating a year in letters, these gift books were intended to represent bonds of friendship and affection. In this respect, notes Meredith McGill, literary gift books were “situated at a pivot point between economic and affective

¹¹¹ Ralph Thompson offers an extended discussion of the material “elegance” of American literary annuals, noting the extent to which their elaborate and expensive designs were meant to connote the equal “refinement” and “richness” of American literary culture. *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865* (New York: H.W. Wilson Co, 1936). For more on the history and popularity of American annuals and gift books in the nineteenth century, see Frederick Faxon, *Literary Annuals and Gift Books: A Bibliography 1823-1903* (Middlesex, Private Libraries Association, 1973) and Stephen Nissenbaum, *The Battle for Christmas: A Social and Cultural History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1997).

¹¹² For more on the economics and profitability of publishing and selling literary annuals and gift books both in England and the United States, see Ralph Thompson’s chapter “Publishers and Profits” in *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865*, 7-15.

systems of exchange...transform[ing] from mass-produced commodities into another kind of currency—‘tokens of affection’ that would be rewarded by a return of the same” (34). Boasting titles such as “Memorial,” “Souvenir,” “Friendship’s Offering,” “Keepsake,” and “Forget-Me-Not,” these gift books packaged literary texts in a form that was both easily consumable and publicly meaningful—a form which illustrates the extent to which literature began to take on a new cultural value in the mid-nineteenth century, a value associated with both its aesthetic and affective qualities. With the rise of mass-production and the emergence of a middle-class reading public, literary texts were increasingly perceived as valuable possessions that were also capable of producing valuable relationships.¹¹³

In addition to commemorating personal relationships, gift books published in the United States were also presented as an important means of fostering *national* sentiments—an emphasis which differentiated them from their European counterparts. In contrast to English and French gift books, which emphasized the creation of intimate, personal ties, American gift books were specifically framed as nationalist texts, designed to promote the emergence of a strong and independent American culture of letters. The editors of *The Atlantic Souvenir*, for example—one of the first and most long-lasting annuals to be published in the United States—specifically characterized their volume as an “attempt to foster native literature and art” (v). Other American annuals such as *The Atlantic Souvenir*, *The Talisman*, *The Casket*, *The Token*, *The Gift*, *The Diadem* likewise prided themselves on publishing works that were “exclusively American.” By thus featuring “only the products of our own citizens,” these magazines sought to present

¹¹³ For more on the sentimental dimensions of literary annuals and gift books, particularly with respect to their status as distinctly “feminine” texts, see Ralph Thompson, *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865* (New York: H.W. Wilson Co, 1936).

readers with a definitive and authoritative portrait of the nation's literary character—to “obtain and produce the best specimens of our native genius” and showcase “the most finished style of our native artists.”¹¹⁴

The nationalist focus of these antebellum gift books is my starting point for this chapter. This emphasis on establishing a distinctly “American” literary tradition was a constant point of focus in the early nineteenth century. Anxious to throw off “the courtly muses of Europe” and declare their literary independence, antebellum American writers and critics sought to develop a recognizable and respected literary tradition that would allow “our nation to take its place, by its authors, among the lights of the world” (Channing, 124).¹¹⁵ Literary scholars have usually focused on the development of American literary nationalism in relation to the genre of the novel. In this case, however, I am particularly interested in how literary *collections* (such as annuals and gift books) were figured as a way of fostering a national literature.

Specifically, American annuals and gift books were praised for their representative function. By including a number of different kinds of works—essays, stories, poems, and engravings—by a range of different writers, these texts were intended to “reflect” the literary character of the nation, particularly with respect to the nation's domestic variety. As the editors of *The Talisman* write in the introduction to the first edition, “We are as mirrors, giving back the reflection of the society in which we are placed...we assume the shape, colour, [and] fashion of the little world around us...[and]

¹¹⁴ Quotations selected from the prefaces to *The Atlantic Souvenir* (1828) and *The Talisman* (1828). For additional discussions of the nationalist dimensions of American literary annuals, see Thompson's *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865* and Mott, *A History of American Magazines*.

¹¹⁵ Quotation taken from William Ellery Channing's speech “Remarks on a National Literature,” delivered to the American Philosophical Society, Aug. 18, 1823. *The World of William E. Channing*, ed. (Boston: American Unitarian Society, 1880): 123-137.

we become the very abstract and brief chronicles of the opinions, feelings, tastes, and principles of those amongst whom we live” (1). Other annuals similarly highlight their ability to bear “the impress of our many characters” and capture the “varieties and particularities” of each year’s literary productions, drawing attention to the fact that their tables of contents include writings “extending from the coasts to our interior.”¹¹⁶ The introductions to *The Atlantic Souvenir*, *The Memorial*, and *The Token* all make a point of soliciting future submissions from writers “in all parts of the country” so as to give their volumes “as national a character as possible” (*Atlantic Souvenir*, v). The editors of *The Atlantic Souvenir* place such a high emphasis on providing readers with a diverse range of works that each edition contain a short report on the “improved” variety of each successive volume. In the 1828 edition, for instance, the editors report with pride that “the literary portion of the work embraces nearly twice as many articles as were inserted last year, much greater variety has been introduced into their character, [and] a larger portion of the most distinguished writers of the country are included among the contributors”(v).

This emphasis on variety becomes central to nationalist claims of these texts. By thus “bearing the impress of so many characters,” these annuals attempt to provide readers with a representative “impress” of the nation itself. “Destined to preserve...and contain the thoughts of many minds,” write the editors of *The Talisman*, “...such a volume is an apt emblem of the history of our own minds,” a statement that illustrates the extent to which the inclusion of many different individual texts was seen as a means of

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Faxon, 126. As he notes, *The Atlantic Souvenir* and *The Memorial* regularly refer to the regions located outside the eastern seaboard as “the interior” or “our domestic interior.” For a discussion of the variable content of American gift books and annuals, see the introductory essays in Frederick W. Faxon’s bibliography, *Literary Annuals and Gift-Books* (Boston: The Boston Book Co., 1912).

creating a sense of collective unity—relying on the representation of “many minds” to provide an emblem of “our mind” (1). In this regard, by creating a sense of unity from the representation of variety, these annuals mimic the representative structure of the federal government, an analogy that *The Talisman* specifically invokes in its 1828 edition. The volume opens with an introductory poem that presents the reader with a series of similes intended to emphasize the diversity of the collection. After first comparing *The Talisman* to “a trunk, with ancient clothes replete of every colour, fashion, age, and shape” and, next, to a “virtuoso’s cabinet” filled with “birds of bright plumes and bats, the deer and ape,” the poem ends with the assertion about *The Talisman* “’Tis like the Legislature” (7). Here, the *Talisman* specifically characterizes literary representation as having the same unifying force as political representation. Just as the legislature provides a forum where all the different people and places of the nation can be represented and, ultimately, held together, so too can literary texts help organize and unite the nation by representing its many different voices and perspectives in the form of a collected literary compendium. And yet, for as much as American literary annuals claimed to offer a representative portrait of the nation’s literature, others took issue with the *type* of portrait that these “literary legislatures” conveyed.

In many ways, *The Western Souvenir* mirrors the other literary annuals published at the time. Filled with a combination of stories and poems, as well as a set of engravings featuring portraits of Cincinnati, Lexington, and the Ohio River, *The Western Souvenir* was meant to serve, as its own editor writes, as a close “imitation” of many annuals that “have reflected so much honour upon the talents of our worthy countrymen in some of

the Atlantick states” (1).¹¹⁷ At the same time, however, James Hall, the editor of the annual, also identifies this collection as a decidedly different type of text—a difference that is linked to its regional focus. “It will be seen that this volume aspires to do something beyond the ordinary compilations of the day,” writes Hall. “We have endeavored to give it an original character by devoting its pages exclusively to our domestick literature. Thus, it is written and published in the Western country, by Western men, and is chiefly confined to subjects connected with the history and character of the country which gives it birth” (2).

By emphasizing that this annual will represent “western” writers and “western” subjects, Hall makes an important distinction about what it means to represent the nation’s “domestick literature.” Although most annuals of the time similarly claim to represent “our domestic productions,” *The Western Souvenir* differs by identifying the specific geographic range of its domestic focus. When Hall notes that this annual will represent “the history and character of the country which gives it birth,” for instance, his use of the word “country” refers specifically to the western country, not the United States as a whole. By making this distinction, *The Western Souvenir* draws attention to the regional diversity of the nation’s domestic space, as opposed to simply characterizing it (as other annuals often did) in generic terms as the nation’s “interior.”

Ultimately, by foregrounding its own regional focus, *The Western Souvenir* highlights the lack of regional distinctions in other literary annuals and gift collections. This is not to say that the other annuals of the period completely downplayed the

¹¹⁷Reviews of *The Western Souvenir* likewise characterize it as “close companion” or “near relation” to its Atlantic predecessors, a view that has since come to define most twentieth-century critical assessments of the work, which typically describe *The Western Souvenir* as a “derivative” version of its east coast counterparts. See reviews in *The Critic* (Jan 10 1829) 164 and *The Ariel* (May 17, 1828). References originally cited in Thompson, (12).

existence of regional differences in American writing. As I mentioned earlier, these annuals emphasized the importance of representing a wide range of American works, and a close look at the contents of *The Atlantic Souvenir*, *The Token*, and *The Talisman* shows that many of the stories and poems included within them highlight the various landscapes and local “peculiarities” of places such as Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, and Virginia.¹¹⁸ In including these “local” works, however, these annuals do not usually characterize these texts as representing a particular regional character or style. Instead, the “variety” represented by these annuals seems more to refer to the presence of different writers and genres than the presence of different regional traditions. Moreover, as is evident from the list of “regional” works cited above, most American literary annuals tended to represent the literature of New England and the mid-Atlantic states almost exclusively. In doing so, however, these annuals did not highlight their de facto regional focus, and it is this failure to acknowledge their own implicit regional focus that western writers like James Hall found problematic.

Ultimately, Hall argues that, by failing to acknowledge their own regional focus, annuals such as *The Atlantic Souvenir*, *The Token*, and *The Talisman* misrepresent the literature of the nation. Instead of living up to their own claims to “obtain and produce the best specimens of native genius” and showcase the nation’s literature in all its many “shapes, colors, and fashions,” these annuals represent only the literature of a single part. By identifying its own regional emphasis, *The Western Souvenir* intends to correct this

¹¹⁸ See Ralph L. Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier* (New York: Columbia UP, 1925); David Donald and Frederick A. Palmer, “Toward a Western Literature, 1820-1860,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3: 413-428; Randolph Randall, *James Hall: Spokesman of the West* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1964); Ralph Thompson, *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865* (New Haven: Archon Books, 1967).

misrepresentation by recognizing and representing regional differences when defining the “national” character of American literature as a whole.

In a poem that follows his introduction, Hall has more to say about the place of his annual in relation to the nation’s literary sphere. After a set of opening stanzas that yet again draw attention to *The Western Souvenir*’s distinctive character (“It comes unprecedented, it comes all alone...there never was a book like our new Souvenir”), the poem characterizes *The Western Souvenir* as a text that will circulate widely, moving beyond its western origins to find a place amongst the literary annuals in every home. “Oh! A new SOUVENIR is come out of the west, through all the wide borders it flies with a zest” proclaims the speaker, “...So boldly it enters each parlour and hall, ‘Mong Keepsakes, Atlantics, Memorials, and all.”

Here, *The Western Souvenir* emerges as a text intended to supplement, rather than supplant current literary productions, yet still provide a more representative view of the nation. The poem “questions” its own purpose:

...Authors start up, each with hand on his pen
To demand whence it comes, with the wherefore, and when;
Oh come ye in peace or in war ye come here?
Or what is the aim of your new Souvenir?

In answer, the speaker of the poem replies,

We’ve long seen your volumes o’er spreading the land
While the west country people strolled rifle in hand...
One hand to the paper, one touch to the pen
We have now rallied around us the best of our men
Away with the moccasin, rifle, and brand!
We too have song, picture, silk, and gold-leaf at command

By entering the nation's parlors and halls, the annual hopes to claim a place for western literature in the nation's burgeoning literary sphere, intervening and participating in the stream of texts currently "o'er spreading the land." *The Western Souvenir* is meant to show that the people of the west are capable of assuming responsibility for their own literary representation. Replacing their "moccasins, rifle, and brand" with "paper and pen," westerners are ready to capture their own experiences in writing, and, in doing so, create a tradition of letters that is equal to that of the eastern literary establishment.

By pushing readers to acknowledge the emergence (and equality) of western writing, *The Western Souvenir* ultimately takes on a kind of "corrective" function, encouraging readers to develop a more balanced and comprehensive view of the nation's literature. Specifically, Hall pushes readers to develop a more *regional* conception of the literature and culture of the United States. In contrast to other literary annuals, which fail to foreground their own implicit regional frame, *The Western Souvenir* attempts to redefine the way citizens perceive both the nation and a national literary tradition. For Hall, representing the nation and producing a national literary tradition is not just a matter of presenting readers with the works of different individuals. Instead, fostering a national literary tradition depends upon first representing the nation in terms of its regional traditions.

Although Hall's annual would not continue beyond this first edition, the years following its publication saw the emergence of a vibrant and vocal regional literary movement, particularly (though not exclusively) located in the American west, at the same time that demands for the cultivation of an independent and distinctive national

literary tradition were at their height.¹¹⁹ In this chapter, I will examine the relationship between this nationalist and regionalist discourse. Ultimately, I argue that the regional focus and sentiments exemplified by a text like *The Western Souvenir* represents an attempt to return or restore the nation to its foundational federal principles—a move that ultimately involves figuring the west as a space where the United States can both redefine and reclaim its federal unity. As Daniel Drake, a prominent supporter of western literature, would write in 1833,

Within the West lies the center of gravity of the union...The cement of future adhesion among all the states exudes, to speak figuratively, from the soil of the West...it is the interior of the sovereign body politic, embracing the vital organs, which distribute nourishment to the outer parts (347)

In order to examine how the rise of western regionalism served both to reassert and redefine the discourse of federalism in the mid-1800s, I will focus on the literary culture of Cincinnati, which quickly emerged as the center of the antebellum western literary movement. I am specifically interested in exploring the ways that western writers, editors, and critics represented this push for a distinct literary culture, as well as the form that this culture took. I will look at how writers and editors attempt to frame the “West,” and how they present regional representation as an important and necessary step in the development of a national, or, more specifically, a federal American literature.

¹¹⁹ In addition to the influx of regional literary magazines that appeared during this time, Ralph Thompson notes that a number of annuals with a regionally-specific focus also emerged, among them *The Amethyst* (1831) by Baltimore authors; *The Baltimore Book*; *The Boston Book*; *The Charleston Book*; *Gems for You* (New Hampshire); *The Native Poets of Maine*; *The New Hampshire Book*, *The New Orleans Book*; *The New York Book of Poetry*; *The Philadelphia Book*; *The Portland Sketch Book*; *The Rhode-Island Book*; and *The Tablet* (New Haven) (17).

The Emporium of the West: Antebellum Cincinnati and the Rise of Western Literature

Typically, when considering the American west, most people imagine the territory located to the west of the Mississippi River—encompassing the mountains, plains, and deserts of places such as modern-day Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, or Arizona. In the early half of the nineteenth-century, however, “the west” was understood to be located much farther east in the states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana.¹²⁰ Although by 1800, much of this territory was already admitted to the Union, it was cast as a wild and sparsely settled backwoods—an image exemplified by a writer like Hector St. John de Crevecoeur who characterized this space as “barbarous” and “disordered.”¹²¹ By the 1820s, however, the antebellum west had become a site of tremendous prosperity and growth. Aided by the development of national transportation networks and the rise of steam technology, the states grew quickly. Between 1820 and 1850, the population of the region more than quadrupled. The influx of European immigrants, combined with a significant Native American population, transformed the west into a region that was more heterogeneous than other parts of the country. As Edward Watts notes, “the Ohio Valley was demographically much more complex than the East. A non-removed Native American presence, a powerful eastern and central European immigrant population, and a strongly southern working and yeoman class made it a strikingly diverse place where different European and Native languages

¹²⁰ For a discussion and description of the regional conceptions of the antebellum “west,” see Benjamin Spencer, “Regionalism in American Literature,” *Regionalism in America*, ed. Merrill Jensen (Madison: U Wisconsin P, 1951): 219-260; James R. Shortridge, *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture* (Lawrence, KS: U Kansas P, 1989); Daniel Aaron, *Cincinnati: Queen City of the West, 1819-1838* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1992).

¹²¹ See *Letters from an American Farmer*, “Letter III: What is an American?” (1782). For more on the popular representation of the early American west as a savage and unregulated region, see James R. Shortridge, *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture* (Lawrence, KS: U Kansas P, 1989).

were spoken within several counties” (118). Alongside the growth of this diverse population was equally rapid growth of agricultural, construction, transportation, textile, and meatpacking industries which transformed the formerly quiet outposts of Lexington, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Cincinnati into thriving commercial and cosmopolitan centers.¹²²

Strategically located on the Ohio River, Cincinnati served as a valuable nexus point for the profitable steamboat traffic and the new trade routes opened up by the Erie Canal. In addition, Cincinnati was also surrounded by productive farmland where high yields of corn, rye, barley, and wheat contributed to the development of both a strong agricultural economy and the emergence of pork and brewing industries (21). As a trading hub, Cincinnati, the “Queen City,” also offered numerous opportunities for construction, banking, and other market and investment ventures. As Daniel Aaron writes, “Cincinnati’s advantages as a river port and her agricultural setting made her...an ideal receiving and distribution market, a haven for a complicated array of middlemen who facilitated the buying and exchanging of goods”—a distinction that would earn the city its other nickname “The Emporium of the West” (25).

More than simply earning a reputation as an important commercial center, Cincinnati also became known as a place for artistic and intellectual activities. “The rise of banking ventures, steamboat yards and slaughterhouses was accompanied by the establishment of numerous museums, theaters, schools, literary clubs, circulating libraries, art academies, historical societies, and concert-halls throughout the city,” writes Aaron (8). As a result, Cincinnati quickly became a popular convention site for

¹²² Richard C. Wade’s *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1959) and Daniel Aaron, *Cincinnati: Queen City of the West, 1819-1838*, (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1992) offer thorough accounts of the growth and development of the west in the early half of the nineteenth century.

intellectual, philosophical, and artistic gatherings. As the members of one philosophical group state in their promotional literature, “Cincinnati...[shall] be the established place for annual assemblages to the great literary, scientific, benevolent, and religious Conventions of the West...[for] here, from all parts of the Valley and from the East is gathered the intellectual and moral strength of our land” (quoted in Aaron, 232).

To a great extent, Cincinnati’s status as a thriving cultural center was linked to the strength of its publishing industry (8). The city’s first printers and publishing firms emerged in the early 1800s and experienced swift and successful growth in contrast to other regional publishers who struggled to turn a profit. By the 1820s, over fifteen newspapers and magazines were published on a regular basis, along with thousands of books, pamphlets, sermons.¹²³ “Cincinnati could, in fact, boast of being, before 1840, one of the great publishing centers of the continent,” notes historian Ralph Rusk (29). As a central hub within the nation’s interstate commerce system, it also became an important site of literary exchange. By the mid-1830s, for example, the city regularly held the annual “Trade Sales” where booksellers and traders in surrounding towns gathered to attend a centralized auction in which they distributed all of their most recent titles, among other national and international texts (Aaron, 233). Cincinnati also offered many other opportunities for residents to participate in transcontinental literary exchanges. As early as 1818, for instance, the city became home to an active “newspaper exchange” whereby publishers throughout the country made formal agreements to distribute each other’s newspapers as a service to the citizens (Aaron, 235). Cincinnati was also had a large

¹²³ “Something like 85,000 volumes have been issued within the three months from the presses of Cincinnati; and, within the same time, 8000 primers and pamphlets, sermons &c. equal together about 3000 duodecimo volumes more. Within the same time, the daily and periodical presses have issued as follows: 3 daily papers, 700 copies daily, 2 semi-weekly, 850 semi-weekly, 6 weekly papers, 6800 per week, 2 semi-monthly, 2,700, 1 monthly, 2000 per month, 1 quarterly, 1,000” (*Niles Weekly Register*, 1831, 284).

“Reading Room,” which subscribed to over sixty different publications from across the United States, creating a public space where citizens and visitors alike could come to read and “note the passing tidings of the times,” entirely free of charge.¹²⁴

In conjunction with these public forums for literary exchange, there were also many active literary societies such as “The Buck-Eye Club” and “The Semi-Colon” club whose members included prominent western writers and critics, among them Daniel Drake, James Hall, William David Gallagher, Timothy Flint, Henry Ward Beecher, Harriet Beecher, and Salmon P. Chase. Founded with the goal of “inquir[ing] into the duties and productions of the people of the interior” these clubs regularly hosted lectures featuring western writers and ran weekly discussions concerning the status of literature from all parts of the nation with the ultimate objective, as Daniel Drake writes, of “weav[ing] among ourselves a firm web of brotherhood and becom[ing] still more closely united in social feeling, [and] literary institutions...in the great temple of union” (*Discourse*, 44).

As I intend to argue, the literary culture of the west, as it developed in the Ohio Valley region, illustrates the extent to which the discourse of literary nationalism was linked to the concept of federalism in the antebellum republic. In order to understand how this argument differs from prior critical discussions, I will briefly consider how historians and literary critics have characterized this western literature and history in the past.

¹²⁴ Advertisements for the Cincinnati Reading Room describe it as “a valuable establishment... furnished with many of the most valuable newspapers and literary journals of the United States, among which may be enumerated *The North American Review*, *The Museum*, *The United States Literary Gazette*, *The Portfolio*, and also *The Edinburgh Review*.” “It is creditable to the public spirit of the Proprietor that he admits strangers who remain but a short time in the city to all the privileges of the establishment, free of expense,” continues the author of the notice, who proceeds to encourage all citizens to support it” (44). See Benjamin Drake and Edward Deering Mansfield, *Cincinnati in 1826* (Cincinnati: Morgan, Lodge, and Fisher, 1827). See also S.J. Clarke, *Cincinnati: The Queen City, 1788-1912* (Cincinnati: S.J. Clarke Publishing, 1912) for additional descriptions of the Reading Room, especially pp. 424-5.

Studies of early western literature have typically been framed in terms of recovery and revision—intended both to recall a neglected moment in the nation’s literary past and to redress mistaken assumptions about that history. Despite the tremendous productivity and success of early western writers and publishers, memories of their influence faded as citizens looked increasingly toward Boston and New York to set the literary compass for the nation in the years following the Civil War. As early as the 1890s, however, the first western “recovery” projects began to emerge, most notably W.H. Venable’s *Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley* (1891). From the beginning, Venable frames his work as an act of historical preservation, motivated by “an incidental rummage through the alcoves of a dozen dusty libraries...[which] awakened a curiosity to study the intellectual agencies which created the first literary institutions in the Ohio Valley” (iii). By uncovering this “dust-covered” tradition, Venable sets a precedent for viewing early western texts as an interesting, yet ultimately incidental part of U.S. literature. Although he deems a number of western works as “worthy of mention,” he characterizes them as “a curious phase of America’s intellectual and literary development.” His reasons for preserving this history remain sentimental rather than literary, motivated by a desire to preserve “the authentic reminiscences of ‘the days when we were pioneers’” (iii).

Ralph Lusk’s *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier* (1925) takes a similar approach. Like Venable, Lusk dismisses the majority of western literary productions as flawed and derivative: “Their failure to realize any large measure of artistic achievement may be granted without debate”(vii). Nevertheless, he asserts the importance of preserving this tradition due to its historical value, noting that this “body of

literature [is] invaluable for the record it contains of the growth of American civilization during a unique epoch”—a reading that is informed by the critical tendency to view early American literary texts as a reflection of history, rather than an integral part of producing that history (vii).

In the 1940s and 1950s, studies of the antebellum west take a definite turn when scholars begin to question the conventional assumption that this literature was a “a significant memorial of the pioneer era” (Rusk, vii). Books such as Merle E. Curti’s *The Growth of American Thought* (1943), Daniel Aaron’s *Cincinnati: Queen City of the West* (1942), and Richard C. Wade’s *The Urban Frontier: The Rise of the Western Cities* (1959) re-cast the west as a dynamic commercial space more culturally and economically “advanced” than previously imagined (8). As Daniel Aaron writes, “the steamboats, factories, cotton mills, rope walks, slaughterhouses and brickyards fail to harmonize with the conventional picture of pioneer life in the Ohio Valley” (3). In drawing attention to this contrast, Aaron explicitly characterizes his study as an attempt to “correct the bias of those historians who have...[set] the ‘brawling’ West against the ‘effete’ East” and who have perpetuated “the cherished notion of the west as an exclusively agrarian culture” (5). Such critical studies ultimately seek to counteract the influence of Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis by encouraging readers to re-think the “stage-version” of national history, in which the antebellum west was assumed to be a wild, disordered, and fundamentally separate space, ever-awaiting the civilizing influence of the east (Watts 140-141).

As critical perceptions of the antebellum west changed, however, literary scholars continued to bracket western literary culture as an isolated moment in the history of

American letters. In their 1948 essay “Toward a Western Literature, 1820-1860” for example, David Donald and Frederick Palmer encourage literary critics to acknowledge the rise of “a peculiarly western literature to voice western aspirations” in the mid-nineteenth century. In the end, however, they characterize this literature as a “failed movement” that must somehow be viewed as separate from the literary developments taking place in the rest of the nation. “This demand for western literature, different in subject and character from that of the East, precisely *paralleled* the repeated contemporary demands for a national literature,” they write (415; emphasis mine). For Donald and Palmer western literature was considered to exist alongside the literature of the rest of the nation, without actually becoming a part of it.¹²⁵ Ironically, western writing would continue to be seen as an “unrefined” literature located at the margins of U.S. culture at the same time that historians were trying to push for a more cosmopolitan and integrated view of the west with respect to the rest of the nation.

Within the last twenty years, the literature of the antebellum west has once again become a site of recovery and revision, where literary scholars examine western texts in relation to issues of race, class, gender, and nation. The radical critique of the frontier paradigm, exemplified by the work of Gloria Anzaldúa, Annette Kolodny, and Mary Louise Pratt, has also changed the way that critics approach early western writing. By replacing the frontier narrative with a more fluid conception of “borderlands” or “contact zones,” contemporary critics emphasize the role of western texts in facilitating moments

¹²⁵ The idea that western literature constitutes a tradition separate from that of the rest of the nation is also apparent in John T. Flanagan’s survey of the period, *America Is West: An Anthology of Middlewestern Life and Literature*, (Minneapolis, U Minnesota P, 1945), as well as Daniel Aaron’s account of Cincinnati literary culture in *Cincinnati: Queen City of the West*.

of cross-cultural encounter and exchange.¹²⁶ Recently, a number of formerly out-of-print western works have been re-published in new critical editions, among them Caroline Kirkland's *A New Home, Who'll Follow* (1839, 1990), Alice Cary's *Clovernook* (1852, 1988), Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's *Travels* (1821, 1992) and Augustus Baldwin Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes* (1835, 1998). Critics have positioned these texts in relation to ongoing inquiries concerning the status of race and gender in the antebellum U.S.¹²⁷ In addition, critics have tried to grapple with the regional dimensions of these works which, as Sandra Zagarell points out, both "portray the region as a discrete unit" and, simultaneously, "represent the complex and ongoing relationship between region and nation" (xlili).¹²⁸

Because the former divisions of east/west, urban/rural, refined/rugged become increasingly unstable, it is difficult to situate literary texts specifically marked and marketed as regional. Likewise it is difficult to place the emergence of this regional tradition in a period when writers and editors were calling for the development of a distinct and independent national American literature—particularly now in a critical

¹²⁶ As Michael Kowalewski writes, "the ethnic and cultural complexity of the West cannot be fully imagined until the idea of a west-ward moving frontier for people coming from the East can be seen as but one of a series of migrations that helped populate the region, from the west, south, and the north, as well as from the east"(9). Kowalewski, *Reading the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

¹²⁷ For examples of some recent criticism focusing on race and gender in early western texts, see Rachel Borup, "Bankers in Buckskins: Caroline Kirkland's Critique of Frontier Masculinity," *American Transcendental Quarterly*, 18:4 (Dec 2004) : 230-46; Erika M. Kreger, "Rustic Matters: Placing the Rural Community Narratives of Alice Cary, Susan Fenimore Cooper, and Caroline Kirkland in the Context of the Nineteenth-Century Women's Sketch writing Tradition" in *Susan Fenimore Cooper: New Essays on Rural Hours and Other Works*, eds. Rochelle Johnson and Daniel Patterson, (Athens, U of Georgia P; 2001); Dawn E. Keetley, "Unsettling the Frontier: Gender and Racial Identity in Caroline Kirkland's *A New Home, Who'll Follow?* and *Forest Life*," in *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, 12:1 (1995): 17-37.

¹²⁸ For examples of work focusing on the regional dimensions of these western writings, see Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse, *Writing Out of Place: Regionalism, Women, and American Literary Culture* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2003); Sherrie Inness and Diana Royer, eds., *Breaking Boundaries: New Perspectives on Women's Regional Writing*, (Iowa City: Iowa City UP, 1997); Edward Watts, *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture*, (Athens: Ohio UP, 1998).

environment where the ideas of nation and nationalism are constantly being called into question.

The publication of Edward Watts and David Rachel's anthology *The First West: Writings from the American Frontier* (2002) marks a recent attempt to deal with these questions. By providing a range of different "western" texts, much of them previously unavailable and uncollected, this anthology marks an important step toward making this regional literary history more visible and accessible for critical inquiry. In bringing this tradition forward, the editors make an effort both to foreground and question the "western" character of this body of writing, with the goal of prompting critical conversations about region and nation without necessarily essentializing either category. On the one hand, Watts and Rachels encourage readers to acknowledge the extent to which early western writing is defined by certain regional differences and distinctions. At the same time, Watts and Rachels also encourage readers to avoid reducing western literature strictly to these regional boundaries. They argue that, despite their distinctive focus, "the west produced significant literary and cultural texts whose significance is not limited to their immediate geographical environs, but must also be considered as contributing to the diverse cultures of the United States as a whole" (xiii). In the end, the editors of *The First West* ask readers to confront the complex relationship between region and nation that emerged in the antebellum period, while simultaneously questioning what it means to define these two categories in the first place.

To date, Edward Watts's *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture* (2002) offers the most extensive attempt at negotiating the relationship between antebellum regional and national representation. Watts reads the

emergence of a strong western literary culture in postcolonial terms, arguing that the regional articulations of the mid-eighteenth century can be read as a reaction against the longstanding colonization of the West by the East. Specifically, Watts likens the cultural and political status of the west to that of “settlement” colonies such as Australia and Canada, where the exercise of imperial power becomes complicated by the development of close cultural and historical ties between the dominant power and colonial communities.¹²⁹ In the case of the United States, Watts argues that the development of a distinctly “western” literary culture in the 1820s and 1830s emerges as a form of postcolonial resistance, whereby westerners sought to resist and revise the imperial, political, and economic frameworks that kept them “subservient” to the dominant culture of the east (xx, xii).¹³⁰

¹²⁹ The concept of “settler colonialism” or “second world colonialism” has been extremely influential in postcolonial approaches to the United States, particularly because this model provides a useful framework for examining the postcoloniality of nations that have both imperial and postcolonial histories, as well as for nations whose colonial spaces are contained within the nation itself. For a more extended discussion of “settler colonialism,” see Alan Lawson, “A Cultural Paradigm for the Second World,” *Australian-Canadian Studies* 9 (1991): 67-78; Stephen Slemon, *Unsettling The Empire: Resistance Theory for the Second World* (London: Routledge, 1995).

¹³⁰ Watts’s postcolonial reading of the American West is part of a larger critical movement to apply postcolonial theory and critical approaches to the United States. The relationship between the United States and postcolonial studies, however, has been (and continues to be) contentious. Many critics have objected to the idea of “including America” within a postcolonial critical paradigm, arguing that the nation’s own history of imperialism makes designating the United States a “postcolonial” nation extremely problematic. Others, however, have argued that theories of postcoloniality offers useful critical methodologies for exploring categories of race, class, and gender in the United States, particularly in relation to the early republic. While earlier studies of the “postcolonial” character of the United States focused on the nation’s post-Revolutionary relationship to Great Britain, more recent work has begun to explore the extent to which the United States can be viewed as a nation with a postcolonial relationship to itself, as a nation both “colonized and colonizing” at the same time. Watts’s work on the postcolonial character of the American west would be an example of this, along with work by Jennifer Rae Greeson and Michelle Burnham, among others. See Greeson’s “Colonial Planter to American Farmer: South, Nation, and Decolonization in Crevecoeur” and Burnham’s “The Periphery Within: Internal Colonialism and the Rhetoric of U.S. Nation Building,” both in *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*, eds. Edward Watts and Malini Johar Schueller (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2002). For more on the emergence of the postcolonial U.S. studies, see Lawrence Buell, “American Literary Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon,” *American Literary History* 4.2 (1992); Peter Hulme, “Including America,” *ARIEL* 26.1 (1995): 117-23; Jenny Sharpe, “Is the United States Postcolonial? Transnationalism, Immigration, and Race” *Diaspora* 4 (1994); C. Richard King, ed. *Postcolonial America* (Urbana: U Illinois P, 2000); Singh, Amritjit and Peter Schmidt. *Postcolonial Theory and the United States*. (Jackson: U Mississippi P, 2000).

While Watts's study marks an important step in terms of thinking about the relationship between regional writing and the nation in the antebellum republic, his postcolonial reading remains problematic. Although a number of writers and editors did argue that the west was unfairly marginalized and exploited by eastern interests and although many western texts do display a great deal of hostility toward the Eastern literary establishment, I would argue that the emergence of a distinctly western literature cannot be adequately explained as the manifestation of "a sense of colonial marginality." As I shall show in this chapter, a close look at some of the most prominent western periodicals of this era shows that the push for a distinctive western literary tradition found expression, not through the language of colonial resistance and oppression, but rather, through the language of federal representation and from a commitment to federal principles and ideals.

The problem with Watts's analysis is that it primarily casts western literary culture as a reactionary discourse, wherein western texts emerge solely as a means of opposing the dominating influence of the "universal Yankee nation" (129). In doing so, Watt's critique ends up re-asserting the problematic binary relationship between region and nation that has long caused western literature to be viewed as separate from or outside of a national literary tradition. Aware of the danger of re-inscribing western literary history in terms of the conventional East versus West paradigm, Watts tries to avoid this framework by characterizing western literary productions as "reconstitutive" texts which attempt, not so much to oppose "the damage of empire" but to "forg[e] new combinations of locally distinctive histories, traditions, and conditions which account for

local heterogeneity without reestablishing a new totalizing homogeneity” (218). In the end, however, Watts’s “reconstitutive” view of western literature gets lost as a result of his continual focus on interpreting texts as a power struggle between colonizer and colonized. Instead of exploring the ways in which western texts sought to question and reformulate the concepts of both region and nation, Watts inevitably recasts the story of western literary as a battle between two opposing forces. In contrast, I would argue that western literature represents an attempt to negotiate a series of interrelated interests (220). As James Hall writes in the introduction to *Letters from the West* (1828), the goal of representing the writing of the west to represent the literature of the nation “not as a “single portrait but as a family piece containing several heads,” an image that ultimately casts the regional differences of the nation in familial, rather than oppositional terms (Hall, 245). As this image also implies, the emergence of a distinctive western literary tradition was represented as both a familiar and continuous mode of national representation. By representing “a literature of our own,” western writers and editors did not portray themselves as breaking new ground or cultivating a wholly separate new tradition. Instead, (as Hall’s familial metaphor implies) the cultivation of a western literary tradition was often portrayed as a means of remaining connected to the nation’s original roots. Specifically, western literary texts were cast as a means of both restoring and perpetuating the nation’s commitment to its federal principles and ideals, and in the next section, I shall look at how the literary magazines of one particular region—namely antebellum Cincinnati—draw on the language of federalism to characterize western literature as a means of both diversifying and unifying the nation.

“A Review of Our Own” Representing the Federal Nation in *The Western Monthly Review*

By 1830, Cincinnati (after New York, Boston, and Baltimore) was fourth in the nation in publishing periodicals, boasting six weeklies, two semimonthlies, one monthly, and one quarterly. By 1848, this number had increased to include over twenty-five weeklies and six monthlies (Mott, 386-7).¹³¹ The majority of these magazines lasted only a few months. Scholars have often pointed to this high failure rate as a sign of the “feeble state” of regional literature in the antebellum era (Rusk, 175).¹³² More recent work, however, has pointed out that, given the difficulties associated with high production and distribution costs, the failure rate for these western magazines was no higher than most other antebellum periodicals. Moreover, since quite a few of these “failed” western magazines had higher circulation rates, per capita, than many of the periodicals typically assumed to be wide-ranging and “established,” we might reject the assumption that western periodical culture was less productive or sustainable than that of other regions.¹³³

Of the many magazines published in Cincinnati between 1820-1850, a few rose to particular prominence, among them Timothy Flint’s *The Western Monthly Review* (1827-1830), James Hall’s *Illinois Monthly Magazine* (later re-titled *Western Monthly Magazine*) (1830-36), Ephraim Peabody and James Clarke’s *Western Messenger* (1835-1841) and William Davis Gallagher’s successive series of publications, which included *The Cincinnati Mirror* (1831-1835), the *Western Literary Journal and Monthly Review*

¹³¹ For more on publication history and statistics, see Frank Luther Mott, “Magazines in the West,” *A History of American Magazines* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1939).

¹³² See also David Donald and Frederick Palmer’s “Toward a Western Literature” for a similar reading of the periodical culture of the antebellum west.

¹³³ Edward Watts examines this misrepresentation of the “stability” of western magazines and newspapers in *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture* (Athens: Ohio UP, 2002).

(1836) and *The Hesperian* (1838-1839). Not only were these among the most long-lasting of the western periodicals, their editors and contributors were central figures in the push to cultivate a distinctly “western” literary culture, and they often collaborated to promote particular authors and publications related to western literary issues. In this chapter, I will focus specifically on Timothy Flint’s *Western Monthly Review* (1827-1830) which, as one of the first magazines to identify itself as a distinctly “western” publication (as well as one of the most widely-circulating and long-lasting), provides a useful example for examining western periodical culture as it developed in its earliest stages.

From the beginning, Flint aligns *The Western Monthly Review* with the popular push to establish an independent national literature. “Our view of the proper object of such a work is to foster literature,” he writes. “It is high time, amidst our improvements of every sort, that some effort should be made to foster polite literature among us” (10). Flint emphasizes the need to foster, not just American literature in general but, specifically, a *western* literature. “We shall come to our point at once,” he states,

At the census of 1830, the Mississippi valley will contain more than four million inhabitants. We are physically, and from our peculiar modes of existence, a scribbling and forth-putting people...we have our thousand orators and poets, ...[yet] we have not a solitary journal expressly constituted to be the echo of public literary opinion. The teeming mind wastes its sweetness on the desert air. The exhausted author, after the pains of parturition, is obliged to drop the dear offspring of his brain into the immense abyss of the public that has little charity (9).

Here, Flint makes an interesting point about the purpose of *The Western Monthly Review*. Although he opens his address by stressing the need to cultivate a “polite literature among us,” his description of residents of the west as a “scribbling and forth-putting people” seems to indicate that an active and productive western literary culture is already in place. Not only do the people of the west already have their “thousand orators and

poets,” Flint implies that the west already has more literature than its current readers and reviewers can handle. In fact, it is precisely this overabundance of western literature that *The Western Monthly Review* is intended to address.

Rather than simply promoting the publication of western works, *The Western Monthly Review* is specifically designed to help create a receptive critical audience. As mentioned above, the biggest problem facing the development of a strong western literary tradition is not the absence of writers, but rather, the absence of readers. Without a means of accessing western works or exchanging critical opinions, western readers have never learned how to value or evaluate their local literary productions, hence the tendency for most western texts to become lost “in the immense abyss of the public that has little charity” (9). In order to put an end to this critical neglect, Flint thus envisions his literary magazine as a means of cultivating a new reading public—one that is capable of recognizing and evaluating western works and while also being able to situate this regional literature in the context of a larger national tradition.

If *The Western Monthly Review* is thus intended to help create a more regionally-conscious reading public, Flint remains concerned about the consequences of overemphasizing the journal’s regional focus. Although he hopes the establishment of a distinctly western journal will teach American readers how to better interpret and appreciate western works, he also recognizes the need to prevent readers from overvaluing this western literature strictly because of its regional origins.

We conceive it a necessary preliminary step to this to have a review of our own—not clannish in regard to west country productions, interests, and feelings, but with a sufficient respect for them, to do as much justice to a work written here as elsewhere (10).

Here, Flint clarifies his goals in creating a reading public that is more receptive to western literature. While on the one hand, he wants to encourage western readers to recognize and value the literary productions of their own particular region, at the same time, he does not want to encourage readers to value western literary texts solely on the basis of their regional affiliation. In other words, in cultivating a reading public with a more developed regional perspective, he does not want to produce a reading public that *only* has a regional perspective—a perspective he specifically describes as “clannish.” In order to avoid fostering such narrow and divisive familial sentiments within the nation, Flint ultimately encourages his readers to view all local representations as part of a larger national literary tradition—in short, to always consider the texts written “here” in relation to those written “elsewhere.” By thus encouraging readers to situate the local “productions, interests, and feelings” of the west in a comparative relation to the rest of the nation, Flint ultimately hopes that a work like *The Western Monthly Review* will enable western writers and readers to see themselves as part of an extended national family, rather than harboring a “clannish” devotion to the literary productions of one small group.¹³⁴

In keeping with his larger goal of fostering a more regionally-conscious American literary culture, Flint devotes the rest of his opening “Editor’s Address” to an analysis of the current state of American literary criticism. Significantly, Flint argues that the process of fostering a domestic literature depends, not just upon the productivity of American

¹³⁴ A curious tension thus emerges, given *The Western Monthly Review*’s dual attempt both to emphasize and downplay the significance of regional distinctions. On one hand, Flint foregrounds the importance of recognizing and representing regional literary diversity by exposing the extent to which western writing has been neglected by American critics. On the other hand, he also encourages citizens to read literature without regard for its regional origins or characteristics, pushing them to read the literature of Ohio, for instance, with “as much justice” as the literature of other regions.

writers, but on the character of the nation's critical reviews. "Reviews are the engines of this trade," he writes, attributing their power to the fact that few readers have the time or the means to express their literary opinions publicly. "It will be conceded that our country contains a great amount of native talent," writes Flint. "Unfortunately," he continues, "there is but one in ten thousand of our readers who is not...too unused to make up a judgment or too much engaged to do it" (10). Because so few citizens are either willing or able to express their own individual critical perspectives, reviewers come to occupy a representative position regarding the literary culture of the nation, providing the opinions that come to define American literary tastes and traditions.

Given the power that published reviews exercise over public opinion, Flint encourages literary magazines to review a wide range of works and represent a range of different critical perspectives. He speaks specifically of the dangers that can arise if literary criticism becomes too circumscribed. Of the "thousands" of readers in the United States, he writes, most

...suspend their opinion and their response; shake their heads, look sapient, and wait for the review. As soon as it comes, they find their keynote and raise the tune. The great mass of readers, glad to be relieved of the trouble of making up an opinion, then chime in. Thus, one or two self-constituted reviews become despotic courts of opinion, from which there is no appeal. A single whipster, a coxcomb, a literary Jeffries may have promulgated the sentence from the impulse of ignorance, or envy; but it passes with the community for the impartial, unanimous and solemn decision of every member of the court. Clearly, there ought to be other tribunals, who may act as checks upon the injustice or despotism of a court, so constituted, and administer prompt and legal remedies (11).

Flint's use of political language to illustrate the problems that arise from a limited sphere of criticism is striking. By likening reviews to a legal court, Flint implies that the literary culture of the United States should be held to the same standards as the U.S. government

when it comes to representing the interests of its citizens. The central issue at stake is the danger of misrepresentation. When the “courts of opinion” become overly dominated by one or two “self-constituted voices,” those voices come to stand—erroneously—for the views of the nation as a whole, thus “pass[ing] with the community for the impartial, unanimous, and solemn decision of every member,” when, in fact, they represent only a very specific and limited set of opinions.

Flint’s critique should sound familiar. By framing his discussion in these political terms, Flint echoes arguments surrounding federal representation in the early republic. Specifically, his rhetoric recalls the classic debates regarding the relationship between “the Few and the Many,” which dominated U.S. politics from the founding period well into the nineteenth century. As Saul Cornell notes, the politics of the early United States was shaped by the fundamental problem of “how to preserve the autonomy of states and localities” without simultaneously subjecting them to “a single central and coercive authority” (11). Flint’s concerns about protecting American literature from the “despotic” power of a few dominant reviews emerges as the cultural face of this argument. By referring to the problematic influences of these “self-constituted reviews,” Flint also echoes George Washington’s own critique of factionalism in the early republic, which similarly warns against the influence of “self-created societies.” Like Washington, Flint worries that the emergence of an overly centralized and geographically limited critical perspective has the potential to compromise the stability and unity of the federal republic.

In the end, Flint’s plan for counteracting the power of these “self-created reviews” mirrors the solution posed by earlier political leaders. Like James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson and others who argued for extending the nation to ensure

that no single group would dominate national politics, Flint calls for extending the critical sphere to encompass a wider range of literary productions and perspectives. “Clearly, there ought to be other tribunals who may act as checks upon the injustice or despotism of a court, so constituted,” he writes (11). For him, as for the early proponents of a federal political system, the greater quantity of critical reviews there are, the better protected writers and readers will be from the “tyranny” of a few limited interests and opinions.

By drawing these parallels between the literary and political spheres and emphasizing the need for a broader range of critical reviews, Flint ultimately pushes for the development of an American literary sphere modeled on the form of the federal government. Just as the government is organized to ensure the equal representation of the states, so too should literary periodicals (the “engines” of the trade) try to represent the literature of the nation democratically. Flint criticizes the majority of contemporary literary magazines for failing to take on this representative role. He particularly singles out the *North American Review* and *The United States Literary Gazette* for their limited geographic focus—a focus which is particularly problematic given the national scope implied by their titles. “We formerly identified our national pride with the proud name of the ‘North American,’ [but] the editors seem to us to have slept upon that name,” writes Flint, encouraging the editors to “wake up” and review a greater range of works in order to better “hold up” their title (I, 13). Likewise, although Flint admits that “the ‘United States Literary Gazette’ has an imposing, if not modest, name and has produced some just criticisms,” he condemns its editors for assuming that “nothing good can be written beyond a circle of three and a half miles diameter, of which circle they are the center” (I,

12-13). In place of this “microscopic” approach, Flint calls for a new practice of literary criticism that is not defined by “clannish and territorial limits,” but instead operates according to a “calm, enlarged, and philosophical impartiality” (I, 12). “The republic of letters ought to have no bounds but the range of intellect,” he writes. “We shall strenuously maintain the opinion that, circumstances being the same... wherever a vigorous intellect opens itself to the inspirations of nature, be it on the Ohio, the Mississippi, Red River or even near the borders of the Arkansas, it will operate the same results as it would in Boston” (I, 18).

In advocating for a literary sphere where the productions of all parts of the nation—from Ohio to Mississippi to Arkansas to Massachusetts—can be evaluated on equal terms, Flint is invested in supporting a federal conception of American literary culture. In short, he envisions a republic of letters that mirrors the republic of states. What is distinctive about his argument, however, is that Flint ultimately locates the federal character of this literary sphere not in the texts themselves, but in the realm of criticism.

In previous chapters, I have explored how early American literary texts helped to support and, at times, revise federalist discourse. Flint, however, is not concerned with the federal dimensions of American literature *per se*. Instead, he is interested in ensuring that American critical practices take on a federal character, by representing both a range of different texts and a range of different opinions. As far as Flint is concerned, the creation of a strong republic of letters depends upon simultaneously cultivating a federal style of criticism. The American critic, writes Flint, should strive to look “not through a microscope, but through broad critical spectacles” in order to “bestow as much even, honest, and discriminating criticism....on the works of his country, in its utmost extent”

(I, 16-17). “Our conception of the spirit of American criticism,” he concludes, is to be “essentially just, both in politics and in literature.”

In an article titled “Impediments to American Literature,” Flint later outlines his ideas for creating such a system—a system that extends well beyond the scope of establishing more regional journals and reviews. While “there is much to be gained” by publishing more magazines “modeled on our own example,” Flint writes, he also calls for the establishment of more formal outlets for showcasing the nation’s literary productions and critical perspectives. “The most material impediment in the way of American literature remains to be mentioned,” he writes. “Unlike Washington, which brings our representatives in from the remotest extremities to the common center, we have no central literary metropolis, but instead of it, ten or fifteen provincial capitals.” Without a central location or, rather, “occasion” to present and exchange these different works, “the productions of each one of our provincial capitals exerts an influence opposite to that of each other,” concludes Flint. “Circumstances more prejudicial to American literature can scarcely be imagined” (484).

In order to address these prejudicial circumstances and “free” American literature from these undue “provincial influences,” Flint proposes the establishment of an annual literary convention to be attended by writers, editors, publishers, and booksellers from all over the United States, where “just as in Washington...collision, interest, and ambition can be struck out and replaced with national feelings” (485).

Could there be such a delegation as that from the well known writers and editors of the different states and divisions of our country who should meet annually in Philadelphia to pass upon the books and other literary productions of the past year and give counsels for the unborn productions of the coming year, we deem, that such a censurate might do something toward breaking down section and building up in its stead a national literature. They could put the veto of public opinion upon

hundreds of trumpery books, to the manifest saving of paper and ink; and they would bring to light much talent and capability that is now the unwrought gem of the mine. (485)

In proposing this annual convention, Flint explicitly advocates the creation of a federal republic of letters. Rather than looking for ways to overcome the regional differences that currently shape the nation's literary sphere, Flint turns to the concept of federal representation as a means of transforming those differences into a source of unity and stability. "A genuine American classical literature would finally result from such a system as this," he writes. Significantly, it is only by providing some sort of centralized forum or "system" for representing these different literary constituencies that citizens will be able to "build up" a national tradition. Without establishing some sort of representative medium where the many literary works of the nation can be presented and discussed, the presence of these "provincial interests" will remain a divisive, rather than a generative presence.

What is particularly striking about Flint's argument, then, is the way he shifts the responsibility of establishing a national literary tradition away from American writers, and locates it instead with the nation's editors, critics, and readers who must take it upon themselves to define the way that literary texts and opinions will be represented.¹³⁵ In shifting his focus from writers to readers, Flint becomes particularly interested in the way citizens are taught to interpret the world around them. In this sense, *The Western Monthly*

¹³⁵ While the critics and editors of periodicals such as *The North American Review*, *Knickerbocker's Magazine*, *The Token*, and others specifically called on "our American writers" to represent "the subjects, scenes, places, and persons to be found in our own country," Flint identifies the nation's editors and readers as playing the most significant role in creating and maintaining a distinctly "American" tradition of letters. For more on the nationalist sentiments and objectives of *The Knickerbocker Magazine* (July 1832), *The North American Review*, *The Token*, *The United States Literary Gazette* and others, see Edward Chielens, "Periodicals and the Development of an American Literature," in *Making of America/Making American Literature*, ed. William Verhoeven (Amsterdam: Rodopi Books, 1996) and Benjamin T. Spencer, *The Quest for Nationality; an American Literary Campaign* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1957).

Review becomes invested in shaping not only *what* Americans read, but *how* they read as well.

Flint's journal specifically includes articles that encourage readers to develop what he refers to as a "federal" mindset. The 1828 run of the magazine features a long, four-part serial article titled "Thoughts on the Establishment of a National University," which sets forth a plan for reforming the nation's educational system so as to better "aid [citizens] in giving interpretation and reality to our federative motto, '*E plur'bus unum*'" (372). "We must federalize as much as possible the mind of the whole American youth," asserts the author, "[then] nothing can dissolve the integrity of the union" (372). By thus encouraging readers to "federalize" their minds, the article hopes to extend the federal principles that shape the nation's political sphere into social and intellectual life as well.

In most things strength and symmetry are united... Multiply therefore as much as practicable national measures, institutions, and arrangements, and by framing them all on a federative model, give symmetry to the whole. By harmonious co-operation and unity of effect such a combination of means cannot fail to be powerful and must strengthen in a high degree, the general tie that binds to their common centre the states of the Union... By such an arrangement alone can be generated, throughout the nation, that enduring federative sympathy which binding to each other individuals and states shall baffle faction and counterwork intrigue (379).

Here, this article identifies the powerful unifying potential of cultivating a "federalized mind." By maintaining a federal mindset, citizens will be able to find ways of negotiating the differences of the nation in ways that are "binding" rather than divisive. No matter how diverse the republic becomes, the federalized citizens should be able to connect those differences through bonds of "federative sympathy"—provided of course that they create formal structures (both in political and social life) for recognizing and reviewing their many differences in the first place. "Such an outlook," writes Flint, "would have a

most salutary tendency to break down sectional feelings and prejudices and at the same time to amalgamate and enlarge and consolidate our national union and intellectual fame... We would wish that [these ideas] were blazoned everywhere until our vitiated public sentiment on this point was healed” (218-19).

In the end, Timothy Flint characterizes the literary sphere as one of the most effective ways in which to “blazon” these federal principles everywhere. By cultivating a reading public where citizens can learn to acknowledge and appreciate the different literary productions of the nation, Flint ultimately hopes to create a federal culture that will enable citizens to better represent and cope, not just with the regional diversity of American letters, but with the social and political problems that arise from this regional diversity as well. In this regard, rather than simply fostering a federal literature, Flint wants American readers to cultivate a federal literacy that will ultimately enable them to “break down sectional feelings and prejudices and at the same time to amalgamate and enlarge and consolidate our national union” in contexts that extend beyond the literary sphere. By thus developing a federal literary culture, Flint maintains that the potential divisions of the nation can be assuaged.

The Federal Criticism of *The Western Monthly Review*

While it is one thing to represent a national literature as being comprised of eastern, western, and southern works, it is quite another to represent and review those different regional literatures without privileging one over the other. There is a fine line, in other words, between imagining eastern, southern, and western literature as part of a “federal family” and being “clannish”—a label that *The Western Monthly Review*

attempts to negotiate. In questioning whether *The Western Monthly Review* can handle the challenges posed by pursuing a more expansive critical style, Flint offers a positive, though ultimately speculative response.

We shall be asked, if we dare assume, that we can be impartial and just and disposed to foster and encourage talent in whichever of the works we review?...If we shall be less disposed to be envious and to indulge party feelings and to sneer than our predecessors?...We answer in the modest and firm words of the hero of Bridgewater, "We'll try" (I, 17).

By framing his response as a negotiation rather than as an assertion, Flint once again echoes the statements of earlier political leaders such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson who, in their "Farewell Address" and second inaugural speech, respectively, both raised questions about whether the citizens of the nation could rise to the challenge of governing the nation according to federal principles. "Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere?" questioned Washington, "Let experience solve it." Likewise, Jefferson also framed his view of the viability of an expanded federal republic with a question—"Who can limit the extent to which the federative principle may operate effectively?" By mimicking those texts, Flint positions *The Western Monthly Review* as a kind of critical experiment, designed to test whether American editors and reviewers can cultivate an expansive critical sphere that is capable of providing a diverse, yet unified, representation of the nation's literature.

Throughout its run, *The Western Monthly Review* is presented as a means of counteracting the "despotism" of American criticism, which has become overly dominated by the perspectives of a small group of reviewers. Flint hopes to "restore" the nation's reviews to "the efficient and salutary purposes of their original invention, and he tries to accomplish this several ways. Flint's primary method, of course, to review works

published “west of the Alleghenies.” As discussed earlier, Flint attributes much of the despotic character of current reviewers to the fact that they focus solely on the literary productions of the New England and Middle Atlantic states. By directing its attention to other works, *The Western Monthly Review* attempts to correct this bias, thus offering a more representative view of the literary productions of the nation by including those literary voices currently being left out of existing “national” reviews.

Fearful of repeating the “errors” of his fellow editors by replacing their “east-centered” perspectives with his own “west-bounded vision,” Flint makes a point of juxtaposing his reviews of western novels, pamphlets, speeches, and textbooks with reviews of works published throughout the nation, including places such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Lexington, Charleston, and New Orleans.¹³⁶ In doing so, he expresses his hope that his reviews will allow readers to “mak[e] a literary tour of the United States,” while encouraging them to cultivate a sense of the literary diversity of the nation as a whole, rather simply providing a limited gloss of one particular location (10).¹³⁷

In addition to reviewing a wide range of texts, Flint also makes a habit of reviewing reviews themselves. Throughout the run of the magazine, he regularly publishes reviews borrowed from other magazines and prefaces them with a short note encouraging readers to judge them as works of opinion. In the October 1828 issue, for

¹³⁶ For specific discussions of these writings, see John Kirkpatrick, *Timothy Flint: Pioneer, Missionary, Author, Editor*. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1911) and James K. Folsom, *Timothy Flint* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc. 1965).

¹³⁷ Many of the works reviewed in Flint’s journal are recognizably “western” publications by writers such as James Hall, Daniel Drake, as well as numerous sermons and speeches by western preachers and educators. In addition, the works of Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, and Lydia Maria Child were also reviewed, along with speeches and sermons by preachers from Boston, New York, and Pittsburgh, biographies of important revolutionary and founding figures from throughout the nation, and travel narratives depicting journey both east to west and west to east.

instance, Flint includes a recent review of a French novel titled *Paul and Virginia* that was previously published in “one of our sister publications.” His goal is not to provide readers with a critical view of the novel, but to encourage them to develop a more critical attitude toward the practice of critique itself. “We submit to the reader the following comment upon St. Pierre’s “Paul and Virginia,” writes Flint, who proceeds to highlight the presence of several glaring errors within it, one of which being that the “editor seems to have considered a translation and new edition of this work as an original production, coming from an anonymous American novel writer” (282). By presenting this “uninformed” and “dishonest” review, Flint encourages his readers to approach all critical notices with a more discerning eye: “We only ask the reader to examine and compare the above with many of the reviews and notices of books that he has recently read” and, in doing so, reflect upon the extent to which he or she may “be too ready to take the responses of these self-constituted oracles upon trust” (281-2). Given the power of criticism to “influence....the literature and morals of our country,” Flint’s critical exercises impress upon his audience the importance of actively monitoring and questioning the character of American reviews which, if left unchecked, have the power to “ferment the literature of the land” (281).

At other moments, Flint puts critical reviews on display, not so much to censure “uninformed” criticism (as in the previous example), but to highlight the importance of acquiring a broad range of perspectives. In the November 1828 issue, Flint includes a translated review of *The New Principles of Economic Politics* by the French political theorist J.C.L. Sismondi, a review which originally appeared in the French journal *Revue Encyclopedique*. He explains his reasons for doing so in an introductory note, “We have

translated the following article from the *Revue Encyclopedique* because it is one in which at this time the people of the United States take an absorbing interest and because... it will be both useful and amusing to remark how the same work is viewed by the writers of another nation” (346). Rather than simply identifying Sismondi’s work as an interesting text—which he could have accomplished by writing a review of his own—Flint makes a point of including a translated version of the original review so as to give readers a sense of how the reviews themselves convey a national character. By encouraging his readers to consider how “the same work is viewed by the writers of another nation,” Flint likewise encourages them to see reviews as the product of distinctive perspectives and circumstances, rather than representing some sort of “universal” critical voice. Flint ultimately hopes to convince his readers that—because reviews are shaped by local contexts—they too need to develop perspectives to account for the many different ways that they view American texts; he would have a critical sphere that represents multiple, rather than uniform, opinions.¹³⁸

In the second volume of *The Western Monthly Review*, Flint goes to even greater lengths to encourage readers to adopt a more expansive critical perspective. In his yearly “Editor’s Address,” Flint announces that *The Western Monthly Review* will enter a “new stage of existence.” In addition to providing its own reviews of American literary works, *The Western Monthly Review* will also take on the responsibility of providing a digest of other literary reviews. “Being, as this place is, nearly the geographic center of the United States and not far remote from the center of population, our situation is extremely convenient for receiving information, books and pamphlets from all parts of the country,”

¹³⁸ Flint makes a similar move when he includes a translated review of *The History of the Spanish Inquisition*, which he again offers as a means of encouraging readers to “comprehend the perspective of other nations” (II, 50).

writes Flint. As a result, he proposes to “read all the American reviews...[and] the best known reviews and literary journals from France and England,” with the goal of offering a condensed summary and critical assessment of each.

We have a coadjutor who reads and translates French and Spanish with fluency and facility whose time will be devoted to reading, abstracting, and condensing the contents of the reviews... Every book and pamphlet too that arrives at our office [British and American works included] shall receive a short and appropriate notice...[and] in giving the sum and abstract of these reviews, we shall always take leave to add our own opinion upon the ability and impartiality of the review (368).

By providing this overview, Flint again encourages readers to see the literature of the United States as a diverse tradition that is governed by an equally diverse range of critical perspectives. Within the public sphere, *The Western Monthly Review* is meant to serve as a kind of representative body where all the different critical perspectives of the nation can find expression. Rather than assimilating those perspectives to a single collective view, the journal will provide a more “able and conscientious support” for the literature of “an extensive and growing nation.” As Flint writes, “Such a work, as far as our knowledge extends, will be unique and alone in the annals of periodicals. Every reading man in the community who has not literary leisure for the perusal of the reviews of books *in extenso* will here be able to take a bird’s eye view of them all.” As opposed to the “strained optics” of other periodicals, Flint insists that the expansive and representative character of his journal will produce a critical public that is “more republican in its feelings” by allowing readers to rediscover the extent to which its literature, like the government, represents the views of its “twelve millions of men” rather than just “half a dozen existences” (368).

How, then, does Flint's plan for producing a national critical digest play out? From 1828 onward, the last section of each issue summarizes and comments on five or six magazines, selected from a range of western, southern, and "Atlantick" periodicals. For the most part, twentieth-century critics have dismissed the significance of these selections as "derivative," characterizing them as "filler" that Flint used to bolster the weak content of the magazine.¹³⁹ While there are places where *The Western Monthly Review* does include extensive excerpts from other magazines (a common practice at the time), the critical digests represent original material—summaries written in Flint's own words, followed by critical assessments identifying the strengths and weakness of each.

In presenting these critiques, Flint makes an effort to portray the various periodicals of the nation in terms of complementary, rather than competitive, relationships. He habitually refers to the other magazines he reviews in familial terms, characterizing them as "our brother monthly" or "our sister quarterly." While the general amicability does not prevent him from criticizing a number of these publications (some of which he finds "limited and condescending" and others "too harsh and injudicious"), his continual references to these "brother" and "sister" publications show that he views the critical sphere as a union of different perspectives—a representation that stands in sharp contrast to the more aggressive and competitive style that critics such as Watts have attributed to this and other western periodicals. Instead of attacking eastern publications to undermine or expose their authority, these digests illustrate how these different magazines, when viewed comparatively, have the potential to promote productive relationships. The following are a few representative examples:

¹³⁹ Critics such as Venable, Rusk, and Donald, for instance, characterize these digests as places where Flint, unable to find enough contributors, simply copied or re-hashed articles from other magazines to fill out the content of his own.

On *Mrs. Hale's Ladies' Magazine* (Boston, MA): "This is a sound, sensible, and judicious monthly journal...She carries to her warfare sound sense, a discriminating mind, and beautiful verses. We wish that the ladies of our region will patronize her work (535)

On *The Boston Journal of Education*: "We are pleased to see *The Boston Journal of Education* sustaining its ground and gaining greater public favor...Every publication which promotes good learning should have our best wishes, no matter its origin. We should be glad to see this very useful work more known in our section of the country (536)

On *The North American Review* (Boston): "The last number of the *North American Review*, besides a number of reviews which evidence great learning and research, more especially designed for learned readers and men of pursuits exclusively literary, contained two or three articles of interest for all common readers.... Though much of this material is specifically related to Boston, in our own great state...such information is much wanted, and we should think that the perusal of such reviews as have more recently appeared would be useful to all men of business" (287)

On *The Southern Literary Gazette*: "This is a respectable looking brother monthly, which does much to illuminate the distinctive character of our friends to the south, continues to delight....The regions where it circulates may be better for it at the end of the year"

On the *Southern Review* –"The contributors to this sister work evince no stinted measures of talent, erudition, practice in writing, independence and spirit. We have no hesitation in saying that we are pleased with the frank and unlabored way they discuss their subjects...If this southern review has its prejudices, we feel persuaded that they are honest ones, and by meeting with these prejudices within its pages, we might gain new and valuable thoughts upon the subjects reviewed" (406)

On *The Transylvanian or Lexington Literary Journal* (Kentucky): We greet our brother monthly, which enters with very respectable appearance. From the literary estimations of its many contributors, we may promise ourselves that it will lend efficient aid to the cause of good learning, science, and good taste wherever it circulates"

When considered as a whole, the critical digests included in *The Western Monthly Review* cast American literary criticism as a kind of familial dialogue. In promoting this more variable and fluid view of "our domestic literature," the journal thus attempts to serve as

a kind of representative forum where multiple perspectives can be presented and juxtaposed.

Between the late 1820s and the 1850s, other western magazines such as *The Illinois Monthly*, *The Western Literary Journal*, *The Cincinnati Mirror*, and *The Hesperian* would likewise call for creating a more “federalized” style of literary criticism that was more representative of the nation’s many different regions. As noted western editor William T. Coggeshall writes, “It is not enough, either, that a national literature exists. It is required of a nation which combines wide differences of characteristics that each shall have its own representation. A Republic of letters may be a confederacy of individualities as well as that a Republic in politics may be a confederacy of States” (*The First West*, 931).

Of particular interest is the way each journal contends with the challenge of balancing its regional focus with its stated nationalist goal. As is always the case when dealing with the concept of federal representation, it is difficult to find ways of representing local interests without fostering conflicts and divisions between different communities. While on the one hand, editors argued that representing the literature of the west would help readers to develop “a more correct and thorough sense of our Union,” on the other hand, they also recognized that their regional focus had the potential to undermine that sense of union by promoting “narrow and clannish sentiments.”

Striking a balance between representing the differences of western society and literature without, simultaneously, implying its separateness or superiority would continue to be a challenge that these western periodicals would face, and each in turn would adopt a different approach. Some, such as William Davis Gallagher and Daniel

Drake, opt to be very aggressive in characterizing the distinctiveness of western life and literature. As Gallagher writes of his *Western Literary Journal*, “The one object of this magazine...is to represent to ourselves and our neighbors, correctly and thoroughly, the true literary character of the Great West,” and as a result, his publications tend to focus on works “strictly western,” to the exclusion of all else (701). Daniel Drake, the founder of a number of western literary societies and vocal advocate of western literature, expresses similar views regarding the role of western periodicals. “In short,” he writes, “we should foster western genius, encourage western writers, patronize western publishers, augment the number of western readers and create a western heart” (352).

For editors such as Gallagher and Drake, emphasizing the unique character of western life and literature was ultimately the best way to encourage readers to promote a more federal conception of American letters. “Promoting the sovereignty of the different states is precisely that which would most effectually perpetuate the Union,” asserts Drake in an 1833 address. “In laboring to promote harmony and unity among ourselves, we are also working for the happiness of the whole Union” (342, 348). Gallagher likewise seeks to characterize the strict regional focus of his own publications in a more federal direction. “Whenever we speak of *western* literature, it is not in a spirit that would separate it from *eastern* or *southern* literature... in speaking of this section of the Union, we use the term *western*, it is merely to distinguish it as a rising province in our great Republic of Letters” (701).

Other editors, Flint among them, were much more apprehensive about taking such an aggressive regional approach, believing that overemphasizing the distinctive characteristics of the west would prompt sectional rivalries rather than national

sympathies. As opposed to the style of Gallagher and Drake, Flint hopes to present a more comparative and less celebratory view of the west, at times even censoring articles that he felt offered too narrow a view of western life and experiences. In commenting on an article titled “The Prospects of Ohio,” for example, Flint writes “Although we too are admirers of Ohio, we respectfully suggest whether this brightly wrought picture would not have been improved by laying on the colors with something more of discrimination” (I, 184). Flint has even harsher words for the author of an “Outline of an Essay on the Future Progress of Ohio” who characterizes the “magnificent” west as “the central abode of American power” which might one day prove capable of “sustaining itself...upon own grandeur and prosperity” should the union ever be dissolved (332). In a short editorial notice immediately preceding the article, Flint attempts to contain these sentiments by taking this author to task for the divisive potential of his remarks:

The following smacks of a full, though immature and youthful mind. The writer has said many true things, some important ones, and some things which he should not so have said...We do not think it wise or safe or useful to predicate any reasonings on the supposition of the failure of our union. These are predictions, talks, and conjectures, which have a manifest tendency to verify their own calculations. The *dissolution of our union* ought to be an interdicted and ineffable phrase (III, 331).

This criticism yet again reveals the extent to which regional representation marked a difficult rhetorical position in the mid-1800s. As far as Flint is concerned, the mere act of juxtaposing the discussion of the virtues of Ohio (no matter how “true” or “important”) with sentences speculating on the instability of the nation has the potential to encourage a

dangerous sectionalism, one capable of contributing to the very instability that Flint hoped his magazine would help ameliorate.¹⁴⁰

Over the course of its three-year run, the articles published in *The Western Monthly Review* reveal constant anxiety about the divisive potential of the magazine's regional focus. Although its comparative critical format and emphasis on encouraging readers to adopt a "federalized" view of the nation's literary differences was meant to help mediate these tensions, Flint was continually occupied in clarifying the nationalist aims of his western emphasis. "It is to be clearly understood that the term "federalize" is to not to be construed into party feeling. It means, as here used, the imbuing of the intellect with feelings of habitual attachment to our federal form and administration of government, nothing more," he writes. Throughout his many "Editor's Addresses," he stresses the extent to which his loyalty to and emphasis on the west should be seen as a manifestation of his patriotic goals (372).

As regards our sectional feeling, of which we hear so much said abroad and in Congress we remark that...such feeling includes *amor patriae* and is not narrow but loves the whole country and looks with singleness of eye and affection to the whole Union and only retains the natural and instinctive affection for the natal spot and that portion of the country which is invested with the associations of home" (II,12)

¹⁴⁰ Other articles likewise seek to promote closer ties between residents of the east and west. In a humorous sketch titled "The Kentuckian in New York," the narrator comments constantly on the differences he finds between the two places, only to conclude with the assertion that "a western member [of Congress] knows how to stand gracefully, and make gestures, and speak the King's English, and pursue a connected train of thought and reasoning and talk away like a Philadelphian" (Vol. I, issue 2, 88). In "Present Population and Future Prospects of the Western Country," the author frames his discussion of the distinctive features of the west with an assertion of the strong ties that nevertheless exist between the west and the east. "The very difference of our physical and moral character contributes to form a chain of mutual wants, holding us to the country north and east of the mountains by the indissoluble tie of mutual interest," he writes. "For us as a people, we look over the mountains and connect our affections with the parent country beyond, by the strong ties of natal attachment...There still live our fathers and our brethren" (I, 333). Other articles focusing on the geography, economies, and customs of the west—articles with titles such as "Cincinnati's Museums," "The Religious Character of the Western People," "The Mississippi Valley," "The History and Geography of the Western States," and "The Future of Ohio," reveal a similar emphasis on how to reconcile their regional focus with a sense of national loyalty.

In referring to the sectional feelings “of which we hear so much said in Congress,” Flint situates his anxieties in relation to ongoing political debates surrounding the issue of states rights and nullification. During the mid-1800s, “the central constitutional issue in America was the problem of the distribution of power between the states and the national government,” writes Richard Ellis, noting that “[i]n one form or another, the issue of states rights permeated almost all ideological and political discussions,” and this subject would come to a particular crisis in 1828 with the issue of nullification (14). When Andrew Jackson levied a controversial tariff, a number of senators (led by South Carolina) began to debate the possibility of declaring the tariff null and void by exercising the authority guaranteed to them under the federal Constitution. The significance of regional loyalties and representation became extremely contested. While on one hand, some argued that maintaining a strong “localist” affiliation exemplified one’s commitment to the nation’s republican ideals (reminiscent, as many claimed, of “the spirit of 1798”), others argued that overemphasizing states rights would serve to undermine and betray those same republican principles.¹⁴¹ As a result of these debates, forms of regional representation took on a particularly charged and divisive significance in the mid-1800s. In fact, notes historian Fulmer Mood, it was during this time “that the term ‘sectional’ first came to prominence as a means of describing the different regional interests in the nation” (7). As opposed to a more neutral term like “regional,” the term

¹⁴¹ Richard Ellis offers an extremely useful account of the complex relationship between the states and the federal government that emerged in the antebellum period, as well as an excellent study of the politics surrounding the nullification crisis in *Union at Risk: Jacksonian Democracy, States' Rights and the Nullification Crisis* (London: Oxford UP, 1989). See also David Ericson, *The Shaping of American Liberalism: the Debates Over Ratification, Nullification, and Slavery* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1993).

“sectional” carried divisive connotations, and the word quickly became used as a means of questioning the legitimacy and loyalty of any local expression (Mood, 33).¹⁴²

In addition to its rhetorical attempts to clarify the nationalist sentiments underlying its regional focus, *The Western Monthly Review* also seeks to circumvent accusations of sectionalism through its near constant emphasis on the development of American transportation networks. More than merely publishing articles related to American literature and criticism, *The Western Monthly Review* includes regular coverage of the nation’s canals, railroads, steamboat lines, and road projects. Of all the articles published in the journal between 1827-1830, nearly a quarter are devoted to the development of these transportation networks, which the magazine continually hails as unifying projects. A report on the development of the Wabash and Miami canals, for example, highlights the extent to which this new system will link previously separate communities together, opening the door to new relationships and new patterns of movement and interaction. The new system “shall connect the Mississippi with Lake Michigan in the state of Illinois; and that is intended to connect on into Ohio which shall extend to Lake Erie where it will connect to the south with the great New York canal and by the Ohio with the Ohio and Chesapeake canal. The next generation will float in canal boats from the remotest points of the Atlantic shores, perhaps to the lake of the woods” (II, 701). Other articles echo these sentiments. “The animating incitements, derived from our prospect of being shortly connected by canals with the Atlantic, [should] unite and invoke us to new enterprises,” writes the author of “The Navigation of the Ohio” (II, 325). “We are connected already with the Atlantic country by noble roads. We shall

¹⁴² For more on the history of the concepts of regionalism and sectionalism in the United States, see Merrill Jensen’s collection, *Regionalism in America* (Madison: U Wisconsin P, 1951).

shortly be connected with the Hudson, Delaware, and Chesapeake bays by navigable canals...contributing to form a chain of mutual wants” (I, 333).

Flint celebrates these networks specifically as a means of both fostering new connections among the residents of different states and transforming the nation’s diversity into a productive resource:

No other country on the globe, of the same extent, has as many resources for population, comfort, wealth, and power as the United States. We have every variety of climate, every diversity of soil, every material element of natural wealth, and these gigantic projects of facilitating transport and these almost inconceivable facilities for celerity of intercommunication between the extremes of our vast country will tend to bring them all into play (19).

Such descriptions of the unifying power of railroads, canals, and road systems echo the arguments of earlier political leaders who, from the beginnings of the republic, characterized transportation infrastructure and networks as an important means of transforming the diverse people and places of the nation into a unified and productive whole.

More than simply addressing the extent to which these networks will foster economic ties, however, *The Western Monthly Review* specifically emphasizes how these networks will help unify the nation by fostering the nationwide circulation of literary texts. Thanks to the “extensive” and “efficient” developments in the American roads and canals, writes Flint, citizens are better able to “receiv[e] information, books and pamphlets from all parts of the country” (II, 368). By reading these works, citizens can become better “acquainted” with the people, places, and customs, not just of their own region, but of the “western, southern, and Atlantick counties,” thus alleviating the feelings of derision or distrust that inevitably arise from “a want of knowing” (II, 366).

Through this nationwide process of literary exchange, writes Flint, the readers of “Lancaster, in Pennsylvania or Worcester, in Massachusetts” and the readers of “Cincinnati in Ohio and Lexington in Kentucky” will be better able to “rub off [their] mutual prejudices” and thus feel united, as though “part of the same family.” He writes,

One takes a step, and then the other. They meet half way and embrace; and the society, thus newly organized and constituted, is more liberal, enlarged, unprejudiced, and of course more affectionate and pleasant than a society of people of *unique* birth and character, who bring all their early prejudices, as a common stock, to be transmitted as an inheritance in perpetuity (I, 33-4).

Rather than transmitting the regional prejudices that currently shape the nation’s political sphere, Flint envisions literature as a means of producing a new generation of citizens who are capable of forming a more stable and unified society precisely *because* they have been willing to develop a more thorough understanding of the nation’s diversity. Whether or not the representation and circulation of different regional literature would result in a “more liberal, enlarged, unprejudiced, and affectionate” nation, however, would remain a matter of debate in the decades that followed.

While, on the one hand, Flint’s reliance on the rhetoric and logic of federalism was intended to help contain and mediate the disruptive potential of representing regional differences within the United States, as time wore on, this federal emphasis became increasingly problematic. As tensions between the states mounted over issues such as nullification and slavery and the canal, road, and railroad systems, the model of federal representation exemplified by a magazine such as *The Western Monthly Review* began to collapse back on itself, producing the sectional tensions and divisions it was initially meant to mitigate. In the concluding section of this project, I will examine briefly how this transformation began to take place by focusing on the emergence of the “Young

America” movement in the late 1840s and 1850s—a nationalist movement in many ways that, in contrast to the literary works just examined, sought to redefine the United States by deemphasizing regional difference.

Epilogue

From Federalism to Nationalism

The regional literary movements of the 1830s were followed by the emergence of a vocal nationalism in the 1840s—the “Young America” movement. Drawing inspiration from the European political movements of the 1830s, Young America referred to a broad range of social, political, and literary activities that were intended to promote a new national self-consciousness, founded on the direct and active participation of all American citizens.¹⁴³ Although it would become closely aligned with the political agenda of the Democratic party, Young America was ultimately as a literary movement that it would become most widely known. Under the influence of writers and editors such as John L. O’Sullivan, William A. Jones, Parke Godwin, Cornelius Matthews, and Evert Duyckinck, Young America pushed for the development of a “new and democratic national literature,” a literature designed both to “represent our national progress” and to “declare our definitive independence from Europe” (O’Sullivan, 1).¹⁴⁴

In pushing for the emergence of this new national tradition, however, the Young America movement represents a shift away from the federal conceptions of literature and

¹⁴³ During the 1830s, a radical political movement known as “Young Europe,” emerged, dedicated to imagining a new social and political future for the continent. In 1831, Italian revolutionaries led by Giuseppe Mazzini founded the “Young Italy” movement, which was followed by the rise of “Young England,” “Young Ireland,” “Young Germany,” and other variations throughout the 1830s and 1840s. For more on these movements, see Yonatan Eyal, *The Young America Movement and the Transformation of the Democratic Party, 1828-1861* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2007).

¹⁴⁴ John L. O’ Sullivan would become one of the most vocal and prolific members of the “Young America” movement. O’Sullivan served as both founder and editor of *The Democratic Review* where many of the ideas and arguments associated with “Young America” were published. For more on the history of the Young America movement, see Yonatan Eyal, Edward Widmer, *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City* (New York: Oxford UP, 1999); M. E. Curti, “Young America,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Oct., 1926): 34-55; John Stafford, *The Literary Criticism of Young America: A Study in the Relationship of Politics and Literature* (Berkeley: U California P, 1952).

nation that I have been exploring throughout this dissertation. In the previous four chapters, I examined how early American literature became a means of defining and unifying the nation through the representation of its differences. Moreover, I also explored how these texts helped foster a literary public capable of reading those differences as a source of unity. In some ways, the Young America movement seems to represent a continuation of this federal imagination. In pushing for the development of a new and independent literary tradition, for instance, editors such as Evert Duyckinck stress the importance of representing the literature of the nation in terms of its variety, while also making it accessible to a wide range of readers. His two most famous contributions to the Young America movement—the “Library of American Books” series (1845-6) and the two-volume *Cyclopaedia of American Literature* (1855-6)—provide readers with a representative cross-section of the nation’s “original” literature by including works by writers from all regions, all backgrounds, and all genres in an affordable format. In doing so, Duyckinck’s work represents “a pan-American nationalism” that embraces male and female writers from the North, West, and South, and includes both established and newly emerging literary voices (Widmer, 121). By thus encouraging readers to cultivate a wider view of their culture, Duyckinck’s attempt to foster a new nationalist literature was very much in line with the federalist vision represented by earlier writers and critics such as Timothy Flint and James Hall. Like many of the works in my study, Duyckinck’s literary collections and anthologies were intended to present readers with a vision of American literary culture as “the sum of its multiple parts” (96).

Duyckinck's work however, was quickly overshadowed by a different nationalist agenda. As the nation became more and more divided over issues of slavery, expansion, and states' rights, American writers and readers grew increasingly suspicious of the emphasis on regional diversity. Despite Duyckinck's intentions to promote "a more varied understanding of our Literature," both the Library of American Books series and the *Cyclopaedia* were poorly received and criticized for presenting readers with a "divided" focus rather than a "national" one. Reviewers were particularly hard on the Library of American Books series, accusing Duyckinck of using his selections to foster sectional tensions by favoring one region over another. Although these accusations were ultimately unfounded—depending on the critic, Duyckinck was alternately accused of expressing an "undue affinity" for the literature of the South, the literature of the West, and the literature of the "Yankee New England"—the hostile reactions to his collections indicate a shift in the way that Americans were imagining the terms of national unity.¹⁴⁵ Instead of viewing regional diversity as an important component of federal stability, citizens began to see it as a threat. As a result, over the course of the 1840s and 1850s, writers and critics would increasingly attempt to downplay the presence and influence of regional differences within the nation, replacing the composite sense of American literary culture with a more monolithic view.

For these writers and critics, the primary obstacle to developing a strong and independent American national culture was a "slavish" devotion to the social, political,

¹⁴⁵ For the critical reception of the Library of American Books series, see Ezra Greenspan, "Evert Duyckinck and the History of Wiley and Putnam's Library of American Books, 1845-1847" *American Literature*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (Dec., 1992): 677-693 and Widmer, 108-110.

and literary culture of Europe. As James L. O'Sullivan writes in his opening address to *The Democratic Review*,

We have no national literature [because] we depend almost wholly on Europe, and particularly England, to think and write for us, or at least to furnish materials and models after which we shall mold our own humble attempts... Our mind must be compelled to think for itself and to express itself... As it now is, we are cowed by the mind of England. We follow feebly and afar...givi[ing] back but a dim reflection (1).

Rather than defining the nation in relation to its own internal differences, the Young Americans primarily sought to define the nation in relation to its difference from Europe—a shift in focus that ultimately encouraged citizens to view American culture in more consolidated and homogeneous terms. By freeing themselves of this European dependence, American writers and readers would at last be able to cultivate a national culture capable of “reflecting our own minds” and “representing our own soul” (3). Ultimately, by pushing citizens to define the United States in opposition to the cultures of Europe, the Young Americans encouraged readers to embrace a uniform vision of American nationalism, rather than a composite representation of local communities and perspectives.

This idea of fostering a national literary tradition based on “our” difference from Europe is exemplified by Herman Melville’s famous essay, “Hawthorne and his Mosses”—a work which was solicited by Edwin Duyckinck and published in the first edition of the *New York Literary World*, one of the leading journals associated with the Young America movement. Like O’Sullivan, Melville encourages American writers to produce “original” works that move beyond the influences of Europe; he notes that “it is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation” (2793). Melville then takes his literary imperative one step farther by encouraging readers to develop a recognizable and

established national tradition, even if the nation currently lacks the literature to adequately support it:

Let America first praise mediocrity even, in her own children, before she praises...the best excellence in the children of any other land. Let her own authors, I say, have the priority of appreciation. I was very much pleased with a hot-headed Carolina cousin of mine, who once said,—“If there were no other American to stand by, in Literature,—why, then, I would stand by Pop Emmons and his ‘Fredoniad,’ and till a better epic came along, swear it was not very far behind the ‘Iliad.’” Take away the words, and in spirit he was sound (2792).

Rather than cultivating a literary nationalism from the local productions of the nation’s writers, Melville wants to create a national literary culture that exists independently of the texts it is supposed to represent. In doing so, he pushes for a coherent and unified tradition that is ultimately capable of encompassing all the literary productions of the nation.

This emphasis on establishing a national culture at all costs would eventually transform the Young America movement from an initially open and receptive form of nationalism—seen in figures like Duyckinck—into an ultra-nationalism that would become more aligned with aggressive expansionist policies and the imperial ideology of Manifest Destiny over the course of the 1850s.¹⁴⁶ Melville’s essay illustrates the extent to which this new spirit of nationalism has the potential to become abusive and despotic. He writes,

Let us boldly condemn all imitation... and foster all originality, though, at first, it be crabbed and ugly as our own pine knots. And if any of our authors fail, or seem to fail, then, in the words of my enthusiastic Carolina cousin, let us clap him on the shoulder, and back him against all Europe for his second round. The truth is, that in our point of

¹⁴⁶ In fact, O’Sullivan is typically credited with helping to introduce the phrase “Manifest Destiny” into the popular lexicon. See his essay, “The Great Nation of Futurity,” *The United States Democratic Review*, Volume 6, Issue 23: 426-430. Edward Widmer addresses the transformation of “Young America” into an aggressive ultra-nationalist movement in detail in movement in *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City*. In the mid-1850s, notes Widmer, “a new version of Young America emerged, more political than intellectual...chiefly composed of southern and western expansionists” (15).

view, this matter of a national literature has come to such a pass with us, that in some sense *we must turn bullies*, else the day is lost (2792; emphasis my own).

Here, once again, Melville privileges the establishment of a national literary tradition over the literature itself, although this time in more aggressive terms. If American writers cannot foster a new and independent national culture with their current work, then, as Melville suggests, the national consciousness and reputation must be produced by force—in this case, by vocally asserting the originality and superiority of American productions abroad and thus “backing [American writers] against Europe for a second round.” In Melville, we see a new rhetoric of nationalism, one defined by aggression rather than rooted in actual representation.

Although Melville and other writers initially associated with Young America would later distance themselves from the movement’s ultra-nationalist positions, over the next decade, the United States would continually “turn bully.” This involved pushing forward a new definition of America as a unique, independent, transcontinental world power—a picture of a nation, as many would write, “in the full flush of its youth.”¹⁴⁷ Ironically, this push toward a more unified and recognizable sense of national identity takes place at the same time that the states were becoming increasingly divided. Indeed, recalling Melville’s argument, the less the United States seemed to represent the strong, unified, and democratic identity its citizens wanted to convey, the more invested its writers, editors, and politicians became interested in trying to force that identity into the mind of the public, both at home and abroad.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ This rhetoric characterizing the United States as being in the prime of its youth was common. This particular quotation is taken from Cornelius Matthews, *Americanism: An Address Delivered June 1845*, (Boston, 1846).

¹⁴⁸ Widmer addresses the increasing aggressiveness of the Young America movement in chapter six of *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City* (New York: Oxford UP, 1999). For more on U.S. nationalism in the 1840s and 1850s, see also Stafford, particularly chapters two and five; Frederick

I conclude this project with this brief account of “Young America,” because, in many ways, this movement marks the end of the nation’s engagement with both literary and political federalism. As conflicts grew both between and within the states, the federal model of “unity in difference” no longer offered a viable way of imagining or representing the republic. In pushing for a new and vocal nationalism, the Young Americans thus represented a break with the model of nationhood conceived during the founding period and re-imagined, in various forms, throughout the first fifty years of the republic. “Daring and audacious conduct, a willingness to depart from well-worn customs, a forward-looking desire to embrace the new—these were all attributes of the ideology named “Young America,” notes Yonatan Eyal (2). By breaking with the past to embrace a new vision of the nation, the Young Americans ultimately saw themselves as returning to the revolutionary principles on which the nation had been founded. Committed to imagining a “new order of things,” they regularly invoked the rhetoric of the Revolution as a means of articulating and justifying their new nationalist project.¹⁴⁹ This emphasis in itself illustrates a change in the way citizens understood and represented the nation. Whereas earlier writers and political leaders turned to the Constitution and the writings surrounding the ratification debates as the foundation for articulating a national identity, the Young Americans oriented themselves in relation to an entirely different founding document—the Declaration of Independence, a work that emphasizes the

Merk, *The Monroe Doctrine and American Expansionism, 1839-1849* (New York: Knopf, 1966); Donald S. Spencer, *Louis Kossuth and Young America: A Study of Sectionalism and Foreign Policy* (Columbia, Mo: U Missouri P, 1977).

¹⁴⁹ For more on the relationship between the Young America movement and the rhetoric of the American Revolution, particularly with respect to the Declaration of Independence, see Widmer, pp. 5-21 and 202-209.

solidarity and unity of the American people and downplays the existence of differences in order to present a united front against Britain.

By drawing attention to this shift in the rhetoric of American nationalism, my project is ultimately an attempt to diversify our critical understandings of the United States in the early republic. Over time, the vision of nationalism exemplified by the “Young America” movement has seeped into our critical understandings of the way in which the nation was figured throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. As I have argued throughout this project, there is a difference between imagining a national republic and a federal republic, and, by juxtaposing my own readings of the literature of the early republic with that of the later 1850s, I hope that I have begun to provide a better sense of what this difference might mean. By illustrating the transition that took place in the mid-1850s from a federalist to a nationalist mindset, it becomes clear that, between the Revolution and the Civil War, there is more than one way to read the nation.

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