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INFECTED REGIONS: MARRIAGE METAPHORS AND ILLNESS PLOTS IN
ANTEBELLUM CROSS-REGIONAL FICTION

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This project is the culmination of a twenty-year journey that started when, hungering for something I could not describe, I dropped my daughter off at kindergarten and my son at a local Mother's Day Out program and enrolled at Tarrant County College. Soon I found myself sitting in English Composition I asking "What is a thesis?" I soon discovered a new passion: literature and rhetoric. My hunger, fed by passionate instructors, only grew. Each class was my favorite, and I excitedly sat on the front row with loads of questions. Yes, I was THAT student. What is more, I could imagine myself standing at the front of the class, teaching the two subjects I loved so much: Composition and Literature. Learning I wanted to major in English, my husband replied, "You'll never get a job." I responded (somewhat jokingly): "I don't care." I subsequently squeezed six years into a two-year Associate in Arts. And though the journey since then was long and arduous, I had the time of my life, and I have many people to thank for that.

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PREFACE

On February 13, 1818, John Adams retrospectively penned his thoughts about the meaning of the American Revolution to the editor of the *Weekly Register*, Hezekiah Niles, who published Adam's letter the following month. After noting the colonies' ethnic, cultural, and religious diversities, Adams wrote:

The colonies had grown up under constitutions of government so different, there was so great a variety of religions, they were composed of so many different nations, their customs, manners, and habits had so little resemblance, and their intercourse had been so rare, and their knowledge of each other so imperfect, that to unite them in the same principles in theory and the same system of action, was certainly a very difficult enterprise. The complete accomplishment of it, in so short a time and by such simple means, was perhaps a singular example in the history of mankind. Thirteen clocks were made to strike together -- a perfection of mechanism, which no artist had ever before effected. (Adams, *Niles'* 17-20)

Here, Adams reveled in the forefathers' miracle-making: organizing the thirteen colonies to successfully revolt and establish a new government. However, his feelings were a bit more pessimistic forty years earlier. In a letter to Benjamin Kent, dated 22 June, 1776, Adams wrote, "But remember you cannot make thirteen clocks strike precisely alike at the same second" (Adams, *Works* 401-02). In that same letter, he uses another interesting figure of speech—a marriage metaphor—to describe the American/British relationship. Adams writes, "That we are divorced *a vincula*, as well as from bed and board, is to me very clear. The only question is concerning the proper time for making an explicit declaration in words" (emphasis in original) (401). He chose the Latin term "*a vincula*," which means "bond" or "tie," such as with a legal

marital bond, before then referencing marital intimacy in the phrase “bed and board” to describe the broken political state between Great Britain and its American colonies. As he concluded, he contemplated, like a courting beau, the “proper time” for an “explicit declaration” that the thirteen clocks, or colonies, should “strike” and declare to their parental authority, England, their intention to bond together in national unity. This statement mirrors the courting beau declaring his matrimonial intentions to his intended’s parents. Thus, like many of our nation’s forefathers, Adams understood the viability of using marriage metaphors to simulate national bonding and unity.

Adams’ misgivings reveal that the uniting of thirteen culturally diverse colonies—the simultaneous strike—was and is a phenomenal wonder. But more importantly, his concern demonstrates that in order for the nation, or the “clock,” to successfully “work,” all thirteen colonies had to gather and strike together as a united and perpetual whole: The Union. Ironically, fifty years after Adams wrote his letter—almost to the day—he and his close friend, Thomas Jefferson, passed away. During a time when America celebrated its Golden Jubilee and mourned these founding fathers’ deaths, rising regional tensions threatened that “perfect mechanism” – the nation’s perpetual unity.

The family metaphor would be taking a new turn in the decades leading up to the mid-19th century, but instead of using the metaphor to justify “divorced *a vincula*,” some writers would use the marriage metaphors to advocate against avoid divorce. More specifically, they used the marriage metaphor to encourage perpetual unity between the North and the South in the decades leading up to the Civil War. This dissertation examines North/South marriage metaphors in antebellum cross-regional literature as discursive strategies for healing regional tensions and encouraging perpetual, national unity.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Marriage Metaphors, Illness Tropes, and Cross-Regional Fiction

During the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, a time when heightened regional strife threatened the unity of the United States, antebellum writers who supported maintaining the Union wrote fiction in which characters across regions interacted harmoniously. Many of these writers constructed plots featuring couples from opposing regions who had to struggle against prejudice—often from their own families—before uniting in marriage. This work focuses on marriage-plot fiction precisely because marriage represents an unstable transition in the characters’ families, as individuals move from one family unit to another, and thus provides apt metaphors for addressing the national family’s transitions during Westward expansion. In conducting my analyses, I pay close attention to the “transitional space between single and married life” to demonstrate the heightened investment of the community in the courtships’ resolutions (Harvey 282). These marriages metaphorically illustrate preferred cross-regional harmony over “provincial prejudices.”¹ As one would suspect, plot outcomes typically favored the writers’ own regions as the preferred model; therefore, my work will demonstrate through rhetorical analyses that this fiction had an ideological agenda during a pivotal and unstable moment in our nation’s history.

While analyzing the novels for this project, I noticed patterns of illness that affected marital outcomes. Appropriately-matched marriages resulted in sick characters’ healing, whereas mismatched marriages resulted in either death or misery. While envisioning cross-regional

¹ William A. Caruthers, in *The Kentuckian*, frequently referred to “regional” prejudices as “provincial.”

fiction as a sub-genre emphasizing bridge-building and healing through national unity,² I began to see rhetorical connections between these illnesses and the authors' marriage union metaphors. Dating back to Colonial America's Puritans, such as Cotton Mather, and even into antiquity, writers have not only used what Bernd Herzogenrath calls the "Body|Politic" to equate civil government with the corporal body, but they have also used illness metaphors to suggest that a society was out of balance and in danger of death (Herzogenrath 87; Sontag 72). Likewise, my study showed me that some writers were using marriage metaphors to mirror national unity and illness metaphors for illustrating disunity or, rather, a nation out of balance and headed for dissolution. Therefore, I selected novels with both marriage and illness plots involving couples from the two contentious regions—the North and South—and inspired by three critical eras leading up to the Civil War: The Nullification Crisis of the 1830s, the financial crises of the 1830s to the 1840s, and the slavery debates of the 1850s. The primary texts for this analysis include William A. Caruthers's *A Kentuckian in New York* (1834), Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* (1835), Maria J. McIntosh's *The Lofty and the Lowly* (1853), and Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride* (1854). This project analyzes how such antebellum writers used their fiction to argue that building cultural understanding across the Northeast and Deep South (hereafter simply "North" and "South")³ could heal regional discord and strengthen national unity.

² Most interestingly, Fetterley and Pryse associate regionalism with the female gender, and they argue that as a marginalized and feminized genre regionalist fiction has the power to heal (18), bringing the nation together by creating a bridge among regions as well as between ethnicities (19).

³ The "Old South" consists of Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, North and South Carolinas, and Georgia. These states were also members of the original thirteen colonies. "Old South" should not be confused with the "Deep South" states, although South Carolina is considered a member of both the "Old South" and "Deep South."

The writers in this study use seemingly harmless marriage-plot fiction as a venue for their participation in shaping a nation-wide public dialogue about negotiating regional harmony and sustaining a strong union. However, the nation at this critical time was not strongly united, and these writers describe—either in their prefaces or in their narratives—the national body as sick or afflicted. Their fears include sickness that leads to regional “amputation” (Caruthers 1: 165), divorce (Sedgwick, *The Linwoods* 360), and death (McIntosh 2; Hentz, *Planter’s* 578-79). In these narratives, then, survival depends upon smart decisions about and commitment to (marital) unity, which brings “wholeness” and healing of characters and, symbolically, the nation. Within the transitional space between fictional courtship and marriage, tensions arise and illness typically afflicts either the couple or a close family member. Analyzing these illness plots allows me to show how the threat of potential death influences marriage-union outcomes. I find that the corporeal imagery of illness echoes the era’s regional tensions and the nation’s heightened investment in resolving discord and establishing a stronger unity for national survival. In these narratives, the illness plot serves as a rhetorical tool. A loved one’s illness encourages others to reflect, prompting those involved to re-evaluate their prejudices and attitudes about particular regions. Overcoming prejudices results in regional healing and, on a symbolic level, strengthens national unity.

These novels allow readers to listen in on fictional characters’ “conversations,” creating an extended dialogical and multi-voiced space for cross-regional understanding. Because these writers simultaneously reacted to the dominant culture’s attempts to define their regions inaccurately, and because their major characters *crossed* borders and interacted with characters from opposing regions, I argue that these works fall within a sub-genre of literary regionalism that I label “cross-regional fiction.”

Marriage and Illness Tropes: Historical Overview of American Body Politics

The seeds of American regional strife date back to the founding of the new republic when Northern and Southern state representatives argued over volatile issues such as slavery, reimbursement of states' war debts, and the location of the nation's capital. In fact, historian Gordon S. Wood (*Empire of Liberty*) explains that "at the moment of independence," Americans thought of themselves "as thirteen separate republics" (7), as opposed to a single, united entity. Wood explains that these new Americans could not even imagine "the possibility of creating a strong continental-sized national republic similar to the one established by the Constitution" in the late 1780s. Moreover, he maintains that unlike a monarchy, republics demanded:

far more morally from their citizens. . . . In monarchies each man's desire to do what was right in his own eyes could be restrained by fear or force, by patronage or honor, and by professional standing armies. By contrast, republics had to hold themselves together from the bottom up, ultimately, from their citizen's willingness to take up arms to defend their country and to sacrifice their private desires for the sake of the public good. (7)

In other words, citizens had to unite, "hold themselves together," in a strong, national bond. Yet the new nation lacked a unique name and a common nationality. In such case, Wood argues, "Union often became a synonym for nation" (42). Probably for these reasons, writers, philosophers, and politicians of this era began to use marriage as a metaphor for national unity.

In an appreciative study of marriage metaphors during America's colonial history, Elizabeth Dale explains how Puritans paralleled marriage covenants with civic covenants to describe hierarchical structures. She begins her historical study, "The Marriage Metaphor in Seventeenth-Century Massachusetts," with Puritan William Gouge, who compared hierarchical

structures between family and state and concluded that ““a family is a little church and a little commonwealth”” (qtd. in Dale 230). Gouge based his logic on scriptural titles describing husbands as “lord, master, guide, [and] head” (231). While the husband represented the “head,” the wife represented the marriage, the Church, and the state body. According to Dale, Gouge “frequently used the body to describe a marriage and, by implication, the state” because he felt that body metaphor better illustrated hierarchy to “heathens” (231). Later, Puritan John Winthrop, first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, altered the metaphor to depict women as perpetual children, enabling him to show both women and children as subordinate citizens (236). Feeling dissatisfied with a hierarchical arrangement that implied conquest, Puritan minister Richard Mather revised the metaphor to reflect a voluntary covenant based on free consent. Explicitly required for voluntary covenants were “liberty, freedom, and equality” (Dale 238). Dale explains that since authority derived from covenants was voluntary and not inherent, Mather frequently used the marriage metaphor as a contractual model based on consent (240; 238). As Colonial America began exploring the idea of independence, voluntary marriage covenants became an apt metaphor for its breaking ties with the parent country, Britain (Cott 15; Hawes 36).

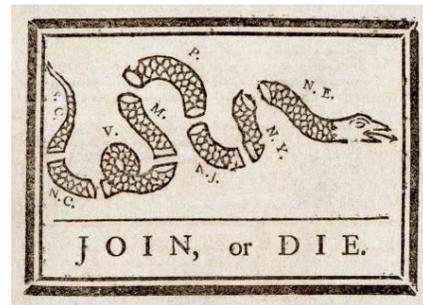
As scholars such as Elizabeth Dale, Nancy Cott and Jay Fliegelman have previously argued, early Americans were turning towards voluntary marriage unions to justify an allegiance based on love rather than fear. In *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation*, Cott describes how this understanding of marriage mirrors the founding fathers’ belief that marriage should be “a kind of polity,” “a voluntary union based on consent,” reflecting the nation’s newly emerging government and its “self-understanding and identity” (Cott, *Public* 10). Jay Fliegelman explores the “deeper significance marriage held for [Revolutionary-era] Americans on the brink

of war” and in building a foundation for their empire (127). “The point of the Revolution,” he maintains, “would not be simply to dissolve an intolerable union but to establish a more glorious one founded on the most primary of social unions—the voluntary marriage contract”

(Fliegelman 127). Similarly, in describing “Marriage” in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, Elizabeth Freeman explains:

as an aspect of modern emotional life in the United States, marriage is the ideological linchpin of intimacy—the most elevated form of chosen interpersonal relationship. At the core of political debate and much critical debate in American cultural studies is whether marriage is a matter of love or law, a means of securing social stability or of realizing individual freedom and emotional satisfaction. These have become national questions; marriage seems so tied to collective identity and democratic practices that many U.S. Americans view it as an expression of patriotism. (152-53)

Likewise, a national union, like a marriage union, protected the interests and “social stability” of individual states joined together. In short, thirteen *united* states could better protect their welfare than could thirteen independent nation-states.



Founders of the early republic recognized an urgent need to voluntarily unite for protection against tyranny. As early as the seventeenth century, Puritans like poet Edward Taylor believed “the onely way to avoyde this shipwracke, and to provide for our posterity” was to unite together as one union (qtd. in Herzogenrath 87). Frustrated with the British and their continued transporting of convicted felons to America, Benjamin Franklin joked that America should

reciprocate by sending rattlesnakes to England. This joke later influenced his now famous “Join, or Die” flag, which he created in 1754 to argue for a united effort in defending the colonies during the French and Indian War, and which would appear again during the Revolution. The flag creates a visual argument that Americans must “unite” to gain strength and safety.

While our founding fathers sought to eliminate the threat of disunity through exhorting speeches and the political process, print culture participated in nation building through popular literature; as a result, a genre of fiction evolved that highlighted marriage unions as allegories for endorsing national unity. In *States of Sympathy*, Elizabeth Barnes argues that “[m]arriage as both metaphor and social institution was to epitomize the union of civil and domestic governments so central to the political imagination” (65). In the context of marriage and partnership, these loving couples could, as citizens, “envision their individual relationships to larger communities” (65). Happy marriages, according to Barnes, are the hallmark of republicanism; they “subsume one person’s identity in the identity of another” (11). Like British laws of coverture, American marriage laws defined the united man and woman as one. Likewise, a confederation of nation-states united legally as “one” entity. For this reason, the confederation formed a centralized government using a template of patriarchal authority, like the Puritan leaders before them, in which the body of nations, symbolically represented as female, must submit. The female (citizen) who failed to unite with a husband (patriarchal government) exposed herself as vulnerable and susceptible to seduction, invasion, ruin, and possibly death. Fictional seduction and marriage plots illustrated this scenario to the reading public through print culture.

Post-Revolutionary novelists used seduction plots to illustrate “invasion” and the dangers of disunity to echo America’s risk in breaking with Britain. These sentimental novels provided

politically-based depictions of families severed and then reunited. Often presented as allegories, these portrayals mirrored Colonial America's break with England and reunification under a new Republic (Noble 176). In sentimental novels, the dangers of life outside of the marriage union frequently functioned as a metaphorical warning against failure to join the Union. In her study on the sentimental novel, Marianne Noble explains how these novelists often paralleled the seductive risks involved with women striking out on their own with the new Republic's break with Britain (Noble 176).

Seduction and sentimental novels used the marital allegory to portray the couple embedded in a community bound by love rather than "terrorized by hierarchical class relations or, later, legal interference" (Freeman 153). Within popular seduction novels of the eighteenth century, such as Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette*, "invasion" became double-voiced discourse for the seduction and ruin of the fictional female without the protection provided by a marriage union. On another discourse level, the "invasion" of a "foreign agent" also symbolized illness within the (national) body (Hong 2). The seduced heroine's "fall" metaphorically illustrated the "dissolution of Colonial purity and the necessity of rebuilding protective structures from within the new republic" (Barnes 9). "Seductive paternalism," a term coined by Elizabeth Barnes, does not renounce patriarchy so much as it reconceives it. It was good, Barnes explains, for women to be educable, even seducible by the male, affirming her personal liberty; however, her succumbing to private desires outside of the marriage union must be denied, affirming republican virtue and authority. She explains that the crisis derives not from "filial allegiance but allegiance to an authority [i.e., Great Britain] that does not have the family's best interests at heart" (65). As a result, the women who succumbed without first uniting with men (read:

patriarchal authority) in the legal bonds of matrimony died. Barnes argues that these “law[s] of the narrative” are written “onto individual hearts” of early American readers (62).

During late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America, print culture played a key role in revolution and cultural development. In fact, as Benedict Anderson (*Imagined Communities*) and Amanda Claybaugh (“Social Reform and the New Transatlanticism”) argue, citizens formed nations in part through the reading of novels and newspapers. “Newspapers,” Claybaugh states, “inform their readers of actual events happening to actual persons elsewhere in the nation, and novels entertain their readers with the same events in a fictional mode” (16).

Print culture’s commitment to the portrayal of the dangers of submission to a foreign nation intensified in the early nineteenth century. At this time, Americans considered realigning themselves with Great Britain and dissolving their alliance with France. Consequently, transatlantic marriage plots, such as Martha Meredith Read’s *Margaretta* (1807) and Rebecca Rush’s *Kelroy* (1812), encouraged support for either Federalists or Jeffersonian alliances. In addition, both novels use marriage unions to promote or oppose the Anglo-British paradigm established by Federalists under the recent Jay Treaty, which Read’s husband, John, worked to create. For instance, Read’s American heroine discovered she was switched at birth and was in fact, Lady Margaretta, daughter of a British aristocratic couple. This plot line worked to remind Anglo readers of their links to Great Britain and the aristocratic system. Rush’s *Kelroy* sent the opposite message. Her heroine resisted her mother’s forceful attempts to marry her to a cold, British aristocrat, illustrating a Jeffersonian model of individualism. Eventually, fictional marriage plots shifted from international to intramural unions.

By the 1830s, rising threats of disunity resulted in writers’ returning to the marriage trope as a metaphor for national unity. However, this time the threat came from within the nation itself.

Tensions over protective tariffs, the resulting Nullification Crisis, and arguments over states' rights and slavery resulted in South Carolina's threat to secede from the Union. Writers such as William Caruthers, Catharine Sedgwick, Maria McIntosh, and Caroline Hentz used metaphorical marriages to illustrate how healing regional differences could restore regional harmony.

Countering the Myth of National Unity

To appreciate the antebellum need for cross-regional marriage plots, twenty-first century readers need to understand the myth of the strongly united early republic. The term "American Revolution," argues Joseph J. Ellis in *Founding Brothers*, "propagates a wholly fictional sense of national coherence" for today's Americans (6). Most Americans today assume the nation was strongly united from the onset of the Revolution. Yet the new Republic escaped dissolving into "a cluster of state or regional sovereignties" thanks to the 1787 Constitutional Convention, which was at best "extralegal" (8).⁴ At this secret convention, the Southern delegates argued for and won assurances that slavery would continue south of the Potomac, even though slavery was "incompatible with the principles of the American Revolution" (Ellis 8, 17). But Americans' excitement over the Constitution's successful ratification caused them to "momentarily [forget] the deep differences that existed among themselves and among the various states and sections" (Wood 36). In *A Basic History of the United States*, historian Clarence Carson argues that despite the Articles of Confederation statement that the "Union shall be perpetual," most early Americans believed the Confederation was "occasioned by the revolt and once the danger was passed, the confederation would break up" (Carson 7).

⁴ The making of the myth of a strongly united Republic may be due to early historians, such as George Bancroft, who in 1834 published *The History of the United States of America, from the Discovery of the American Continent*. His text presented a nationalist view of the Revolution. Noting no "local variations," he suggested a national, cohesive push towards the Constitution, stating, "from the ocean to the American outposts nearest the Mississippi one desire prevailed for a closer connection, one belief that the only opportunity for its creation was come" (as qtd in Hesselstine 25).

George Washington's "Farewell Address" reveals to today's readers that the threat of national disunity through sectional prejudices continued into the approaching new century. On September 17, 1796, President George Washington exhorted Americans to maintain national unity, "for it is a main pillar in the edifice of . . . your peace abroad [and] of your safety"; it is, he states, "the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity." Present-day readers can sense within the speech's negative spaces that Washington harbored a foreboding awareness that tension and "Geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western," threatened national unity. He attempted to divert any potential "causes, which may disturb our Union," by reminding Americans each region held important qualities that benefited the others:

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds, in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and, while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted.

(Washington n. pag.)

Washington set forth here a utopian vision of a harmonious America—each and every limb depending upon the whole. He explained that the West derives benefits from the supplies and "maritime strength" of the East, and the East would "find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home." By including the four cardinal points,

Washington equated a healthy nation with a balanced nation. Sub-textually, he and his audience were cognizant of regional strife and threatened disunity. He warned that Americans should guard and preserve “the Union of the whole”; they “should properly estimate the immense value of [their] national Union to [their] collective and individual happiness,” and they should guard against “every attempt to alienate any portion of [their] country from the rest”—by endeavoring not “to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views” (Washington). Washington, in other words, wished the regions, while unique in character, to imagine themselves as a homogeneous community.

Washington, acutely aware of the nation’s fragility, enjoyed matchmaking with his wife Martha and “bringing together couples from different parts of the United States” (Wood 78). Readers of Sedgwick’s *The Linwoods* see the First Couple’s matchmaking play out in the uniting of Herbert Linwood and Lady Anne, who marry in Washington’s home under Martha’s tutelage. The Washingtons looked upon marriage as a dynastic means to “consolidating a ruling aristocracy for the sprawling extent of America”; together, they arranged sixteen marriages, including James Madison and Dolley Payne’s (Wood 78). On a related note, in his 1796 speech, Washington argued that a disunited nation would make the country susceptible to foreign invasion and international discredit. Like a marriage, a strong, patriarchal national union, according to Washington, equals security and protection for all citizens:

all the parts combined can not fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations, and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves which so frequently afflict neighboring countries

not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigue would stimulate and embitter. (Washington)

Founders of the United States, such as Washington, imagined that intimacy “would mirror kinship; love would meet law and even prefigure it” (Freeman 153). Therefore, it makes sense that Washington would choose intimate terminology like “intercourse,” a Union of “collective happiness,” and “attachments,” and juxtapose those intimate referents with pejorative words such as “alienation” and “rivalships,” which imply invasion and divorce. Additionally, terms indicating “socially disvalued states” connote “illness” and “disease” (John J. Pilch, “Improving Bible Translations: The Example of Sickness and Healing,” qtd. in Hong 2). Using this technique, Washington sought to create a sense of anxiety, a dread of detachment, and even a sense of impending doom within his reader/listener. Moreover, Washington “understood the power of symbols” and spent a great deal of time “devising schemes for creating a stronger sense of nationhood” (Wood 78). As a result, Washington further embedded the sacredness of the marriage union with the protective power of patriarchy. His position as “father” and his fatherly concern for the success of the Union anticipates the cross-regional marriage-plot tropes that this study examines.⁵ These fictional marriage plots, especially Caruthers’s and Sedgwick’s, both of which frequently use the Washington-as-national-father motif to illustrate a familial connection

⁵ According to Gordon Wood, “People said [Washington] was denied children in his private life so he could be the father of his country,” while others expressed “relief that he had no heirs,” thus negating the possibility of a monarchical heir. Washington himself worried about these anxieties and, in his first draft of his inaugural address, he wrote ‘the Divine Providence hath not seen fit, that my blood should be transmitted or name perpetuated by the endearing though sometimes seducing channel of immediate offspring.’ His initial version read: “no child for whom I could wish to make a provision—no family to build in greatness upon my country’s ruins” (73, 75). But his advisors recommended against it, and he omitted the statement.

across regions, contextualize Washington's concerns about the regional turmoil and the threat of disunity.

Review of Regional Scholarship

The tendency to place loyalties within a section (a political-based area) ahead of the nation created an exigency that precipitated the regionalist writers in this study to adopt the marriage-plot-as-metaphor trope in their fictions. These regionalists used this trope to encourage national unity over disunity. This project adapts elements of regionalist theory from a variety of disciplines and scholars, most significantly Frank Davey, who addressed Canadian regionalism in ways conducive to an American literary lens, and Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse, who radically restructured regionalist theory and deserve credit for inspiring the recent revival in regionalist literary studies. These scholars' work on regionalism is exciting because it focuses on the genre's rhetorical strategies and highlights the creative ways in which the genre participates in creating national identity. Frank Davey argues that regionalist literature enters public discourse to redefine its own regional identity; "[t]he individual called to by regionalism," he states, "is invited to hold certain restraining and shaping beliefs not because of political difference, but because such beliefs are perceived as 'true' or 'natural' to the inhabiting of a specific geography" (3). Regionalists write about their own regions, and use local customs, dialects, and settings to explain their region within the national whole. They possess an inherent claim to authority and truth not shared by writers who reside in outside regions. For these scholars, regionalism is a social construction, a discursive strategy that resists "meanings generated by others," especially those generated in areas "which can be constructed by the regionalism as central or powerful" (Davey 4). These theories of authenticity explain why authors like Maria McIntosh and Caroline Hentz felt they could persuade their readers to resist

perceived “meanings generated by others,” such as Northern abolitionists’ contention that slavery was evil. By casting themselves as regional authorities of the South, they encouraged their readers to accept *their* socially constructed “truth,” which is that the slave system was humane and beneficial to those unfortunate persons caught up in it.

Because writers such as those in this study refused to quietly accept the identities attributed to their regions by the dominant society, by print culture, or in parlor conversations, the genre came to be seen as directly oppositional and resistant to mainstream American realism, later championed by Theodore Roosevelt as “True Americanism.” Regional fiction, explains Fetterley and Pryse, is “the site of a dialogical critical conversation,” calling “into question numerous cultural assumptions about literary history” and reading strategies (*Writing* 2). They explain that critics often “denaturalize what it means to claim a regionalist identity,” thus creating a “‘regionalizing premise,’ the cosmopolitan view that to ‘regionalize’ is to contain and dismiss any resistance a region might make to its very regionalization” (*Writing* 5, 7). Regional writers, like Mary Wilkins Freeman, who take “open exception” to this premise, see themselves as “out of place.” Therefore, Fetterley and Pryse argue that these resistant texts add a “discursive marker” that invites readers to “re-conceptualize” past assumptions that have “regionalized,” or “marked,” their characters and their writings as “out of place” (*Writing* 7, 1-2). By writing in this genre, authors invite their readers to better understand their region; through *cross*-regional fiction, writers invite readers to re-conceptualize their nation as a community of culturally-diverse regions.

I argue that regionalist fiction imagines itself a community, an idea I explore through the lenses of Benedict Anderson’s text *Imagined Communities* and Stephanie Foote’s study in “The Cultural Work of American Regionalism.” Building on these scholars’ work, my dissertation will

explain how antebellum literary regionalism participated in constructing regional “imagined communities” within the broader, national community, while creating a way for communities to understand and value social difference. In this way, regional works, as Foote notes, “helped to establish a way of imagining communities that interrupted even as they sustained a national culture” and set the “agenda for many of the cultural concerns about multiculturalism” that we see today (40, 27). Focusing her work on literature of the twentieth century, an era much later than my own study, Foote argues that the “volatile moments,” such as those of the late nineteenth century, prompted regional writing. Issues such as Reconstruction failures, imperialism, Westward expansion and its assimilation, concerns about race and immigration, women’s advancement, and class and labor divisions all “demanded mechanisms” for Americans to make sense of the changing American identity (28, 31). Consequently, regional literature is a style “particularly well suited to the task of processing and mediating the social and political conflicts” (28). I argue the “volatile moments” of the antebellum era, during which tensions focused on *regional* differences, prompted what I call *cross-regional* writing.

In cross-regional fiction, it is precisely the “crossing,” or traveling across borders that serves as the gateway for regional examinations of antebellum tensions. As Benedict Anderson argues, the tensions of the era created a moment in which the bonds of nationalism were “elastic enough, combined with the rapid expansion of the western frontier and the contradictions generated between the economies of North and South, to precipitate a war of secession” (64). The “elasticity” connotes a weak commitment to national unity and signifies a viable threat of secession. Exploring the threat of Westward expansion on the national identity, William Caruthers introduces two Westerners as romantic rivals in his North/South marriage tropes. He

strategically fashions his border-crossing narrative to support a North/South bond that could sustain a Western threat and regional differences.

The elastic bonds of nationalism facilitated a tendency for states to place loyalties within their section over the nation (what I call “sectionalism”), creating an exigency for cross-regional marriage metaphor fictions. Since regionalism, as Foote notes, “held open the meaning of America and Americanness,” I argue that regional writing, cross-regional fiction in particular, surfaced at the most opportune moment to do what it does most efficiently: “elaborating the meaning of places and of the people who inhabited them [. . . ,] and discussing and mediating the place of social and cultural difference itself” (Foote 30, 27). Therefore, this literary genre is uniquely self-conscious of its own difference from the national whole. As Stephanie Foote points out, in moments of conflict involving place (such as regional tensions during the antebellum era), “no genre was more important than regional writing” (27). As a result of close study, I see Stephanie Foote’s assessment of regional fiction most fully in *cross-regional* fiction:

“[Regionalism’s] most powerful cultural work [is] the culturalization of difference itself; and the transformation of political difference into cultural differences that could be managed as its most important legacy to the United States” (39). Cultivating difference specifically, cross-regional fiction predominantly embraces dialectical discourses of a multi-cultural whole. According to political theorist and Bakhtin scholar Andrew Robinson, dialogism “involves the distribution of utterly incompatible elements within different perspectives of equal value.” For these reasons, cross-regional fiction repositions volatile arguments about politics and diverging cultures into fictional parlor conversations, in which decorum demanded politeness and emotional control. This format enables these writers to defuse tension and facilitate regional and cultural understanding, thus restoring national health. Using methods established by these scholars and

more, I examine ways local knowledges, revealed through the characters' observations and discourses, communicate cultural understanding across regional borders, thereby constructing a national identity of inclusion. Antebellum cross-regional narratives allow readers to understand the era's cultural complexity.

Keywords: Regional, Cross Regional, and Illness Plot

This dissertation classifies those writers celebrating their local regions while remaining loyal to the nation as “regionalists,” and it classifies their ideologies expressed through various art forms as “regionalism.” This concept of loyalty to the region under an umbrella of national patriotism contributes to the genre's paradoxical nature. Defining regionalism as a genre separate from sectional—a political-based geographical area—has involved a century-long debate among scholars and geologists.⁶ While sectional and regional works are similar in that place drives both genres, the ideological messages behind these narratives are distinctly *dissimilar*.⁷

⁶ Howard W. Odum and Harry Estill Moore acted as mediators by organizing a variety of definitions and opinions of regionalism into a type of courtroom debate in order to “obtain a fair ‘hearing’ for the various viewpoints” (174). One might more accurately describe the resulting conversation as attacks and counterattacks. To list a few examples, Odum and Moore began with what they call James Gray's “extremist's interpretation,” entitled “The Minnesota Muse.” Gray, a literary scholar from St. Paul, stated “[t]hat militantly American doctrine called regionalism” makes “local prejudice something vaguely resembling a religion” (174). They followed Gray with the “equally narrow concept of regionalism” by Paul Beath, who called the Southern-Agrarian school led by Donald Davidson, John Crowe Ransom, and Allen Tate, “unreconstructed rebels who are continuing the Civil War long after Appomattox.” Beath went on to list several faults with the genre, namely that regionalism possesses an inferiority complex, has a preoccupation with mediocrity, “especially local mediocrity,” exploits “the rural folk at the expense of the urban folk,” and denies the “great tradition” established by Matthew Arnold, which is “the best that has been thought and known in the world” (175-77). Odum and Moore concluded by calling attention to the “problem” of adequately defining regionalism. Thus they leave readers with vague descriptors, such as regionalism as “portraiture of the various folk groups and differing localities in the nation” (Odum, *American Regionalism* 168-170).

⁷ Due to the negative connotations associated with the geographical term “section,” scientists, sociologists, and literary writers of the New Regionalism Movement of the 1930s desired to “draw a sharp distinction between sectionalism and regionalism,” thereby enabling regional works to “escape the taint of war” (Davidson, “Where Regionalism” 24). Quite naturally, in the years following the Civil War and even into the twentieth century, the term “sectionalism,” placing the state before the Union, continued to elicit negative reactions and suspicions by critics and publishers. The tendency to confuse “regional” with “sectional” inhibited the publication efforts of

Anticipating questions about the scope and limitations of the terminology I use in this study, I admit that, while many antebellum writers used the term “region,” I have found no evidence they referred to themselves as “regionalists” or described their literary style as “regionalism.”⁸ Nevertheless, early Americans recognized geographical cultural differences and called for a literature to represent their distinct regions. For instance, in an 1831 address to the alumni of Miami University in southwestern Ohio, Benjamin Drake, a historian and writer, exhorted graduates to develop a literature that represented their formerly “wild region,” now “teeming with millions of intelligent beings” (83). He explained that their literature, which should not imitate the “more superficial productions of other regions,” should be “imbued with that vigor and manliness which are the appropriate characteristics of Backwoodsmen” (91). Drake recognized Western art and culture as both similar to yet distinct from the national whole. In fact, Drake told his listeners it was their “proud destiny” that their “magnificent valley [should] send up the pure streams of learning, knowledge, and patriotism” to the republic. He further reasoned that regional knowledge would then sweep away “sectional jealousies, giving perpetuity to the union and happiness to the people” (83). In other words, regional literature and

Southern writers who wished to paint their regions in the narrative form. For example, Josiah Royce, the idealist philosopher of “enlightened provincialism,” complained in 1908 that “against the evil forms of sectionalism we shall always have to contend” (72). Similarly, Southern Agrarian Donald Davidson lamented that “sectionalism received a stigma which has never been erased” (Davidson, *Regionalism and Nationalism* 7). Davidson also complained, “And so, even in dictionaries of the year 1936, the term sectionalism is defined, with a Johnsonian fillip, as ‘devotion, especially disproportionate, to the interests peculiar to a section of the country; sectional feeling, prejudice, etc.’” When discussing the recent adoption of the term “regionalism,” Davidson quipped that “Of all the Americans who are affected by this turn of affairs, the Southerner is naturally the quickest to rejoice” because the new term allowed Southern writers to embrace their “old southern claims” while “maintaining differentiations that were once damned and dismissed as sectional” (Davidson, “Where Regionalism” 24).

⁸ Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse, who date the origins of regionalism at 1850 in *Writing Out of Place*, also make this disclaimer.

understanding would reverse the negative effects of sectional tensions and heal the nation, a concept the writers of this study also embraced. Readers can infer from Drake's use of the two terms (sectional and regional) that they hold inherently opposing ideologies.

Consequently, the ideal of a regional literature that also supported national unity might have been too innovative for its own time, perhaps owing to a tendency to conflate "regional" with "sectional."⁹ For instance, two years after Benjamin Drake's 1831 speech, his brother Daniel attempted to "forestall possible charges" by members of the Literary Convention of Kentucky, who suspected the Western regions might have been encouraging a "sectional literature which would subserve a Western confederacy inimical to the Union" (Spenser 221).¹⁰ In a speech strikingly entitled "Remarks on the Importance of Promoting Literacy and Social Concert, in the Valley of the Mississippi, as a Means of Elevating its Character, and Perpetuating the Union," Daniel Drake recognized there currently flowed a "spirit of disunion" within the nation and argued that a Western literature could cement, or heal, a "future adhesion among all

⁹ Massachusetts Senator Rufus Choate warned against double allegiances of both state-nation and state-section in 1858; he warned that "there is an element of regions antagonistic to nationality" (qtd in Spenser 227).

¹⁰ While researching through Caroline Lee Hentz's archives, located at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, I serendipitously discovered letters between the Hentzs's and Dr. Daniel Drake, who, with Caroline, was a member of Ohio's Semicolon Club and a mentor to her son, Charles, who attended the Medical College of Ohio where Drake (a founding member) lectured as a professor. He also visited the Hentzs's in the South on one of his research expeditions. In *The Planter's Northern Bride*, Hentz's character Dr. Darley strongly resembles Drake. He is a physician and mentor to the Planter's brother-in-law, has curly hair, was born in the East and moved West, and never got over losing his late wife—all characteristics in line with Dr. Drake, who died during the time Hentz was writing the novel. She also added unfulfilled romantic tensions between the Planter's sister and Dr. Darley, which are interesting. In reading Hentz's personal diary and letters, I infer that she had affection for the doctor. In another interesting anecdote, her son, Charles, wrote in his autobiography about a scandalous scene occurring while the Hentzs's were living in Ohio. Caroline received a note from an admirer. Her husband, Nicholas, on pretense of leaving the house to go hunting, quietly returned and caught her answering the note. He flew into a murderous rage and challenged the man to a duel. Caroline, in fear, sent word to Dr. Drake, who arrived in time to stop the duel and calm tensions. Immediately after this scene, the Hentz's closed their female academy, packed up, and left Ohio. Caroline created a similar scene in *Lovell's Folly*, naming the would-be suitor "Colonel King" (Hentz, Charles 411).

the states” (Drake, Daniel 51).¹¹ While contemporaries viewed this writing style with suspicion, the Drake brothers clearly understood Western, regional literature’s national and rhetorical distinction from sectional.

The Drake brothers’ speeches reveal that regionalism struggled to take root during the antebellum era and elicited suspicion among those who mistook regionally-themed writing as anti-national. A century later, Donald Davidson, pro-agrarian and political sectionalist, explained that this mild, “put the nation first” interpretation of regionalism can be dangerous for the genre’s survival. Defeat, he argued, likely awaits the regionalist because those who “happen to hold national authority” might “consciously or unconsciously make a sectional interpretation of ‘national interest’” (29). Unfortunately, confusion about the genre’s inclusion in a national literature and increasing sectional tensions and jealousies leading to the advent of the Civil War eventually squashed the sprouting regionalist style. Anything that celebrated region – especially the Southern region—came to be viewed with suspicion and suspected of sectionalism, which had come to connote an anti-Union sentiment (Spenser 229). Regionalism would remain predominately suppressed until it reemerged in reconstruction romances, such as Constance Fenimore Woolson’s “Old Gardiston” (1876). By the early twentieth-century, “regional” as a geographical study and then a literary genre entered the lexicon of American literary history.

Inspired by the work of geographer John W. Powell and historians Lyman C. Draper and Fredrick Jackson Turner, early twentieth-century scholars adopted the term “region.” Powell, who published “Physiographic Regions of the United States” in 1895, changed map-making from the old sectional to a regional system. Powell felt that dividing the map into sections was

¹¹ Robert Penn Warren, writing in the 1936 *Southern Review*, and Fetterley and Pryse, *Writing Out of Place*, argue that regionalist writers felt that their writing had healing qualities (Flora and MacKethan 685; Fetterley and Pryse 31).

problematic since social and economic trends did not always line up with definitive state borders, much the same way regional literature today resists definitive features of form. Powell thought regions were “natural divisions, because in every case the several parts are involved in a common history by which the present physiographic features have been developed” (qtd. in Mood, *Regionalism in America* 84). Frontier historian Fulmer Mood would later explain that Powell’s new “consideration of regions apart from section” subsequently found “its own proper place in the scheme of things” (Mood 9)—in other words, the New Regionalist movement of the 1930s. Powell’s work influenced historians Lyman C. Draper, who believed “out of the record of regions” that “men could come to a fundamental understanding of the nation,” and Fredrick Jackson Turner.¹²

While writing and researching the 1830s to 1850s, Fredrick Jackson Turner, whose “History of the West” was the first history course on an American region offered at a university, wrote to a friend that while completing his book, he became frustrated with terminology. He stated that while “attempting to exhibit the sectional and regional (in distinction from sectional) aspects of our history,” he became “more and more aware of the difficulty of the task and [was] getting very humble.” He found he must “distinguish *regions*, within a section or across several sections, from *sections* as groups of states” (as qtd. in Carstensen 114-15).¹³ William B. Hesseltine later claimed that Turner realized “the United States was not a series of politically united states but a congeries of regions” with fluid boundaries (Hesseltine, “Sectionalism” 28-

¹² Frederick Jackson Turner was one of America’s first generation of academic historians and one of the “pioneers in establishing history as a part of the college curriculum” (Hesseltine, *Sectionalism* 26). He pushed for courses in sectional and regional history.

¹³ Carstensen makes no comment as to whether he or Turner added the emphasis.

29), an argument Benedict Anderson also maintains. Like the regional landscape, literary “regionalism” defies hard-and-fast definitions.

The geographers and historians cited here embraced “region” as a method of study specifically because of its fluidity. However, in literary studies, scholars have been more hesitant. In its purest form, regionalism’s resistance to definitive boundaries helps us understand why scholars in the humanities then and now overlook distinguishing “sectional” from “regional”—frequently using the words interchangeably (Jensen 4). In the literary arena, Donald Davidson summed up the terminology problem best: “Like many other terms appropriated from the language of science, the words *region* and *regionalism* lose all exactness when they enter the literary vocabulary” (Mood, *Regionalism* 179). While researching this subject, I found today’s historians still conflate the two terms; regionalism essentially has a public relations problem.

A thorough understanding of “sectional” and “regional” terminology is important in comprehending why regional writers believed their works could heal a divided nation and why many publishers and scholars have, until recently, misunderstood and marginalized the regional genre. *Sectional* borders are politically defined; whereas, *regional* boundaries are organically constructed. Foremost, “section” implies separateness and segregation. Sectionalist writers, such as Southern writer Augusta Jane Evans, placed their loyalties to their section over the nation. On the other hand, “region” implies a portion of a larger geographical and/or national culture. As a method of study, regionalism is about exclusion and inclusion; regionalists, sensing that outsiders viewed their regions as culturally distinct, sought inclusion with the larger whole—the nation—through arts and literature. Therefore, it makes sense that regional writers saw themselves—and their works—as nationalist. In fact, William B. Hesseltine referred to this genre as “regional-nationalism” and contrasted its promotion of “unity and cooperation” with the

“competitive” and “selfish nature of sectionalism” (“Regions, Classes and Sections” 35). Likewise, Howard W. Odum clarified that regionalism “envisages the Nation first” (338). He likens sectionalism with “cultural inbreeding, whereas regionalism is line-breeding.” Regions benefit from a “cross fertilization of ideas” and develop “new strength” from breeding in “new cultures, built upon the old” (“Regionalism Versus Sectionalism” 339). In explaining the difference, Odum used animal husbandry terminology, which subsequently reinforces the argument made by the writers who comprise this study: marrying cross-regionally promotes a stronger nation.

Although Odum’s arguments referred to the “New Regionalism” movement of the 1930s and pertained mostly to economics, technology, and the nation’s material resources, his distinctions between and classifications of “sectional” and “regional” provide a complement to my analyses of antebellum cross-regional literature. In-breeding (sectionalism), for instance, refers to crossing two closely-related animals, such as brother and sister. Line-breeding (regionalism), by contrast, refers to the bringing together of two animals with common yet distant ancestors, such as our metaphorical national father George Washington, about whose position as beloved patriarch both William Caruthers (*A Kentuckian*) and Catharine Maria Sedgwick (*The Linwoods*) sought to remind readers. Odum argued that regions needed to “line-breed” and not “in-breed,” to obtain a “well planned, interregional balanced economy” (“Regionalism” 339). “Balanced,” a word loaded with symbolic meaning, signals a healthy union. Understanding the difference between “sectional” and “regional” helps reveal that the works that make up this dissertation are regional in nature. Moreover, the writers I analyze feature characters that cross and marry across regional boundaries, hence merging the line-breeding “balance” metaphor into their marriage plots.

Couples in the novels that make up this study marry across *borderlines* to illustrate that the regionally-blended antebellum family unit leads to a stronger, balanced nation. The cross-regional marriage metaphors I study appear to correspond to Hesseltine's and Odum's visions of regionalism as pro-national.¹⁴ Similarly, cross-regional couples would likely produce progeny ("new cultures") whose hybrid identities would tie two regions together ("built upon the old"). Indeed, Caroline Hentz's *Planter's Northern Bride* and Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* propose just such a scenario. In *PNB*, the planter holds up his cross-regional son as a symbol to his devoted slaves, promising that he and his generations (who represent a national "whole" in blood) will care for them always because they are his family. The planter's baby boy, grandson to both an abolitionist and a slave holder, represents the Southerner's hopeful vision of the nation's future: North and South united in understanding and accepting of slavery as an honorable institution, beneficial to the national whole.¹⁵ Likewise, in Sedgwick's novel, Mr. Linwood (a staunch Tory throughout) admires his new grandson. Nevertheless, he cannot help but provide a disclaimer: "though, he was born under Washington's flag, and sucks in independence and republicanism with his mother's milk, the little rascal." Notably, he acknowledges he now has "few salutary bitter drops," indicating the healing power of cross-regional represented in his grandson (355).

¹⁴ Over a decade later, the historian Merle Curti provided us with Professor Odum's definition of regionalism (yet he did not provide the source). For Odum, regionalism is "essentially a synthesis of differentiation and integration, with the framework of homogeneities and diversities, following the historical process of periodic alternating between the particularist trend of multiplying culture areas and the universalist trend toward consolidation and integration of areas and cultures" (qtd. in Curti 377). While Curti found the definition "a highly useful instrument of analysis" (377), this dissertation seeks to discover a more pragmatic set of criteria for determining regionalist texts.

¹⁵ While a few scholars today still tend to refer to *The Planter's Northern Bride* as a "sectional" or "intersectional" novel, I place Hentz's work under the regional umbrella due to its pro-Union agenda. Karen A. Keely, "Marriage Plots and National Reunion" (1998), refers to Hentz's, Caruthers's, and McIntosh's writings as "intersectional" romances that sought to "promote sectional understanding" (621). Additionally, Karen Manners Smith, writing in *The History of Southern Women's Literature*, refers to Hentz as a "sectional propagandist" (56).

The most important aspect of regional literature for my work here is the role that local geography plays within the narrative. In defining the literary “region” for *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* (2007), Sandra A. Zagarell argues that critics of regionalism have traditionally recognized “place as a given.” Additionally, drawing on scholars such as Judith Fetterley, Marjorie Pryse, Stephanie Foote, Kate McCullough, Amy Kaplan, Carrie Tirado Bramen, Richard Brodhead, and June Howard, Zagarell summarizes the common features of the form as a “celebration of difference” in race, ethnicity, gender, and class. Similarly, Elizabeth Ammons and Valarie Rohy, *America Local Color Writing, 1880 – 1920*, argue that, rather than viewing region literally, as environmentalism and nature writing, textual analyses suggest “local color or region is more accurately a metaphor that describes differences of culture as well as geography” (xxviii). Following these scholars, I, too, view regionalist fiction as works that center on a culturally diverse American “place” as a defining feature of form. Place drives these narratives and the conflict; it colors the characters’ cultural markers and attitudes.

My own definition of regionalism derives for the most part from Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse’s *Writing out of Place* and the much-respected regionalist writer and naturalist Mary Austin, for whom American Literature *is* a regional literature (Austin 98). As Fetterley and Pryse argue, regional literature “recognizes itself to be ‘out of place’ and thus functions as a cultural interpreter (7). However, Fetterley and Pryse’s definition of the genre is more local than other scholars, such as Ammons’s and Rohy’s, who conflate regionalism with local color, and even my own interpretation. While Fetterley and Pryse resist a representative region as monolithic as “the South” (12), my definition embraces a nesting of regions—a smaller region within a larger region, and so forth. For instance, Harlem is a region within New York City. As a “place,” it has its own culture, dialect, and philosophical beliefs somewhat interrelated to city life

but also amplified and distinct. Nested within Harlem is Spanish Harlem, a more narrowed place with an even more distinct culture, language, and belief system.

Regional

Therefore, I define regional literature as a distinctly nationalist, “place-based” genre that highlights the connection between character and place. Regionalist works ask readers to seek an understanding of how a region influences its inhabitants’ identity—and to recognize their cultural distinctiveness as inclusive within the national whole. Regionalist fiction emphasizes community over the individual, which appears somewhat at odds with America’s devotion to individualism. However, regional literature is dialogic, inherently recognizing multiple voices and perspectives as of equal value—thus embracing a situated form of individualism. While culturally distinct and seemingly different, these individual voices carry their own narrative weight. As Bakhtin scholar Andrew Robinson has noted, an integral part of the heteroglossic (multi-voice) novel is its “combative quality” and resistance to “closure or unambiguous expression, [which] fails to produce a ‘whole.’” Accordingly, Robinson explains, the heteroglossic novel “involves a world which is fundamentally irreducible to unity”; instead, it embraces a multi-voiced “separateness and simultaneity.” Naturally, multi- and equally-valued-discourse counters the state’s and nation’s monological perspectives. As a promoter of an anti-regionalist homogenizing nationalism, in his 1894 speech “True Americanism,” Theodore Roosevelt, a president seeking cultural coherence during the height of regionalism’s late nineteenth-century popularity, advocated a patriotic American literature that embraced a “broad adhesion to the whole nation” (Roosevelt). Despite Roosevelt’s wish for literature to present America as a culturally unified nation, the reality is that since its earliest days as a Republic, America has been and will always be culturally diverse. Suppressing cultural diversity,

moreover, can—and did—lead to rebellion, which is exactly what happened in 1861. In fact, America continues to struggle with embracing cultural diversity, especially religious and racial diversity. As my project shows, regionalism performs cultural work by asking readers to embrace that diversity.

This study posits that an inherently resistant and non-conforming regional literature is a major characteristic of Americanism and American literature, a premise proposed by Mary Austin in her 1932 article “Regionalism in American Fiction.” Mary Austin speculated that cultural prejudices may have kept readers and writers from embracing diverse regional works as a national literature. Austin theorized “our long disappointed expectation of the ‘great American novel,’ for which every critic was once obliged to keep an eye out, probably originated in the genuine inability of the various regions to see greatness in novels that deal with fine and subtle distinctions in respect to some other region” (99). Austin’s observations that critics sometimes lacked appreciation for fiction driven by regional culture rings true in my own research—that many scholars associate the genre with provincialism or geographical oddities.

In America, non-conformity is natural, so to expect a literature that presents a homogenous national culture is unnatural.¹⁶ Undeniably, Austin’s embracing of diversity was a far cry from Nathaniel Hawthorne’s frustrating 1840 declaration that American literature had “no limits and no oneness; and when you try to make it a matter of the heart, everything falls away except one’s native State” (qtd. in Jensen 220).¹⁷ Austin argued it is both natural and logical for

¹⁶ As Austin argued, these kinds of “notions” are as “ill-defined” as the “implied criticism” that there was a “kind of disloyalty” in such differentiations of any one geographical place from others. In the end, she determined these criticisms were “by-product[s] of the Civil War” (98).

¹⁷ In the mid-eighteenth century, the terms “region” (undefined borders) and “section” (defined borders) were “unfixed currency” and were frequently used interchangeably (Odum and Moore 223). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that one could read Hawthorne’s “state” as “region.”

Americans to write regional fiction. In fact, Austin stated she was “rather surprise[ed]” that critics of her era viewed regionalism as “something new” (98). For her, the “astonishing thing would have been to find the American people as a whole resisting the influence of natural environment in favor of the lesser influences of a shared language and a common political arrangement” (98). She believed that it was not in the nature of mankind “to be all of one pattern in these things any more than it is in the nature of the earth to be all plain, all seashore, or all mountain” (98). Writing a full century before Austin, the editor of the *New York Constellation*, A. D. Paterson, likewise expressed appreciation for a regional-based American literature in his editorial review of *The Kentuckian*. He thought “peculiarity of scene, and of moral and political feature, together with an almost unbounded liberty of expression, can produce a national literature” (n. pag.). Paterson posited that Americans traveling through the country would experience wonder at the diverse scenes, “multifarious” characters, and “originality of feeling and expression” around them. Likewise, for Donna Campbell, nineteenth-century literature—viewed through a regional lens—does not reveal “a ‘whole’ in American literature but a series of partial portraits” (*Realism* 108). It is precisely these diverse and multi-voiced (polyphonic) elements that *cross-regional* fiction embraces and conveys to readers sitting at home.

Cross-Regional

As a sub-genre of regional fiction, the cross-regional, antebellum North/South fiction analyzed here exhibits the cultural and ideological characteristics of at least two regions in its effort to negotiate difference and envision unity. Therefore, cross-regional fiction’s most distinguishing characteristic is polyphonic discourse. The term “polyphony,” borrowed by literary critic Michel Bakhtin in “Discourse in the Novel,” comes from music theory, referencing the blending of multiple instruments (or voices), independent of melody but harmonious as a

whole. Because the nation is polyphonic—non-homogenous yet homogenous—cross-regional fiction inherently best suits American literary representation. Bakhtin distinguishes literary works in which discursive differences coexist as heteroglossia. Because cross-regional texts embrace polyphonic voices, they are Heteroglossic and, therefore, able to “represent the debates of a time-period, and bring perspectives into fuller understanding of each other” (Robinson). In other words, cross-regional fiction inspires dialectic discourse.

Since regionalism is self-conscious about representational accuracy, it recognizes only its own members as experts. For that reason, many authors of *cross*-regional narratives claim the unique distinction of dual-regional citizenship. Of the four authors who make up this study, three claim this advantage. William A. Caruthers, a Virginian, attended medical school in Philadelphia, where he also worked before moving to and practicing in New York. Caruthers lived in a range of geographical areas and hoped to settle in the West before his death. Maria J. McIntosh of Georgia moved to New York to live with her brother after losing her money in the Panic of 1837. And Caroline Lee Hentz, born in Massachusetts, lived in the North, the West, and the South, residing in Ohio, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida. Catharine Maria Sedgwick, who doesn't claim a North/South identity, structured her Nullification-reaction novel as a Revolutionary era allegory, setting regional conflicts between the urban New York City and Massachusetts agrarians, both locations of residency at various times in her life. These writers draw upon their travel and multi-residential experiences to claim authority about social and ideological place-based characteristics. While a “dialogical novel reveals and relativises linguistic borders, making discourse travel across them” (Robinson), these authors needed border-crossing characters to legitimately carry those observation to readers.

Consequently, cross-regional fictions are inherently travel narratives. For that reason, at least one character must “cross” geographical borders and interact with out-of-region others. The crossing of boundaries occurs in a variety of ways. For instance, an “outsider” may cross into the protagonist's own region, allowing the reader to subsequently receive, via the protagonist’s point of view, impressions of the outsider and his/her home region. Typically, though, a protagonist will cross borders and convey his/her impressions of the foreign region to other characters—either in that region (by answering questions like, “Tell us your observations of our city and its people?”) or to friends and family in the protagonist’s home region—and consequently to readers. In Caruthers’s *The Kentuckian*, for instance, the protagonist accomplishes this feat by recording his observations, impressions, and discoveries of New Yorkers in letters to his Virginian friend, Beverley. Sedgwick hypothesizes that cross-cultural mixing, phrased as “placing men in new relations,” often results in a “new force and beauty [with] ties that bind together the human family” in a union that “no test could dissolve” (*The Linwoods* 100). In writing about Bakhtin’s heteroglossia, political theorist Andrew Robinson explains, “The text appears as an interaction of distinct perspectives or ideologies, borne by the different characters. The characters are able to speak for themselves, even against the author” (Robinson). In other words, writers such as those in my study structure an artistic system, arranging “diversity of styles and voices” in particular ways for particular effects (Robinson).

To sway readers, a work of fiction must represent likeable characters from multiple regions represented within the text. Cross-regional writers seek (perhaps superficially) representational balance. Their amiableness encourages a spirit of ethos readers would welcome and appreciate. Of course, these cross-regional characterizations are inherently prejudicial, usually favoring the protagonist’s and/or possibly the writer’s own region. In reading cross-

regional fiction, the audience listens in on conversations in which characters discuss regional culture and customs, a strategy that lessens the persuasive underpinning within the narrative. Discourse revolves around concepts of space and territory, notions of inside and outside, center and margin. These spatial borders are socially constructed. In these North/South narratives, discursive exchanges include comparisons of women's clothing, education, food, religion, political views, and moral virtues. For example, in Caruthers's *The Kentuckian*, readers learn that Southern women are well-educated and in McIntosh's *The Lofty and the Lowly*, readers learn that Southern women dress modestly, and Northern women spend too much money on fashions that quickly go out of style.

Discourses naturally include political concerns of the day – such as slavery and abolition. Whether discussed or not, slavery haunts these antebellum texts, undermining the notion of a stable Union and foreshadowing the forthcoming national split. As Robinson describes heteroglossia, each voice “has its own perspective, its own validity, and its own narrative weight within the novel” (“Robinson” n. pag.). For example, in *The Linwoods*, Isabella's brother, a Whig, is saved by a former slave, Rose, who later states, “this a'n't to be the land for them that strut in scarlet broadcloth and gold epaulets, and live upon the sweat of workin people's brows. No, thank God—and General Washington” (355). While contemporary readers of the 1830s may have sympathized with Rose's plight, they would have also comprehended her mistaken expectation of emancipation. Moreover, in Hentz's *Planter's Northern Bride*, the planter strategically discusses the North's idea of slavery by picking apart and dissecting each Northern argument as an unfounded rumor devised by malicious runaway slaves. Through the narrative, Hentz tries to influence the reader's perceptions of truth by portraying the hero-planter as a dashing and chivalrous gentleman, capable of deep feelings and emotions. After Hentz has

boosted his likeability, the planter's voice holds more *ethos* when later depicting runaway slaves as murderous and dangerous to society and their aiding and abetting abolitionists as unreasonable manipulators who frequently become victims to the slaves they harbor.

Determining likeable and unlikeable characters enables me to closely examine the characters' dialogues, their polemical agendas – both overt and hidden—and their morals in light of the regions they represent. For instance, after receiving new knowledge about an opposing region, characters refusing to embrace diversity, instead maintaining their regional prejudices, typically meet tragic ends, such as losing all their money gambling in *The Lofty* or making unfavorable marital choices in *The Linwoods*. These observations are significant on a national level since “fatal illness has always been viewed as a test of moral character” (Sontag 41). Those characters lacking moral virtue threatened the nation's health and security. Conversely, favorable characters are benevolent, highly moral, generally likeable, and they end their days happily ever after. These assessments reflect the writer's own ideological agenda regarding their regions' inclusion in the national identity. By explaining and/or defending their regions, these writers hoped their multi-voiced works would teach regional familiarity and enhance understanding among out-of-region persons, resulting in a more cohesive bond. However, within the transitional space between courting and the marriage union in the fiction that comprises this project, conflict typically manifests as a physical affliction, which subsequently affects marital outcomes.

Illness Plot

In literary history, illness metaphors “have always been used to enliven charges that a society was corrupt or unjust” (Sontag 72). As early as the eighteenth-century, French anatomist Marie François Xavier Bichat related health to “the silence of organs” and disease to “their

revolt” (qtd. in Sontag 44). In her critical text *Illness as Metaphor*, Susan Sontag uses the analogy of “dual citizenship” in describing wellness and illness. Wellness, she argues, is the “good passport,” while illness is an “onerous citizenship” (3). Sontag argues that if “[o]rder is the oldest concern of political philosophy, and if it is plausible to compare the polis to an organism, then it is plausible to compare civil disorder to an illness” (76). During the decades leading up to the Civil War, sectional strife over tax tariffs and slavery afflicted national peace. The writers in this study used illness metaphors to relocate vitriolic debates into civil discourses about marriage and harmony. I label these rhetorical devices “the illness plot.”

Caruthers’s and Sedgwick’s texts are the best examples to illustrate illness as metaphorical threats to national harmony. Caruthers’s hero, Victor, describes place-based discord as a “line of demarcation” drawn distinctly “between the diseased and the healthy flesh.” This line divides, he argues, slave and free states. He prays “the disease may be cured without amputation, and before mortification takes place” (1: 165). Further linking polis with the body (or family body) and civil revolt to disease, Sedgwick’s anti-heroine, Helen Ruthvan, describes the rebel son of a Tory as a “diseased branch from a sound root” (83). Sedgwick uses the term “infected region” to describe an area united in colonial revolt (36). The infection, caused by prejudice, “sacrilegiously severs the bonds by which God has united man to man, and breaks the human family into party and sects!” (158). In short, discord is an illness that threatens the national health and harmony. Throughout the nineteenth century, as Sontag explains, “disease metaphors be[came] more virulent” (74). Thus, disease “became the synonym for whatever was ‘unnatural’” (74) or out of balance. For a Union desiring perpetuity, the breaking of “family into party and sects” is as unnatural as divorce. Sedgwick’s allegorical Revolution-era narrative, describes the war as “unnatural” and divorce as “unscriptural” (200, 360). Writing during an era

of heightened regional tensions, owing to the ongoing Nullification Crisis, Caruthers and Sedgwick chose to use illness metaphors to explore problems in the national character.

To induce healing, the authors in this project introduce the marital union as a metaphor for national healing and stability. These writers sought a balanced “union” between the North and the South. Drawing upon the classical and medical concept of balance, Sontag argues that illness in the polis comes from imbalance. “Treatment,” therefore, “is aimed at restoring the right balance—in political terms, the right hierarchy” (Sontag 77). A nation in balance—in order—is healthy. If tension, prejudice, and revolt could make a region “infected,” then order and balance—through mitigating prejudices via regional understanding— should restore health. In *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, an abolitionist father denies marital consent for his daughter, the Northern bride, to marry a Southern planter, and the couple falls ill. The father must make a decision that affects the couple’s lives. After the father endorses the marriage, the couple regain their health and marry. Afterwards, the abolitionist’s daughter travels to her new Southern plantation home. In letters home to her parents, she describes a well-balanced and harmonious plantation/slavery system. The planter serves as a father figure to the slaves, and his mammie/mother is an old and respected slave woman who approves of the new bride. His slaves have their own cabins, personal gardens and livestock, and earn extra money on their own time. An all-inclusive community, the plantation makes and provides all crops, food, clothing, and ironworks. The plantation also has a store where slaves can make purchases. The system, as the Northern bride describes it, is balanced and harmonious—healthy. Each cross-regionalist novel that makes up this dissertation contains healing metaphors for national health and well-being.

The illness plot works in the vein of what Karen Tracey labels “the double-proposal plot.” Writers of domestic fiction, Tracey argues, use the double-proposal plot to navigate the

“labyrinth of conflicting interests” between male and female desires (2). Heroines first reject marriage proposals desired by fathers. Then, these women accept proposals they deem desirable. Similarly, in illness plot fiction, impediments to marriage cause illness, and in some cases, this illness disrupts courtship and marital plans. The ensuing delay provides time and agency for one or more characters to reconsider prior assumptions about the match. For example, when the slave owner and abolitionist’s daughter fall ill, their position bordering mortal doom encourages the father’s reflection and reconsideration:

He could not help asking himself, if he were doing right to separate those whom God seemed to have united by a love so passing strong He questioned his own principles, his own motives, and wondered if it were really his duty to sacrifice his daughter’s happiness to his own reputation. (121-22)

As this example shows, “The romantic view is that illness exuberates consciousness” (Sontag 36), and with time to think, the father felt ashamed in “acting as the demagogue of a party” (122). Hastings can now “see the dealings of Providence” and confesses that the illnesses, the prayers of his wife, the opinions of the minister and his friends “have actuated (him) to revoke the decision [he] had made” (148-49). When the father rescinds his refusal, healing ensues and the lovers marry. On a subversive level, Hentz’s narrative encourages readers to question the motives of abolitionists and even Stowe—are they willing to bring the nation to death—through war—over slavery? In Sedgwick’s novel, it isn’t the couple who become ill but the heroine’s father. Mr. Linwood’s illness disrupts British-born Jasper’s planned proposal to Isabella. Her father’s demanding her presence in the sickroom provides Isabella with time to realize Jasper’s true character, which does not balance with her own. In the meantime, she gets more acquainted with Eliot, a Whig. By the end of the novel, she reconsiders her political allegiances from Tory

(and Jasper) to Whig, and she marries Eliot. As these illustrations demonstrate, illness provides the concerned couple with agency in their marriage negotiation.

Illness plots create a sanctified space of negotiation—the sick room—where only select visitors may enter and where the ailing victim’s body holds rhetorical power. These closed spaces, according to Michel Foucault, are “heterotopias of crisis.” Persons gain access to sacred places only if they “submit to rites of purification” (26). When Hentz’s planter becomes ill, his personal slave, Albert, demonstrates “rites of purification” by leaving the sickroom only “when his grief was wrought up to a paroxysm that was perfectly uncontrollable, and he feared to disturb the patient by his bitter cries. Then, he would rush out doors, throw himself upon the ground, and give vent to the most heart-rending lamentations” (*Planter’s* 137). Conversely, the abolitionist’s right to enter the planter’s sickroom was questionable. Hastings’s maid, Betsy, felt his visits were useless until “he’ll give him the right medicine,” referring to his marital consent (119). Moreland’s slave, Albert, “shrunk with horror from the sight” of his master’s enemy and, fearing Mr. Hastings’s “*evil eye*,” wished to place a screen between the abolitionist and the planter (138). In *The Kentuckian*, Caruthers’s heroine, Fanny, loses her rights to the sick room when she refuses her father’s choice for her husband. Sedgwick’s anti-hero, Jasper, has no rights to Mr. Linwood’s sickroom, and therefore, he fails to secure Isabella’s hand in marriage. From his sickbed, Mr. Linwood encourages his daughter to marry for love. The fissure caused by her father’s illness allows Isabella time to witness Jasper’s mistreatment of Betsy Lee, Eliot’s sister, who loses her mind. When Betsy returns Jasper’s love tokens, which she calls “charms,” both she and Isabella receive healing and visual clarity.

Healing in these cross-regional texts implies regional forgiveness and national healing. Notably, Daniel Drake’s assessment that these works would “adhere” the “spirit of disunity”

corresponds with my own observations that antebellum writers metaphorically referred to the nation as “sick” and their cross-regional fiction as a “balm of healing” (McIntosh, 1: 6). The West, according to Drake, through its regional literature, could make the nation stronger by “remain[ing] harmonious and united with herself” and therefore become the nation’s “handmaid of improvement” (Drake, Daniel 52). Healing restores balance, gives hope, repairs wounds, and makes the body whole. The fundamental definition of *healing* includes the following connotation: “a restoration to a state of health or well-being defined as ‘normal’ by the society” (Hong 2). Healing protects “the body from the invasion of a foreign agent” and a “social unity based on mutuality and reciprocity” (Hong 2, 7).¹⁸ In applying these theories in my own work, I argue that these writers held that a healed Union experiences forgiveness through provincial understanding, and as a result, the regions interact in a polyphonic harmony—a dialogic multiplicity of perspectives and voices that are different yet harmonize together within the nation. Unlike a divided house, a harmonious union stands strong against a foreign invasion. Cross-regional texts embrace the harmonious coexistence of regional differences. These texts offer a site in the public sphere for a variety of “imagined communities” from differing regions to work out their perceptions and/or prejudices of each other. As Andrew Robinson explains, “Dialogism is not simply different perspectives on the same world. It involves the distribution of utterly incompatible elements within different perspectives of equal value.” This fiction provided readers and writers of the era a dialogical space where opposing regions could, theoretically, come together and work out, or rather act out, their differences as examples and

¹⁸ Seduction novels use rape or seduction to contextualize “invasion” of a foreign entity upon a “weak,” and therefore, ill nation. As a result, the heroine usually becomes pregnant and then dies in sickbed. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, “menstruation and pregnancy were treated as abnormal”—as a sickness (Bendelow and Williams 115).

lessons for readers. The North/South marriages contained within these fictions encapsulate a national vision of a healthy and harmonious Union.

In appraising these writers as regionalists and championing a literary study of their texts, I have resisted criticizing the social and political attitudes that motivated their arguments about class, race, and the institution of slavery. While I refrained from focusing on what we recognize today as racist attitudes, I am sensitive to the illogical arguments some of these authors often make based on class and race. Like Jane Tompkins in *Sensational Designs*, I desire, instead, to demonstrate “to a modern audience the viewpoint from which [these writers’] politics made sense” to them, and more broadly, their anticipated readers (xiii). To that end, the time and space in which they lived and wrote—the antebellum North and South—influences my observations and analyses of their literary works.

Chapter Summaries

Each subsequent chapter follows a similar pattern, beginning with a statement of purpose, then summaries of texts the chapter will cover, and finally biographies of authors. Since political debates and crises of the era influence the narratives, each chapter includes a “State of the Union” section, which analyzes the historical and political climate during the writers’ creative process. As I have argued, cross-regional texts are heteroglossic (multi-voiced). Since each voice represents a speech-genre anchored by time and space (Robinson, n. pag.), I analyze these cross-regional novels through a chronotopic (time/space) lens. These writers used marriage and illness plots as figurative representations, paralleling marriage “unions” with the national “union,” and demonstrating the nation as out of balance and sick. Healing occurs when the North and the South bond and unite, resulting in a harmonious balance. As a result, these plot devices encourage readers to “join” the struggle by rooting for the couples’ “happily ever after.”

Regrettably, these writers, like so many antebellum white Americans, encouraged maintaining national unity at all costs—including the acceptance of slavery and the silencing of abolitionists.

Chapter Two examines William A. Caruthers's *A Kentuckian in New York* (1834) and Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* (1835) as reactionary narratives to the Nullification Crisis in South Carolina. This study argues that by using cultural memory of the Revolutionary War and the apotheosis of George Washington, Caruthers and Sedgwick sought to recall their white readers to their shared cultural and political history in the years just after the passing of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. As this chapter argues, some antebellum writers, Caruthers and Sedgwick in particular, worried that with the passing of the Revolutionary War generation, the emerging generation, focused on America's industrial progression, had lost their focus on maintaining the nation's perpetual unity.

Caruthers, whose novel remains unrecovered for modern-day readers, set his narrative during the regionally-tense 1830s. Conversely, Sedgwick repositioned North/South tensions as a Revolutionary allegory, when Tory and Whig prejudices and hostilities erupted in a national revolt. While setting their narratives roughly fifty to sixty years apart, these two authors approached the regional tensions in eerily similar ways. Their settings center heavily on New York and focus on prejudices between aristocratic urban dwellers and Southern and New England agrarians. As this chapter shows, cultural borders, though "artificial," are as hard to cross and contain just as many prejudices as regional borders. Cultural markers include clothing, hair, speech, breeding, religion, education, economy, and industry. Writing two decades before the height of the abolitionist movement, Caruthers and Sedgwick do address existing racial prejudices. However, while they appear to disapprove of racial mistreatment, their narratives support an American identity of White racial superiority. Additionally, both narratives make

references to an “ill” nation/region and use illness plots as a renegotiation device for stronger marriage unions that embrace forgiveness and restore regional harmony. Each novel culminates with four cross-regional marriages that unite North with South, East with West, and Virginia with a recalcitrant South Carolina.

Chapter Three critically studies Maria J. McIntosh’s *The Lofty and the Lowly* in light of financial Crises of 1820s through the 1840s and the 1850s slavery debate. During the “Panic of 1837,” the soon-to-be authoress Maria McIntosh lost her entire fortune, necessitating her relocation from Georgia to New York, where she lived with her brother. The principal heroine, Alice, like McIntosh, is bi-regional, living in the both North and South regions. And like the author, she loses a fortune during the Panic of 1837 and must work to support her family. The novel, though published in the 1850s, explores the moral, material, and economic differences between Northern and Southern societies during the 1820s to the late 1830s. Ultimately, the narrative redirects regional prejudices to the era’s concerns about social mobility and the “New Money” rich. The narrative proposes that the joint efforts between Northern Merchant and Southern Agrarian would heal a nation economically and socially out of balance. To that end, the novel culminates in two marriages between Northern Manufacturing and Southern Agrarian families.

Notably, McIntosh’s Preface indicates that she laid her first volume aside for about a year before beginning Volume Two. Though McIntosh remains mostly silent about slavery in Volume One, she mounts a rhetorical defense of slavery in Volume Two. An examination of her timelines indicates that during her writing gap, Harriet Beecher Stowe published *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Therefore, this project, like that of scholar Mary Templin, *Panic Fiction: Women and Antebellum Economic Crisis*, and Elizabeth Moss, *Domestic Novelist in the Old South*, considers

The Lofty as one of many anti-Uncle Tom reactionary novels appearing in the years after Stowe's publication. Then, too, McIntosh, like the other writers in this study, supports a national identity that is distinctly Anglo American.

Chapter Four provides a close reading and critical study of Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride*. In critiquing a text of this magnitude—one so well-anchored in historical events while simultaneously creating a Southern mythology—this study incorporates Bakhtin's chronotope as a lens for rhetorical analysis. Using the chronotope enables me to observe how Hentz seeks to link her White readers' collective memory to Old World Anglo aristocracy and chivalry. In doing so, she promotes a White national identity as socially and racially superior.

Like McIntosh, Hentz was writing her narrative in the midst of heightened regional tensions over existing slavery debates and the publication of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. However, Hentz counters Stowe's narrative with more severity than McIntosh, and she more overtly constructs an imagined American Anglo identity. In fact, Hentz boldly pairs a Southern planter with a Northern abolitionist's daughter. Unlike most domestic novels, Hentz's couple marries early in the novel, thus giving readers a narrative that includes the Northern bride's perception of marriage to a Southern slaveholder. Also unlike previous writers, Hentz's bride gains a stronger voice after marriage; she becomes the Northern lens through which all pro-slavery arguments are observed, processed, and judged. By the end of the narrative, the newlyweds convince the bride's abolitionist father—and thus, Hentz hoped, the reader—that he (the North and abolitionists in general) has misunderstood the slave system in the South, which the novel portrays as humane and familial.

These four novels, published during the three regionally-tense decades leading up to the Civil War, reveal the nation's heightened concerns about healing and maintaining the nation's Union. Together, they cover national issues such as tax tariffs, trading embargos, disease epidemics, increasing poverty, massive immigration, rapid social mobility and New Money culture, and most notably the slavery debates. These novels also reference threats to national security in the form of the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Seminole Wars in Florida, the Mexican American War in Texas, Westward expansion, and their era's intensified fear of slave revolts. To express concerns about a nation in distress, these writers employed what today's scholars call the Body Politic, equating the national body with the corporal body, to incorporate illness plots that symbolized the antebellum nation as out of balance. Consequently, each narrative illustrates regional and national healing through their cross-regional marriage plots.

Ultimately, as the Civil War attests, these writers failed in their quest to maintain the perpetual unity American forefathers like Washington and Adams envisioned. Because regionalism ideologically resists marginalization and the "out of place" identity marker, today's scholars may recognize these writers' attempts to marginalize the racial Other as short-sighted and hypocritical. Indeed, these writers censured their own marginalization all the while they participated in marginalizing others. But slavery haunts these narratives and disrupts assumptions about America's racial identity. As Andrew Robinson explains, the polyphonic community is "always conflict-ridden between different consciousnesses" and is, therefore, "fundamentally irreducible to unity." To be sure, even in the twenty-first century, America's continued struggle in uniting its multi-racial voices proves that the noble challenge is "always" difficult.

CHAPTER TWO

Nullifying the Nullifiers:

The Nullification Crisis in Caruthers's *A Kentuckian in New York* and Sedgwick's *The Linwoods*

In the years leading up to the American Civil War, certain writers developed and used cross-regional fiction as a popular discursive strategy intended to help unify the nation and ease regional tensions. These tensions increased after South Carolinians began threatening to secede over national protective tariffs they felt benefitted the North at the cost of the South. The Protective Tariffs of 1828 and 1832 led to the Nullification Crisis, “one of the more dramatic events in United States history” (Freehling x). Today, few Americans realize that the United States almost entered into a civil war three decades earlier than its official start in 1861. In fact, during the late 1820s and early 1830s, South Carolina's threatened secession over tariffs frequently made headlines in the antebellum public press.¹⁹ Naturally, the continuing debate over the states' rights to nullify national laws and concern for national unity spilled over into the national literature, through which some literary writers explored political and cross-regional tensions. This chapter analyzes two of the earliest of these cross-regional novels: William A. Caruthers's *The Kentuckian in New York* (1834), a travel narrative; and Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* (1835), a political allegory. Publishing their novels during the lingering heat over the Nullification Crisis, these authors remind readers of their familial affection for their patriarch George Washington and take their readers back to the origin of national unity—the Revolutionary Era. Caruthers and Sedgwick seek to fortify their American readers' cultural memories of the time when they and/or their ancestors made great sacrifices to

¹⁹ For more information on the Nullification Crisis in the public press, see *The Civil War and the Press* edited by David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Debra Reddin van Tuyl; and *Words at War: The Civil War and American Journalism*, edited by David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Roy Morris Jr. Both books provide in-depth coverage of the Nullification Crisis debate in the papers.

build the Union. In doing so, they encourage feelings of familial unity over dissension and disunity caused by an ever-expanding West, tariffs on textiles, and tensions over slavery.

In William A. Caruthers's *The Kentuckian in New York*, the two prominent regions under scrutiny are New York—city and state—whose manufacturers predominantly benefitted from protective tariffs on textiles, and South Carolina, whose cotton planters objected the loudest to what they labeled the “Tariff of Abominations.” To parallel social and political flaws in both regions, Caruthers structures his novel around the precept that travel serves as an educational tool that can uncover “provincial prejudices,” a premise also explored in McIntosh's *The Lofty and the Lowly*. His novel records the journeys of three recent college graduates from the South: Victor, Lamar, and Beverley. Victor and Lamar are South Carolinians traveling to the North, while Beverley is a Virginian on an expedition to observe Carolinian culture and economy. During this time, the western portion of Virginia, Beverley's (and Caruthers's) home region, was the key southern region that grappled with slavery and entertained emancipation. Moreover, both North and South, as rivals for the same prize, were courting a relationship with the West, represented in the narrative not only by the Kentuckian, Damon, who befriends the two northern-bound gentlemen, but also another Kentuckian who serves as Lamar's Western rival for his Northern bride. While traveling, these young men visit sites connected with George Washington and the Revolutionary War, calling forth cultural memory. These characters determine to uncover regional prejudices and misconceptions, communicating their observations—what today could be viewed as ethnographic—through a series of letters that travel across geographical borders. In addition to examining cultures, ideologies, and social institutions through a regional lens, Caruthers's characters also observe agrarian versus urban lifestyles, including merchants and money-making men who benefitted by tariffs. Ultimately, Caruthers's argument is that

prejudices have infected the regions, and that both North and South are guilty of the very prejudices they hold. By the end of the novel, all four gentlemen marry cross-regionally: Victor and Lamar marry Northern women; the Virginian, Beverley, marries a South Carolinian; and the Kentuckian marries a lady from the “middle ground” of Maryland (1: 54). All three heroes relocate their brides, a few initially hesitant to move to a slave country, to their own regions. These marriages—North with South and West with East—symbolically demonstrate ways in which Americans, according to Caruthers, need to overcome regional prejudices and bond together, building a cohesive Union that can stand in light of the Nullification Crisis. For these authors, the preferable method for disabusing prejudices is through multi-regional travel and observation or by reading cross-regional fiction. Demonstrating proof of his theory, he contextualizes regional harmony through his travelers’ cross-regional marriages.

Like Caruthers, Catharine Maria Sedgwick tackles the Nullification conflict by invoking cultural memory to remind warring regions of their shared heritage. However, Sedgwick sets her narrative during the Revolutionary War. In doing so, Sedgwick uses temporal distance to allegorically transfer domestic tensions to a safer discursive space. She reframes North/South regional prejudices in a variety of ways: urban versus agrarian, inherited versus natural aristocracy, and Tory versus Whig political philosophies. She, like Caruthers, explores regionally-oriented prejudices against merchants and agrarians, and she also paints imported British luxuries in a grotesque manner, thus providing a slight nod to the Nullification Crisis by reminding readers from both regions of their shared cultural distance from un-democratic British social norms. Pairing family discord with national discord, the novel focuses on two families: the Linwoods, New York-based Tories, whose son turned rebel; and the Lees, a Massachusetts farming family supporting the Whig cause in the rebellion. A third family, the Merediths from

England, serve as the disruptive foil and rival to the two rebel heroes and their families, enabling America-born citizens to bond against a common enemy—the British. Sedgwick combines historical reflection with an effort to combat the disunity emerging in her own time by reasserting a national family echoed in the novel’s domestic arrangements, in the end, as anti-British. As in *The Kentuckian*, *The Linwoods* culminates in three significant cross-cultural marriages. The Tory heroine Isabella, a city aristocrat, turns rebel and marries the agrarian Eliot Lee; the British-born Lady Anne gives up her aristocratic title and marries the bankrupt American patriot Herbert Linwood. The British aristocrat Jasper Meredith fails to win Isabella—the heroine “born for empire,” signifying the America’s rejection of British values. Instead, Meredith marries Helen Ruthven, an American-born Tory and social climber who promises to make Jasper’s life miserable. Both Caruthers’s and Sedgwick’s narratives posit that cross-regional tensions can be overcome through national family-building—what today’s scholars call the “Body Politic.”

Using the bodily metaphor to represent the united public *body* dates to America’s Colonial era and Massachusetts Bay Puritan leader John Winthrop, who used the metaphor “most stringently” to discuss “protect[ing] and affirm[ing] the well-knit Body|Politic” (Herzogenrath 100). For Winthrop, one of the greatest threat to the Bay Colony was the antinomian teachings of Anne Hutchinson, who propagated that Christians were not bound by moral law. Winthrop considered her teachings “a cancerous illness that has ‘*straight infected*’” the community through “seemingly fixed” but “porous” borders (100). According to Bernd Herzogenrath, *American Body/Politic*, Winthrop’s “paramount task” was to “cure the body and drive out the infection” (100). During the Nullification Crisis, westward expansion, vitriolic regional prejudices, and Southern threats of secession *infected* the nation, revealing a weakness in the

Union's political body. Using the corporal body to represent a public and political "Body Politic," both writers work in symbolic, romantic foils to threaten their marriage plots, thus echoing contemporary threats to national unity: Caruthers uses the West while Sedgwick uses Great Britain. The male characters must work diligently to convince their female love interests, symbolizing the citizenry, to abandon their reservations and unite together as one couple (nation). Oftentimes, the nudge comes in the form of illness, which redirects the mind of both the ill and/or those connected to the ill character to look beyond prejudice. These narratives seek to demonstrate to readers that cross-regional marriage unions, facilitated by travel, will heal and strengthen national unity.

Analyzing these popular novels through a cross-regional lens not only reveals how these writers sought to reconcile national harmony but also provides insider perspectives on the antebellum era's negotiation of identity based upon regional, political, class, and racial diversity. These novels seek to create and disseminate a shared cultural memory; however, the celebrated culture they present, though diverse in nuanced ways, is clearly a white-dominant culture based upon a shared Anglo-Saxon ancestry, culture, and religion with Great Britain. Through cross-regional travel, illness plots, and North/South marriage metaphors, these authors impress upon their readers a familial sense of national identity and a need to conciliate for national unity during a time when some Southerners were calling for secession.

About the Authors

On the surface, William Caruthers, the "father of the Virginia novel," and Catharine Sedgwick, frequently credited as one of the founders of the American national novel, would appear to have little in common. Caruthers, regarded as "the first important Virginia novelist and one of the earliest practitioners of the romantic tradition in the South," descends from a line of

wealthy, country merchants and Virginia landowners (Hurt).²⁰ Conversely, Sedgwick's family, with more prestige than money, moved in some of the highest social and political circles in New England and Washington, D.C. Yet both descended from Revolutionary War officers, and their fathers were prominent politicians who also maintained personal relationships with distinguished presidents. Caruthers's father had a business relationship with Thomas Jefferson, and Sedgwick's father had a friendly and political relationship with George Washington. Moreover, the Carutherses and the Sedgwicks were instrumental in establishing schools and universities and deeply involved in the nation's future prosperity and security (Davis 50; Karafilis xx).²¹

Born into Virginia's bourgeoisie society, William Caruthers graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's medical college just before marrying Georgia heiress Catherine Gibson in 1823. By 1829, the couple was living in New York City, where Dr. Caruthers worked steadfastly to help the victims of the 1832 cholera epidemic in such neighborhoods as the infamous Five Points, events he recorded in *The Kentuckian*, his first novel.²² His biographer, Curtis Carroll Davis, speculates that Caruthers moved to New York to be near the publishing houses (79). While there, he worked as a book reviewer, or as Caruthers describes it, he

²⁰ In fact, in her memoir of her father, General Patton, Ruth Patton Totten writes that of her father's old Virginian order, "William Alexander Carruthers said it for all of them—that generous, fox-hunting, wine drinking, dueling and reckless race of men which gives so distinct a character to Virginians wherever they may be found" (242). Caruthers's Virginia novels are *Cavaliers of Virginia* (based on the Bacon Rebellion) and *The Knights of the Golden Horse-Shoe* (based on Lt. Gov. Alexander Spotswood's 1716 expedition to the Blue Ridge Mountains).

²¹ Sedgwick's father, Theodore Sedgwick (1746-1813), was Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and later served as a Massachusetts Supreme Court justice. Her grandfather, Ephraim Williams, was the founder of Williams College (Karafilis xx). Caruthers's maternal great, great grandfather, Robert Alexander (a direct descendent from Robert the Bruce), established Augusta Academy, which eventually became Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA. His father, William Caruthers, was trustee of Ann Smith Academy in Rockbridge County, VA.

²² W. A. Caruthers, M. D. published a remedy for Cholera in the *New-York Spectator*, August 02, 1832. Col. C.

“wrought some little at the craft of book-slaughtering and author-killing” (qtd. in Davis 89).²³ By 1835, New York newspapers referred to Caruthers as “formerly of Virginia, and now a highly respected physician in this city” (Davis 88).²⁴ During this time, he also wrote a popular article on Daniel Boone, who many believe was the inspiration behind the Kentuckian, Damon, in *The Kentuckian* (Davis 90). Caruthers attempted to establish his reputation as a national writer, patterning his style after the nationalist Sir Walter Scott, yet he struggled to transcend his identity “as a sectional historian and romancer of the Old Dominion” (Hurt).

Also influenced by Scott’s novels, Catharine Maria Sedgwick paid homage to the great author by titling her *Linwoods* novel with “Or, ‘Sixty Years Since’ in America,” after Scott’s novel *Waverley; Or, ‘Tis Sixty Years Since*. Sedgwick descended from a “politically powerful family” (Karafilis xix). Her mother’s family included men of character and estate, neither poor nor rich. Her father, Theodore Sedgwick, was a Revolutionary War hero who served as Speaker under George Washington in the U.S. House of Representatives. As a staunch Federalist, he “maintained that only an elite leadership could sustain the nation and had a haughty suspicion of the ‘lower orders’” (xx). As an adult woman, Sedgwick forged her own political views much aligned with democratic social and political ideologies, yet to a degree, she retained many of her father’s attitudes about an “elite based on culture and manners, if not on wealth” (xx). Still, she preferred living in the country, writing in her journal that it provided her cherished advantages since “one is brought into close social relations with all conditions of people. There are no barriers between you and your neighbors. The highest and lowest meet in their joys and sorrows, at weddings and funerals, in sicknesses and distresses of all sorts” (Sedgwick and Kelley 77).

²³ Caruthers, “A Pair of Critics,” *Richmond Compiler*, April 18th, 1835, p. 2, col. 4. (Davis n35, 435).

²⁴ Biographer Curtis Carroll Davis records this notation as cited in the *New York Gazette*, *Richmond Compiler*, *New York Mirror*, and *New York Commercial Advertiser* (88, 434).

She brings this idea of cultural mixing into *The Linwoods*, arguing that “placing men in new relations” would result in “the ties that bind together the human family” that “no test could dissolve” (100). Keeping the Union strong was one of Sedgwick’s priorities and she participated in nation-building through her writing. Over her lifetime, she penned ten novels and a hundred or more tales and sketches (Karafilis xi). Given her background, the political nature of her work, which helped put “American literature on the map” (Karafilis xi) as a culture-making force, comes as no surprise (xi).

As politically-minded authors, Caruthers and Sedgwick expressed concerns that the Nullification Crisis in South Carolina might destroy the Union. For Caruthers, South Carolina’s problems with poverty and tariffs were an “evil” that “Nullification cannot answer” (1: 80). Writing in light of his observations, Caruthers has his hero sense ““that some great revolution awaits our own cherished communities””; as a physician, Caruthers describes the national body as then drawing a “line of demarcation” between “the diseased and the healthy flesh” (1: 165). His hero hopes the ““disease may be cured without amputation,”” a reference to then-current debates about Southern secession. Sedgwick also references the heightening tensions through her New England heroine Bessie, who exclaims, ““Ah, there is a terrible storm gathering! Those who have grown up together, lovingly interlacing their tender branches, must be torn asunder—some swept away by the current, others dispersed by the winds”” (35). The image of interlaced tree branches alludes to the national union for which the previous generation fought and sacrificed. A few years before writing her novel, Sedgwick observed a House of Representatives debate on salt tariffs that likely inspired her metaphor. In a letter to her niece, dated 1831, Sedgwick records witnessing Southern members speaking with “great vehemence” of “their oppression,” of their “being goaded to rebellion,” and of “the time being near when ‘vengeance should stalk

about those halls” (*Letters* 215).²⁵ She writes, “It was melancholy to see such feelings aroused among our countrymen, and more painful to see them quite disregarded” (215).²⁶ The following year, South Carolina passed the Nullification Ordinance against tariffs it felt economically favored the North. Perhaps her experience influenced her hero, Herbert Linwood, who remarks to his Tory friend that the ““scattered and distant”” Americans have come together for ““one sentiment—we fight for Carolina, and Carolina fights for us”” (*Linwoods* 216). This sentiment likely suggests that the citizens of her own time would do what Congress would not—fight for Carolina. As pro-national novels with protectionist agendas, these polemical texts provide interesting perspectives about regional strife, intensified by the Nullification Crisis, from a Southerner (Caruthers) and a Northerner (Sedgwick). As Michael Warner argues, print culture, such as these fictional narratives, serves as a vehicle for public, social discourse and debate (50). These literary narratives promote unity in a time when not all politicians were doing so. Asserting their natural right in political personhood (Warner 50), these authors were willing to express a commitment to the union and invite citizen-readers to join them in this agenda.

State of the Union

On July 4, 1826, as the nation celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, its last two surviving Revolutionary fathers, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, passed away. The event literally and symbolically marked the passing of the Revolutionary War

²⁵ At the start of 1831, Unionists argued Congress would “right the wrongs” of its policies if South Carolinians would be patient. However, “[n]ot only did Congress fail to reduce any tariffs during the 1831 session, but it also attempted to restore a duty on salt reduced during the previous session.” This action “ruffled the feathers of nullification editors who saw the measure as proof that the tariff party never would relieve the South of its oppressions” (Pribanic-Smith 4).

²⁶ In a letter dated November 16, 1861, her feelings appeared to have changed. Wishing for an end to the “present struggle,” she writes, “I am willing to see South Carolina humbled in the dust—to see riches and honor taken from her, and full expiation of the crimes she has committed; but beyond South Carolina I have no ill will” (Sedgwick, *Letters* 391).

generation. A new generation was emerging with few to no actual memories of tyranny and revolution. Born during the pre-Industrial Revolution, this generation of Americans instead focused their attention on the future and the capitalist system, which encapsulated America's ideas of democracy and individual rights. The South, as "capitalists who disliked capitalism," and South Carolina in particular, had always based its economy on exporting their staple crops through free international trade (Freehling 35, 94). The importance of free trade was strong enough for South Carolina statesman Pierce Butler to warn Congress that a protective tariff would risk "a dissolution of the Union, with regard to his State, as sure as God was in the firmament" (qtd. in Freehling 94).²⁷ Southern planters always had misgivings about protective tariffs, and when, in 1828, Congress passed another tariff that "propped up consumer prices but not the price of raw cotton," South Carolina began contesting its legality in the press (96, 36).

Southerners argued that the 1828 tariff, which taxed imported textiles, unfairly favored the Northeastern manufacturers at the expense of the agrarian South. At this time, the South exported raw cotton to England, which in turn resold the cotton—as milled textiles—to Southern merchants more cheaply than did the American Northeastern manufacturers. As a result, the tariff contributed to the economic decline in South Carolina and created a dilemma for the staunch nationalist John C. Calhoun, South Carolinian and Vice President to Andrew Jackson. In response, Calhoun developed the theory of nullification, which argued that individual states retained the right to nullify acts as unconstitutional that unfairly favored one region over another. Calhoun, historically an ardent national protectionist,²⁸ extended the resolutions as an

²⁷ South Carolinian Statesman Pierce Butler made the initial comment, which was then reported by William Maclay of Pennsylvania and quoted in Freehling (94). Yet during a period of vigorous nationalism after the War of 1812, South Carolina and other Southern states did support tariffs in 1816, enabling the nation to pay its war debts.

²⁸ Protectionists support policies such as tariffs that "protect domestic industries against foreign competition." National tariffs "are the chief protectionist measures. They raise the price of imported articles, making them more

endorsement for state secession. Afterwards, the relationship between President Jackson and Vice President Calhoun became tenuous. In 1830, during a dinner honoring Thomas Jefferson, Jackson, looking straight at Calhoun, proposed his infamous toast: “Our Federal Union—It must be preserved.” With his hand shaking, Calhoun responded: “The Union, next to our liberty most dear” (qtd. in Brinkley 245). Calhoun’s toast clarified that he prioritized state liberty above national unity and established himself at that point as a sectionalist.

By 1832, South Carolina passed the Ordinance of Nullification, invalidating the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 as unconstitutional and unenforceable within the state’s boundaries. That December, Calhoun resigned as Vice President and ran for and won his state’s U.S. Senate seat. Despite Calhoun’s efforts, Congress passed the Force Bill of 1833. President Jackson, fearing regional conflict would “endanger the integrity of the Union,” used the bill to order naval forces to South Carolina’s shores and, via threat of war, force the recalcitrant state to pay duties on imports. Jackson also “threatened to hang Calhoun and to lead the federal army into South Carolina himself” (Freehling 2). As he did with the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and would do again with the Compromise of 1850, Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky sought to reconcile the North and South regions by brokering a compromise. He proposed that protective tariffs gradually decrease each year to reach the 1816 rate by 1842 (Brinkley 245). Now satisfied, South Carolina repealed its tariff nullification in 1833. Despite the averted crisis, the events between 1828 and 1833 succeeded in making “sectionalists out of the Calhoun nationalists,” after which regional tensions persisted, gaining momentum with discussions of abolition and eventually culminating in the Civil War (Freehling 132).

expensive (and therefore less attractive) than domestic products. Protective tariffs have historically been employed to stimulate industries in countries beset by recession or depression” (“Protectionism,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*).

Historian William Freehling, not wishing to “underestimate the economic causes of the Nullification Controversy,” posits an ulterior motive behind South Carolina’s decision to nullify the tariffs: sustaining legalized slavery (xi). In fact, President Jackson, in a letter dated May 1, 1833, speculated that “the tariff was only a pretext, and disunion and Southern confederacy the real object. The next pretext will be the negro, or slavery question” (as qtd. in Abbott and Conwell 453).²⁹ South Carolina planters embraced nullification in part “to win constitutional protection against a nascent abolitionist crusade” during a period in which Southerners were starting to witness “the first signs of a growing crusade against slavery” (49). Freehling explains that “[e]xperts on nullification have always realized that the crusade of 1832, although ostensibly aimed at lowering the tariff, was also an attempt to check the abolitionists” (xii). As a result, national tensions over slavery and racism inherently haunt cross-regional antebellum narratives, lurking under the narrative’s surface or materializing in either sympathetic or philosophical rhetoric. Both Caruthers’s and Sedgwick’s narratives recognize slavery as a divisive and evil institution; however, neither writer takes a stand in support of abolition. In fact, the familial sense of national identity and shared cultural heritage they present to readers is genetically and characteristically Anglo. In other words, they invite white readers, who were at that time the predominate consumers of these narratives, to recognize a common Anglo-Saxon culture inherited from their British ancestry—thus creating a sense of racial unity. Like the early forefathers who shelved the slavery issue to unify the states against Great Britain, Caruthers and Sedgwick likely tempered anti-slavery rhetoric out of fear that volatile reprisals would detract from their agenda: to heal a discordant nation in the heat of the Nullification Crisis.

²⁹ South Carolinian yeoman farmers, due to a “cotton bonanza” perpetrated by Eli Whitney’s cotton gin, had transitioned into more aggressive cotton capitalists; thus “[s]laves poured into the upcountry and cotton poured out; for a time Piedmont South Carolina was the greatest American cotton producer” (Freehling 8).

Contemporary Reviews

When New York-based Harper and Brothers published William Caruthers's *The Kentuckian* in 1834 and Catharine Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* in 1835—both of which focus on distinctly American themes—America's national literature was just establishing its foothold on the international stage. Part of that drive owes its origin to Sydney Smith's infamous query in the January 1820 *Edinburgh Review*, “in the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book?” (Smith 79). In 1834, the *New York Times* ran an editorial review of *The Kentuckian in New York*, praising Harper and Brothers for increasing the oeuvre of distinctly American literature. According to the editor of *American Monthly Magazine* and expatriate Englishman Henry William Herbert, the Messrs. Harpers, “by liberality towards young writers of their own country,” were “bringing about a revolution in our literature” (Herbert 387). Not surprisingly, Caruthers's novel drew a great deal of attention for its regional distinctions. The *New York Transcript* remarked on its “correct knowledge of men and manners in different sections of our country . . . as well as a fair and impartial spirit of judging of local differences—the peculiar faults or merits of the north and the south” (Greene 2). By far the most rhetorically interesting review appears in the June 14th, 1834, edition of the *New York Constellation* (Paterson n. pag.) The editorial begins by drawing attention to whether “we have a literature of our own, or not.” The writer enters into a comprehensive discourse on America's unique regional quality, which deserves an extensive transcription here:

we may at least assume that so numerous now a-days are our writers, so diversified are our scenes, so multifarious are the points of character in our people, so contrasted are the habits of one extreme part of the States from another, that a traveler from any one point shall find matter of wonderment, ere that he has

viewed half of the large expanse of which he boasts himself a citizen, and shall have been himself an object of equal wonderment a thousand and a thousand times. If variety of incident then, originality of feeling and expression, peculiarity of scene, and of moral and political feature, together with an almost unbounded liberty of expression, can produce a national literature, we either have it in America, or are in a fair way to produce it, for in no other part of the world can parallel cases be found The work before us is an attempt to show how the scenes and habits of other states would appear to a native of Kentucky, whilst at the same time it exhibits the peculiarities of the Kentuckian to those that live at a distance from him.³⁰

Notably, the editorial highlights the unique *cross*-regional and polyphonic elements within the traveling character, who participates in discovery and “wonderment” with inhabitants of distant regions. Observations of unique sociological and political *regional* differences are what the writer feels can “produce a national literature,” which, he notes, *The Kentuckian* attempts to do.

For the same reason—regional distinction and observation—other reviewers criticized *The Kentuckian*. *The American Quarterly* review disliked the regional “cant,” “slang,” and “swagger” (“Review,” 508). And *The Charleston Courier* disliked the Kentuckian’s “*queerish*” talk and his unlikely name—Montgomery Damon. Both papers, emerging from the North and South respectively, criticized the novel’s depictions of their individual institutions. *The American Quarterly Review* expressed outrage at Caruthers’s portrayal of New York’s financial district: “Our Southern Paul Pry’s dropped into [New York’s] counting-houses, brokerage-offices and

³⁰ Patterson’s ideas about what constitutes American literature anticipate and parallel Mary Austin’s pivotal essay, “Regionalism in American Fiction,” in *The English Journal* a century later, in 1932, in which she argues that distinctly American literature is a regional literature.

exchange-rooms, without ceremony, and with malice propensity, noted down its follies and improprieties, which [the book has] proclaimed to the world without reserve or compassion.”³¹ It then described, with pejorative intent, the hero as “the Aristocrat” and complained that the “youngsters” (the two Southern travelers), unceasingly reminded readers they were “prime specimens of South chivalry,” whom no one could contradict “on pain of suffering a gentleman’s vengeance from the muzzle of a pistol or the thong of a horse-whip” (508). The *Quarterly’s* attack centers almost entirely upon the *cross*-regional elements—including prejudices and stereotypes—within the novel.

Sedgwick, whose *The Linwoods* many tout as the first truly American novel, played a prominent role in creating a national literature. In a review of Caruthers’s second novel, *The Charleston Courier* praised both writers for filling America’s literary field with “native novelists,” who “are engaged in the patriotic task of illustrating the history and traditions, the scenery, and the characters of their country, or of that vast Continent of which that country forms the greatest and most enlightened political division” (“Review of *The Cavaliers*”). The *Museum for Foreign Literature* admired Sedgwick as “one of the few American writers who rose into deserved popularity in their own country, without waiting for the approving sanction of European critics. By the more trained and fastidious of her countrymen, she is considered the first of American novelists” (618). Additionally, *The Southern Literary Journal* declared that *The Linwoods* would add “to the stock of lasting national literature” (“Review of *The Linwoods* 175). Most reviewers noted the novel’s ability to inspire patriotic feelings, and the *Knickerbocker* ranked it “with the best novels we every read” (“Review of *The Linwoods*” 368). In his 1835

³¹ Also known as “Paul Pry,” a nosy character in the play *Paul Pry* by John Pool (1825). The *Oxford English Dictionary* states that the name derives its meaning from “a prying or impertinently inquisitive person.” In the novel, the Kentuckian goes to see the play in which Paul Pry is a character.

review, Edgar Allan Poe, then editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, referred to *The Linwoods* as “genius”; ten years later, he continued to name it as one of Sedgwick’s best novels (Karafilis xi).

Together these narratives provide an interesting juxtaposition of America’s regions in two pivotal time periods. Readers can envision New York City’s Broadway Street, the Hudson River, Saratoga Springs, and the Battery in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. While Victor visits the Battery in the 1830s, imagining the flag unfurled and the British ships in the harbor, Sedgwick’s heroes view the actual scene, watching the British sail away as “Old Glory” unfurls over the Battery. Moreover, these writers explain and defend different social forces within regions to one another, enhancing regional familiarity and community understanding. Caruthers’ and Sedgwick’s narratives contributed to the formation and circulation of a national literature that was—both in domestic setting and culture—distinctly American.

Critical Analyses of *The Kentuckian* and *The Linwoods*

William A. Caruthers’s and Catharine Maria Sedgwick’s narratives tease out and explore tensions based on cultural and regional prejudices in light of the Nullification Crisis. Despite condemning the institution of slavery, these narratives reveal inherent prejudices of their own—including the assumption that the antebellum American identity is Anglo. Black Americans living in the North are free but not “politically free” (Caruthers 1: 180). In the South, any consideration for freeing slaves means transporting them to Liberia. While these narratives seek to show America as culturally diverse, this diversity simply consists of different shades of white culture within a shared Anglo-Saxon heritage. The North has its aristocratic culture and art while the South proudly adopts Old World chivalry and gentility or even, in the case of Victor

Chevillere, as cavaliers. Poor whites in both regions prefer to take solace in white superiority rather than admit they are lower than Southern slaves (Brinkley 302-08).

Caruthers's narrative is more ethnographic; his heroes purposefully agree to study regional character during their travels and "exchange opinions upon men and things" through a series of letters (1: 13). In *The Linwoods*, Sedgwick reframes the national discord of her own era into a look back at Revolutionary tensions and prejudices concerning Whigs and Tories, natural and "artificial" aristocracy, and country rustics, city aristocrats, and British nobility. Here, the Tories are chiefly urban, aristocratic New Yorkers or British nobles, while the rebels, considered "Americans" or "Yanks," are Christian Whigs and agrarians residing mostly in the more rural New England areas.³² Writing during a contentious time, both writers metaphorically describe the national body as "diseased" and "infected." Their narratives explore solutions, such as travel and education, to overcoming regional prejudices and, thus, achieving harmony. A healthy (national) body is a body in balance—in harmony. To illustrate an achieved state of regional harmony, these authors incorporate successful cross-regional marriages. Metaphorically, these marriages depict regional healing and an imagined reunification, thus perpetuating the Union.

Regional Exploration and Understanding

For Caruthers and Sedgwick, border-crossing travel is an educational experience that leads to uncovering prejudices and healing regional discord. Their travel theories anticipate Dean MacCannell's argument in *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* that tourism renews society "in the heart of the individual" and leads to "a near absence of alienation. . . . This is, of course, the kind of relationship of individual and society that social scientists and politicians think is necessary for a strong society" (55-56). MacCannell uses the term "alienation" to mean

³² Sedgwick records this thought in an 1833 letter from Virginia's Warm Springs in which she writes that Virginians and "our plain, country, New England people" resemble "strikingly" (Sedgwick, *Letters* 235).

“out of place,” much like Fetterley and Pryse define regionalism in *Writing Out of Place*.

MacCannell categorizes tourism as a “cultural production” with three mechanisms: “a sight, a marker, and a tourist” (Van Den Abbeele 4). Without the marker, or as Benedict Anderson labels it, the “artifact,” tourists are unable to recognize the sight. Georges Van Den Abbeele in “Sightseers: The Tourist as Theorist” details the workings of MacCannell’s “marker”:

Markers can be either ‘on-sight’ (signposts, commemorative plaques, inscriptions, etc.) or ‘off-sight’ (postcards, picture books, advertisements). Sightseeing can be understood as a process whereby the tourist moves from marker to marker until reaching the sight So sightseeing constitutes a kind of basic narrative sequence in which the tourist first hears or reads about a sight through an off-sight marker and then follows the directions given him by subsequent markers until arriving at the on-sight markers which trigger his recognition of the sight. (4)

In short, the *marker* represents the *sight* with all its symbolic meaning to the *tourist*, which ends with “sight sacralization” (4).

In the same vein, Caruthers and Sedgwick use border crossing travel in their narratives to create touristic experiences for their readers, which leads to, borrowing the term from MacCannell, a *time* sacralization: The Revolutionary War, a sacred time in American history when independent states united together and formed a powerful nation. These writers use venerated sites such as the Washington Memorial, City Hall and City Prison, the Potomac, Morristown in the winter of 1780, Castle Garden, and the Battery with the Star-Spangled Banner waving over the Atlantic as British ships retreat. Through their narratives, Caruthers and Sedgwick move their readers, like tourists, from marker to marker, explaining each sight’s significance with tales of Washington’s virtue and bravery and America’s common fight for

independence from tyranny. In doing so, they sacralize both Washington and the Revolutionary War. Using this place-based form of cultural memory-making, Caruthers and Sedgwick encourage their readers to imagine themselves a victorious and powerful nation, and to see that North and South both share in that distinguished heritage under George Washington, a Virginian.

To encourage healing, *The Kentuckian* and *The Linwoods* suggest prejudice results from ignorance that regional exploration can cure. Caruthers's heroes travel cross-regionally "almost [as to] a foreign country," for "pleasure and improvement" and to study "the character of every man" they meet (2: 76; 1: 29; 1: 13). His message, through his hero Victor, is that "[e]very southern should visit New-York. It would allay provincial prejudices, and calm his excitement against his northern countrymen" (1: 181). But, as Victor cautions Beverley, who visits the Carolinas, travelers undertaking an exploratory mission of this type "among a people still more bigoted than himself," risk "becom[ing] more bigoted" (1: 72-73). Moreover, Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* addresses an array of prejudices: upper versus lower classes; town versus country; British-born versus American-born Tories; and Tories versus Whigs. In a New York drawing room, where people are rulers in their place, a New England farm wife would be a "sorry figure" (32). While education allowed some New Englanders, like Eliot, to "pass" in elite society, the elite would consider his sister Bessie, a "peasant girl," an "exotic," and a "base bird" in a society where "birds of a feather flock together" (23, 19). The Tory aristocrats, including the Linwoods, lived mostly in New York City and had "an antipathy" for New-England Whigs, viewing them as a "disloyal" and "conceited" race (39). These New Englanders, such as the Lees, supported a natural aristocracy, graduated by frugality, industry, and virtue, rather than based on artificial codes (25). Instead of eradicating all prejudices, Sedgwick takes those between American-born Whigs and Tories and redirects them towards the

British, thus sealing the national “American” family. Using geographical travel (Caruthers) and imagined time travel (Sedgwick), these writers invite their readers on their journeys, marking venerated sites while teaching them that cultural diversity need not be divisive.

Ultimately, Caruthers’s message is that travel, which today would be viewed as anthropological, can make the student more liberal and intellectually aware. For instance, the gentlemen socialize in various New York drawing rooms and on outings in which cross-regional questions and opinions are asked and given by Northerners, Southerners, and Westerners alike. Subjects include female education, fashion, courtship, trade, arts, industry, religion, cigar smoking, and medicine. They come to understand that many aspects of their individual cultures cross over regional boundaries. This enlightenment, achieved through travel, enables them to “cast out devils,” which Victor refers to as “Southern bigotry” (1: 72-73). In the Carolinas, Beverley dines and socializes with the Southern rich, poor, enslaved, while also observing geographical oddities, like Moravian marriage rituals. He concludes that in South Carolina: The rich are too rich, the poor are too poor, and the cause of both is slavery, which is more inhumane than in his home state, Virginia, where slaves are fewer and are part of the family. Touring the Moravian village, he finds examples that Anglos with delicate, white skin can and do work in fields, disproving arguments that only dark-skinned people can survive working in South’s hot sun. Ultimately, Beverley determines that slavery is an evil that corrupts the rich and impoverishes the yeomen and the slave alike. Through travel, characters gain knowledge and understanding of each region visited.

As a travel narrative, *The Kentuckian* parallels negative attributes in both North and South. Both have a large chasm between the rich and the poor. The North has its rich capitalists, and the South has its large-landholding planters, and each group practices its own type of

corruption. Visiting Wall Street brokers and bankers, Victor contemptuously refers to them as “Shylocks in their dens” (1: 192).³³ Merchants are corrupt and hypocritical (1: 71-72). The worse poverty and sickness Victor chronicles is in the “dismal” region known as “the swamp” or Five Points, where a cholera epidemic was then raging (1: 155, II 27). Caruthers, a New York physician during the city’s 1832 cholera epidemic, narrates the horrific scenes Victor witnesses as the dead are carried out of houses two and three at a time and piled in the streets. His hero writes that these “human catacombs” have no Southern counterparts: “They are far more filthy, degraded, and wretched than any slave I have ever beheld, under the most cruel and tyrannical master” (1: 197; 2: 28). So while Caruthers appears to be levelling the field of regional criticism, he passive aggressively recasts white poverty as more evil than slavery. In doing so, he lessens the sting of Southern slavery and suggests the institution can work under certain benevolent conditions. Nevertheless, slavery, as Beverley describes it, is not an institution Caruthers whole-heartedly supports.

In light of the recent Virginia Slavery Debate of 1831-1832, Caruthers’s Virginian, Beverley, is especially interested in the state of slavery in South Carolina, the only state that is a member of both the “Old South” and the menacing “Deep South,” where the slave system was more harsh and cruel. Through Beverley, Caruthers claims the “evil” of Carolina’s poverty is one that the “Nullification cannot answer” (1: 79-80). The South must end slavery before the lower-class poor can be elevated to the “dignity of intelligent and independent yeoman,” a premise Southerners “would boldly deny” in the presence of a Yankee (1: 77). Therefore,

³³ “Shylock” is a character in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. “Shylock” has since been used as an anti-Semitic, derogatory slur to represent a corrupt loan shark. Maria J. McIntosh also uses the term in her novel *The Lofty and the Lowly*, which I analyze in Chapter Three. Recently, Vice President Joe Biden apologized for referring to those making bad loans to military members as “Shylocks.” As a result, Lily Rothman published an article *Time Magazine* entitled, “When Did ‘Shylock’ Become a Slur?”

Beverley maintains he is an abolitionist, “not for conscience-sake, but from policy and patriotism” (1: 77). In fact, his reasoning for ending slavery is to help the poor whites. As Victor investigates the poor in Five Points’ “dismal,” “swamp” region, Beverley travels through actual swamps, including the Great Dismal Swamp, in order to observe poor whites and slaves. The white “poor of a slave-country are the most miserable and the most wretched of all the human family” (1: 76). The “seeds of decay,” he observes, “are sown where . . . national pride—industry—economy . . . should grow, namely, with your yeomanry!” (1: 78). Poverty also leads to slavery abuse. The more “miserably poor and ignorant” the slaveholder, the more “uniformly hard and cruel” they become towards their slaves (1: 118-19). Similarly, Victor finds those in New York who are “harsh and uncompromising towards unfortunates and criminals” are also those who, while “appear[ing] virtuously indignant at crime,” are rogues at heart (1: 196-97). By illustrating that North and South have the same societal ills, Caruthers makes his case that travel and experience can disabuse prejudices.

Like *The Kentuckian*, *The Linwoods* depicts “ignorance and malignity” as the cause of prejudice, which in turn divides the national family into “party and sects” (159). Sedgwick hypothesizes that cross-cultural mixing, phrased as “placing men in new relations,” often results in a “new force and beauty [with] ties that bind together the human family” in a union that “no test could dissolve” (*The Linwoods* 100). Readers see this theory played out when Mr. Linwood’s son, Herbert, becomes a Whig after spending time on the Lee farm (38). Their “degree of similarity and difference” inspires their “mutual confidence” (77). Herbert’s Aunt Archer, who also turns rebel, reveals that country living has given her “a fairer point of view” than those living in the city, surrounded by “British officers and tories devoted to the royal cause” (159). Like the planter class in McIntosh’s *The Lofty and the Lowly* and even Caruthers’s

Virginian, Victor, the British officers in Sedgwick's narrative openly expressed their "natural aversion" to American "city merchants" (127, 129). These prejudices offended Isabella Linwood, who viewed city merchants as "our city gentry"; as a result, she began to see "the folly of measuring American society by the European" (128). In *The Linwoods*, common ground discovered through cross-regional and cultural association can cast off the "shackles of early prejudices" between American Tories and Whigs (216).

For the most part, British aristocrats are the foreign entity against which Americans imagine themselves a separate national family. Previous to the Revolution, colonial class distinctions were "in accordance with the institutions of the old world" (*The Linwoods* 24). As travelers on American soil, the Meredith family serves as the premier representation of British culture and aristocracy. Thus American-born colonists learn about British culture by observing the Merediths. In political debates, they see Jasper Meredith, a Tory with property in America, exercise caution since the retention of his American property "might depend of the favour of the rebels" (65). For "Neck or nothing Patriots" and American Tories, only the cowardly, the cold-blooded, and the selfish adopt neutrality. Harboring a distrust of Jasper, Eliot Lee argues that "a man [should] run the risk of hanging for it either way"; he should be "either a whole-souled whig or a loyal tory" (65). Likewise, Mr. Linwood, who has disowned his Whig son, vocally expresses pride that Herbert is at least willing to hang for his politics, a circumstance he notices Jasper will not risk. Jasper is roguish, vain, and wasteful. He laughs at the New Englanders' "a' la bourgeoisie" industry and frugality; and when he wastes his allowance, he depends on the prudent Eliot to pay his bills (30, 28). Moreover, Jasper values ladies' favor by their market value. His careless dalliance with the much-loved, pure, and virtuous Bessie Lee, the daughter of a yeoman, leaves her permanently scarred. At that point, Jasper finally loses all favor with both

the Linwoods and the Lees. And his “ambitiously English” accent and “his elaborate dress, manufactured by London *artists*” alienate New Englanders, who do not welcome him in their drawing rooms (42). Observing the “born quality” British, a local farmer and public house owner declares, “the time is coming when one man that’s no better than his neighbor won’t wear stars on his coat, and another that’s no worse a collar round his neck” (157).

Interestingly, *The Kentuckian* is set sixty years later—in the 1830s—and Damon, a country-bumpkin from Kentucky, approves that New Yorkers are, “a whole-souled people,” who “don’t look at the cut of a feller’s coat, but at the cut of his jib,” thus suggesting the class democracy Sedgwick’s tavern keeper predicted (1: 190). However, Caruthers’s hero, Victor, sees Northern democracy as problematic in comparison to Southern:

It is necessary here to have many more bulwarks between this class and those below them than is needful with us; as there is here a regular gradation in the divisions of society. The end of one and the beginning of the next are so merged, that it would be impossible to separate them without these barriers. What are they? You would ask. They consist in little formalities,—rigid adherence to fashion in its higher flights,—exhibition of European and Oriental luxuries, et cetera, et cetera. (1: 203)

His suggestion here is that social borders in the South are more distinct; thus, Southerners need no artificial barriers of fashion. Since these goods come from foreign countries, he may be condemning the purchase of imported goods, one of the underpinning causes of his present-day tariffs threatening national unity. The narrative criticizes the “gay plumage” of populous cities, juxtaposing them against the “real suffering” of the misery and disease of the urban poor (1: 50). Sedgwick likewise criticizes frivolous finery. A decade after publishing her novel, Sedgwick

recorded in a letter to Mrs. Kate Minot that upon leaving her church and seeing ““people in their fine summer clothes”” she could not help but think of the ““creatures”” covered with ““putrefying sores”” in ““the street and dens, through which I had just walked”” (*Life* 306). Almost anticipating this sight, Sedgwick presents a touching scene in *The Linwoods* in which she juxtaposes starving American prisoners with the spilled aristocratic handboxes containing “feathers, flowers, ribands, fans,” and “coloured hairpowders” (218). Writing in the same era, both writers show revulsion toward an elite class that fails to extend generosity and goodwill to the unfortunate, and Sedgwick in particular criticizes artificial class markers, such as clothing, which needed to be softened in order to maintain unity.

Clothing, in *The Linwoods*, marks foreign aristocrats traveling in America as odd, frivolous, and artificial. To those whom Mr. Linwood calls “levelling Americans” (279), British-inherited aristocracy is an artificial performance, whereas American aristocracy is natural and earned. Clothing, hair, and drawing room manners are a few of the ways in which the elite British have created an “impassable gulf” between the classes (47). Fashion, in particular, is one of the most visual markers of social status and plays a key role in the social construction of identity and boundary negotiation (Crane 1), which American-born Whigs refuse to adopt. For instance, Jasper’s new Artois shoe buckles and scarlet frock coat are “inimitable”; however, he concedes that New Englanders would disdain ““aping” those “we (not they, be sure!) think above them”” (47, 31). His concern anticipates Georg Simmel’s theory of fashion in which lower classes attempted to gain status by imitating the upper classes. As a result, the fear of contagion by association led to the elite’s adoption of still newer styles and continued social distinction (Crane 6). The lower classes’ adoption of fashion could facilitate border crossing.

However, the New Englanders' disdain of aristocratic fashion highlights their rebellious and independent nature and a reluctance to receive foreign imports that would harm the domestic economy, a factor that eventually instigated the Nullification Crisis and threatened the nation. Banding together to boycott imported goods would help heal a fledgling economy. In fact, a few short years after this publication, the nation experienced a devastating financial crisis. Sedgwick's Whigs elect to wear homespun clothing and dress apart from the British to show their solidarity against England. Jasper's finery inhibits his social crossing in agrarian New England neighborhoods. He can only wear finery in New York, "where they always take the lead in this sort of civilization" (47). Since Sedgwick's narrator makes a point in categorizing the "fancy articles" advertised in New York Tory papers, we can infer that she entertained a decided opinion against "artificial" markers of class:

For sale at this office, scarlet dress-frocks, with silk lining and capes, the work of celebrated operators west of London; the celebrated new-fashioned buckle, which owes its origin and vogue to the Count d'Artois, brother to the King of France; scarlet riding-dresses for ladies, made to suit the uniform of their husbands or *lovers*; canes for the gallant gay Lothario; gold and silver strings for plain walking-canes, with silver and gold tassels for plain Master Balance; . . . brocaded shoes and slippers, ladies' shuttles for the thrifty in the knotting amusements, etc. (247).

The excerpt Sedgwick includes in her Revolutionary allegory has a decided emphasis on foreign-imported fashion—from London and France, possibly a nod to tariffs of her own day.

Additionally, the word "thrifty" in the advertisements marks the knotting article as of interest to the lower classes. The semiotic link between artifacts of luxury and monetary purchase adds to

the artificial illusion of aristocracy and further serves as a catalyst for American Tories and American Whigs to redirect their prejudices against the British.

As a contrast, Isabella Linwood's fashion choices delineate her independent spirit and inner "rebel chieftainess" (18). For instance, although she is, for the moment, a Tory, she forgoes wearing the Queen Charlotte bonnet in favor of the one patterned after the Queen of France, "patroness of the rebel cause" (128). When she casts off "shackles of early prejudices" and turns Tory, Eliot is happy to see her sacrifice "the little idol vanities of accidental distinctions" (332). In her study of deviance in domestic fiction, Jenifer Banks explains that Sedgwick explored ways that the tenets of True Womanhood—piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity—"could be used to do the cultural work that empowered rather than restricted women" (234). These explorations surface when Isabella attends a state ball "as a suitor" to plead to Sir Henry for her captured brother's freedom. While ladies of the era used fashionable dress and accessories to seduce, she arrives "dressed in a white silk gown, without any ornament or decoration whatever, save a rich Brussels lace veil, which she had put on partly to screen and partly to apologize for her very simple and rather appropriate toilet" (Sedgwick, *The Linwoods* 238). When she walks into the ballroom, her humble demeanor stands out amongst the gaudily-dressed ladies. All eyes are on Isabella, and she becomes an object of male desire. Her confident simplicity emboldens her, and she obtains Herbert's prison furloughs home. Typically, Isabella's daily apparel consists of simple morning dresses, with her hair "unspoiled and untouched by the profane fashion of the time" (222). In that era, American patriots ridiculed powdered hair as "pompous and unattractive" and were turning away from "European standards of beauty, which were associated with corruption and decadence" (Mays 50-1). Sedgwick repeatedly contrasts her heroine's natural beauty "most favourably" against the "profane fashion" of the British's

artificial beauty (*The Linwoods* 222). Readers see these distinctions when Lady Anne first arrives in America. Greeting Isabella, Lady Anne wears a French walking dress and powdered hair.

Lady Anne, Mrs. Meredith's niece, is the sole British-born character in the narrative to become Americanized and "turn rebel" (348). Her arriving in a *French* dress foretells her eventual adoption of the rebel cause. Isabella's modesty and independence influences the younger girl, who soon learns the "thrifty" art of knotting in the Linwood parlor (266). As Banks argues, Sedgwick's heroines typically "search for personal liberty and their right to define 'respectability' and 'virtue' for themselves, and thus to determine what should constitute membership in the domestic world" (234). Lady Anne embeds herself within Isabella's family, whom her aunt describes as "'the broken-down Linwoods'" due to their dwindling fortune. Mrs. Meredith, who would like to see a match between her niece and her son, resents not only her niece's changing nature, but also that her late brother left his daughter independent of both her fortune and her choice of husband. As a British matron, she cannot control her young charge's independent spirit. After Lady Anne assists in Herbert Linwood's escape from prison, she elopes with him and renounces her inherited title, having "'no distinction but that which suits the country of my adoption—that which I may derive from being a good wife and mother—the true American order of merit'" (353). Lady Anne's industry heals the nation by contributing to the local mercantile economy, suffering after the removal of trade embargos with England in Sedgwick's own time, and Anne's virtuous sacrifice and cultural work in the home industry mark her transcendence from British artificial elitism to true womanhood and natural American aristocracy.

Americans do not inherit aristocracy; they earn it. The best definition for *natural aristocracy* comes from a New England farmer and owner of a public house, "'The Almighty

must furnish the material, but the forming, polishing, and currency, must be the man's own doings; not his father's, or grandfather's, or the Lord knows who'" (157). As a tavern keeper with abundant opportunities to observe foreign travelers, his opinion carries weight in Sedgwick's text. The reader, understanding the elements of natural aristocracy, then recognizes the change and maturation of Herbert's character. Formerly aristocratic and banished for his rebel politics, Herbert Linwood is a frivolous young man who, after losing favor with his father and with George Washington, crosses class borders and experiences degradation in person, masquerading first as a dimwitted servant and then as a female slave. Starving and dirty in a military prison, where he resists temptations to turn Tory and receive clemency, Herbert gains manhood. After escaping, he proves gallant in battle and wins Washington's approval and forgiveness, thus earning natural aristocracy. But the character Eliot Lee best illustrates this feature (157). Sedgwick calls Eliot a "common man" who rises "above the vanities and littleness of self" (130). The tavern keeper claims he cannot tell that Eliot is not "born quality" (156). In fact, Jasper admits that "'Eliot might pass current anywhere; but then he has had the advantage of . . . an intimacy with—pardon my coxcombry—your humble servant" (32). The fact that Eliot can pass illustrates that people can learn and mimic aristocratic mores, which are therefore artificial. For Sedgwick, prejudices, like hard metals, can be recast and purified in "fiery times" (191). In *The Linwoods*, clothing serves as a cultural artifact that marks "true" Americans and helps Anglo Americans imagine themselves a sovereign and independent nation able to produce its own textiles, styles, and culture, another nod to the Nullification Crisis of the 1830s. Sedgwick's argument is that America's independence of foreign imports benefits the national economy as a whole.

Slavery

After the War of 1812, the South profited by sending their cotton to England, who in turn sold the milled textiles back to the South more cheaply than Northern manufacturers. As a result, Congress passed protective tariffs to protect the Northern industry. However, William Freehling proposes that the South had an alternative motive in nullifying tariffs, sustaining legalized slavery (xi). Writing to heal national discord, Caruthers and Sedgwick participated in the cultural work of white nation-making at the cost of advocating the abolition of slavery, an evil institution they both disliked. In the era when they wrote their polemical narratives, two marked events resulted in White America's shifting attitudes about abolition: Nat Turner's 1831 slave revolt and the subsequent Virginia Slave Debates. Previous to the revolt, Americans held a "range of opinion[s]" on slavery, with many Americans, North and South, supporting a gradual emancipation for an institution becoming increasingly difficult to maintain (Tracy, Susan 2). Both Caruthers's and Sedgwick's narratives include scenes featuring slave revolts. Fear of nation-wide slave revolts led to more Americans supporting the power structures that sustained slavery. As a result, the press began depicting abolitionists as "murderous extremists who believed George Washington damned to hell for his slaveholding" (Avallone 102), another appeal to patriotism as a reason for opposing abolition.

These "coercive measures" played out in the media and swayed abolitionists against publicly advocating their cause (Avallone 103). In Caruthers's home state, Virginia, slave debates generally split along regional borders: the Western region, holding to the natural equality-of-man philosophy, sought abolition and the relocation of slaves to Africa, while the Eastern region sought to strengthen its control of slavery (Root 127). Never again, "would a Southern state so openly and so seriously consider the possibility of ending slavery" (Root 211). Similarly, during an era of increased slave revolts, Sedgwick laid aside "a Slave story," her short

narrative that supported racial equality and “contested contemporary scientists’ declarations of black inferiority” (Avallone 105). One of her black characters “anticipates bloody vengeance that would prove the race’s heroic character” (105), much like the slave revolts that later frightened Sedgwick into quitting the work. In 1833, Lydia Maria Child requested a contribution to an antislavery gift book, and Sedgwick acquiesced “only on the condition that she not be regarded as ‘an advocate of the principles of the abolitionists’” (qtd. in Avallone 105). Both Catharine and her brother, Theodore, who felt the South needed to put down slave revolts, held an emerging belief in black inferiority (104-5). The existing climate of heightened fear may explain Caruthers’s and Sedgwick’s softened political stances on the institution of slavery in their regional restoration narratives.

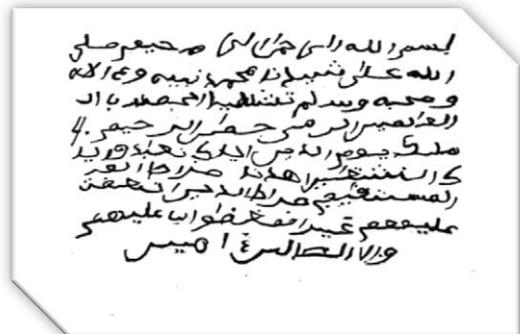
Caruthers’s connection to Virginia’s West/East divide on slavery in some ways reflects his ambiguous stance on slavery, as depicted in *The Kentuckian*. In fact, Frederick Jackson Turner called Caruthers “a liberal of interior Virginia” (Turner 207). His natal home in Rockbridge County, VA, covers the landscape through which West and East Virginia would later divide their state during the Civil War. Caruthers and his family supported colonizing freed Blacks in Liberia and petitioned the General Assembly of Virginia for funds (Davis 115). Several years earlier, in 1826, The Franklin Society, of whom Caruthers and his family were members, debated whether Virginia should relocate slaves to Africa or simply emancipate them. While they voted “yes” to the latter, they determined that it was not in “the true interest of the Union to make it constitutional for the General Government to devote a part of its surplus revenue to the gradual emancipation of the slaves to send them out of the country by paying the owners who are willing to sell them” (Davis 116). Ironically, Caruthers, through his wife’s estate, inherited about seventy-nine slaves (Allan 296). Caruthers’s explores the Virginia / South

Carolina divide on slavery through his character Beverley. The resulting marriage between Beverley and Victor's cousin, Virginia Bell, symbolically reveals Caruthers's pro-slavery stand with South Carolina. While his narrative provides a sympathetic portrayal of mistreated slaves in South Carolina, it resists the cause of abolition due to the economic harm it would bring to Southern yeoman. Yet its treatment of slavery was controversial enough to merit attack from South Carolina newspapers.

The Charleston Courier, which referred to the anonymous author, "a Virginian," as "an anti-Southern 'Southern,'" questioned Caruthers's Southern identity in particular because "the writer is certainly on the wrong side of orthodoxy as to [their] domestic institutions," in other words, slavery. Moreover, the paper accused Caruthers of "a spice of malignity on the subject." Caruthers, who was practicing medicine in New York when he wrote and published *The Kentuckian*, responded to the *Courier* a few weeks later in a letter published in the *New-York Spectator*. Caruthers pleaded "not guilty to the charge of malignity" against the state's domestic institutions (slavery): "There is not a remark in the book, on the delicate subject alluded to, which was not dictated by sorrow and sympathy, rather than anger and malignity."³⁴ He added that he intended his remarks for Virginia—his home state—as well as South Carolina.

³⁴ The following year, Caruthers published *The Cavaliers of Virginia*, and *The Charleston Courier* amended its opinion of the author: "When the former novel of this writer made its appearance, and incurred the lash of our censure, we expressed the hope, that his present work, then announced as forthcoming, would enable us to engage in the more grateful office of praise. It is with pleasure that we now redeem our self-imposed pledge, and record our testimony in favor of the 'Cavaliers of Virginia,' and a decided improvement, in all the characteristics of the novel, in style, plot and incident, when compared to its predecessor ('Review of *The Cavaliers*).

Caruthers's arguments about slavery are more liberal than his fellow Southern writers, such as William Gilmore Simms and John Pendleton Kennedy, but they stop short of declaring slavery a moral wrong. He frames his strongest arguments through his Virginian character Beverley, who will confess his opinions about slavery to those from the Southern region but never to a "Yankee." Written as a private epistle, Beverley's opinions are meant to come across as frank and honest, providing readers an inside view of a prejudiced Southerner's true reservations about slavery. As a traveler observing the region, Beverley notes the lack of discrimination "to age, sex, health, or condition" in field labor (1: 116). Interestingly, he calls the requirement for women to work in fields and to produce as much work as men an "abomination" (1: 116). He purposefully travels into slave quarters to examine their food supplies, and in detail describes their weekly provisions, their methods of grinding corn at the end of a tiring day, and their lack of meat in their diets. Upon inquiry, he learns that they receive meat only at Christmas. He also acknowledges the humanity and intelligence of the slaves he meets in a small village, where he and Sam, his personal slave, stop and purchase some food.



Hearing there were slaves born in Africa, Beverley asks to meet them. Discovering a slave named Charno, who retained his original name, is literate in Arabic, he requests an illustration. Caruthers includes a facsimile of Charno's writing, a Mohammed prayer, in the novel. Charno's ability to write proves his race's intelligence, thus countering racial inferiority. The experience

left Beverley “quite affected and melancholy” (1: 147).³⁵ His subject position as a prejudiced Virginian, a planter, and a sectionalist Southerner lends more credibility to his perspective about the ills of slavery.

Though claiming to be “no abolitionist,” Beverley views slavery as a disease on Southern white society and a hindrance to the poor yeoman’s prosperity. He blames the large chasm between South Carolina’s rich and poor on slavery and describes the overall “peculiar institution” in the southern portion of the state as “intolerable” (1: 78, 116). Historical records support Beverley’s observations. Increasing use of the cotton gin led to an increased need for slaves and land for bigger profits. Therefore, larger landowners began buying up the mortgages of small planters, whom they forced off their lands (Tracy, Susan 177). Yeoman farmers found themselves working lands as tenants to larger landowners. For Beverley, the greater number of slaves results in lack of familiarity and attachment between planter and slave. Without that emotional attachment, Carolina slave owners are more likely to abuse and treat their slaves like live-stock. Beverley praises Virginia’s slave system as “tolerable,” having “something soothing about it to the heart of the philanthropist” (1: 115-116). There, slaves, respected and considered part of the family, “are more in the condition of tenants to their landlord” (1: 115-116). Caroline Lee Hentz’s *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, the subject of Chapter Four of this study, also maintains that Georgia’s planters consider their slaves as part of their family. Nonetheless, Beverley’s conflicting attitudes about race echoed many of Caruthers’s contemporary West Virginians, who two decades later would secede the Confederacy and emancipate their slaves.

³⁵ I argue that the character, Charno, was likely patterned after a slave in the South named “Prince,” because he claimed his grandfather was King of Timbuctoo. Caruthers’s biographer, Curtis Carroll Davis, writes about Prince, who wrote a plea for his freedom in Arabic (345-6).

Shortly after Caruthers published his novel, John C. Calhoun urged a more aggressive opposition against abolition and changed the South's position on slavery with what has since been labeled his "positive good" speech. Writing on the eve of this change, Caruthers's narrative adheres to the then current position of slavery as a "necessary evil" argument. Caruthers's Virginian would like to see slaves freed, but their freedom, he argues, would "dissolve the social compact" and "set in defiance all laws for the protection of life, liberty, and property, either among them or the whites" (2: 71). He maintains they are a majority controlled by a minority who would have "personal without political freedom" that could only lead to "anarchy and confusion" (2: 71). Caruthers's "triumphant answer" to the social compact is a slave-free nation as illustrated in a Moravian village Beverley visits (1: 80). Slavery does not exist in the Moravian village and "labour is no disgrace" (1: 81). Both Moravian and young aristocratic ladies from a local female seminary worked side-by-side on the grounds. These actions serve as "a complete refutation of the assertion, that the whites cannot work in a southern climate" (1: 81). Through his Virginian hero, Caruthers relocates regional strife over tariffs to the "peculiar institution" truly dividing America. He invites his readers to imagine a nation united in consanguinity, and in doing so, he may be bolstering a slave-relocation sentiment.

Despite debates over abolition and fears of slave revolts rocking the nation, Catharine Sedgwick remains largely silent about the "peculiar institution," choosing instead to reposition victimization to the white race. Determining Sedgwick to be "personally deficient in courage," Charlene Avallone conducts a thorough study on race in "Catharine Sedgwick's White Nation-Making: Historical Fiction and *The Linwoods*" (106). Avallone believes that the contemporary media backlash against abolitionists just after the Nat Turner slave rebellion not only encouraged Sedgwick's silence but also contributed to Sedgwick's shifting attitudes about racial equality and

inferiority. The threat of disunion fueled by the Nullification debates, she explains, played a key role in Sedgwick's and her brothers' increasing resistance to abolition. Of note, her brother Theodore upheld white supremacy "within a god-given hierarchy of races" (104). As Avallone observed in Sedgwick's writings, "Slaves were not part of the hallowed nation's people so much as they were a threat to it" (106). In her autobiography, Harriet Martineau records having a conversation with Sedgwick about the slavery controversy, to which Martineau suggested dissolving the Union as a solution. Sedgwick, startled, snatched her arm back and cried, "'The dissolution of the Union! . . . The Union is sacred, and must be preserved at all cost'" (1:376); for Sedgwick, that cost was slavery.

Coinciding with contemporary slavery apologists who shifted blame and guilt to England for bringing slavery to America, Sedgwick's narrative depicts the majority of slave-owners as city-dwelling, aristocratic Tories. In the text, Tories like the Linwoods typically owned a dozen slaves to an agrarian Whig's one or two (20). Visiting the Linwoods in New York, the rustic Bessie Lee shows more respect than Isabella for Jupe, the Linwood's servant who escorts the girls safely on errands. Betsy appreciates his protection and views him as a man, whereas Isabella, Sedgwick's key heroine, emasculates Jupe, labels him a "coward," and cruelly teases him about the ghosts of those executed after an infamous slave revolt (7, 9). Sedgwick presents this bullying scene to the reader as a comedy. Adding insult to injury, Jupe's grandmother and aunt were two of those executed (9). While this scene reveals how the legend along with the still-hanging gibbet on Gallows' Hill was intended to dissuade antebellum slave revolts, it also figuratively represents the haunting of slavery and racism on the white American identity. Moreover, Blacks were fighting "in the rebel cause," indicating another way in which America built an empire on black labor. When Mr. Linwood learns these "negroes," if captured, would be

sold into slavery by the British, he celebrates, exclaiming, “Black sons of Belial—they fighting for liberty, d—n ’em!” (247). Sedgwick uses Mr. Linwood, a loyal British subject and a favored character, as a representative of English Imperialism and racism, to divert the blame for slavery towards the British who brought the institution to American shores, as many slavery advocates sought to remind their opponents.

Sedgwick displaces slavery by highlighting, instead, the marginalization of white colonialists. Instead of advocating black emancipation, Sedgwick focuses on arguments equating colonists to slaves wearing collars around their necks and fighting for freedom and independence (32). Colonists, as Sedgwick describes them, felt that bread was not buttered fairly for everyone, mirroring her modern-day regional tensions over tariffs (279). These colonists, mostly agrarians, wanted to do away with class distinctions and prejudices. In a recent publication concentrating on white women and racial Others, Samina Najami and Rajini Srikanth argue that “minoritizing” the white experience gives “it a history of victimhood. Inflecting whiteness with class and stressing the ways in which power and privilege are mediated by socioeconomic conditions, such as that of poor whites,” or in Sedgwick’s narrative, oppressed Whigs, who “can claim to be every bit as victimized as people of color” (Najami and Srikanth 3).

One way Sedgwick displaces racism in *The Linwoods* is by racializing the white character Kisel, a mentally challenged young man devoted to Eliot’s care throughout his military service, and Herbert, who ironically gains freedom by cross-dressing as a slave woman. Sedgwick racializes Kisel as a slave, describing him minstrelsy as a “jack-o’-lantern,” a “merry maker,” “harlequin-looking thing,” a dog to “fetch, carry, [and to] lay down at [Eliot’s] feet” and die for him (58). Indeed, throughout the narrative, Sedgwick uses canine references to describe Kisel and even Herbert Linwood who masquerades as Kisel in order to visit his father in New

York, the Tory headquarters. Because Herbert, a Whig, is in enemy territory out of uniform, he is arrested as a spy, a capital offence. As an eye-witness, Herbert describes ways in which white American rebels are victimized by the infamous jailer Cunningham. Isabella and her servant Rose, a former slave freed by Mr. Linwood, concoct a scheme for Herbert's escape. He cross-dresses as Rose, wearing "wooly" hair and a black mask, whereby he is able to walk out of prison, and Rose, in a scene loaded with dual meanings about continued post-Revolution slavery, stays locked in prison in his place. Rose, as Avallone notes, "devotes her one rebellion to liberating her young master." Sedgwick, she continues, "undermines the subversive potential" in Herbert's cross dressing "by having Rose self-deprecatingly contrast her features" with Herbert's: "'It's a main pity,' [Rose] said, 'to cover your pretty shining hair with what looks like *nigger's wool*, as they call it'" (Sedgwick, *Linwoods* 327). Likewise, Kisel, mistaken as one of a gang of criminal skimmers, is also imprisoned and sentenced of death. Isabella and Rose, both of whom visit him, are unable to free him for the most part because of his cognitive impairment. Afterwards, Eliot, disguised, arrives in the city in time to see Kisel marching to the gallows. Collapsing in the street, Kisel recognizes Eliot, but before he could betray his master's identity, he dies. Since rebels caught in town out of uniform were executed by the British, Kisel's death essentially saves Eliot's life. Herbert, the white man who masquerades as a black woman, gains freedom while Kisel, a mentally inferior and racialized Other, proves unable to help himself, thus supporting Avallone's thesis about the Sedgwicks' belief in white superiority (104).

Sedgwick's only concession to the plight of slavery consists of two small scenes involving her character Rose. Rose declares to a young Isabella that she would rather be dead than a slave (136-37). Both Isabella and her father are baffled by her desire for freedom since they treat her with favoritism. Nonetheless, Isabella negotiates with her father for Rose's

freedom. Later, while watching the Tories retreat to England, Rose mutters to herself, ““this a’n’t to be the land for them that strut in scarlet broadcloth and gold epaulets, and live upon the sweat of working people’s brows. No, thank God—and General Washington”” (355). Yet Washington does not secure freedom for black Americans, as revealed in a particular scene involving the servant Jupe. Jupe declares he will be dining with Washington. Mr. Linwood, becoming resigned to his traitorous Whig children and these ““levelling Americans,”” expresses outrage, declaring his son will dine at home rather than dine with a black man. Isabella, understanding the servant’s intention, clarifies that Jupe will be *servicing* General Washington’s dinner—not *dining* with him. Linwood’s slaves, though free (due in part because of his poverty), retain their roles as servants. As Avallone explains, Sedgwick’s freed Blacks conform to James Fenimore Cooper’s “ideal of the traditional family servant, made to [. . .] identify with the ideology and interests of Anglo-Americans in the new nation” (108). All of the writers in this study use their narratives to suggest a vision of America as Anglo, and they all include a desegregated dinner table scene as taboo and against the racial, societal construct.

Though lauded as a truly American writer by a great many critics, Sedgwick, like Caruthers, did not escape regional criticism. As editor of South Carolina’s *The Southern Rose*, Caroline Howard Gilman declared the portrayal of Rose over-romanticized and inaccurate, claiming that slaves do not “pine for ‘free breath.’”³⁶ Highlighting Sedgwick’s lack of Southern travel experience, Gilman wonders, “Why will our faire countrywomen waste their sympathy on a subject so distant from their sphere of observation?” “Our institutions,” she clarified, can only

³⁶ Caroline Howard Gilman authored novels for young ladies such as *Recollections of a Housekeeper; Vernon Grove; or, Hearts as They Are: A Novel; Recollections of a Southern Matron*, and several gift books featuring stories and poems for children. On Nov. 8, 1836, *The New York Mirror*, Ed. George P. Morris, ran a review praising *The Southern Rose* (“The Rose-bud). Twenty years later, the *Mirror* also reviewed Caroline Lee Hentz’s pro-slavery novel *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, using “the strongest words of praise that [their] vocabulary affords,” and calling it a “dove of peace” that will mitigate sectional prejudices.

be understood by patient observation and not by “ladies who sit at home with a faire sheet of paper and write only what they *feel*.” Her next comment provides an interesting insight into Southern responses to Sedgwick’s novel: “I do not go so far as some persons, who say that *The Linwoods*, *The Token*, etc. ought to be banished from our libraries because they contain a few offensive paragraphs” (38). While her narrative participated, as Avallone argues, in white nation making, Sedgwick’s sympathetic portrayal of Rose’s longing for freedom humanizes her enough to upset Southerners who sought to protect the institution of slavery. The fact that some called for the books to be banned indicates the pervasive power of literature to not only participate in public debates but also to sway public opinion.

These narratives illustrate Toni Morrison’s argument that “the four-hundred-year-old” African presence “shaped the [American] body politic,” and “the entire history of the culture” and literature (5). Images of Blacks as dirty, uneducated, “impotent, or under complete control,” descriptions both authors use in characterizing those free and enslaved, serve as a companion to and facilitate the construction of whiteness (Morrison 33). On one level, Caruthers and Sedgwick portray their heroes as compassionate towards Blacks because these writers understand victimization and oppression. However, on another level their refusal to take a bold stand for abolition bolsters the most controversial subject of their day, slavery, in order to rally white readers around a common ground, the mythologizing of Washington, who sought to free Americans from monarchical tyranny. Therefore, both Caruthers and Sedgwick prioritize the Union over the disunion that the issue of slavery will eventually cause. These two writers thus undermine the work of abolitionists by contributing to an ongoing American master narrative that supports separate racial spheres. Moreover, they do so by exalting the father of freedom, George Washington, a slave owner.

The Apotheosis of Washington

Caruthers and Sedgwick, using what Michel Bakhtin has since labeled the “chronotope” (translated literally as “time space”), call upon their readers’ shared cultural memory and affection for George Washington as a tool to reinforce the national bond. This technique assists Anglo-American readers in imagining themselves a unified national family in light of their shared ancestry, culture, and religion. Both writers pull in America’s Revolutionary past to emphasize a shared cultural identity over their present-day regional tensions and prejudices that were then leading to disunity. In fact, Sedgwick’s narrative must have touched a nerve with one reviewer who, writing in *The North American Review*, expressed regret that “the heroic age of our country . . . begins already to wear in the eyes of the degenerate money-making men of the present times” (“Review of *The Linwoods*” 160), possibly a derogatory reference to manufacturers in the North. Theoretically, Sedgwick’s reminding readers who Americans were in the past enables her readers to know who they are in the present. In *The Kentuckian*, Caruthers encourages cultural memory by incorporating the past into the present through Victor’s regional tourism; Sedgwick does the same using her Revolutionary allegory.

Caruthers’s hero, Victor, visits key sites connected with Washington and evaluates them much like a Baedeker correspondent. On his way to New York, he visits Washington’s monument in Baltimore where Caruthers through Victor explains the significance in memorizing the nation’s history towards its perpetual unity:

[L]et cities, communities, and states enshrine him in marble. These speak to the eyes; and hundreds, and thousands will stand here, amid these beautiful shades, and think of [Washington] with profound veneration, who would never otherwise look into any other kind of history. The effect of such works as these is admirable;

not only in showing veneration for the great dead, but also upon the living, in purifying the heart and ennobling its impulses. (1: 54)

While not enshrined in marble, clearly Caruthers and Sedgwick believed their narratives would “ennobl[e] the impulses” of readers who would not “otherwise look into any other kind of history” (Caruthers 1: 54). In *Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity*, Liliane Weissberg explains that in “crisis of memory,” “Objects (or language turned into objects) became the means of regaining a cognizance of the past and promised a means to hold on to it” (Ben-Amos and Weissberg 10). Monuments, such as Caruthers highlights, “safeguard[ed] against forgetting” as “forgetting was inscribed [and codified] in each object” (10).

The location of Washington’s monument in Baltimore, a slave-holding border state, symbolically places the venerated hero as mediator between the two warring regions. As Victor notes, ““standing on the middle ground, between the angry sectionists of the North and the South, she will present a haven in which the rivals may meet, and learn to estimate each other’s good qualities, and bury or forget those errors which are inseparable from humanity”” (sic) (1: 54). While Baltimore is the *place* for mediation, the spirit of Washington is the common ground. Moreover, Victor’s thoughts reflect Caruthers’s purpose in the narrative—to learn each region’s “good qualities,” which would help alleviate tensions.³⁷

Later in New York, the first national capital of the United States, Victor visits City Hall on Broadway, Castle Garden, and the Battery (1: 152-3, 179). At City Hall, Victor describes viewing portraits of Washington, George Clinton, Alexander Hamilton, La Fayette, etc., the

³⁷ In fact, the decade following the publication of Caruthers’s *Kentuckian*, escaped slave Frederick Douglass would credit his being sent to Baltimore with his eventual freedom, ““Going to live at Baltimore laid the foundation, and opened the gateway to all my subsequent prosperity”” (Douglass 33). Yet Baltimore paid a heavy price for its middle ground position as a border slave state when a riot broke out 1861 due to the city’s divided loyalties between the Union and the Southern sectionalists.

chairs Washington and Adams used during the first inauguration, and the flag that flew at this historic event (1: 152-53). At the Castle Garden, Victor makes the past present by envisioning a time when the statue of George the Third was “melted into bullets, and shot at his own ships and soldiers” (1: 179). Victor watches visitors promenade on the castellated structure where the “star spangled banner” flies on national holidays, where shots once fired through port-holes, and where American patriots welcomed Lafayette. These scenes provide a nice juxtaposition between post-war peace and contemporary threats to national unity, which were then leading to war.

Also using the chronotope, Sedgwick brings the past present to encourage readers in finding common ground with rival regions in admiration of their revered national father, Washington. While Caruthers’s modern-day hero stands upon the Battery watching ““ships of every nation, as they rode triumphantly over the waters”” importing and deporting people and merchandise to and from capitalist America (Caruthers 1: 180), Sedgwick’s characters witness firsthand defeated British troops retreat past the Battery towards their ships. As the last ship departed, the ““star-spangled banner’ was unfurled” and “every bell in the city” pealed a welcome for Washington, “the spotless patriot, the faultless military chieftain, the father of his country” (Sedgwick 357). Again like Caruthers, Sedgwick juxtaposes war and peace. Washington is ““first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen”” (358). Throughout, the narrative depicts Washington as godlike with a power “almost divine (and doubtless from a divine source), by which he could direct the whirlwind and subdue the storm” (203-04). Eliot Lee ““venerate[s] him next to the Deity”” and approaches him with trepidation (73). Herbert Linwood found him to be a ““great man, like Him [Jesus] who he imitated”” (73). And like God, Washington is the nation’s creator of freedom, metaphorically described as a tree he planted and guarded “that was to overshadow his country,” and in which citizens, like birds

“he cherished,” make their “nests in its branches” (315). As Washington guards his “cherished” birds in *The Linwoods*, his full-length portrait presides over the brides and grooms celebrating in Beverley’s parlor in *The Kentuckian* (2: 201). Caruthers and Sedgwick culminate their narrative with, as Avallone phrases it, an “apotheosis of Washington” (97) and suggest that shared cultural memory linked to the first President could heal the nation in the days immediately after the Nullification crisis. By deifying Washington, these writers (among others) seek to conflate theology and politics into the body of Washington, the United States’ first president and the nation’s symbolic “father.” In his text *An American Body/Politic*, Bernd Herzogenrath explains the Body Politic “was conceived in analogy to the ‘mystical body’ of the church, which was ‘one in Christ’” to “secure the continuity of the country’s unity” long after the death of the national leader’s material body (3).

The Illness Plot and Marriage Metaphors

But while Washington is the “father” of the nation, the nation itself is a *united* organism. Like a marriage union, the State is the organism’s head, and its citizens are its body (2). In their narratives, Caruthers and Sedgwick politicize the corporal body, what Bernd Herzogenrath calls “the Body|Politic,” by associating marriage union with national union. They also use the Body Politic when key characters become ill. The illness represents imbalance or threats to national unity. As this motif invites characters to image their loved one’s demise, it also invites readers to imagine the demise of their beloved Union. Using multiple levels of discourses filtered through illness plots, Caruthers and Sedgwick illustrate the push and pull fictional couples and families negotiate in trying to establish a union that will be mutually beneficial and perpetual. The illness plots highlight the shifting understandings in identity (of the “Other”) that exist in relationships, which are inherently multi-voiced. The couple and their family and friends must consider future

consequences to potential matches as marriages also affect those connected to the couple. To illustrate, Caruthers's heroine, Fanny, asks Victor why he must “persist in a course which must result in the unhappiness to all parties?” (1: 28). For Sedgwick, the interdependency and “responsibilities” of “humanity and the advance of civilization” depend on the “purity of the institution of marriage” (*The Linwoods* 360). Rhetorically, the illness plot is a manipulative tool devised to demonstrate horrific consequences in misguided alignments between families—and by extension, the national family—whose value and/or political systems clash. A misaligned portion of the nation is an “infected region” (36). Both authors describe the ongoing national strife as a disease. Caruthers labels it as “diseased” flesh at risk of amputation if the whole body is to be saved (1: 165). And Sedgwick's Tories view the rebelling colonists as “a diseased branch from a sound root” (*The Linwoods* 83). It is not surprising that both authors use the illness plot as a metaphor for national instability and as a rhetorical device of persuasion and manipulation. Neither is it surprising that both authors look upon surviving the illness as a beneficial experience for the nation's citizenry.

In *The Kentuckian*, Caruthers uses illness plots to secure cross-regional marriage unions. Beverley gives us some insight into the illness-plot phenomenon. Wishing to marry Victor's disinterested sister Virginia Bell, he suggests that his becoming sick would make him more “interesting” to her (1: 112). Later, he does become “exceedingly ill,” and Bell, conforming to the True Woman's most important function—nursing—tends to him (2: 5; Welter 163). In keeping with typical illness rhetoric, Caruthers uses death synonyms to paint the afflicted Victor as skeletal, deformed, and like a “Sepulcher” (2: 13). The appearance of death enables the wayward party, in this case Bell, to envision life without the loved one. As Victor explains, Bell recognized his fever-induced love declarations as truths from the heart. Since he was in a manic

fever, he could but only speak truth. As a result, Bell “revolutionized her whole conduct towards [Beverley],” and, thereafter, he discovers her to be more respectful, dignified, and sympathetic, marking her transition from the coy Southern belle to a mature True Woman (2: 8-9). She, in turn, became “paler and thinner,” making her thoughts easily readable to Victor (2: 9). He thought her change “wonderful” since “there was not an expression of the thoughtless school-girl there” (2: 9). He marks her maturation by ceasing to refer to her as “Bell,” and begins to call her “Virginia.” The name change is significant because his illness induces *Virginia*, who accepted his proposal, and her mother to cross regions and move to Beverley’s home in the state of *Virginia*. Likewise in New York, Lamar falls ill from a wound received in a duel with his Western rival for Isabel. Afterwards, he “triumph[s] over Isabel’s scruples about going to the south and to a slave-country,” and they are married (2: 198). Thus, Virginia and South Carolina mend regional bonds, and the North/South secure a union light of America’s Westward Expansion.

Victor, the principal hero, first meets his love interest, Fanny, in the South where she is fleeing North, towards her home. Dressed in black, wearing a black veil, her character is reminiscent of runaway slaves chased by slave catchers. From the onset, Caruthers casts the widow Fanny within a shroud of mystery and fragility, a state that fascinates Victor. In his letters, Victor describes her as his “demure little runaway” or “the lady of the Black Mantle” (1: 48). Widow’s weeds were effective disguises for runaway slaves as it allowed them to conceal their face, sex, and skin color. Pursuing Fanny is a maniacal and emancipated man whose “whole business seems to be to haunt [Fanny] in [her] travels” (1: 56). Typically, Victor sees her or catches sight of her when he is visiting landmarks associated with Washington, thus connecting her plight to the nation’s founding. According to Fanny, to relieve her sufferings

“*the grave must give up its own; and the law must give up its own; and the avaricious must annul their decrees; and the dead of half a century must undo their work . . .*” (Italics in original; 1: 58). The nation at this time was exactly a half century old, and the “avaricious” “decrees” more than likely refer to slave catchers and slave laws. While Caruthers remains passive about slavery—even owning slaves himself through his marriage union—he argues by means of Fanny, who within the narrative crosses from South to North—that slavery is the root cause of the nation’s illness—its discord. Though his stand on slavery is passive and somewhat subversive, for a Southerner his arguments are quite liberal.

Recovering from an illness, Fanny is pale, fragile, faints frequently, and claims to have a “deathlike sickness” (1: 37, 1: 15). She is the True Woman as Emerson describes her, “more vulnerable, more infirm, more mortal than man” (Emerson 1:180). Using a plot within a plot device, Caruthers provides Fanny her first-person voice, allowing her to tell her own story; however, he filters that voice through Victor in his letter to Beverley. Readers learn that Fanny’s affliction stems from a forced marriage to a Westerner, who subsequently dies on their wedding night, and the maniacal man is her revenge-seeking father-in-law. By way of Fanny’s first marriage, Carruthers suggests that a North/South over a North/West connection would result in a healthier Union. Moreover, Fanny’s short and unhappy marriage owes its root to Tory/Whig tensions and a failed strategy meant to heal the wounds of two families.

Like Sedgwick, Caruthers recognized a similarity between regional tensions of his day and the Tory/Whig strife half a century earlier. He folds that analogy into his narrative to illustrate that Americans are meant to unite with Americans, and any other match would be fatal. Fanny’s epistle takes readers back to the Revolutionary War, when a land feud between Fanny’s grandfather, a Republican, and Mr. Moreton, a Tory, inhibits the cross-political marriage

between their children, Holcomb and Catharine. Sent away by her father to London, Catharine dies brokenhearted after hearing Holcomb's pursuing ship is lost at sea. But Holcomb survives. Devastated, he travels South, leaving his family to also believe he is dead. Years later, he returns as prosperous and mysterious Mr. Thornton and secretly arranges a marriage between his niece, Fanny, and Moreton's grandson living in the West, Mr. Sandford. But when Fanny refuses the match, her father nearly dies of a stroke.

As a result of his stroke, Mr. St. Clair's bedroom transforms into his sickroom—a sanctified space of negotiation where discursive power rests with the invalid. In his article "Of Other Spaces," philosopher Michel Foucault refers to these sacred spaces as "heterotopias of crisis"—a closed space not easily accessible unless one "submit(s) to rites and purification" (Foucault "Of Other Spaces" 26). St. Clair's deathbed propels Fanny to rush home to his side. Her father's first words to her are, "Oh, Fanny! . . . your letter was near killing me" (2: 158). These words are significant in that they place both his illness and his approaching future in the hands of his daughter and her decision to marry Mr. Sandford. The question for him is: Will she submit to his will? If she proves loyal, he may live. By immediately responding, "dear father; I will do as you desire; indeed, indeed, I will,—after you have heard all the circumstances," Fanny submits to her father's will and earns rights to his sickroom (2: 158). But mediation here is superficial, as is her freedom in choosing a husband. While he tells her to "decide the question with regard to Mr. Sandford," he makes it clear that he identifies his happiness with her suitor and "perhaps it is the last which [he] may enjoy in this world" (2: 160). When Fanny declares she cannot marry Sandford, even promising to live single, poor, and secluded, she forfeits her rights at his bedside and must leave. The father's health quickly deteriorates and the family, including Mr. Sandford, draw near in vigil. Eventually, Fanny falls on her knees,

agreeing to the marriage. But agreeing is not enough. Fanny must declare, “Yes; I have before Heaven solemnly promised, of my own free will, to marry Mr. Sandford at any time my dear father may choose to appoint; whether he lives or dies” (2: 163). At this point, he declares Fanny his “consistent and devoted child” and invites her into his arms (2: 163). In her letter to Victor, Fanny refers to this decision as her “duty” and “sacrifice” for her father’s health and happiness (2: 163).

In keeping with the idea that mismatched marriages end in death, Fanny, guilty by her gender, likens her wedding to a sentence of condemnation and the ceremony as a spectacle gathered to see her executed. She describes herself as “the poor criminal on the scaffold, . . . about to suffer the extreme penalty of the laws” (2: 172-73). Even her refusing to vow obedience went unacknowledged, and she was “pronounced a lawful and wedded wife!” (2: 174). At the wedding dinner, Mr. St. Clair and the elder Mr. Sandford reveal the marriage arrangement by Mr. Thornton (Holcomb St. Clair), by which “the old feud has been healed, and two hearts made happy” (2: 178). Upon her free-will marriage, Fanny inherits half of Mr. Thornton’s fortune, and the narrative implies that her groom had previous knowledge of this secret boon, which proves his father’s broken promise. Before the toast was over, Mr. St. Clair reveals an “old crone” had prophesied and condemned “this most unholy union,” and shortly thereafter the groom dies of wine poisoning. Days later, Fanny’s father passes away after “implor[ing] his child’s forgiveness, calling himself criminal, guilty, and blind” (2: 182). As if it were a recompense for manipulating “unholy unions,” the male line of a “once numerous, powerful, and wealthy house” ended. The elder Mr. Sandford accused Fanny of “murdering [her] husband] on his bridal night,” and he pursues her from North to South and South to North, much like slave catchers pursue run-away slaves.

Since Mr. Sandford represents the West, his home territory, nineteenth-century readers may have discerned subversive arguments about Westward expansion, its influence on the number of slave states, and its threat to national unity. Historian Alan Brinkley argues in his survey of *American History*, that North and South tensions over slavery “remained relatively contained” until “the West . . . brought these differences to a head most forcefully” (343). Would incoming states be slave-holding or free states? Moreover, the expanding West needed to communicate with the older states (Brinkley 360). Would the eastern terminus for such communication (for example, railroads) filter through Northern or Southern states? It may be that Fanny’s failed marriage with Sandford has metaphorical meanings grounded in the ratification of western states, which led not only to the 1820 Missouri Compromise but also to fugitive slaves laws. Therefore, Caruthers’s cloaking of Fanny in racial overtones, pursued by a maniacal specter (symbolic of slavecatchers), could represent the haunting issue of slavery that disrupts North and South regional harmony. The fact that Victor marries (captures) Fanny and returns her, like a run-away slave, to his Southern home reveals Caruthers’s Southern bias. He may not like slavery; he may think it is the source of America’s illness, but he feels that it is the South’s issue to resolve. Readers cannot help but notice that North/South marriage plots in Caruthers’s novel are successful, voluntary, and result in national healing.

Like Caruthers, Sedgwick uses illness as a rhetorical tool—both to make and break potential marriage unions, especially between British and Americans. Moreover, she uses Mr. Linwood, the family patriarch and ardent Tory, to make her arguments. When the Tories take his son, Herbert, prisoner, Mr. Linwood, succumbs to a life-threatening illness that foils a marriage union between his daughter and British-born Jasper Meredith, and subsequently secures another marriage between Herbert and British-born, rebel-turned Lady Anne. Fearing her father’s “death

at every moment,” Isabella clings to his bedside for “five days and nights” (193). Jasper, wishing to propose, tries to draw her away from Linwood’s sick chamber, but her father keeps her by his side, claiming ““My life depends on you, Belle [. . .] don’t quit me, Belle!”” (184). Later, Jasper makes another attempt to win her declaration. She is about to capitulate in his favor, when Mrs. Linwood rushes in, demanding Isabella come to her father ““instantly”” (193). At this point, Mr. Linwood encourages Isabella to follow her heart in marriage, a republican idea, by revealing his big regret, not marrying his first love, the rebel-turned Aunt Archer. In the end, Linwood stays true to his Tory leanings, even while assimilating to the “levelling Americans” culture (354).

Thinking Isabella would marry him out of gratitude, Jasper resorts to using Mr. Linwood’s illness to pressure Herbert, sickly and in prison, to renounce the rebel cause and join the Reformees. But Herbert receives inspiration from the dedication of fellow starving prisoners from Carolina (South) and Connecticut (North). He finds Jasper’s suggestion, which would bring “dishonor to Isabella’s brother,” offensive and declares his heart “true to his country,” even unto death (217). Herbert’s devotion to the country of his birth marks his maturation and solidifies his hero status, thus earning his right to Lady Anne’s hand.

Illness plots typically result in marital delays that afford loved ones time for reflection and reconsideration. Mr. Linwood’s illness affords Eliot’s sister, Bessie, time to finish a pilgrimage to New York where she unmask Jasper as a dishonorable rogue and “self-idolater” (301). Sedgwick clearly intends readers to view Bessie as symbolic of faltering colonialists and her “malady” as symbolic of England’s ideological spell cast upon them. When Bessie realizes that the British Jasper, who has “dominion” over her, toyed with her affections and never intended to marry beneath his class, she becomes mentally deranged (320). She curses ““Oh memory!—memory!—memory!,”” and believes ““the past, the past is all—there is no present, no

future!’” (320, 210). The text likens her to Fanny Kemble’s “exquisite personation of Ophelia” (301). Demented, she leaves Westbrook, Massachusetts, on foot, traveling to New York to find Jasper. Along the way, she receives help from sympathetic villagers, and a deeply sympathetic LaFayette writes her an order of protection and provides her an escort into New York City (264). Her journey culminates in a highly symbolic and emotional scene in which Bessie, fever-deranged and death-like, states, “I have come such a long and wearisome journey to make peace for all of us; and if you will let me but finish my task, I shall lay me down and sleep—for ever, I think” (298). Her task is to return to Jasper “those charms and spells by which my soul was bound” (297) before yielding him to Isabella. By returning the charms, Bessie believes she has brought peace to British and Americans. The charms symbolize her courtship with Meredith and include: a faded bud, a gold chain, a “forget-me-not” brooch, a pencil with the “power to make revelations,” and a “tress of her own fair hair, tied with a ravel lock of his in a true-love knot” (299-300). In *An American Body-Politic*, Bernd Herzogenrath explains the implication of the true-love knot:

In the sacred marriage, that ultimate communion of the saints in heaven, the ligaments that knits the communal body together, is reaffirmed and strengthened—as [Edward] Taylor puts it, “a curious knot God made in Paradise, / And drew it out inamled neatly Fresh. / It was the True-Love Knot, more sweet than spice / And set with all the flowres of Graces dress. / Its Weddens Knot, that ne’re can be unti’de. / No Alexanders Sword can it divide’ [sic]. (Bernd Herzogenrath 80)

“Alexanders Sword” references the legend of Alexander the Great who severed the Gordian Knot, which could not be untied, before invading Greater Asia, symbolizing a change in regime

(Graves, footnote 83.4). Bessie wishes the knot untied, and when Jasper refuses to help, she asks Isabella. Instead of *untying* the knot, Isabella, “rebel chieftainess” and “born for empire,” with scissors in hand declares “I can sever it” (7, 300). Afterwards, she keeps Bessie’s strand as a “memorial of innocence, and purity, and much-abused trust” (300). Colonialists then felt their trust much abused by Britain’s monarchy. By echoing Alexander’s masculine sword with the feminine scissors, Sedgwick marks a change from the oppressive monarchical rule to a citizen-elected, republican government.

Severing the knot not only broke the spell Jasper had over Bessie but also the one he had over Isabella, resulting in a healing of the mind. At this point, Isabella tells her Aunt Archer, “my mind is absorbed in a delicious, devout sense of escape. From my childhood I have been in thrall—groping in mist. Now I stand in a clear light—I see objects in their true colours—I am mistress of myself” (302). Mr. Linwood’s and Bessie’s illnesses work in a two-part structure: first to delay Isabella’s accepting Jasper’s proposal and second by revealing Jasper’s true character. Breaking the link in the chain that bound her to Jasper indicated, according to Aunt Archer’s thoughts, “the weakness of the whole chain . . . Belle thinks and feels independently” (235). On another level, the broken chain symbolizes America’s break with Great Britain. In fact, Isabella likens the chain to slave chains, binding her to an “alternate slave of vanity and love,” and the “voluntary service of the heart is better than freedom” (346). Isabella’s new attitude makes her more attractive to Eliot, as she tells him, “I think you like me for, what most men like not at all—my love of freedom and independence of control” (322). Here Sedgwick alludes to the colonies’ fight for freedom of tyranny and independence. Likewise, a marriage of America’s states into a national union represented the same idea—state-governing independence within the Federal Union.

Illness also plays a part in Herbert and Lady Anne's marriage. Mr. Linwood's illness and sacred sickroom space situates Herbert, frequently furloughed to visit his ailing father, in company with Lady Anne. Over a period of time, they fall in love. Herbert's prisoner and death-row status makes their marriage impossible. But his fragile health in prison prompts Isabella, Rose, and Lady Anne to help him escape and culminates in Anne and Herbert's marriage in the home of George and Martha Washington, who reportedly enjoyed matching cross-regional couples (Wood 78). In fact, Martha states that she will stand in as a parent for Anne. Anne, then, renounces her title and "turns rebel"; she feels "'Heaven would smile on the union of true and loving hearts'" (353, 339). Herbert and Anne's son also serves to repair the father/son relationship, even though, as Mr. Linwood states, he "'sucks in independence and republicanism with his mother's milk'" (355). The one character who never followed a Tory or Whig ideology is Bessie, who lingered in health, "chiefly to minister to the sick and sorrowful," until her death a short time later (353). More importantly, Bessie never marries and never has children; therefore, her role as a citizen in the national body ends with her death. Indeed, those characters who marry cross-regionally and produce progeny demonstrate regional healing. Both North and South are united in their children's bodies, symbolically representing the North/South contractual consummation, and as future citizens, they ensure perpetual unity within the national family.

Conclusion

Aiming to heal the enlarging regional divide caused by the Nullification Crisis, Caruthers and Sedgwick published fictional narratives that sought to uncover and combat provincial prejudices, which would bring regional healing. In fact, prejudices drive both plots. In *The Kentuckian*, Caruthers argues that without the Nullification's "pecuniary interest" the "provincial rivalry" would only be a "fertile source of amusement" (13). In the 1820s and 1830s, disgruntled

Southerners felt that recent tariffs favored Northern merchants and manufacturers at the expense of agrarian planters. On the one hand, as depicted in Caruthers's narrative, Southern agrarians disparagingly view "Yankee" merchants as "retailers of wooden nutmegs—unfair dealers, and a canting, sniveling, hypocritical set," while Sedgwick defends merchants as our "city gentry" (Sedgwick 128; Caruthers 1: 71-72). On the other hand, Northerners describe Southern planters as indolent and harsh slave-owners. Similarly, Maria McIntosh's *The Lofty and the Lowly*, the subject of the following chapter, also describes North and South tensions, yet McIntosh redirects the blame for those stereotypes on class rather than regions. Here, though, Caruthers diverts that argument to South Carolina in particular, while Sedgwick defends planters as the "honest yeoman of the land" (Sedgwick, *Linwoods* 240). Moreover, both Caruthers and Sedgwick imply that Southern slavery is acceptable in moderation, such as in Virginia. Virginians, Caruthers notes, own fewer slaves per family than their South Carolina counterparts. Similarly, the agrarian Lees have one or two slaves as compared to the dozen or so that the aristocratic and Tory Linwoods possess. Therefore, both regions are guilty of their own atrocities and shortcomings. In the forthcoming chapters on McIntosh and Hentz, both written in the 1850s just after the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the slavery defense adopts "the positive good" argument, perpetuated by John C. Calhoun, in that planters serve as parents, educators, and missionaries.

Caruthers's and Sedgwick's narratives imply the nation's heightened temperature indicates illness in an "infected region." The illness here is prejudice, "sacrilegiously sever[ing] the bonds by which God has united man to man, and breaks the human family into parties and sects!" (Sedgwick 36, 158). Through what would be later labeled the "Body Politic," these writers invite readers to imagine their sick nation dividing and subsequently dying. As a preferable counterpoint to characters' illnesses that represent a nation sickened through division,

both authors envision a newly-made national body emerging through cross-regional domestic unions.

In the end, the marriages in *The Linwoods* are cross-regional, uniting rural Massachusetts with urban New York City; cross-class, binding country rustic with aristocrat, and poor American aristocrat with (surrendered title) British heiress; and cross-ideological, connecting Tory and Whig. In *The Kentuckian*, Caruthers's marriages cross and bind the U.S. map: North/South, Virginia/South Carolina, and West (Kentucky)/East (Maryland). Through marriage-plot motifs, Caruthers and Sedgwick demonstrate the perfect Union healed from prejudices (sickness). To uncover prejudices, Caruthers proposes that ““much travelling and experience of the world”” encourage regional understanding and heal prejudices (1: 110). In fact, the illness experience results in a more benevolent individual, and benevolence, in turn, weakens partialities (1: 109). This idea connotes balance and a healthy union. Frequently in domestic fiction, a “marriage [union] could bridge two classes and create a harmonious balance between two people” (Chambers 68), or by extending the metaphor, overcoming prejudices can “create a harmonious balance” between regions, thus restoring national unity. By the 1850s, interregional roadways and transportation improve, thus enabling more cross-regional travel and marriages. Accordingly, McIntosh builds upon Caruthers's and Sedgwick's thesis by also suggestion cross-regional travel would disabuse regional prejudices by joining the agrarian with the manufacturer.

CHAPTER THREE

“The Chivalrous South and the Enterprising North”: The Financial Crisis
and McIntosh’s *The Lofty and the Lowly*

In 1833, President Andrew Jackson successfully urged Congress to pass the Force Bill, authorizing him to use whatever means necessary to collect federal tariffs, or what South Carolina labeled the “Tariffs of Abomination”; that same year, Jackson determined to “crush” that “abominable institution”—the Bank of the United States, which he felt benefitted the wealthy at the expense of the poor (Reynolds 107). Many Americans of that era blamed his actions for the subsequent Panic of 1837, which “initiated the worst economic depression the country had yet known,” lasting well into the 1840s and 1850s (Reynolds 310). When the federal government pulled funding from the United States Bank (USB), Maria Jane McIntosh, then living with her half-brother in New York City, lost her entire legacy. Like a number of other educated females of her era, McIntosh began earning an income by writing fiction. Born in the South and adopted by the North, McIntosh shared with other antebellum writers a concern that regional prejudices and tensions might destroy the Union.

McIntosh begins her 1852 novel *The Lofty and the Lowly* with an address “To The Reader,” wherein she explains the origin of her “desire” is “to remove some of the prejudices separating the Northern and Southern United States” (1: 5). She proposes that her narrative stands as an “olive-branch” that will “pour balm into the wounds” and heal the regional breach (1: 6). In doing so, she promotes the idea that through cross-regional travel the North and the South, where there exists “good in all and none all-good” (1: 1), can provide mutually positive influences for each other—both morally and economically—through regional understanding and association.

Maria Jane McIntosh's *The Lofty and the Lowly*, spanning three decades and culminating with the Panic of 1837, covers a period cultural historian David S. Reynolds describes as having "profound contradictions in the nation's identity" (34). Her narrative predominately focuses on two families: the Montroses, a Southern plantation family from Georgia (McIntosh's natal home), and the Grahames, a Northern manufacturing family with aristocratic ties to a barony in England. A third family, the Brownes, represent Northern "New Money" and serve as the foil for the other two families. When Col. Jno. Montrose, the Southern patriarch, marries in 1810, America is still mostly an agrarian culture. Just after the War of 1812, the Grahame patriarch establishes his "factory for cotton and woolen cloths"; America was then moving towards capitalism and industrialism. "At a period when American manufacturers were little more than a dream," Edward Grahame "entertained the faith that only in the conjunction of manufacturers and agriculture, could the financial independence of his country be attained" (McIntosh 1:36). Edward Grahame's vision for a cross-regional, national dream team in capitalism, which echoes McIntosh's narrative purpose—uniting agrarian and manufacturer—soon comes to a crash during the Panic of 1819, which "initiated the nation's first major depression" (Reynolds 29). Likewise, Col. Montrose's brother, Charles, suffers great losses in his manufacturing business. Both Edward Grahame and Charles Montrose soon pass away, leaving readers to associate speculation failures with the deteriorating health of these two great patriarchs. While not legally required to do so, Robert Grahame struggles to repay his father's debts while also supporting his younger brother and sister. Down in Georgia, Col. Montrose adopts his late brother's family and moves them to his plantation to live a life of luxury and ease; however, when the Panic of 1837 hits, all the Montrose children find themselves at the brink of poverty. In order for these families

to survive during a period of financial crisis, they must develop a strong work ethic and practice strict economy while learning to depend upon each other for moral and spiritual support.

Another element in the nation's contradictory identity is the issue of slavery. The American Dream promised equal rights for all, yet it continued to tolerate slavery (Reynolds 34). Moreover, President Jackson, the candidate for the common man, "did nothing to challenge the existence of slavery" (Brinkley 237). In her address to the reader, Maria McIntosh reveals that she began this novel upon the publication of her *Women in America* in 1850, and then laid it aside for a period of two years. During that period, Harriet Beecher Stowe published *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, first in serial format that ran in the weekly *National Era* and then, in 1852, as a novel. Since the second volume of *The Lofty and The Lowly* makes a stark change in narrative by focusing more overtly on slavery, in particular through the elderly character of Daddy Cato who resembles Uncle Tom, one can easily imagine that McIntosh's alteration in rhetorical strategy resulted in part from her reading of Stowe's publication during that two-year period. Adding to this allusion is her use of "Lowly" in her title, which echoes Stowe's subtitle: *A Tale of Life among the Lowly*. Like Caroline Lee Hentz, who at that time was writing *The Planter's Northern Bride*, McIntosh blames a nameless foe for leading her "unwillingly within precincts which others have made an arena of controversy" (1: 5). That she is speaking of Stowe is obvious even to her literary reviewers. Identifying herself as a member of both the South and the North, McIntosh claims a special privilege, "stand[ing] between the contending parties, bearing the olive-branch, and desiring only to pour balm into the wounds given by more powerful hands" (another possible reference to Stowe) (1: 6). Her linguistic choices of "balm" and "wounds" participates in Body Politic rhetoric and exposes McIntosh's belief that the conflict over slavery, especially as highlighted by writers like Harriett Beecher Stowe, contributed to a national

ailment. Therefore, to reflect an unhealthy union troubled by a financial crisis that affected North and South, free and slave, McIntosh incorporates illness plots that lead to her characters' cross-regional marriage unions. McIntosh's personal note, placed as a preface, suggests that she believed her cross-regional narrative would "heal" regional discord, as illustrated in her metaphorical marriage unions.

About the Author

Like Caroline Lee Hentz, Maria Jane McIntosh not only began her writing career out of financial need but also had claim to a bi-regional identity. Julia Deane Freeman of Massachusetts (pen name "Mary Forrest") wrote in her 1861 biographical collection, *Women of the South Distinguished in Literature*: "Twenty-five years have made Miss McIntosh a citizen of the North, and gladly would we claim her" (163). Yet, born into "a wealthy and distinguished Georgia family" not far from Savannah, McIntosh grew up in a "gracious mansion with extensive grounds and beautiful views, which figures as the setting in many of her fictions" (Baym 86). After losing her father, a Revolutionary War veteran and officer, when she was three and her mother when she was twenty, she ran the family plantation for twelve years. In 1835, McIntosh sold the plantation and invested her money in bank securities in New York, where she went to live with her half-brother, Naval Captain James M. McIntosh. Two years later, during the Crisis of 1837, "every vestige of her patrimony was swallowed up, and out of the vortex rose a new creation," a writer (Freeman 165). Upon a friend's suggestion, McIntosh began writing juvenile tales under the name "Aunt Kitty." By the mid-1840s, she started publishing her woman's fiction.

In *Woman's Fiction*, Nina Baym singles out Maria J. McIntosh (1803-1878) as "the first of the popular women novelists of the mid-century" (86). Her novels *True Lives* (1846) and

Charms and Countercharms (1848) went through seven and eight editions respectively, and the latter sold over 100,000 copies (86). In 1850, she published *Woman in America, Her Work and Her Reward* in which she “ventures to define clearly her conception of that hackneyed, evasive, nondescript thing, ‘a woman’s sphere’” (Freeman 167-68). According to Baym, McIntosh’s themes included “woman in search of herself,” a process during which events force her on a journey towards independence (Baym 89, 88). Often her fiction mirrored elements of her personal life; in effect, she “lived through a version of the story that she wrote and rewrote” (87). Frequently, McIntosh explored and compared North and South culture. Writing from a bi-regional identity and as a victim of the financial crisis, McIntosh composed from a position of authenticity, creating an alternative narrative to historical accounts about some of the most controversial and noteworthy topics of the era: methods and customs of travel; the negotiations and legalities of personal and national debt; methods for and morals of practicing economy; concepts of gentility and gentlemanly behavior; social and cultural attitudes about industry and work ethics; and descriptions of and precepts for enhancing the plight of slaves and factory workers.

State of the Union

During the War of 1812, England’s trade embargos inadvertently nurtured the factory industry in a predominately agrarian America. Politicians of the era took advantage of a booming industry and feelings of nationalism to build the country’s infrastructure. President Madison supported transportation improvements of roads and canals and reviving the Bank of the United States (Reynolds 11). The number of steamboats doubled, and the ease of travel fed capitalism (12). Moreover, cloth once woven at home was increasingly manufactured in New England textile mills (62). European demands for American exports, such as cotton, tobacco, and flour,

and the opening and sale of government lands in the West fed the proliferation of state banks, drained silver and gold reserves, facilitated the issuing of credit, and flooded the regions with paper money (11). Suspicious of paper currency, Jackson disapproved of selling government land for state bank notes that depended upon the stability of the issuing bank (Brinkley 255). The swift changes in the economy prompted Thomas Jefferson to warn, “We are to be ruined by paper” and “we are under a bank bubble” about to burst (qtd. in Reynolds 29). As cultural historian David Reynolds aptly states, “American workers got a harsh lesson in the dangers of capitalism when the economy crashed” in 1819, which “initiated the nation’s first major depression” (29). McIntosh herself describes the effects of risking capital in her narrative:

The war with England and the interruption of our commerce which had preceded it, had greatly elevated the price of European fabrics, and depressed that raw material which we had been accustomed to exchange for them. No period could have been more favorable for domestic manufacturers, and accordingly, for a year or two, Edward Grahame bought his cotton at a low price and sold his cloths readily at a fair valuation. . . . But peace was declared—the ports of England were thrown open to us—the cotton which had lain so long useless in the store-houses of the planter rose suddenly to an unprecedented price. . . . The overstocked warehouses of England emptied themselves upon our shores, and the strong prejudices in favor of foreign fabrics left the home manufacturer to a hopeless competition. (1:37)

As McIntosh describes and Reynolds’s research confirms, England, whose embargo boosted America’s Industrial Revolution, also threatened it after the war by unloading their surplus textiles on American shores (Reynolds 11). As a result of the crashing economy, banks decreased

credit and began calling in their loans. McIntosh echoes this trend when her manufacturer magnate, Edward Grahame, struggles to repay creditors.

In the midst of this 1819 crisis, politicians disagreed on the best way to stabilize the economy. Henry Clay of Kentucky and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina believed the Bank of the United States (BUS) would stabilize currency; however, gross mismanagement of state banks led to fraud and embezzlement. Attempts by Congress to terminate the nearly insolvent BUS proved futile since a number of committee members held stock in the bank (Reynolds 29). Additionally, recent Supreme Court decisions inhibited state interference in privately-run corporations, which in turn inspired allegations of a capitalist conspiracy and stimulated state's rights and agrarian concerns to a new extreme (31, 64). At the close of Monroe's term, America showed promise as a world power, but the "era of good feelings" gave way to rising tensions that would eventually lead to civil war (47, 34). During the ensuing years, class divisions increased, causing one labor paper in 1828 to criticize the classes as "the rich and the poor; the oppressor and the oppressed; those who live by their own labor, and they that live by the labor of others" (qtd. in Reynolds 65). The time was set for the extension of democracy in a new era: Andrew Jackson and "The Age of the Common Man."

As the first president not born in an elite family, Andrew Jackson was "the people's president," the "first from the West, the first born in a log cabin" (Reynolds 81). Rather than worshipping him as a God like they did Washington, citizens saw Jackson as one of them. Committed to reform social and financial equality, Jackson became consumed with destroying the Bank of the United States and blinded to the benefits it could, if managed properly, provide (82). By 1832, the BUS's twenty-nine branches "controlled a third of the nation's bank deposits" (96). Jackson claimed that the BUS benefitted the wealthy—mostly northeasters and

foreigners—at the expense of the common Americans. And he accused the bank of creating artificial class distinctions, increasing the wealth of the powerful elite, while neglecting “the humble members of society—the farmers, mechanics, and laborers” (qtd. in Reynolds 97). As historian Edward Pessen explains, advances in transportation enabled the rapid rise of mass trade production at the cost of the small shop owner and master craftsman (*Most Uncommon Jackson* 3). Now able to sell cheaper products on a national stage, the merchant capitalist arose as “a dominant figure on the economic scene” (Pessen, *Most Uncommon Jackson* 4). The South, growing but not developing, disliked having to depend on Northern merchants, who, they felt, threatened their distinctive way of life (Brinkley 297-99). Indeed, those of the “Old World” believed that the “masses dominated the New” (Pessen, *Riches, Class* 2).

When Congress introduced a bill to recharter the BUS, Jackson used his veto, declaring to Van Buren, “The bank . . . is trying to kill me, *but I will kill it!*” (Reynolds 107). Jackson began shifting federal monies from the Treasury to selected state banks, frequently referred to as his “pet bank” scheme (Rousseau 473). In 1836, he issued the Specie Circular order, requiring “hard money” in public land purchases, which were occurring mostly in the West. Consequently, a combination of factors led to the Panic of 1837: the withdrawal of federal funds from the USB thrust many Americans like McIntosh and her fictional Alice into poverty; the Specie Circular, a policy economic historian Peter L. Rousseau calls “pivotal” in creating a financial imbalance by transferring gold/silver specie from Eastern banks to the West; and an unfavorable trade balance, causing England to require specie from American banks (Rousseau 486; Reynolds 109; Brinkley 255-56). Prices fell, particularly the price of land, financially affecting McIntosh’s fictional Col. Montrose, who had recently purchased river lands on credit that then depreciated to less than he owed.

The Panic of 1837 and the ensuing depression indicate the national health was poor and out of balance. In order to restore order, a renewed Whig Party arose, “a motley mix of National Republicans, Anti-masons, nullifiers, supporters of the BUS, states’ righters, tariff promoters, and advocates of internal improvements” (Reynolds 111). They ran on a religious agenda of self-improvement through moral and religious teachings, appealing to the middle- and upper-classes and even segments of the urban working class (112). As a reflection of the era, McIntosh’s novel has a didactic tone, preaching self-improvement and reliance, endorsing strong work ethics, and defining an elite polite society in light of Christian virtues. Essentially, McIntosh’s main premise is the old proverb “Idle hands are the Devil’s workshop.” Through her narrative, McIntosh instructs citizens to avoid the bondage of debt and practice “strict economy” by curbing frivolous expenditures. She also extols the virtues of a healthy work ethic, even extending that quality, when necessity demands it, to women in polite society.

Contemporary Reviews and Scholarship

For the most part, literary reviewers of *The Lofty and the Lowly* focused more on the topic of slavery as an obvious counter-narrative to Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* rather than on McIntosh’s depiction of Northern versus Southern culture. In general, reviewers seem to have agreed that McIntosh’s rebuttal was, at best, mild. The *Cincinnati Gazette* found that admirers of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* would “not find their dislike of slavery greatly lessened” and might, instead, find themselves “persuaded to cherish a kindlier feeling toward those whose lot is cast amid the institutions of the South” (“Book of the Day”). The *American Courier* called the work “purely American,” noting that the subject of slavery “barely comes under the notice of the writer” (“Book of the Day”). While *Godey’s Lady Book* appeared bored with “still another” effort towards mitigating the “odious contrasts of American life and character,” it praised McIntosh for

having “scrupulously” avoided giving any offence, presumably about slavery, to readers and predicted good results in its obliterating national prejudices (“Evening Thoughts” n. pag.). A second *Godey’s* review even went so far as to claim *The Lofty* was *not* an answer to Stowe’s book, for “nothing approaching the spirit of controversy is to be found in the volume” (“Centre-Table” 378). In regard to her depiction of the North, the *American Courier* found her hero, Robert Grahame, the “standard of a North man”; however, the *National Era* (April 14, 1853) referred to McIntosh as “rather a favorite of ours,” defending her against any accusations of “injustice to the North in her book” (“Book of the Day”). Most striking is that an extensive list of reviews on McIntosh’s counter-narrative to Stowe appeared in the *National Era*—“the original home of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*” (Mesle 203).

The *National Era* juxtaposed their “Book of the Day” column, featuring McIntosh’s *The Lofty and the Lowly* next to advertisements for Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and *Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (photo at right). This anomaly recently caught the attention of Sarah Mesle, who highlights the incident as an “important anachronism in modern reading practices” in her 2013 article “Sentimentalism’s Nation: Maria J.

McIntosh and the Antebellum Contexts of

‘Southern’ Fiction.” Mesle argues that today’s scholarly approaches to anti-Uncle Tom

narratives mistakenly assume “ideological and geographical” opinions about slavery that

functioned “differently now than they did in their own era” (204-5). She points to what she calls

TO BOOKSELLERS AND THE PUBLIC IN THE WESTERN STATES.

JEWETT, PROCTOR, & WORTHINGTON,
Cleveland, Ohio.

WOULD respectfully announce that they are the Western publishers of all the works issued by John P. Jewett & Co., Boston, and that we supply all their books, at their prices, in any quantity. Among these books are the following:

Uncle Tom's Cabin. By Mrs. Stowe. Various editions.
Uncle Tom's Cabin in German. Soon to be issued.
Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin. Soon to be issued. By Mrs. Stowe.

The Autographs of Freedom.
The Trial by Jury. By Lyander Spooner.
The Book of One Thousand Anecdotes.
The Shady Side; or, Life in a Country Parsonage. By a Pastor's Wife.
The Philosophy of Mysterious Agents. In three Parts. By Dr. E. C. Rodgers. An Exposé of the Spiritual Humbug. Price, 25 cents each part.
Heaven and its Spiritual Emblems. A Religious Old Book. Beautifully bound and illustrated.

IN PRESS:
White Slavery in the Barbary States. By Hon. Charles Sumner. With 40 splendid illustrations by Billings, engraved by Baker & Smith. This will make one beautiful 16mo volume of about 140 pages, bound in cloth, thin boards, printed in the most elegant style, on the best paper, at retail, 50 or 62½ cents. Ready about 15th of February.

in Press. to be issued in March—

prevent robbing while in the process of. Any person who has one sworn that this winter if not foul, will more than save her if they will procure and use the article. Knowing that multitudes are anxious to obtain above information, and that it is more than an equal for the dollar asked, no apology is needed for this notice.

March 10—4t
Nowbury, Vermont.

THE BOOK OF THE DAY.
NOW READY, the eighth thousand of *The Lofty and the Lowly*; or, Good in All, and None All Good. By Maria J. McIntosh, author of "Two Lives," "Gleanings and Counter Gleanings," "Evenings at Donaldson Manor," &c. Two neat volumes 12mo. Paper \$1, cloth \$1.60.

An eighth edition having been called for so soon after its publication sufficiently attests its great merit. Any one remitting to the publishers the price of the book, can have it mailed to his address, free of expense.

A few Criticisms of the Press.
As to its literary merits, we can honestly commend it as a charming story; and for its moral influence we think the admirers of Uncle Tom's Cabin will not find their dislike of slavery greatly lessened by its perusal, while they may be persuaded to cherish a kinder feeling toward those whose lot is cast amid the institutions of the South.—*Cincinnati Gazette.*

It is a book of great interest, written in a candid truthful spirit. The arrangement of the plot and incidents is skillful, and the work abounds in passages of great pathos and of thrilling interest.—*Boston Daily Advertiser.*

A good book, commendable in spirit and creditable in execution. It will make its way in public favor and win for its accomplished author the commendation of all dispassionate readers.—*Daily Times.*

Written in a most admirable tone, and with manly

“a disconnect between slavery and nation presumed” by scholars like Nina Baym, Mary Kelley, and Elizabeth Moss, who, she claims, offers “contradictory approaches to McIntosh’s prose” (208). Rather than committing the “grave” “mischaracterization” of reading pro-slavery as “Southern” and anti-slavery as “national,” thus confusing geography with ideology, Mesle encourages a study of McIntosh as a pro-nationalist writer participating in a “vital” and “tense conversation about slavery and national identity” (205). In a comparative reading of Stowe’s and McIntosh’s text, Mesle explores the ways in which both writers promoted sympathy and benevolence in a pro-slavery world (224). It is important to note that pro-slavery ideologies did not rest solely in the South; the North maintained its own share of racist viewpoints. Like Mesle, I contend that McIntosh’s narratives, despite her pro-slavery perspective, can be read as both “pro-Southern and pro-American” (Mesle 207, 220), engaging in the work of national unity in a period of economic crisis.

Several scholars have recently looked at antebellum reactions to the Panic of 1819 and/or 1837 in fiction. Joseph Fichtelberg, author of *Critical Fictions*, concentrates specifically on fiction in which sentimentalism served as an agent of power in economic crises. For instance, feminine vulnerability allegorically represented marketplace turmoil, from which weakness could lead to recovery. In contrast, David Anthony’s *Paper Money Men: Commerce, Manhood, and the Sensational Public Sphere in Antebellum America* centers on masculinity during the financial crisis in male-authored texts. María Carla Sánchez, in *Reforming the World: Social Activism and the Problem of Fiction in Nineteenth-Century America*, examines how panic fiction writers represented speculation as a “practice in falsehood,” which was a “dangerous deviation from the country’s inherited moral codes” (58). Sánchez focuses on social reform in works typically suspicious of the label “fiction” while looking at the interconnectedness between

individual and national character. However, the two literary scholars whose work concentrates on woman's fiction, and in particular on Maria J. McIntosh, are Mary Templin, *Panic Fiction: Women and Antebellum Economic Crisis*, and Elizabeth Moss, *Domestic Novelist in the Old South*. Templin, who coined the term "panic fiction" in her 2004 essay of the same name, reveals that most of the fictional reactions to the panic crisis were written by women. Tapping into the era's financial anxieties, these women provided economic advice and examples in entertaining narratives. She also examines how "panic produced anxiety about social changes and disrupted certain kinds of identity, particularly gender and class" (11). In her study of Southern women writers, Moss views McIntosh as a Southern writer who fostered the "communal values" of agrarian culture and criticized Northern capitalists whose corruptive actions attempted to erode those values. I agree with Moss in that McIntosh's narrative reveals a bias towards the South; however, from my multiple readings of the novel, I see McIntosh as attempting to present both regions in good and bad lights, thus echoing her subtitle "all good and none all-good" (1: 1). Then, too, I perceive an elite bias underlining her depictions of Northern class morals and culture. While Templin and Moss provide persuasive analyses of *The Lofty and the Lowly*, my work joins their conversation by focusing on cross-regional tensions and illustrating how McIntosh figuratively situated the financial crisis as a national illness. I also underscore how the uniting of manufacturing and agrarian cultures, symbolized in marriage unions, results in economic and regional healing.

Critical Analysis of *The Lofty and the Lowly*

Like the other authors who make up this project, Maria J. McIntosh structured her narrative by detailing prejudices between the North and the South before suggesting cross-regional travel as a method to disabuse bigotries and bring healing. Her writing contemporary

Caroline Lee Hentz in *The Planter's Northern Bride* also focused on Northern manufacturers and suggested they pattern their labor system on the Southern plantation system of familial love. McIntosh, however, did the opposite. Her Northern manufacturing family had a positive influence on the Southern Montroses in areas of economy, work ethics, and the Christian treatment of those working under them—factory workers in the North (and for the Montroses, slaves in the South). McIntosh focused her narrative on three sets of siblings descending from two prominent families: Charles and Alice Montrose, bi-regional children who were born in the North to a manufacturing family before moving South to live on their uncle's plantation; Donald and Isabelle Montrose, the Georgia planter's children and cousins to Alice and Charles; and Robert and Mary Grahame, the children of a bankrupt Northern manufacturer. Living through one of the nation's severest depressions, McIntosh used her narrative to suggest an economic and regional imbalance in need of healing through positive cross-regional influences. McIntosh metaphorically contextualized interdependent harmony through her use of cross-regional marriages.

As a cross-regional text, *The Lofty and the Lowly* positions readers then and now in scenarios that allow them to listen in and understand the prejudices disrupting regional harmony in antebellum America. Deep-seeded in McIntosh's narrative are anxieties about "New Money" and blurred class boundaries that facilitate social mobility occurring in the economically progressive North. The narrative explains that to Southerners the term "Yankee" constitutes everyone North of the Potomac and is synonymous with "meanness, avarice and low cunning" (1: 16); Southerners consider Yankees "*sharpers*," ready to take advantage of easy-going Southern generosity (1: 56). In fact, Col. Montrose considers his family "dishonored" when his brother Charles marries the sister of a "Yankee shopkeeper,—a term he believes as applicable to

every man who lived by traffic of any sort”—and that his brother “was about to enter into trade himself” (1: 16). Northerners’ overt concerns about making money, budgeting, and keeping records and receipts mark them as materialistic and ungentlemanly. For Donald Montrose, Robert Grahame’s justification for keeping a fine horse based upon the merits of financial economy “savored too much of Yankeeism” (1: 124). Additionally, McIntosh’s narrative paints a marked difference in the two regions’ attitudes toward work: Southerners view labor as ignoble (1: 53). For them, Northern factory workers are no better treated than slaves. By contrast, Northerners believe Southerners are less honorable because they receive financial gain not from their own work but from slave labor. For that reason, Mr. Browne, a Northern manufacturer, fears his nephew, Charles, will grow lazy and extravagant living in the South with the Montroses (1: 20). Northerners also view Southerners as a haughty, indolent, and “half civilized” race, “better acquainted with the sword and the pistol than with any more useful implements” (1: 16). Yet it is the merchant Mr. Browne’s son, George, who becomes spoiled and indolent, reporting that “Observing the labors of others” exhausts him (1: 93). And Capt. Edward Wharton, an impoverished Virginia gentleman from a respectable family, proves the exception to Northerners’ prejudices about Southern indolence and frivolity. He practices strict economy, takes his military career seriously, and serves as adviser and mentor to young Donald Montrose. The lesson for readers to take away is that geographical prejudices are simply unreliable stereotypes and that there is “good in all and none all-good” (1: 1)

Social Mobility, New Money, and “The Charmed Circle”

McIntosh suggests in *The Lofty* that rather than these stereotypes reflecting regional differences, they were more likely characteristics of class differences, especially in the “New Money” Northern class. As Elizabeth Moss generally observes of Southern women writers, I,

too, see McIntosh tailoring her narrative to “suit the tastes” of upper-class readers (Moss 27). As Andrew Jackson noted, the antebellum “era of good feelings” proved prosperous for many investors, resulting in the rapid rise of wealthy capitalists. But the idea of an egalitarian society, as promoted by its “chief architect” Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*, was based upon “a surprisingly frail foundation of fact” (Pessen, *Riches* 1). Using quantitative data, historian Edward Pessen subjects Tocqueville’s egalitarian thesis to comprehensive analysis using tax records, city registers, and personal diaries of those living in the “New Money” epicenter, the Northeast (*Riches* 3). In *Riches, Class, and Power before the Civil War*, Pessen argues that antebellum society was not as fluid or mobile as historians previously believed (*Riches* 74). In fact, he calls it a “myth” (*Riches* 87). Many “New Money” industrialists, such as merchants and manufacturers advancing above their humble circumstances, did not easily attain “inclusion in the charmed circle” (243). Pessen calls this elite circle “Old Family” and defines it as signifying “a family long successful and usually long wealthy or well-to-do” (244). For McIntosh, the length of time necessary to acquire elite standing in the “charmed circle,” was more than two generations (1: 102), and Pessen’s research agrees: “Long renown dating back several generations in this country was, for example, a significant criterion” to socially advance (243). In *The Lofty*, McIntosh promotes the old adage that “blood will tell,” implying that “New Money” elite could not mimic the “Old Family” gentility. For readers, she offers up two mercantile families for comparison—the Grahames and the Brownes.

Both Grahame and Browne are competitive leaders in the manufacturing industry and both want to provide the best for their families. However, Grahame’s advantage over Browne is his aristocratic blood linking him to a barony in England. But as Grahame’s wealth dwindles during the 1819 depression, Browne’s fortune grows, enabling his retirement in a respectable

neighborhood. The narrative then gives way to the children to prove they are deserving of inclusion in the socially elite. “Old Family” characteristics include a code of honor and a classical education (Brinkley 302). Robert Grahame proves his honor and restores his father’s by working to repay creditors despite laws exempting him from inherited debt. Robert works diligently as both the owner of and the mechanic in his own factory, all the while studying classical Greek literature in his leisure hours. In his factory office, classical texts sit alongside mechanical texts, thus impressing those who visit and marking him an anomaly within the mercantile class (1: 38, 41). Over the years the Grahames sacrifice luxuries and practice strict economy, enabling Robert to finally repay every debt with interest. Eventually, he patents an invention for facilitating the weaving of textiles, regaining the family fortune and re-entry in socially elite circles. Quoting Lawrence Stone, Pessen explains that those who lost wealth, “were quietly dropped from the [social] lists.” If they regained their wealth, they were welcomed back (Pessen, *Riches* 244). Yet Robert’s character has flaws. While a Christian, Robert “could labor for his fellow-men, but he could not love them. From his own loftier and purer sphere, he looked with contempt upon their weaknesses” (1: 185). Twice the narrative describes Robert as “of a fallen race” due to his pride and self-reliance (1: 263-64, 185). His eventual cross-regional marriage to the virtuous and forgiving Alice Montrose tempers “what was harsh in him,” thus making Robert spiritually whole (2: 321). Throughout McIntosh’s narrative, characters describe this “*Yankee shopkeeper*” and mechanic as “a scholar, a gentleman, and a Christian” (1: 205; 2: 83). Robert Grahame is a renaissance man.

Landholding offered another entryway into the elite classes (Pessen, *Riches* 243); to that end, McIntosh paints Robert with hues of chivalry and gentility typically attributed to the Southern planter class. Moss argues that McIntosh typically paired a Northern man with a

Southern woman “on the premise that the northern had imbibed sufficient southern virtue through association” (62). However, Robert possesses these Southern characteristics before ever meeting Alice or visiting the South. Then, too, his blood connects him with British aristocracy. Despite the Revolution, Southerners continued to connect their culture to Anglo-Saxon chivalry and aristocracy. In 1859, a few years after McIntosh published *The Lofty*, Augusta Jane Evans wrote in the November issue of *Southern Literature*, “Next to the British aristocrat, we know of no position in the world more desirable than that of the Southern planter” (qtd. in Moss 166). As a rich and classically trained Northern manufacturer with aristocratic ties to a barony in England, Robert Grahame proves worthy of his future Southern bride, Alice Montrose, whose name titles the British edition of McIntosh’s novel: *Alice Montrose; or The Lofty and the Lowly: Good in All and None All-Good*. Indeed, Col. Montrose, a Southern planter, thinks Robert a noble person who ““must have good blood in his veins, or he could not have preserved that air of nobility amidst such depressing circumstances”” (1: 192). Robert and his sister Mary have qualities “to the manner [*sic*] born,” and in the South, Robert would be the ““equal of a prince”” (1: 270, 1: 194). And like a heroic prince, he appears in pivotal scenes with timely heroism riding a fine, black stallion, saving Southern characters such as Donald and Alice from George Browne’s duplicitous schemes. Having recovered his fortune, Robert repurchases the family estate in Springfield, Massachusetts, signifying his family’s reentry into polite society and solidifying his elite standing by becoming a landowner. Tree-lined and facing a river, the mansion resembles a plantation manor.

But instead of a planter with slaves, Robert is the sympathetic “overseer” of factory workers. His sister, Mary is the quintessential mother figure, teaching the factory girls, overseeing their spiritual education, and, like a plantation mistress, tending their illnesses.

Additionally, Robert builds a community for the factory workers, providing each family a small house with room for a garden and livestock—echoing a similar description of the Montrose slave community. Since his father never relinquished his British citizenship, Robert is in line to inherit his uncle’s British title and lands; however, as a true “American gentleman,” he declines (2: 292). Despite regaining their wealth, neither Robert nor his sister change in character. They live, dress, and entertain modestly, serving economical four-course meals, keeping only one servant, and never flaunting their wealth (1: 186) like those new-moneyed classes, affirming Pessen’s observations that the elite had a tendency to “play down their wealth” (26). McIntosh presented this mercantile family to her contemporary readers as examples of respectable behavior descending from aristocratic British heritage. Contrasting with this “noble” family are the Brownes.

As an example of a “New Money” Northern merchant, Mr. Browne exhibits a keen sense of shrewdness in navigating the dangers of a fast-growing economy and in exercising a strong work ethic; however, the Brownes display their acquired wealth “with a bustling ostentation too little softened by the refinements which [they] had not had time to study” (1: 93). On the positive side, the “rigid economist” Browne “never entered into any of those wild speculations, by which many of his acquaintances, making haste to be rich, became poor”; instead, he lived within his income and was now “worth about half a million” (1: 8). However, having earned his fortune, he retired from business to live the life of a gentleman. He purchased “one of the handsomest houses” in an elite neighborhood, “set up his carriage,” introduced his daughters into society, and enjoyed the “general approbation” of “social distinction” in society (1: 9).³⁸ McIntosh describes his dinners as “excellent, his wines of the rarest,” his library books “richly gilded” yet, in

³⁸ McIntosh states he settled in the neighborhood of “The Mall,” referencing The Commons area near Beacon Street. Edward Pessen lists this neighborhood as “Streets Favored by the Boston Rich in the Early 1830s” (194).

contrast to Robert's, unread (1: 9). Obviously Browne has the means to support his recently widowed sister and her two children, yet he claims to Col. Montrose that he is unable to support them out of his own pocket. As an alternative, Mr. Browne offers to place his nephew, Charles, "as a clerk in a mercantile house," where he would support himself, while seeing that Alice receives an education "as will enable her in future to command independence" (1: 8). While Mr. Browne recognizes the need for his nephew and niece to learn an occupational skill—and considering the coming Panic of 1837, his advice proves to have been wise—his goal for his own children is that they enjoy the luxuries earned by his own hard work. His daughters dress fashionably and his son foppishly, with a gold watch and diamond ring. Their lavish display of wealth and their resistance to following rules of decorum while in mourning for Charles Montrose and later his brother Col. Jno. reveal to nineteenth-century readers that the Brownes lack the modest gentility required by the society they seek to navigate.

As a representative of the newly rich merchant class, the Brownes perceive people according to their market value. The rich Isabelle Montrose is a better prospect as George's bride over Alice, who has no money. Yet at the point when Alice once again has money, she is a good match, and George abducts her, intending to force a marriage. Additionally, George views the sons of gentlemen as prospective financial "dupes" and complains they are harder to find during the 1837 depression (1: 246). The negative characterization of George and the allusion to his hunting "dupes" echo McIntosh's personal hatred for the speculation and scheming that led to the financial panic, which she blamed for her own financial losses. Likely, McIntosh felt herself "duped" by the banking industry. Linking George Browne with other children of the newly rich, McIntosh depicts them as threats to the "Old Family" classes; they are "sharpers ready either in the bargain or at the gaming-table, to avail themselves" of the "*old gentry*" (emphasis added 1:

93). To illustrate, Robert's younger brother Richard and Montrose's son Donald—both sons of the “old gentry”—become George's dupes. Calling in Richard's note, much like the era's bankers, George manages to blackmail him into defrauding Donald out of a signed and blank “post-obit” note of credit, which George uses, in turn, to dupe his own father, Mr. Browne.

Illustrating the consistent failure of the Brownes to adhere to social codes of mourning throughout the narrative, Mr. Browne arrives at the plantation to collect on the note just after Col. Montrose passes away. Moreover, Mr. Browne, realizing the value in human trafficking, brings along an infamous slave trader. The scene McIntosh melodramatically describes involves the trader's “horrid eyes” cast upon “two colored seamstresses,” causing Alice's “shuddering” and tearful bursts. His “presence tainted the air [Donald] breathed, and soiled the earth on which he trod” (2: 33). For nineteenth-century readers, especially for those who had recently read Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, this scene carries horrific allusions. Here, McIntosh depicts Mr. Browne as crueler than the slave owner Donald, who promises to sacrifice everything—even his fiancée Alice—to save “his people.” Even worse, the trader was on his way to sell slaves in New Orleans, a destination that conjures up for readers then and now horrid images of cruelty and lasciviousness. Donald, a gentleman, resists insulting the merchant who “could not be expected to know the feelings of . . . a *gentleman*” toward his people (2: 36), further evidence that Mr. Browne lacks the decorum required for polite society.

Using Browne's vulgar behavior as an example, McIntosh takes the opportunity to provide a lesson about idolizing wealth. Mr. Browne, a conniving trickster, promises to handle his brother-in-law's estate but instead deceives his sister and her children out of thirty to forty thousand dollars and possibly more. For contemporary readers going through the depression, Mr. Browne's actions establish him as a selfish cheat, thus fulfilling negative stereotypes of Northern

merchants as “*sharppers*.” The narrative explains that Mr. Browne “moulded” and planted the seeds in his children’s nature. Mr. Browne, then, has reaped what he has “sown in the wind” (2: 284). McIntosh admonishes:

Every day his empty heart acknowledges the incapacity of wealth to fill its desires, and yet every day wealth becomes more completely his idol. It is no longer the luxuries or pomps which wealth may purchase, but wealth itself, the hard, cold, glittering gold, he loves, and according to that immutable law by which man becomes assimilated to the object of his supreme affection, he too must become hard, and cold, and false. (2: 284-85)

Here, McIntosh’s use of gold likely refers subversively to politicians who valued gold and silver specie over credit, which depended on one’s honorable reputation—mainly in the socially elite—as an element of value. As a result, she redirects the narrative stereotypes about the Northern merchant class to antebellum anxieties about “rags to riches,” rapid social progress. Visiting America slightly before the novel’s setting, Mrs. Frances Trollope noted in *Domestic Manners in America*: “Any man’s son may become the equal of any other man’s son” (1: 171). That McIntosh had read Trollope’s 1832 book becomes obvious in Robert’s conversation with his British uncle, who quotes: “Mrs. Trollope said truly, you Americans can never talk without dollars and cents” (2: 52).³⁹ But while Trollope admired America’s social progress and wealth, she did take exception to “coarse familiarity, untampered by any shadow of respect, which is assumed by the grossest and the lowest in their intercourse with the highest and most refined. This is a positive evil, and, I think, more than balances its advantages” (Trollope 171). Readers

³⁹ Paraphrasing a British man living in America, Mrs. F. Trollope’s exact words are: “I heard an English man . . . declare that in following, in meeting, or in overtaking, in the street, on the road, or in the field, at the theatre, the coffee-house, or at home, he had never overhead Americans conversing without the word DOLLAR being pronounced between them” (Trollope 1: 137).

may infer from McIntosh's warning that wealth quickly gained does not allow time for one's observation of and adjustment to the higher sphere.

Ironically, it is George Browne who proposes the definition of "gentility." That he understands this concept is not surprising since as a confidence man he must play the role to gain his mark's trust. Gentility, he explains, "varies with varying place and circumstance"; in other words, it is geographically associated. The narrative implies George is simply pandering to Mrs. Jno. Montrose's class arrogance. To Southern women like Mrs. Jno. Montrose, he explains, gentility "wears the quiet aspect of one who, assured of her place and satisfied with it, does that which seems proper and graceful in her own eyes, without asking—what will others say?" In contrast, Northerners act out gentility "*en pleine cour*" (in open court) by "jostling" into "a prominent position" in a manner that "speaks . . . plainly . . . 'Come not near, for I am greater than thou.'" George likens gentility to clothing that fits "gracefully and easily" with Southerners, but it is "always glittering and showy, [and] hangs awkwardly" on Northerners. Mrs. Jno. Montrose agrees with his definition, but she argues the difference is "indicative of classes [rather] than countries," suggesting McIntosh's thesis—that this variance might be due to rapid elevation in wealth and not regional distinction. Since social progress happens more in the North than the South, Mrs. Jno. Montrose explains, Northerners are thus frequently stereotyped with these negative characteristics. Reason tells her that "the roughnesses and awkwardnesses which are the result of recent change will be worn away by Time" (1: 94-95). McIntosh, through the voice of Mrs. Jno. Montrose, states:

A gentleman is not made by gold—not even by the education, the habitudes and associations which gold may purchase. Like a poet, he is born, not made; and such a birth is the result of the culture not of one, nor often of two generations;

but where there is a rapid increase of wealth, as here, the culture will go on and the stock increase. Even the inheritors of Mr. Driscoll's wealth in the third or fourth remove will, I doubt not, be refined into that subtle essence which Mr. Browne found it so difficult to analyze (1: 104).

The amount of time needed, she estimates, is more than two generations, which coincides with Edward Pessen's investigation into the elite's social attitudes of the era. Despite awkwardness in those transcending increasingly blurred social barriers, Mrs. Jno. Montrose and Maria McIntosh do support social progress. In fact, McIntosh marries off her hero Charles Montrose to Emily Willson, Mr. Driscoll's shy niece, whom George cites as an example of social progress.

Readers do not learn much about Emily, except that, as a governess, she is educated and understands her place in society. In other words, she does not seek to step above her social position. Notably, Robert shows the same sensitivity when in the company of the British elite—he does not initiate conversation, but waits until they approach him. Like the military, a governess serves as a respectable position for the educated poor. McIntosh is silent in identifying Emily's regional identity; however, when Charles proposes to Emily, she is in Baltimore, a neutral and “middle” state. Therefore, Charles, a “poor *gentleman*” of bi-regional North/South, manufacture/planter blood marries the poor but educated Emily, presumably of Baltimore. It appears that, for McIntosh, this is an appropriate social match.

Cross-Regional Travel

Cross-regional fiction is inherently travel fiction. Like William A. Caruthers and Catharine Maria Sedgwick, Maria J. McIntosh emphasizes travel as a beneficial experience for disabusing regional prejudices and strengthening the Union. For instance, Robert tells Alice, “steamboats are bringing us into so much more frequent communication, that Maine and Georgia

will soon be near neighbors, I am thinking; and better acquaintance will, I hope, obliterate many a long-cherished prejudice on either side” (1: 184). Both James Madison and John C. Calhoun would agree. In Madison’s annual message to Congress in 1815, he stressed “the great importance of establishing through our country roads and canals which can be best executed under national authority.” He predicted ““intercommunication” would result “in bringing and binding more closely together the various parts of our extended confederacy.”” Calhoun, addressing the Fourteenth Congress, stated, “On this subject of national power, what . . . can be more important than a perfect unity in every part, in feelings and sentiments? And what can tend more powerfully to produce it, than overcoming the effects of distance?”” (qtd. in Meigs 207). In referencing the early nineteenth-century prejudices between Northern merchant and Southern planter, McIntosh qualifies, “the people of different parts of the United States were but little known to each other” (1: 15), but due to advances in travel of her own time, she predicts regional prejudices will soften.

As North/South bi-regional characters, Charles and Alice have beneficial cross-regional experiences that better enable them to economically adjust during difficult times. And bi-regional, they are the only children in the Montrose family who instinctively desire some sort of industry. While born in the North to a Southern father and a Northern mother, Charles and Alice are raised predominately in the South. Their mother, aunt, and even the narrator continually refer to them as “Southerners,” and they welcome the distinction. Yet Charles “had been old enough at the death of his father to know something of the widely differing opinions of his two uncles in respect to his career” (1:47). Though he thought his Uncle Browne’s opinions for his future were “sordid,” he did not desire the life “of uneventful repose and indolent dependence” that awaited him at Montrose Plantation (1:47). The narrative insight gained here through Charles’s thought

processes shows readers that his multi-regional residential experience contributes to his industrious and noble character. Charles seeks a career in the Navy. Relieved that his nephew will not be “selling tapes and ribbons, like that Yankee uncle of his,” Col. Montrose warns of the military, “it is a dog’s life, but it is after all the best life with us for a poor *gentleman!*” (1:50). As historian Alan Brinkley affirms, Southern whites “sustained their image of themselves as aristocrats” by avoiding “such ‘coarse’ occupations as trade and commerce; those who did not become planters often gravitated toward the military, a ‘suitable’ career for men raised in a culture in which medieval knights . . . were a powerful and popular image” (302).⁴⁰ For Charles, “achiev[ing] an independence, however humble, for his mother and sister as well as for himself” would result in his being a “far nobler being” (1: 48). But the South has taught Charles “habits of careless expenditure” (1: 53). Upon his initial introduction into attaining a small debt, Charles quickly adopts rigid economy, which “many a messmate” attributes “disdainfully” to his “Yankee blood” (1: 53). Charles’ financial fall is a relatively small one in comparison to Donald Montrose’s and Richard Grahame’s. Readers can easily connect his adaptability to his mixed North/South blood. Eventually, Charles’s ship becomes lost at sea; therefore, he remains absent from a majority of the narrative, leaving Alice to care for their mother alone.

For Alice, cross-regional travel is what stimulates her desire for industry. Visiting in the Grahames’s home, Alice sees nothing wanting. On the “smallest possible amount of means,”

⁴⁰ One career option for a “poor white Southerner” was overseer. Like William A. Caruthers and Caroline Lee Hentz, McIntosh portrays the overseer as a horrible individual, displacing any blame for slave cruelty away from the slave owner. As a positive representation of Southern planters now “waking up,” Col. Jno Montrose believes Charles, as overseer: “might then work out the most difficult problem, not absolutely incapable of a solution, which has yet been submitted to the human intellect—how the slave may be elevated to the condition of an intelligent, accountable being, without detriment to the master’s interest” (1: 49). However, ““a youth of seventeen could not fight against the whole force of the social current surrounding him, and Charles would sink, in spite of your efforts to prevent it, to the level of an overseer,—and what is worse, he would sink to the character of one”” (1: 49). McIntosh uses this scene to portray the slave-owner’s overwhelming predicament—it is a problem with an impossible solution.

Mary keeps a comfortable home, mingling “something of elegance with the simplicity of her arrangements,” with “neatness, industry, and good taste, [and] with the aid of only one servant” (1: 186-87). When they visit Robert at the factory, Alice, with amazement, observes young girls working at the looms. Through Robert, Alice learns that some of the girls ““have noble motives for their work; some are working that an old father, or feeble, helpless mother may die beneath the roof which they love,”” and some that “a young brother may not want the culture which his mind craves”” (1: 189). These acts of selflessness echo Mary’s work teaching “their work people” to read, write, and learn Biblical lessons on Sundays. The Northern work ethic causes Alice to be ““ashamed of [her] useless life”” (1: 205). Alice admires the factory girls’ self-sufficiency and desires to know that, if needed, she would be ““capable of doing as [the factory girls] do”” for her own mother and brother (1: 190). Alice realizes she would have been better off had her Uncle Montrose not done so much for her and Charles. In hindsight, her Uncle Browne’s suggestion she be trained for financial independence was sound advice, serving as one of the instances in which McIntosh sought to show “good in all” with Mr. Browne. For McIntosh, timid young women like Alice need to feel confident that, if the need arises, they can support themselves and even their families.

Having been influenced by Mary Grahame, Alice begins teaching the plantation slaves to read and write. Alice’s work strengthens her character, teaching her “to lean without fear, or doubt, upon an Almighty arm” (1: 211). Wishing to learn to read the Bible, Cato becomes her student, thereby establishing him as McIntosh’s Uncle Tom. His reading success impresses Col. Montrose, who becomes “an earnest advocate” in Alice’s attempts to uplift the slave through education (1: 209). Word of her achievement spread, and soon:

Many who heard of it wondered that it had never occurred to them. Gentle and generous hearts which had ever felt deep interest in the well-being of the slave, hailed this dawn of intellectual advancement for him with delight; and the example of Alice was followed by the wives or daughters of most of the gentlemen planters residing within visiting distance; that is within twenty miles of Montrose Hall. From these the influence was communicated to others more distant, till it spread over several countries. (1: 209)

McIntosh is suggesting that a healthy exchange between the North and the South, achieved through cross-regional travel, can result in regional—and thus national—improvement. In this example, the Northern mercantilist influences the Southern planter, who in turn influences neighboring planters to do the same. But as an indictment of Northern abolitionists, McIntosh blames anti-slavery tract publications for inciting slave revolts, resulting in new laws forbidding the teaching of slaves to read and write (2: 318). Therefore, McIntosh relocates blame for slave illiteracy onto abolitionist leaders, resulting in negative and unhealthy cross-regional influence—“good in all and none all-good” (1: 1)

Through Mary, Alice gains the confidence she later needs to be self-sufficient. Because Alice and her mother are tied to Mr. Browne by blood, Col. Jno. Montrose’s widow banishes them from their Southern home. They take with them their legacy from the late Col. Montrose, \$10,000 invested in the United States Bank, and return North. They settle in a small village in Massachusetts, where they rent a modest cottage with room for a garden and hire two servants. Alice sends for Daddy Cato, who wishes to visit for a few months, and his presence in the house provides protection and security for the females living alone. With her mother sick, Alice becomes the mistress of the home. Echoing Mary’s good habits, Alice promptly establishes a

budget, estimating costs for servants, food, rent, and a small amount for clothing. Still, neither Alice nor her mother earn their legacy, which they inherited from Col. Montrose. Nor does she care for herself and her mother alone; the servants perform those tasks. Essentially, Alice continues in the same position of ease—without the skills needed to live independently and, through her own industry, care for her mother. But it is 1837, and soon Alice learns that the federal government has withdrawn funding from the United States Bank. Her brother's missing-at-sea status inhibits her ability to sell their jointly owned and rapidly depreciating stock. Her Uncle Browne, rather than helping, instead takes pleasure in having been right, blaming Col. Montrose and her mother for not listening to his advice. He claims, "I would have taken care that you should be educated in such a manner as to be independent through your own exertions; I would not have educated you for a fine lady and then left you to support yourself" (2: 75-6). As earlier, he offers no assistance, only advising her to give up the house. He refuses to even provide her an escort to visit the cottage owner; instead, he tells her to go alone. As noted by Moss, McIntosh's attempts to portray her birth and adopted regions equally conflicted with her personal biases towards the South (Moss 98). Throughout her narrative, every irredeemable character—such as Mr. Browne, who again and again proves himself a brute—is from the North.

At the point in which Alice determines to negotiate a new rent arrangement, bypassing the landlord and insisting on a meeting with the actual owner, Mr. Gaston, Alice begins to transcend girlhood by embarking on her womanly journey as defined by Nina Baym in *Woman's Fiction*. According to Baym, woman's fiction is economically anchored and focuses on the educational journey of "a young girl who is deprived of the support she had rightly or wrongly depended on to sustain her throughout life and is faced with the necessity of winning her own way in the world" (11-13). To begin, Alice's mother, too distraught over her son's missing

status, is incapable of caring for her daughter and home. Absent or negligent supervision, facilitated by her mother's illness, enables Alice's transformation. For the most part, her mother has no idea what Alice is up to. Readers understand that, had her mother been well, she would have restrained Alice's movement and insisted Alice maintain a decorum of gentility. Members of polite society resisted publicizing their dire circumstances. And although Alice doesn't go on a "literal" journey, taking her some distance away from her home, she does go on a spiritual and educational journey. She travels through manufacturing districts, unescorted, which McIntosh paints as obviously heroic with much melodrama and sentimentality.

Readers understand clearly Alice's fear as she walks along the industrial streets and into a factory where men are dirty and rough-looking. Mr. Gaston's shock at discovering Alice has traveled there unescorted reaffirms McIntosh's portrayal of Alice's heroism. Facing her fears, Alice negotiates a cent-per-cent investment for Gaston, promising to pay him double their rent if he will wait for the bank to pay her dividends (2: 89). At first, Mr. Gaston appears a fierce being, but her bravery impresses the mogul and earns his respect. He reflects that Alice would be a positive role model for his own daughter, which eventually happens when Alice renegotiates her rent—again—for piano lessons. Hearing of her mother's poor health, Mr. Gaston escorts Alice to the doctor. Alice proves to be her mother's caretaker and savior; for as the narrative implies, without Alice's intervention, her mother would have most likely died. The actions of two Northern merchants provide readers a comparative and context regarding gentlemanly behavior in Northern men. Mr. Gaston, a long-established manufacturer, is chivalrous and sensitive of Mrs. Montrose's ill health, whereas her own brother, Mr. Browne, remains insensitive and most definitely ungentlemanly. This example serves to support McIntosh's premise that distinctions in social graces are not restricted to regions but are characteristics of class differences.

As a bi-regional character, Alice is better able to accept that women working in public are not disgraceful but instead admirable. As such, she is adaptable to her new station in life. She finds her expenses are draining her cash faster than she anticipated, so she regulates her spending—proving during a time of economic hardships that strict budgeting is a healthy solution. She dismisses her servants and rises early to clean house, set the table, and make coffee before her mother awakes and discovers Alice doing all this work (2: 90). When her mother does start to realize the daughter’s housekeeping, Alice convinces her—with true honesty—that she enjoys the industry. Indeed, McIntosh uses these scenes to show how industry and self-sufficiency helped Alice’s “soul and body [grow] strong” (2: 72). Poverty aside, an independent woman like Alice maintains a respectable toilette, with “good taste in dress—even in the arrangement of the simple and inexpensive” work dress “there was something coquettish and pretty” (2: 157). The more mature Alice determines to earn money by taking in embroidery work for a shop owner. Alice also grows and then creates beautiful flower arrangements, which coming from her private garden bring a premium in town where Cato sells them. Together with the embroidery, piano lessons, and the money Daddy Cato earns at Mr. Gaston’s factory, the three live comfortably. Alice boasts of earning four dollars a week. “And so,” McIntosh applauds, “to this our petted Alice had risen—the tender nurse, the careful housekeeper, the industrious worker” (2: 156). However, Cato’s financial contribution makes the narrative’s rhetorical purpose problematic: Alice is not solely independent. Then, too, McIntosh presents these two working together with mutual respect and peaceful harmony—in Alice’s little Garden of Eden no less—as an idyllic representation of the planter/slave relationship.

Readers can infer from McIntosh’s linguistic choice “*risen*” that the author supported the notion of women working. Work did not lower Alice but raised her up from “petted” to “strong.”

For McIntosh, Alice's *coming of age* coincides with her *coming of independence*. Yet McIntosh realized that society has not yet arrived at the same epiphany. For instance, arriving home at last, Charles "felt pained" in learning of his sister's situation—"not because of the personal suffering or inconvenience involved in such a condition, but because of the world's estimation of it. And yet this false, conventional sentiment, could not overbear his innate conviction that the very thing of which he was ashamed was her highest honour, and ought to have made her proudest exaltation" (2: 180). Still, Alice is "'not sorry to know that [she] can help [herself]'" (2: 186). McIntosh's message here, as demonstrated through her North/South bi-regional characters, is that industry and economy are noble attributes to be admired in any class.

In contrast, for Donald, a true Southerner, mastering a strict economy proves to be a challenge that he eventually conquers. As a result of Northern influence, he approaches his position as plantation master with improved seriousness and dedication. McIntosh uses Donald's gambling adventure as an example of the risks involved in scheming and speculation. Donald jeopardizes his family's heritage, his birthright, and the future lives of "his people" (slaves), for the "easy money" to be made by gambling (1: 148). He has no "hard money" to pay George Browne. In turn, the gamester initiates the "novice" in notes of credit: "'each party keeps a memorandum of losses and gains which, when we are parting, may be balanced in hard money, or if this be not convenient, in a note payable at any time that suits the convenience of the giver'" (1: 125). George's proposal parallels the practice of the era's banking industry, which was then circulating paper bank notes in place of gold and/or silver specie. Subsequently, during the Panic of 1837, many banks refused to redeem their own bank notes, ceased to give credit, and called in their loans. However, in both the banking industry and with gamblers holding notes, payments

come due at the convenience of the holder and not “the giver,” which Donald eventually learns. To Donald’s fear that he may never be able to repay the note, George replies:

That is somewhat longer credit than we have been accustomed to give or ask, though mine may prove to be little less, should *mon bon papa* live as long as his looks when I saw him last seemed to promise. You look puzzled, Montrose; did you never hear of *post obits*? I find their moral effect admirable, I assure you.

They are great strengtheners of the filial sentiment. (1: 125)

George proposes he sign a post obit, which means the expectant heir may repay his debt when he comes into his estate. Donald is horrified at the thought of anticipating his father’s death as a way to relieve his financial burden. For McIntosh, speculating can result in poisoning familial relationships. Investments sacrifice the family’s future for present instant gratification. Donald, continuing to gamble in drunken stupors, fails to maintain a record of his debts or even receipts for debts paid, all of which contribute of his downfall. With cunning, George falsifies Donald’s blank post obit for \$65,000, and then sells the note to his father, Mr. Browne. When Col. Montrose unexpectedly passes, Donald must accept his mother’s and sister’s help in mortgaging the plantation and paying the interest. But it comes with a price: his mother demands he not marry his cousin, Alice, and then she sends Alice and her mother away. Therefore, gambling destroys the extended family the same as gambling destroys the nation by instigating a financial panic. Yet with the help of his future brother-in-law, Capt. Wharton, Donald begins to learn economy. Through Capt. Wharton’s and Robert’s examples of industry, Donald’s growing maturity gains polish.

Traveling to the North, Donald visits Robert Grahame at his factory, whereupon he observes the care the manufacturer exhibits towards his “factory people.” Through her narrative,

McIntosh linguistically parallels Robert's "factory people" with Montrose slaves, frequently referred to as "your," "my," or "our people." Impressed by his tour of the factory, Donald awakens to his need to "make amends to our people." Back at Montrose Hall, Donald lessens the slaves' work to a degree less "than most freemen are compelled to do" (2: 319). He improves their living arrangements and provides them "sound moral and religious instruction." On a sectioned-out piece of land, Donald builds "a few houses of a better class than those usually occupied by our slaves" as a social experiment for slaves that anticipates the Reconstruction-era sharecropping. As Templin has argued, McIntosh blurs the domestic plantation with the marketplace (11). And despite new laws prohibiting the instruction of slaves, Donald Montrose's plantation and "every plantation" around "has now its daily school" devoted to the instruction of the slaves. This noble "missionary labor" has become contagious, and "cultivated women" are "leaving the society which they were formed both to adorn and to enjoy, and spending their lives on secluded plantations in this sacred mission" (2: 320). This example serves as a counterpoint to McIntosh's accusation that abolitionist tracts led to laws forbidding slave literacy. It also parallels Hentz's argument that Northern women can be missionaries to the South instead of instigators of revolt. McIntosh thus suggests that tourism allows for observation and study of other cultures that can lead to one's own self-improvement and the self-improvement of others—such as slaves.

In turn, Robert desires to obtain more knowledge about his own country's distinct regions and travels to the South (2: 191). Robert finds there, "more simple forms of life, less of show, and more of natural, unsophisticated enjoyment" (2: 317). This description contrasts the busy, jostling Northern society. According to Robert's observations, there exists in the South an appreciation and love of reading literature, and "above all, he found true, earnest hearts, 'open as

day to melting charity.” He discovers that Southerners “could not be the monsters of selfishness and cruelty which partisan writers had represented them” (2: 317), a subtle reference to Harriet Beecher Stowe. Robert inquires of Donald about reports of abused slaves: ““Do you suppose that all these things are false?”” (2: 318). In response, Donald challenges him to “see for yourself” and to talk with the slaves, “if you hear of one such instance of cruelty and oppression as those which are reported every day by our enemies, you will hear what I have never done”” (2: 317). For Donald, the fault is not cruelty but rather neglect due to the Southern system of *Laissez faire*. Ultimately, Robert sees that the South is “waking up,” as Donald phrases it, and he leaves Georgia feeling that ““no man who felt that life’s highest object was to labor for the advancement of man and the glory of God, need mourn that he was born a Southern slave-holder; and that many of this class did so feel”” (2: 318). Using travel narratives in a fictional format, McIntosh implores her contemporary readers to “see for yourself.” True regional understanding requires first-hand observations rather than listening to those, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose power is ““responsible only to public opinion”” (2: 318). The South as Robert observes it and McIntosh intends it is an ideal and genteel community in harmony with nature and with its slaves.

Financial Crisis as Slave Crisis

McIntosh, who at one point ran her family’s plantation in Georgia for twelve years, countered Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by depicting slaves as living in harmony with the plantation families. In fact, her narrative blames Northern abolitionists, such as the Stowes, for disrupting harmony and causing legislation that ultimately hinders the advancement of the slave. For McIntosh, slaveholders were akin to missionaries, and the system itself was a religiously justifiable institution saving Africans from their own savagery. In *Domestic Novelists in the Old*

South, Elizabeth Moss provides a thoughtful analysis of McIntosh's reactionary defenses to Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, both in *The Lofty and the Lowly* and in *A Letter on the Address of the Women of England to Their Sisters of America in Relation to Slavery* published in the *New York Observer*. Additionally, Moss analyzes how Southern women writers, such as McIntosh and Hentz, whose anti-Uncle Tom narrative I analyze in the next chapter, used their fiction to defend slave owners and their supporters by portraying them as victims of unjust northern attacks intended to ruin the South (121). Building upon Moss's observations, I argue McIntosh presents slaves as susceptible victims to Northern moneylenders who can exploit them for their market value without any thought or care for their humanity and familial attachments.

While it is a Southerner, Donald, whose wastrel lifestyle places what he calls "his people" at risk, it is the Northern financial community, which the text associates with gambling, who are the villains. Donald's personal financial crisis—his gambling debts—threatens the stability of his ancestral home as well as the slave community since he will have to liquidate his assets to make restitution. His paper note of credit, highly symbolic of the unstable bank notes of McIntosh's era, transfers to three different Northern money lenders who threaten the plantation system, before a fourth, Robert Grahame, finally redeems Montrose's mortgage. Initially, George Browne, a confidence man, holds Donald's falsified blank note. Breaking his word, George sells Donald's note to Mr. Browne, a greedy merchant and usurer who calls in the note, consequently contributing to Mr. Browne's own sister, niece, and nephew's financial fall. The third holder, Uriah Goldwire, is a Northern usurer. *Goldwire's* name incidentally represents the specie backing paper money—symbolized in Donald's promissory note. McIntosh paints Goldwire as grotesque and debased, and she hints that he is of Jewish origin. Desiring Isabelle, he crudely comments that he would "give a good many hundreds of dollars" for her (2: 37). When the Panic

of 1837 causes cotton rates to fall, resulting in Montrose's mortgage default, Goldwire attempts to force Isabelle Montrose into marriage in exchange for the mortgage. For *Panic Fiction* scholar Mary Templin, "McIntosh suggests here, in rather inflammatory terms, the vulnerability of Southern planter culture as a whole to the effects of panic and to the contaminating and rapacious touch of Northern commerciality" (168). In a similar scene, George kidnaps Alice, intending to force her into marriage, after which he will correct the wrong done to Donald. McIntosh's imagery here implies that Northern usurers (i.e., the banking industry) are raping the South, thus forcing the sale of slaves to the Deep South.

Both Mr. Browne and Uriah Goldwire, each intending to liquidate the plantation's slave assets, arrive with slave traders. "No step," McIntosh explains, "was so unpopular at the South . . . as the sale of slaves" (1: 295). Nevertheless, McIntosh, through the voice of Donald, provides readers an extensive rendition as to when, why, and how a planter would thus sell his slaves:

His people are the last property a true Southerner will part with, but misfortune may leave him no choice. In that case it is the custom either to sell plantation, negroes and all, just as they stand, to some one who is believed to be humane; a belief which would overbear many hundreds higher bid from another applicant; or where the property must be separated, to make that separation by families, and sell these even at some sacrifice to those to whom they themselves express a desire to belong. Negroes of good character will never find any difficulty in securing good and kind masters; the incorrigibly bad of course are differently situated—were they white, they would probably be sent to a State's Prison—being black, their punishment is, the auction stand, and sale to the highest bidder, with the change such a master as your travelling companion. (2: 36)

This explanation, which McIntosh intends readers to find noble, astonishes Mr. Browne, who had no notion that slave owners held any value other than monetary for their slave property (2: 37). Later, Goldwire threatens to sell all the Montrose slaves in New Orleans, purposefully reminding the Montroses and readers about the horror stories “they tell” about “nigger pens, and taking away young ones” (2: 117). These “horror stories” probably include Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a current best seller in McIntosh’s time. As a stark juxtaposition to cruel money-lenders, McIntosh’s Southern-styled hero, Robert Grahame, saves the plantation with a certificate of deposit made on the State Bank of Georgia. Robert, whom McIntosh describes as a *true* gentleman, promises to make no demands, allowing the Montroses to repay when they are best able. And thus, McIntosh declares with irony, “Montrose Hall was redeemed . . . through the successful industry and noble generosity of a ‘Yankee manufacturer’” (2: 139). In contrast, McIntosh’s narrative implies that Northern capitalists and bankers, “aided by Jewish money lords” (Zimmerman 18), corrupted the economy and threatened the planting class who dealt more on crop futures than hard money. Southern women writers, as Elizabeth Moss explains, feared the evils of Northern materialism and modernization; through their fiction, they sought “to protect their region from infection” (28).

Illness Plots and Marriage Metaphors

As my project seeks to show, writers have typically used illness to metaphorically describe the nation in crisis. One of the earliest illustrations of Uncle Sam in satire depicts him—and thus the nation—as ill. “Uncle Sam Sick with La Grippe,” by Edward Williams Clay, best illustrates how antebellum satirists used illness metaphors to depict a nation in crisis. The lithograph, created during the USB controversy, shows Uncle Sam collapsed with the “grippe” after learning Jackson has vetoed the recharter bill for United States Bank. Appearing by his side

are the following: President Jackson, portraying “Dr. Hickory”; Senator Thomas Hart Benton, the apothecary holding an enema; and Vice-President Martin Van Buren, as Aunt Matty the nurse. Viewed through the window as just arriving are Nicholas Biddle, the one-time head of the national bank and depicted here as a second physician; and Brother Jonathan, “who was, like Uncle Sam, a frequent symbol of the United States in the nineteenth century” (“Uncle Sam”; Reilly 101). In this sickroom scene, Uncle Sam, slumped in his chair, holds a paper reading, “Failures / New Orleans \$100,000,000. New York \$150,000,000. Philadelphia \$70,000,000.” These figures represent losses due to bank failures. On the floor lies a bust of George Washington, and to the right is an eagle, stating, “I must Fly to Texas, for I shall be starved out here.”⁴¹

Like Clay’s print, *The Lofty and the Lowly* portrays the Panic of 1837 as an epidemic affecting the financial health of America’s citizenry. McIntosh focuses her storyline on the effects of speculation, which

she equates with gambling and an unstable and sinful lifestyle. For example, George likens gambling—money won without labor—to “ten thousand dollars gained that day on the stock exchange” (1: 114).



McIntosh’s characters repeatedly refer to gambling as an “ill” or an “illness.” America’s

⁴¹ According to Reilly, no records exist indicating if or in what format this broadside was ever published (101).

Christian heritage, built upon Puritan and Calvinist foundations, has historically linked sinful living with sickness. For Puritan minister Cotton Mather, ““a *Sick* Person should be more Desirous to be Delivered from *Sin*, than from *Sickness*”” (qtd. in Herzogenrath 121). Donald’s gambling—and his subsequent illnesses—affect all three families: the Montroses, the Grahames, and the Brownes. McIntosh uses the illness metaphor to reflect a nation out of balance, affecting unity both in the nation and with couples. The nation and characters must learn budgeting and industry. For those who succeed, healing ensues, enabling happy cross-regional marriages; those who refuse to adopt a fiscally responsible lifestyle, such as George, have no place in the American narrative, thus by the end of the novel, George leaves the country.

According to McIntosh and as early Puritans proposed, gambling and a prodigal lifestyle negatively affect the health of the wastrel. George Browne is the spoiled, foppish son of a successful merchant, who seeks “wealthier dupe[s]” to repay his own loans to his “brother sharpers” (1: 109). He is thin, pale, and “in bad health,” appearing to be age forty when he is not yet thirty. He corrupts Richard Grahame and blackmails him into falsifying Donald’s gambling debts. Richard is not at peace with his actions; therefore, to ensure Richard’s silence, George manages to have him shipwrecked on a deserted island. While there, Richard develops an illness that lingers throughout the remainder of the narrative. Suffering from exhaustion and fever, Richard is nearly dead when he finally makes it to Montrose Hall, where he reveals the deception. Additionally, both George’s and Richard’s deceptive cunning disrupts marriage unions. Moreover, neither George nor Richard marry, and in some ways Richard’s lingering illness and single status mirror Bessie Lee in *The Linwoods*. Because of his lingering illness,

Richard must depend upon Mary and Donald, who marry, for care. McIntosh's message here implies that corporal and national strength are enhanced by unity.

McIntosh uses Donald's gambling and subsequent illness as an accusation against Northern financial markets and as a mechanism for manipulating marriage unions. Donald blames his misplaced trust in "a man with Yankee blood," who through "ill doings" had "ill used" him (1: 251). As Mary Templin explains, Donald and all the men involved in his fall "represent what McIntosh apparently perceived as distinctive regional faults" (170). The term "ill used" alludes to "usury" and the three financial usurers who took advantage of Donald's dire circumstances: George Browne, Mr. Browne, and Uriah Goldwire, all Northerners who, holding a forged note of credit, threaten Montrose Hall, signifying Montrose Southern heritage and ancestry. McIntosh also casts the usurers in a dark light because, unlike Southerners, these Northern money men share "a desire for money that overshadows any humane considerations and thus allows cruelty, exploitation, and even fraud towards others in the pursuit of profit" (170). Therefore, Donald's financial crisis subtly attacks Jackson's Specie Circular (i.e., "Goldwire"), which created a financial imbalance between Eastern and Western banks and led England to demand payments of gold and silver from American banks (Reynolds 109). Ultimately, Donald learns "new notions of the value of money" (1: 252). The experience contributes to Donald's hardest fall, which will ultimately bring healing when Donald revises his attitude about industry, budgeting, and marriage to his cousin.

McIntosh describes Donald's weaknesses as "a lack of discipline, no respect for labor, and a temperament that craves the excitement of gambling," directly connecting Donald's Southern lifestyle with his financial undoing (170). His disdain for keeping records of his gambling debts and his expenses contributes to his fall. The effect of his naiveté is cross-

regional, placing his Northern aunt and Alice in financial peril when the USB suspends their payments, and cross-Atlantic when Robert sells his patent in England and redeems Montrose Hall. Demonstrating his inability to look beyond his own selfish desire, Donald blames Alice for his fall. When Alice initially refuses to marry him, whom she loved as a brother—thus committing incest—Donald promises her he will seek forgetfulness through a wanton lifestyle, bringing dishonor to her Southern home and sorrow to his father’s grave, a man who “cherished [her] as his own child” (1: 105). His threat foreshadows his own father’s death, which is due in some part to his son’s gambling and illness. Throughout the narrative, Donald constantly reminds Alice that she is the cause of his degradation; if she had married him, “this never would have happened” (1: 251). Clearly, Donald believes that marrying his cousin would have saved him from George’s deception. In a subversive level, Donald supports a Southern isolationist policy, which like a sickness would ultimately weaken and possibly destroy the Union.

Donald’s illness serves as a mechanism to pressure Alice towards an undesirable marriage. At the thought of marrying her “brother” Donald, Alice becomes ill (1: 225-26). Yet throughout Donald’s severe illness she resolves to do all she can to make him happy if he should live—despite that “her whole soul now rose up in protest” (1: 231). In short, it was his suffering that “called forth her tenderness” (1: 233). As a direct result of his illness, she agrees to marry him in two years, declares she has a headache, and shuts herself in her room (1: 237). Later, when Col. Montrose passes away, thus making the post-obit come due, Donald suffers brain fever and almost collapses into his father’s grave. In Donald’s ensuing illness, Alice’s pity and soft feelings towards him make her more agreeable to their eventual marriage (1: 286). But Alice’s blood ties to the Browne family disturb Mrs. Jno. Montrose, who uses her share of the plantation as leverage to force a separation between her son and Alice. Alice eventually

convinces Donald to let her and her mother leave Montrose Hall, thus saving his plantation from liquidation (2: 20). Donald declares, “there is a fatality upon me” (2: 59) and determines he will die before he brings more harm to his family. After hitting rock bottom, Donald begins to see more clearly. He realizes Alice would have married him in order to not be separated from “all that was dear to her, but she never loved [him,] except as sisters love” (2: 60). At this point, Donald begins to heal. In the end, McIntosh has her Southern hero marry Mary Grahame, whose Northern characteristic and talent for practicing economy will benefit the Montrose plantation—and by extension, the South, thus leading to a healthier and happier Union built on mutual trust and cooperation.

Scenes connected to illness also periodically place Alice in the company of Robert Grahame, whom she eventually marries. The first time she meets Robert, Alice is about to consent to her much-beloved Uncle Montrose’s wishes that she marry Donald. Before she can agree, Robert arrives to announce Donald is “alarmingly ill.” Instantly, Alice feels that Robert is “a refined gentleman” (1: 143). Essentially, Donald’s illness, via Robert’s errand, disrupts the emotionally-charged scene between Alice and her uncle, which in turn timely halts Alice’s verbal commitment to marriage. A similar scene occurs in *The Linwoods* when Mr. Linwood’s illness disrupts Jasper Meredith’s proposal to Isabella. Then, too, the night her brother Charles expresses his wish that Alice marry Donald, she dreams she has fallen in a grave, and Donald is shoveling dirt over her body, putting great pressure on her chest. She awakens to a smoke-filled room. Robert is there trying to wake and save her and her mother from a fire. Again, the prospect of death redirects Alice’s matrimonial path. Both scenes also affect Robert, who, reflecting on Alice’s agreeable nature, feels “a perpetual hymn of thanksgiving,” that his whole life was in harmony (1: 181). Later, when Alice is explaining her mother’s illness to a disruptive and angry

abolitionist crowd, Robert again arrives just in time to save her. This scene most particularly illustrates how Northern abolitionists threaten Southern life.

However, harmony halts when Robert catches Alice talking to another man, alone. Unbeknownst to Robert, the man is his brother, recuperating and deathly ill from George's machinations to have him killed. Richard, obtaining a promise of secrecy from Alice, wishes to uncover the falsehood of Donald's gambling debts. Alice realizes that her choosing to keep Richard's secret means sacrificing Robert's good opinion of her and their potential marriage. Later, when Richard arrives ill at Montrose Hall, he not only reveals George's deception but also repairs Alice's reputation. Feeling remorseful and wishing to make amends to Alice, Robert discovers her missing. Suspecting her character again, he reads Alice's journal and learns the extent to which his betrayal has affected her. Alice records: "'I would that I were dead'" (2: 244). Her gloomy entry indicts his conscience and a "deadly pallor" shades his cheek. Her words proves to Robert that she did not willingly leave with anyone, and he eventually rescues her before George, who kidnapped her, can force a marriage. Just after hearing Alice sing "to music well 'married to immortal verse,'" Robert proposes (2: 305). By associating harmony with her principal North/South couple, McIntosh demonstrates healing with national unity.

For McIntosh, the gambling and wastrel lifestyles, which she illustrates through Donald's (Southern planter) and Richard's (Northern manufacturer) social and economic failures, equate to the speculative financial risks of her own era. She demonstrates their dangers to the national health by incorporating illness metaphors. Donald's illness affects Alice's marital future in a variety of ways. First, it entices Alice's sympathy, tempting her to accept what she does not wish. Secondly, in instances when Alice is about to capitulate, either illness or allusions of death block her path. At the same time, these interruptions place a preferable match before her by the

timely introduction of Robert into the scene. Moreover, Donald's illness places Mary in his path. She not only treats his physical illness, she tends to his spiritual and prejudicial ailments. While Richard's illness disrupts Robert and Alice's harmonious relationship, it functions to first shame and then heal Robert of his sinful pride. To suggest healing, McIntosh uses feelings of harmony. In doing so, she proposes that a North/South union will save the nation from an impending doom.

In *The Lofty and the Lowly*, cross-cultural marriage brings harmony and healing. McIntosh's heroes need specific qualities in their wives to make them whole. Robert fears "woo[ing] a gentle nature [such as Alice] to partake my rough, stern life" (2: 306). Donald, thinking of all Alice and his sister Isabelle did for the slaves, contemplates, "'Ah! If I had such a helper as Mary" (2: 297). In creating what the *Bible* calls a "suitable helpmate" for her characteristically Southern and aristocratically British, Northern Merchant, McIntosh constructed her heroine as bi-regional and deployed a formula Nina Baym calls "woman's fiction." To that end, Alice loses the emotional support of her mother, debilitated by depression, and the financial support of her pseudo father, Col. Montrose, whose legacy she lost in the financial panic of 1837. Completing this spiritual crusade, Alice achieves "self-dependence" and personhood (Baym ix). Ultimately Alice proves herself strong in body and soul and thus able to "partake [in Robert's] rough, stern life" (2: 306). Robert's and Alice's souls mingled. She tempered his harsh pride and he elevated her "above all that is frivolous, and making life's roughest and steepest paths seem smooth and easy by his strong arm and cheering words" (2: 321). Their path leads away from illness and, together as multiregional, they symbolize a dynamic American couple with familial associations with Great Britain.

Through Mary Grahame, Donald learns that Northern manufacturing is a noble profession with responsibilities requiring the uplift of the working class, an idea that Donald internalizes in his own position as plantation owner. Previous to meeting Mary, Donald struggled against a “union between villany [*sic*] and weakness,” a “union in which each gave what was needed by the other” (1: 108-09). Donald’s Southern tendency towards indolence and disdain for keeping account of his money—which he believes too much like a merchant—proves to be his “weakness,” making him and “his people” (and thus the nation) vulnerable to villainy. In seeking a union with Mary, Donald must prove himself worthy since Mary can only vow to marry where she could both “honor and obey” (2: 316). Through his turmoil, he learns that a debtor is a “slave of his creditor” (1: 248). Therefore, McIntosh places Donald, a slave owner, in metaphorical bondage to evil, Northern usurers. In doing so, she inspires, both in her own era and in the novel, the Southern planter’s self-described “waking up” (2: 318). Using Mary as her vocal springboard, McIntosh expounds the virtuous contributions made by mechanics and manufacturers. Like the planter who seeks to control the earth by reaping strong crops, the mechanic has “the power by which we subdue nature to our will” (1: 154). And like the plantation master and slave owner, the manufacturer must apply “that power to procure comfort and wealth for thousands” (1: 154). For Mary and McIntosh, these are noble qualities that complement each other. McIntosh paints Robert with characteristics of a Southern planter, and then she elevates Robert above “*degrading associations*” by casting him as a metaphorical messiah to the working class. As Mary explains, Robert occupies:

a position of influence, a ruler and guide to many, and avail[s] himself of this position only for good. Around him are some who came to him untutored clods,

fitted at best for expert machines, into whom he has infused intelligent souls, and whose aspirations he has directed heavenward. (154-55)

In some ways, her comments allude to her stance of slavery. As Moss has thoroughly argued, McIntosh supported slavery as a moral institution that lifted Africans from what McIntosh described as their “debasement ignorance,” “cruel superstitions,” and “their brutish physiognomies and loathsome habits [that] might have made us doubt their right to the name of MAN” (McIntosh, *The Lofty* 2: 163-64).

Conclusion

McIntosh’s rhetorical agenda here is to set up a paradigm whereby Northern manufacturer and Southern planter work together to make the Union both morally and financially stronger. She more directly demonstrates the feasibility of this notion through the bi-regional children of the Southern planter, Charles Montrose, and the Northern merchant’s sister, Alice Browne Montrose. Their children Alice and Charles, who spent their early years in Boston and grow to maturity in the South, exhibit the finest qualities of both regions. Consistent with Northern values, they both adapt smoothly to practicing and internalizing economy and industry. They also maintain the genteel decorum and adherence to social and Christian mores valued in Southern Planter class.

In this vein, McIntosh best illustrates through her bi-regional children American sociologist Howard W. Odum’s theories of cross-regional “line-breeding.” Line-breeding, Odum explains, builds new cultures upon old, thus developing new strength from materials and resources from multiple regions. In “Regionalism Versus Sectionalism,” Odum argues that regionalism supports the nation by participating in a cross-fertilization of ideas, and interregional “cooperative processes implies more of the designed and planned society than sectionalism,

which is the group correspondent to individualism” (339). The result, he maintains, is a “well planned, interregional balanced economy” (339). Here, he uses “balanced” to imply a healthy national economy, which echoes McIntosh’s major premise, that the joint efforts (cross-fertilization) of manufacturer and agrarian can stabilize the economy. In short, she merges Odum’s balancing and line-breeding metaphor in her literary bi-regional families.

Through North/South marriages McIntosh illustrates to readers her idea of a healthy and balanced union: Northern manufacturer Robert marries Southern-raised Alice; Southern planter Donald marries the Northern Mary, a manufacturer’s sister.⁴² McIntosh’s metaphorical unions enable her readers then and now to envision the patriarch Edward Grahame’s early American Dream: “only in the conjunction of manufacturers and agriculture, could the financial independence of his country be attained” (McIntosh 1:36). For the South, the imagined ideal is a better slave system in which slaves learn to read the Bible, receive gentler treatment, and for those of exceptional character, earn limited independence on a proto-sharecropping system. Then, too, the planter learns the virtues of economy, industry, and humility. The North learns to avoid greediness, self-indulgence, and, like the South, humility.

Writing during historical moments of crises—financial, social, and racial—McIntosh sought to ease tensions by displacing regional prejudices with the contemporary elite’s concerns about rapid social mobility. For McIntosh, the “New Money” classes gained their wealth too fast, thus not allowing time for their observation and education on class decorum. The newly rich—Northern Browne and Goldwire—present the greatest threat to the South and to slaves in

⁴² Alice and Mary are in many ways a composite of McIntosh herself. Like McIntosh, Alice has a North/South bi-regional identity. Alice lives on a plantation, and she experiences financial losses due to the United States Bank’s suspension of payments. Similarly, Mary nurses and then loses both parents, lives with her older brother, and—similar to McIntosh who wrote juvenilia like her *Miss Kitty’s* tales—teaches reading and religion to young girls. McIntosh paints these two women as Christian in character, modest in dress and manners, strong in spirit and independence, and proud to be able to contribute to the home economy through their own industry.

particular. Because of their capitalist greed, they see profits rather than families and a heritage whose economy depends upon the often unstable crop system. Robert, who possesses some of the Old World within him, best exemplifies for Northern financial institutions a proper understanding of Southern economy. He purchases the Montrose mortgage, assuring them he will not call in their loans but will patiently wait until they reap a return on their crops. As a result, slaves need not fear that Northern usurers will sell them “downriver” to New Orleans. Ultimately, McIntosh’s message is that, given time, these “New Money” classes will learn the propriety required to maneuver in “the charmed circle” (Pessen, *Riches* 243). Despite depicting the truly “bad” characters, such as the Brownes and Goldwire, as of Northern birth, McIntosh cautions her readers’ against biases, by maintaining that there is “good in all, and none all-good.”

CHAPTER FOUR

‘Old World’ Aristocracy and Southern Mythology: The Slavery Crisis

and Hentz’s *The Planter’s Northern Bride*

Though South Carolina’s Nullification Crisis and the Panic of 1837 heightened regional and disrupted national unity, no nineteenth-century debate threatened the United States’ national unity more than the slavery question. In that context, this chapter extends my research on cross-regional literature by analyzing Caroline Lee Hentz’s *The Planter’s Northern Bride* (PNB), first published in 1854. Born in Massachusetts and later transplanted to the South, Hentz used her fiction to counter anti-slavery arguments within the nation and particularly those found in Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), which she believed disrupted national harmony and threatened national unity. Drawing on a range of archival records, I argue that Hentz considered her experiences living in both the North and the South not only validated her as eyewitness to the “true” state of slavery, but her cross-regional perspectives also authorized her as an ambassador for national healing. Writing to her publisher, Abraham Hart, in Pennsylvania on December 14th, 1852, Hentz explained that, unlike Stowe, she would make sure that “truth should be the cement,-nothing but truth” in her novel (Hentz, Letter). As a Northern-born eyewitness, she sought to convince her white readers that cross-cultural understanding, in the North particularly, would calm and heal regional tensions and prevent the approaching civil war.

Seeking to repair the regional breach widened by Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Hentz uses terms associated with illness and healing to construct her restorative North/South marriage union. In her preface, she describes the existing tensions of her era’s “individual or public feeling [as] too highly wrought” (iii). She names the cause as “that intolerant and fanatical spirit, whose fatal influence we so deeply deplore” (iv). Though she doesn’t name Stowe or *Uncle Tom’s*

Cabin, the implication clearly points towards abolitionism as “the destroyer” whose “deadly influence” threatens national unity (209-10). While William A. Caruthers, Catharine Maria Sedgwick, and Maria Jane McIntosh all used illness metaphors to describe regional tensions caused by the Nullification and Financial Crises, Caroline Lee Hentz incorporated the metaphor to depict, with a degree of accuracy, a country on the brink of national death over the volatile issue of slavery. In this chapter, I argue that in allegorizing North and South regional strife over slavery, Hentz joins together a Southern planter and slave owner with a Northern abolitionist’s daughter. The abolitionist, Mr. Hastings, publishes an anti-slavery newspaper and closely resembles William Lloyd Garrison. Hastings vows he would rather see his daughter dead than married to a slave owner. Given the events occurring just seven short years after the novel’s publication, his statement foreshadows the Civil War in which 620,000 Americans died. When Hastings refuses his consent, both his daughter and the planter become ill, and the text leads readers to believe that death awaits the couple just as death awaits the nation’s sacred union. Hentz’s illness plot encourages the abolitionist father—and by extension, anti-slavery advocates of her modern-day word—to reconsider adopting a “fatal” stance that would destroy the union and lead to national and human deaths. By the end of the narrative, the father becomes more aware and approving of the missionary work done by plantation owners. Through the illness plot, Hentz’s narrative suggests to readers, particularly antebellum readers, that overcoming regional prejudices results in a harmonious and mutually beneficial national union.

Since the nature of a definable geographic space along with time plays a significant role in cross-regional literature, my analysis draws upon Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of the chronotope (translating literally as “time space”) to illustrate how Hentz used time and space to reposition the antebellum North and South into one unified space, symbolically healing the regional divide.

Using this tool, I demonstrate how Hentz, anticipating Bakhtin's formulation, incorporated references of Old World Anglo aristocracy and chivalry so as to shift the "time space" narrative and draw on an Anglo collective memory to promote an imagined national identity as socially and racially superior. To illustrate regional harmony, Hentz used the marriage between a Northern daughter of an abolitionist and a Southern plantation owner as a metaphor for national unity, and their son as a symbol of the nation's combined interests in the future.

In a letter to publisher Abraham Hart, dating 14 December 1852, Hentz explained the plot for her *Uncle Tom* counternarrative: A Southern planter visits the North where he meets and falls for a woman, "who has imbibed from all surrounding influences the bitterest prejudices against southern Institutions." The bride sees her new home through a "jaundiced vision," which "truth, acting as a great Physician" eventually heals (Hentz, Letter to Hart, 14 December 1852). In *Planter's Northern Bride*, the planter-hero is Mr. Moreland (as in the South has *more land*). In the opening scene, he is traveling North to escape the nightmarish memories of a marriage that ended in divorce. It is important to note here, as I'll analyze later in the chapter, that Hentz racialized Moreland's first wife and their daughter in order to subtextually address a taboo subject: the plantation slave master's mistress and their mulatto children. Driven by his miseries to visit a New England village, Moreland meets and falls in love with Eula, the daughter of a staunch abolitionist, Mr. Hastings (who acts too *hastily*). As an outspoken abolitionist, Hastings publically declares, with some frequency, that he'd rather see his daughter dead than married to a slave owner. Subsequent illnesses, which I label "illness plots," threaten the lives of both lovers and eventually lead the father to allow the marriage, providing the daughter views herself as a missionary to the slave community. The daughter, Eulalia (called Eula), serves as the Northern lens through which all pro-slavery arguments are filtered, considered, and judged. Once Eulalia's

“jaundiced” view clears, she begins to see that the slaves’ quality of life is better than that of the Northern poor Whites and free Blacks in her home region; she sees that the slaves are lucky to live such carefree lives. As Eulalia reaches this epiphany, Hentz intends for her Northern readers to do so as well. At this point, Moreland, his daughter, and—by extension—the nation are healed.

The Planter’s Northern Bride is a key example of those nineteenth-century domestic novels Nathaniel Hawthorne dismissed as trivial romances written by that “d—d mob of scribbling women” (Hawthorne 75). As a popular writer of women’s fiction, Hentz created heroines who typically defy parental authority and break cultural expectations. But as Karen Tracey points out, Hentz took advantage of literary reviewers’ prejudices against “typical domestic tales,” which they “only hastily and partially” read, to protect her subversive domestic novels from southern criticism and to ensure Northern publication (“Little Counterplots” 4). Despite the overt political tone of Hentz’s novels, scholars have only recently turned their attention toward critically studying her work. While Tracey examines the ways in which Hentz adheres to Southern hierarchy while carving out “a more powerful niche for privileged white women at the top of that hierarchy” (4), Elizabeth Moss’s work on Hentz, which does not include *PNB* in particular, analyzes the Southern aristocratic heroine as the source for reclaiming power of the Southern home (10). On the other hand, Betina Entzminger uses critical race theory to examine how Hentz’s novels explore White identity and female sexuality through racialized characters. She focuses her attention on the planter’s first wife, Claudia, a dark-eyed, dark-haired Italian gypsy with sensuous red lips, to show that the dark seductress hints at “southern oppression of white women and blacks” (60). Similarly, Cindy Weinstein considers how Hentz countered anti-slavery narratives by “valorizing sympathetic attachments” between slaves and

the slave-master based on love and choice as opposed to consanguinity “as a means of vindicating slavery’s perversion of families” (13). Additionally, she examines *PNB* as a counter-narrative to Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and draws out Hentz’s more racist arguments. My study of Hentz’s novel extends the work of these scholars by analyzing how Hentz used cross-regional dialogues and social interactions as a mode of regional inquiry and discovery.

State of the Union

Impelled by the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the United States’ westward expansion, reinforced by American racist beliefs in White supremacy, brought in an additional million square miles of new territory, which included native peoples not recognized as U.S. citizens (Brinkley 344). Westward expansion also led to tense national debates over the annexation of slave versus free-soil states. While the number of slave and free-soil states equaled fifteen each by 1849, the expected annexation of California and Utah—both free territories—threatened to upset the balance and leave the South represented by a minority in the Senate. As South Carolinians had during the previous Nullification Crisis, slave-owning Southerners began to speak of seceding from the union. Moreover, a new generation of Northern leaders, such as New York statesman William H. Steward, were becoming concerned less with the ideas of union than with eliminating slavery (Brinkley 358). As a result, U.S. Senator Henry Clay, from Kentucky, determined to find a solution to hold the union together and, therefore, presented what came to be called the Compromise of 1850, which included the Fugitive Slave Law.

Almost a half-century later, Charles Dudley Warner, formerly staff editor for *Harper’s Magazine*, reflected on this historical moment in the *Atlantic Monthly*: “On the 29th of June, 1852, Henry Clay died. In that month the two great political parties, in their national conventions, had accepted as a finality all the compromise measures of 1850, and the last hours

of the Kentucky statesman were brightened by the thought that his efforts had secured the perpetuity of the Union” (311). Interestingly, many in the North viewed the law not only as cruel and degrading but also as a “move formed for nationalizing slavery” (311). Nor did it help that Southerners soon began appearing in the North hunting fugitive slaves, further angering Northerners. Mobs formed, tensions mounted, and abolitionist sentiment strengthened (Brinkley 358). Warner noted an important yet tense historical moment: “on the 20th of March, 1852, there had been an event, the significance of which was not taken into account by the political conventions or by Clay, which was to test the conscience of the nation. This was the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*” (311). During the time Stowe wrote and published her bestseller, Northern textile industries were experiencing a financial boom from Southern cotton, a fact Hentz’s novel highlights. As Elizabeth Moss notes, that Stowe’s narrative “almost single-handedly made the Fugitive Slave Law unenforceable” during this financial boom “testifies to the verisimilitude” of her anti-slavery novel (104).⁴³ Negative reaction to Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom* came in the form of anti-*Uncle Tom* novels, one of which was Hentz’s *PNB*.

Contemporary Reactions to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Polemical Narrative

Inspired by the Compromise of 1850, Stowe’s novel tapped into “the persistent anxieties of a nation exhausted by years of sectional infighting” (Moss 103). In his 1852 review of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, George Frederick Holmes, Chancellor of the University of Mississippi and frequent contributor to the *Southern Literary Messenger*, personified and demonized Stowe’s novel as: “an aged and haggard crone, . . . cloth[ed] . . . in deceptive garb,” who “steal[s] more securely into our unsuspecting favor,” with “incantations” and “venom.” According to Hentz,

⁴³ The South reacted by making Stowe and her novel taboo. For instance, Louisiana’s regionalist writer Grace King reflects on this linguistic taboo in her autobiography, explaining that no one in her home was allowed to mention *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—that “hideous, black, dragonlike book that hovered on the horizon of every Southern child” (77).

Stowe's "awful descriptions" had excited her so that she could not sleep. In a November 1852 letter to her publisher, Hentz found Stowe's description of slavery in the South as "an entirely new Institution" to her. In fact, she could not "conceive how a woman could write such a work" (underscore in original).⁴⁴ In the preface of *Planter's Northern Bride*, Hentz responds: "When individual or public feeling is too highly wrought on any subject, there must inevitably follow a reaction" (iii). Hentz boldly states to her readers that "reason," by which she means her portrayal of the South, is "ready to assert its original sovereignty" (iii). In short, she depicts Stowe's portrayal of slavery in the South as irrational, and her own eye-witness account as the rational truth that logical readers will accept. These concepts are mirrored in her "jaundiced-eyed" heroine, Eula, whose vision of the South clears upon achieving regional understanding.

Ironically, Stowe revealed in the preface of her 1879 edition that she had anticipated a favorable reception in the South, even more than what she expected in the North. She believed she had painted the slave-holders as "amiable, generous, and just" (Stowe, "Preface" xviii). She had admitted their difficulties so fairly, she explained, that one friend, "who had many relatives in the South," wrote to her, "Your book is going to be the great pacificator; it will unite both north and south" (Stowe, "Preface" xviii). But as Sarah Robbins argues in *The Cambridge Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe*, regional reactions to Stowe's bestseller were not fixed categories. Many Southerners supported Stowe as depicting the South fairly, while many Northerners supported the pro-slavery South (100-101).

⁴⁴ As Sarah Robbins explains in *The Cambridge Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe*, Southern critics, such as George Frederick Holmes, attacked Stowe for disregarding rules for feminine propriety and for possessing "a sinful fascination with sex." "In an apparent effort to cloak attacks on Stowe in a protective cape of feminine propriety," Southern women in particular publicly criticized Stowe's behavior as a threat to "the state of womanhood in America" (101). Given her decision to underscore "woman" in her letter to Hart, Hentz likely shared similar concerns.

In her introduction to Stowe, Robbins notes the unique “ongoing circuit of textual exchange” between the North and South rejoinders, which include Maria J. McIntosh’s and Caroline Lee Hentz’s novels and even Stowe herself through her subsequent publications of *A Key to Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and *Dred* (Robbins 100-101). To illustrate what she calls “an amazing phenomenon” in the publishing arena, Robbins cites Charles F. Briggs’s January 1853 review entitled “Uncle Tomitudes.” For Briggs, Uncle-Tom rejoinder novels were “one of the most striking testimonials to the intrinsic merit of the work that it should be thought necessary to neutralize its influence by issuing other romances to prove that *Uncle Tom* is a fiction” (101). Briggs notes this phenomenon as “something entirely new in literature” (101). This something new happening in the North and South antebellum America was the evolution of a new genre in which Southerners responded to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* through a similar narrative form, often called “Uncle Tomitudes,” “Uncle Tommies,” “Anti-Toms,” or “Anti-Uncle Tom” novels.⁴⁵

Time and Space in the Anti-Uncle Tom Novel

Charles F. Briggs’s observation of “something entirely new in literature” and Warner’s comments in the *Atlantic Monthly* reveal how *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* created the conditions for a *time-space*-anchored American consciousness. Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* changed the way Americans then and now viewed the Antebellum (time) South (space); *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* placed the South in a position in which it needed to repair the regional divide and restore national honor. It did so through the Anti-Uncle Tom novel.

⁴⁵ For “southern response novels,” Robbins reminds us that “‘southern’ is a complicated category to invoke” (101). To begin, Maria McIntosh, a Southern woman, was living in New York when she wrote and published *The Lofty and the Lowly*, and Hentz, born in the North, moved South where she became a naturalized Southern woman. Geographical sites of publication further complicate categorization: “With the northeast still the center of the book-making industry, it was more likely that an anti-Tom novel would be published there than in Charleston” (Robbins 102), as was the case with Hentz’s *PNB*, published by Abraham Hart of Philadelphia.

To discuss the “process of assimilating real historical time and space in literature,” Russian philosopher and semiotician Mikhail Bakhtin uses the term “chronotope” (*Dialogic* 84). He explains that in literature the chronotope “has an intrinsic *generic* significance. It can even be said that it is precisely the chronotope that defines the genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the primary category in the chronotope is time” (emphasis in original 84-85). Essentially, the chronotope constructs how time and space are represented in the novel’s language. For instance, when Hentz refers to the planter’s personal slave as his “vassal,” she escorts the reader’s imagination to European (space) Old World (time) feudalism. Doing so allows Hentz to invite her White readers to imagine a national community that is racially and socially superior and Anglo. In this vein, I use the term “chronotope” to highlight the critical role time and space play in textual analyses within my research. Significantly, the time-space framework of these pro- and anti-slavery narratives plays a key role in our understanding of the antebellum North and South and the ways these writers produced meanings and participated in cultural work, such as creating a Southern mythology, a genre in some ways initiated by Stowe herself, that has lasted to the present day.

Harriett Beecher Stowe’s anti-slavery message through the sentimental narrative caught Southerners off-guard, and many reviewers doubted that a counter-response through the same medium would prove successful.⁴⁶ George Frederick Holmes feared that these secondary and “replicant” works would be mere counter-irritants to readers (727). As if to confirm Holmes’ fear, scholars such as Joy Jordan-Lake and Thomas F. Gossett illustrate the many ways these

⁴⁶ George Frederick Holmes, in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, states, “It may be doubted, indeed, whether an assault on a solemn interest, moral or social, conveyed under the garb of fiction, can ever be satisfactorily answered under a similar form. If it could be, it would be too trivial to be worthy of such an elaborate defence” (*sic*). In the same article, he theorized that if a reply be made in fiction, it should “be the portraiture of graver miseries, worse afflictions, and more horrible crimes familiar to the denizens of our Northern Cities,” where white labor prevails (727).

novels follow conventions that provoke negative responses from readers—then and today.⁴⁷

Typical plot devices include the benign yet fatherly slave owner; contented slaves who champion their masters against critics; the rebel, run-away slave who begs forgiveness and admittance back to the plantation family; the slave institution as the slaves' salvation from want and deprivation; the Northern industrial system as a cruel and uncaring plantation substitute; and the morally corrupt abolitionist who seeks to lure misguided slaves from the safety of their Southern homes. Hentz incorporates all of the above in *PNB*. Thomas Gossett estimated that there are about twenty-seven anti-Uncle Tom novels, the last appearing in 1861 (Gossett 729). Although he does not list Hentz as one of “the four best ones,”⁴⁸ Elizabeth Moss does assert that Caroline Lee Hentz, who had much in common with Stowe, was certainly “the best qualified” to respond to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (106).

About the Author

Both Stowe and Hentz originated from prominent Massachusetts families, “married improvident intellectuals,” and used their pens to supplement family incomes. Both women lived in Cincinnati, Ohio, at about the same time and were also members of the Semicolon Club,

⁴⁷ For further information about anti-Uncle Tom novels, see Joy Jordan-Lake's *Whitewashing Uncle Tom's Cabin: Nineteenth-Century Women Novelists Respond to Stowe* (2005); and Thomas F. Gossett's *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture* (1995). See also Sarah Robbins's *The Cambridge Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe* (2007) for further information on *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and its many afterlives.

⁴⁸ According to Gossett, the four best anti-Uncle Tom literary works include: Thomas Bangs Thorpe's *The Master's House*, William Gilmore Simms's *Woodcraft*, Sarah Josepha Hale's *Liberia*, and William J. Grayson's *The Hireling and the Slave*. Gossett seems to base his criteria on novels that stand apart from their counterparts in plot structure and devices. His estimation of Thorpe's novel as “the best” proves problematic as an anti-Uncle Tom novel when he reports that critics described *The Master's House* as more of “an antislavery novel” (212, 219). One wonders if “the best” constitutes rhetorical argument or entertainment value. Interestingly, one resistant reader of that era may have disagreed with Gossett. On June 25, 1856, Francis Amasa Walker, then a student of abolitionist and suffragist Lucy Stone, wrote *The Liberator* asking about the lack of talent found in the pro-slavery novels. While far from complimentary, the future president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology states, “By far the ablest one I have ever seen—and I regret to say that I have been foolish enough to waste some considerable time on them—is ‘The Planter's Northern Bride’; and that is full of absurdities and contradictions.”

organized for literary study (Moss 106). Hentz, however, thought herself more qualified than Stowe to write about the South. To Hart, she wrote, “I have lived in four slave holding states, and can say in perfect truth, that I have never seen a slave inhumanely treated, never seen one in chains, never seen an infant child torn from its mother’s arms” (18 Nov. 1852). Hentz perhaps alludes to Stowe’s lack of first-hand knowledge of slavery and “purported exaggerations of slavery’s abuses” (Robbins 101). In responding to Stowe, Hentz asserts that she could “write something better than I ever done before” (18 Nov. 1852). Despite thinking *Cabin and the Parlour* by Charles Jacobs Peterson “the best work on that side of the question” she had yet read and alluding to *Uncle Tom* and the multitude of counter-narratives, she insists to Hart that “There shall be no Cabin” in her novel: “most assuredly__The public has had cabins enough for one Century” (14 Dec.1852).

When Caroline Lee Hentz wrote her pro-slavery novel, she had already made a name for herself as a best-selling writer. She had published extensively in Western periodicals, was a favorite of *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, had won awards for her drama and poetry, and had published a variety of novels readers enjoyed. *Aunt Patty’s Scrap Bag* and *Linda* are two examples of her many best sellers that won much praise by literary critics. Ironically, one of her many admirers was Abraham Lincoln, who “read with evident relish Mrs. Lee Hentz’s novels, which were very popular books in that day” (Herndon 104).⁴⁹ One reason for Hentz’s success is that she

⁴⁹ Lincoln’s former law partner and friend, William Henry Herndon, wrote about the Civil War president’s admiration of Hentz’s work in his biography of Lincoln. Another biographer, Roy P. Basler, claims it was “unlikely” Lincoln read Hentz’s novels because her novels weren’t published until 1846 (6). Herndon made the comment while discussing Lincoln’s law studies. Likely, Herndon mistook “books” for “fiction.” While Hentz did publish *Lovell’s Folly* in 1833, Herndon’s comment appeared in a paragraph discussing Lincoln’s fondness for periodicals and “spicy stories one and two columns long,” with titles such as “Becky William’s Courtship.” William Henry Venable in *Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley* reports that Hentz published in the *Western Literary Journal and Monthly Magazine*, *Hall’s Western Monthly Magazine* (giving “prominence to sketches and tales by Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, and Miss Harriet Beecher”), the *Cincinnati Mirror*, *The Hesperian*, and she published

understood her audiences and how best to market her cross-regional identity. As Hentz explained to Hart and to her readers in her Preface of *PNB*, she was born in the North and lived in four different Southern states. She also lived several years in Ohio, formally a Western territory. Hentz's multi-regional experience taught her how to negotiate dialogue in order to appease a variety of cultural ideologies. In her article "Little Counterplots," Karen Tracey calls this technique "narrative subterfuge." She explains that Hentz marketed her "manuscripts to northern publishers, placated southern critics who screened novels for ideological conformity, and entertained the popular reading audience throughout the United States" (1). Nina Baym refers to Hentz as an "immensely popular" writer of Woman's Fiction, who with E.D.E.N. Southworth was "esteemed by their contemporaries" and dominated the American literary marketplace during the mid-nineteenth century (110).

Caroline Lee Hentz had already authored five novels when Abraham Hart published her *Marcus Warland*, which hit the shelves alongside *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.⁵⁰ In April 1852, *The Literary World* described *Warland* as a "graceful domestic fiction" with a "point of view not often presented to northern readers." Hentz, it stated, interwove her plot with a "very modest but none the less admirable and effective political tract," which the editors recommended to "certain turbulent fanatics of the North and East" ("Macus Warland" 243). Perhaps this last statement serves as a nod towards Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The following month, *Godey's Lady's Book* described Hentz as "a lady endowed with a superior mind" and "conceded" that readers

poetry in "Selections from the Poetical Literature of the West." We know that Lincoln read the *Cincinnati Gazette*, so he did receive Ohio periodicals. Thus it is more than "likely" Lincoln read and enjoyed Hentz's work. Also of note, legend suggests that Lincoln once remarked when meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."

⁵⁰ The exact publication date of *Marcus Warland* is unknown; however, the *American Periodicals Series* database lists its earliest review of *Warland* as April 3rd, 1852, in *The Literary World*.

should “weigh with great care all the facts” of opposing sides before pronouncing an opinion. The editors lamented that more writers “do not partake more liberally of her kind sentiments” (“Literary Notices. *Marcus Warland*” 406). Both of these periodicals noted Hentz’s cross-regional identity as a consideration when weighing her authorial clout.

Caroline Lee Hentz did not intend *Warland* to be a direct counter to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Nevertheless, famed Southern critic William Gilmore Simms criticized Hentz for failing to adequately defend the institution of slavery in her narrative. “No Southron,” Simms argued, “who knows anything of the subject, argues in this manner” (Simms, “Review of *Marcus*” 257). Here, Simms essentially challenged Hentz’s regional identity and authority.⁵¹ Two years later, Hart published her *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, in which she unmistakably defends slavery in the South. This time Simms *praised* Hentz as “a better witness [of slavery in the South], in all respects, than Mrs. Stowe.” Simms described her as a “Northern woman by birth,” who “has lived in close communion with the institution,” and who “has no hobby to ride, no crusade to promote” (Simms, “Review of *Planter’s*” 255). The publishing house H. Long & Brother, advertising their copies of *PNB* in the *New York Times*, called it a “patriotic,” “unprejudiced,” “true and graphic picture of Southern life” (“Classified Ad 3”). Two years later, upon Hentz’s death, *Godey’s* devoted two pages of their “Editors’ Table” to praising her work, life, and character. Having lived in the North, the South, and the West, Hentz “learned the wisdom of loving her whole country above any particular state or section,” which facilitated her “remarkable” ability to write with “entire truthfulness” (“Editors’ Table” 52).

Shortly before Hentz’s death, T. B. Peterson purchased the stereotyped plates and the rights to much of her work from Abraham Hart. Just after her death in 1856, Peterson reprinted

⁵¹ Karen Tracey, in “Little Counterplots,” states that “Southron,” a regional variation of “southerner,” “probably carries an insider connotation that emphasizes Hentz’s outsider status” (18).

PNB, inserting five overwhelmingly positive reviews by “SOME OF THE LEADING EDITORS” in the front matter. These Northern reviews include the *American Courier*, *N. Y. Mirror*, *Boston Morning Post*, and *Newark Eagle*. The *N. Y. Mirror* review is the most rhetorically significant. The write-up, using “the strongest words of praise that [their] vocabulary affords,” proclaimed that *PNB* “should be as welcome as the dove of peace to every fireside of the Union.” It cannot be read without a moistening of the eyes, a softening of the heart, and a mitigation of sectional and most unchristian prejudices” (qtd. in Hentz, *Planter’s*, “Front Matter” i). The insertion of these positive reviews aimed to console readers nervous about regional tensions and rumblings of an approaching civil war. Plus the “dove of peace” simile reinforces Hentz’s belief that readers’ acceptance of the book’s premises could heal the nation and bring peace. Interestingly, these reviews do not appear until after Hentz’s eldest son, Charles, traveled to the North in April, 1856, to settle his late mother’s publishing affairs. His diary reveals that he met with Hiram Fuller, editor of the *N.Y. Mirror*, while staying in New York (Hentz, Charles 568).⁵² Afterwards he traveled to Philadelphia to meet with publisher T. B. Peterson, who subsequently included the *N. Y. Mirror’s* review in *PNB’s* front matter later that year. Fuller, a Northerner and a known Confederate sympathizer, left the United States shortly before the Civil War and became the editor of London’s *Cosmopolitan*, “giving aid and sympathy therein to the Confederate States” (Mott 330). If Charles Hentz and Hiram Fuller negotiated the “dove of

⁵² In *A Southern Practice: The Diary and Autobiography of Charles A. Hentz, MD*, Charles Hentz states Fuller’s first name as “George”; however, writing after the fact, he likely confused the editor’s name with George Morris, who edited the *Mirror* until 1846. Initially, the periodical went by the name *New-York Mirror, and Ladies’ Literary Gazette*. Later, during Fuller’s term as editor, the paper changed its name to *The Evening Mirror* and published on a daily basis, yet it retained its shortened title *The Mirror* as an abridgement. For more information on *The Mirror* see Frank Luther Mott’s *A History of American Magazines*.

peace” review, it follows that either Fuller or Peterson may have written to other Southern-friendly Northern editors for favorable reviews to insert in the book’s front-matter.⁵³

Hentz posits in her preface that the nation can be saved only if the North and the South unite together to fight regional prejudice and conflict. Hentz mirrors this mantra within the narrative when the two North/South-crossed lovers, denied a marriage union by an abolitionist father, sicken with life-threatening illnesses. Once the father consents to the marriage, the North/South lovers are healed. Of herself as a Northerner, she writes, “we were born at the North, and though destiny has removed us far from our native scenes, we cherish for them a sacred regard, [and] an undying attachment”; she continues, “[W]e are [not] actuated by hostility or prejudice” (iii). She essentially implies: “we’re one of you—we’re Northerners; you can trust us because we love our homeland.” She mirrors this concept within the narrative by choosing a Northern-born heroine, like Hentz, who travels to the South to witness for herself the plight of slavery. Eula, the heroine, stands in as the Northern lens through which they analyze the slavery question. For Hentz, Northern readers must first enter the world of slavery, guided by one of their own, Eulalia the Northern Bride and cross-regional guide, to understand the benevolence of the institution.

Critical Analysis of *The Planter’s Northern Bride*

⁵³ I have determined that Peterson published two editions of *The Planter’s Northern Bride* in 1856. The first one, likely published before the meeting with Charles Hentz, contains a *Peterson’s Magazine* advertisement headed, “GREAT INDUCEMENTS FOR 1856!” and does not mention the five Northern reviews discussed above. This edition, one of which I possess, has a brown, embossed cloth cover with gold gilt on the spine. After Hentz’s death in February 1856, Peterson began advertising a ten-volume collection of Hentz’s work. These editions came in brown, embossed covers with gold gilt on the spines and sold for \$1.25, while paper-covered editions sold for \$1.00. The embossed cover on *this* set, however, contains the imprint: “Peterson’s Uniform Edition of the Complete Works of Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz,” and the spine gilt is also redesigned. Likewise, this edition contains the same “GREAT INDUCEMENTS FOR 1856!” advertisement as the earlier version. Peterson also sold a finer quality edition on archival paper, covered in “full crimson, with beautifully guilt edges, full gilt sides, gilt back” in “fine Morocco cloth” for \$2.00. Examples of these editions are available for viewing on the California Digital Library website <http://archive.org/>.

In *The Planter's Northern Bride*, Hentz displaces the Southern defense of slavery by placing, instead, the Northern moneyed class on the defensive regarding their treatment of their own working class. In doing so, she essentially proclaims that the moneyed North and the moneyed South are alike: both classes profit by “slave” labor. However, Hentz doesn't propose that the Northern factory and business owners abolish their economic system. Instead, she offers the Southern Plantation system as an ideal model of responsible patronage—reminiscent of the feudal system of *noblesse oblige*.

Like Stowe, Hentz used sentimental fiction in *PNB* to evoke a Southern mythology. Yet while Stowe's narrative gratified the Northern need to feel morally superior, Hentz's narrative satisfied their secret desires for a system of caste, or what Francis Pendleton Gaines calls a “romantic hunger” for “some allegory of aristocracy” (17). Scholars such as Patrick Gerster, Nicholas Cords, C. Vann Woodward, and Francis Pendleton Gaines have all noted the mutual cooperation between the antebellum North and the South, each region for its own purposes, in creating and perpetuating a Southern mythology.⁵⁴ In fact, the South's most enduring stereotypes derive from Stowe's Uncle Tom, Little Eva, Topsy, and Eliza. In “The Northern Origins of Southern Mythology,” Gerster and Cords highlight the connection between “the passions aroused by sectionalism, race relations, and civil conflict” to the nation's growing obsession with a Southern mythology (568). Caroline Hentz perpetuates the North's fanaticism with Southern mythology by peppering the novel's setting with allusions to Old World aristocracy and chivalric romance, and in doing so she encourages an imagined Anglo national identity as racially and socially superior.

⁵⁴ See: C. Van Woodward, *American Counterpoint: Slavery and Racism in the North-South Dialogue*. Boston: Oxford UP, 1971. Francis Pendleton Gaines. *The Southern Plantation*. Columbia UP: 1924. 30.

In *PNB*, Hentz essentially seeks to de-emphasize the spatial regional boundary and emphasize a temporal boundary based upon race and class. Today's readers may quickly notice, and even flinch at, an unabashed tone of aristocratic snobbery coupled with now inconceivable notions of White racial superiority within the text. Yet these attitudes were widely accepted and typical of pro-slavery fiction of the antebellum era. In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson explains, "the dreams of racism actually have their origin in ideologies of *class*, rather than in those of nation; above all in claims to divinity among rulers and to 'blue' or 'white' blood and 'breeding' among aristocracies" (149). By directing her pro-slavery narrative to upper-middle class White readers in the North, Hentz plays on what Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal called "Yankee class romanticism." According to Myrdal, "[t]he North has so few vestiges of feudalism and aristocracy of its own that, even though it dislikes them fundamentally and is happy not to have them, Yankees are thrilled by them" (1375-76).⁵⁵ These scholars credit the North's obsession with a Southern mythology to two factors: 1) the North's desire to experience feudalism vicariously through fiction, and 2) their desire to deflect from their own problems with racism by focusing on the Southern institution of slavery.

Southern Chivalry and *Noblesse Oblige*

In *The Planter's Northern Bride*, social class structure, properly maintained through *noblesse oblige*, provides the best means for happiness for slaves and the lower classes—but at a sacrificial cost to the privileged classes. Alluding to feudalism, Hentz portrays Moreland, the noble Southern planter, as if he were a knight on a quest—to discover the true "condition," the

⁵⁵ In his 1856 collection of Hentz's novels, T. B. Peterson, the publisher, includes a description of Hentz by a "distinguished critic": "Never met I a more fascinating person. . . . She is tall, graceful and dignified, with that high-bred manner which ever betokens gentle blood." In light of this description of her character together with letters, novels, and novelistic style, I argue that it is more than likely Hentz saw herself as aristocratic, though impoverished.

“inequalities and wrongs” of mankind, including the “free hirelings of the North,” who seek to “throw off the yoke of servitude” for “equality which exists only in name” (31). Moreland is travelling through New England to visit the “merchant *princes* of Boston” (emphasis added 13), a reference to the booming textile industry, which as Elizabeth Moss notes owes its success to Southern cotton. Throughout *PNB*, Hentz critically alludes to the Jacksonian “Age of the Common Man,” a lingering philosophy from the previous era in which ideas of social democracy and egalitarianism threatened the Old World aristocracy in the North that owed its origins to its English forbearers (Gerster and Cords 573). In fact, Edward Pessen, in *Jacksonian America*, recorded an anecdote involving one of the era’s New York elite’s shock at the “coarse familiarity” the lower classes show to the city’s highest elite (79). While Tocqueville noted “the picture of American society has . . . a surface covering of democracy, beneath which the old aristocratic colors sometimes peep out” (qtd in Pessen 92), Pessen argues that these colors, as recent studies suggest, “permeated the entire fabric of American society” (92-93). In *PNB*, Moreland overtly resents the leveled social scale and upholds his heroic demeanor by showing concern for the working class and free slaves. He likens their condition to the “enslaved children of Africa,” who, he concludes, are “the happiest *subservient* race that [are] found on the face of the globe” (31). Unlike McIntosh, who portrays her Southern-styled *Northern* manufacturer, Robert, as a Christ Figure, Hentz portrays her Southern Planter as the heroic savior to the “enslaved” community and the Southern aristocratic white man as a patron cursed with the burden of slavery, past sins inherited by the country’s British forefathers. Hentz describes Moreland as a “searcher after truth . . . brave enough to plunge into the cold abyss, where it is said to be hidden, or to encounter the fires of persecution, the thorns of prejudice” in order to attain the truth that without *noblesse oblige* the lower classes suffer (31). While on his quest, the

hero crosses cultural borders and travels to a quaint little New England village with Albert, his slave and “vassal,” a chivalric term for one who vows homage to a feudal lord and who is under his protection.⁵⁶

Like the other writers in this study, Hentz uses the travel narrative, inherent in cross-regional fiction, to associate Moreland with antiquated notions of aristocratic power, privilege, and nobility. During the antebellum era, the average “common man” could not afford to travel for leisure, especially due to the high cost of transportation. To illustrate this point, the first paragraph of *The Planter’s Northern Bride* establishes the hero, Mr. Moreland, as a “rich and independent” Southern planter, with “leisure as well as wealth at his command” (13). In contrast, Northerners, as explained by Moreland’s future father-in-law Mr. Hastings, ““have not quite as much leisure here as you gentlemen of the South. Time, with us, is wealth”” (96). Additionally, travelers like Moreland are treated with suspicion. They arrive in town as strangers, with their characters and histories as blank slates; as cross-regional travelers, they can control the narrative of their identities that the locals then hear and repeat. There are no home-town persons to contradict this information. Mr. Hastings tells Moreland that he has the advantage over them: ““you see us here in the bosom of our families—just as we are—without disguise or mystery,”” while Moreland gives them ““nothing but his name in return”” (98). Moreland replies that he has ““letters of introduction from some of the first men of the South”” (98). Social connections with the aristocracy work as what Moreland calls a ““passport to the best society of New York and Boston,”” which allows him to cross social borders prohibited to others (98). The passport functions as an interesting rhetorical tool. For the most part, those who travel, with the intention of socializing in society (as opposed to servants or slaves sent on errands, who must also carry

⁵⁶ At one point in the novel, Albert is attacked by a dishonorable abolitionist, and Moreland yells, “Let no one . . . on their peril, touch this boy. He is under my protection, and I will defend him with my life” (563).

“letters”), are members of an affluent society. These members include cross-regional authors, who frequently boost their ethos by referencing their travel experiences, and, more importantly, who control the narrative that enables the nation to imagine itself a community. Having the document(s) means freedom of movement and implies one has met the required criteria of trust and movement, which includes membership in a home community. Not having one implies the opposite and restricts one’s abilities to cross social borders. Therefore, passports essentially and ironically function as a method of cross-regional and cross-social gate-keeping.

To illustrate the consequences of disrupting traditional social structures, Hentz uses the desegregated dinner table. Their first evening in the New England village, Albert, Moreland’s slave and a counter-character to St. Clair’s Adolph in *Uncle Tom*, accompanies Moreland to the inn’s dining room. Like Adolph, Albert, a handsome, young mulatto, dresses “very nearly as genteelly as his master” and is accustomed to listening to the “conversation of refined and educated gentlemen” (14). As a result, he has acquired “propriety” in his speech and a sense of his own aristocracy (14). Moreland sits at the dinner table with a mixture of gentlemen and those of a “courser grain,” whom we are to understand are of the working class—the “common man.” The landlord, Mr. Grimby, racialized as “a hard, repulsive looking man, with a dark, Indian face,” notices Albert standing behind Moreland’s chair, a Southern custom, and invites him to eat at the table. To this “shocking” scene, Hentz adds a two-word footnote, simply stating, “A fact,” by which modern readers might infer that such a scene was unbelievable enough to warrant authorial verification. Yet the footnote works like password for the antebellum Anglo readers who understand the violation of social decorum in the invitation.

Hentz likely racializes Grimby, the landlord, in order to make sense of his transgressing the rules of dining etiquette and to place him as the alien outsider to the New England region,

thus excluding him from the social sphere or “space.” When Moreland objects with “unconscious haughtiness,” Grimby claims he meant “no offence,” but that they “look upon everybody here as free and equal” (21), another reference to the Jacksonian Common Man. Alluding to the antebellum struggle to unite regional societies (time and space), Hentz depicts Grimby as unable to understand why Southerners cannot “conform to our ways of thinking,” giving voice to a belief many Northerners likely had about the South during that era (21). It is probable that Hentz’s desegregated dinner episode represents a pervasive fear in the years following the “age of the common man” since each author in this project included a desegregated dinner table. In *The Kentuckian*, Beverley anticipates Victor’s shock upon hearing of his dining with his personal slave at a make-shift table in Carolina’s swamp region. Sedgwick’s Isabella Linwood must correct her outraged father’s misperceptions about “levelling Americans” by explain that Jupe, their former slave, would be *servng*, rather than *dining* with, General Washington. Only McIntosh, in *The Lofty*, paints her dinner-table scene with any sympathy. Alice pities Uncle Cato’s forced segregation from her white servants’ table and thinks it unfair. Yet in light of McIntosh’s premise that prejudices are based upon class, Alice does not extend an invitation for him to share her own table (2: 70).

As evidence of class- and race-based fears of deteriorating Anglo culture, Hentz re-conceptualizes the democratic notions dinner table. This assertion becomes more effective when the offender is the racialized innkeeper. In anger, Moreland declines his dinner and demands Albert sit and eat with the men instead. The planter views the dark-featured landlord as “infinitely [his] inferior” who “intended to insult” him with his “unwarrantable proposition” (22). In a similar scene, George in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* sits down with “constraint and awkwardness” at the Quaker’s table; “It was the first time that ever George had sat down on

equal terms at any white man's table" (Stowe 139). While George feels the "love and good will" of those around him, Albert feels only repulsion, later telling Moreland that while he made Albert eat with the others, he did not "'feel on an equality with 'em, no way. They are no gentlemen'" (30). In this case, Hentz suggests that there are natural aristocracies in both races. Throughout the novel, Hentz makes it clear that Albert sees himself as above the working class—a status that comes with his position as Moreland's vassal. In order to emphasize the racial and class divisions, Hentz frequently depicts a class bias favoring Moreland's slaves over the lower classes and Northern free Blacks.

Albert's dining with the "gentlemen" also intertextually parallels a scene that occurred before Moreland's arrival, in which Mr. Hastings, an abolitionist and father of Moreland's future bride, brought home an escaped slave named Nat and gave him a seat at the family table, and installed him in the family's "best bedroom" (41). Upon hearing of the incident from a local, Moreland declares he liked this picture because it proves that Hastings practices what he preaches, yet he shudders to think of Eula, Hastings's daughter, juxtaposed "with the rough, gigantic negro" (41). As it turns out, Eula "escaped further personal contact" by subsequently falling ill at the thought of eating next to the escaped slave (41). Describing Eula as ill suggests that social equality makes for an unhealthy nation while also proving her a genteel woman.⁵⁷ When Nat eventually grew "insolent and overbearing," and too comfortable in Hastings's home, the abolitionist "was at last compelled to turn him out of the house" after which he fastened a "double bolt" to his doors, implying Hastings secretly feared Nat (42). Most likely Hentz named "Nat" after Nat Turner, who led a slave rebellion in Southhampton, Virginia in 1831. In a letter to Hart dated 14 December 1852, Hentz recalls a local rebellion while she lived in North

⁵⁷ Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, explains that illness and swoons express female sincerity (57).

Carolina and remarks that had it not been discovered in time, “there might have been a repetition of the horrors of the Southampton tragedy.” In *PNB*, Hentz uses the mix-raced dining scenes to offer a different perspective on Stowe’s more democratic scene with George and the Quakers. Segregation at the dinner table—one of the more intimate forms of social communion—is preferable not only to the genteel Northern lady but to noble slaves like Albert as well. Readers might well have inferred that this segregation extended beyond the table to the nation as a whole.

To negotiate understanding between regions, Hentz, like the other writers in this study, incorporates bridge characters, such as Mr. Brooks. She overtly references his bridge-making experience by creating Brooks as an architect visiting the New England village to build, appropriately, a *bridge* over a local river. Brooks, who follows Moreland from the inn, apologizes that Moreland had “so poor a specimen of Northern politeness” and remarks, “I trust you do not think we all endorse such sentiments,” such as the racial mixing at dinner (22). Brooks’s statement implies that the North is not cohesive in its forward thinking about race/class relations and equality. Hentz’s narration explains best how the bridge character works, “as his interests were not identified with the place or the people, his opinions were received by Moreland with more faith and confidence than if they issued from the lips of a native inhabitant” (29). As a character from the North, Brooks welcomes an education about Southern culture and institutions. From his conversation with Moreland, Brooks surprisingly learns that the planter does not fear bringing Albert, whom Moreland interestingly views as his brother, into “the very hot-bed of fanaticism,” where there would be “strong efforts made to induce” him to leave (23).⁵⁸ In fact, Moreland appears almost cocky in his confidence in Albert’s loyalty.

⁵⁸ Moreland later explains to Eula that while he claims the Alfred as his brother, “he is not my equal physically or mentally, and I do not degrade him or exalt myself by this admission” (305).

Using cross-regional conversations between Brooks and Moreland, Hentz links her narrative to contemporary antebellum regional tensions. As a Northerner, Brooks respects Moreland's rights and resents "any ungentlemanlike infringement of them," referring to the mix-raced dinner table scene. By using the term "ungentlemanlike," he reveals himself a member of gentle culture, thus uniting himself, a Northerner, with Moreland and segregating himself from Grimby, the racialized other. Yet Brooke also explains that he cannot understand "how beings [slaves], who are ranked as goods and chattels" can ever "fill the place of a friend or brother in the heart" (23). In short, shared social identities trump regional identities for Hentz. Brooks clearly feels that Northerners should respect the mores and customs of Southerners visiting the North, even if they do not agree with said customs. Moreland "nevertheless" assures Brooks that Southerners look upon their slaves as their best friends. It is from Brooks's open-minded inquisitiveness and acceptance that Hentz intends her readers to take their cues about indulgence of and appropriate response to Southern culture.

The cross-regional schema of congenial discourse between regional persons, such as Brooks and Moreland, encourages collaboration in mitigating prejudices and oppression. While Moreland and Brooks walk, they converse about "the domestic problem" typically evolving from misconceptions of the region. Along the way, Moreland notices Nancy, a "poor creature" suffering from consumption and on her way home to die. With "unfeigned surprise towards the elegant and evidently high-bred stranger," Brooks watches Moreland take Nancy's bundle and carry it for her—"thus courteously relieving poverty and weakness of an oppressive burden" (25). In response, Brooks belatedly realizes he "ought to have anticipated" Moreland's kindness and offered to help Nancy, a fellow Northerner, himself (25). Hentz illustrates that many financially-abled Northerners fail to help their poor and sick. Using the South as an

example to follow, the North can learn how to better care for the needs of their own sickly and poor. Here, Hentz implies that a relationship with the South can relieve the Northern burden of poverty. Bakhtin explains that the “heroic deed,” glory, and glorification are features that sharply distinguish the chivalric romances from others (153). However, instead of Moreland’s noble deed (carrying Nancy’s “oppressive burden”) glorifying his liege lord, as typical in feudal romances, Hentz uses the “heroic deed” to glorify the hero’s home region—the South. Moreland confirms Brooks’s speculation that he’s “unaccustomed” to helping the poor and sickly, explaining that Southern institutions, such as *noblesse oblige*, make such actions unnecessary. In that context, Bakhtin argues that we can uncover older schemas that “have come down to us intact” and “are fused and consolidated into a new—specifically novelistic—unity,” a “completely new” genre anchored in “time space” (*Dialogic* 86, 89). By modifying the “heroic deed” motif, Hentz builds upon an Old World romance to mythologize Southern aristocracy.

Hentz incorporates cross-class interactions to provide contexts for exploring how economic power structures place greater burdens on the Northern working-class than those experienced by the Southern slave community. Together the men converse with Nancy and learn that Mr. Grimby, the landlord who made room for Albert at his table, has no room for Nancy in his employ. Grimby stopped her wages three weeks earlier; according to Nancy, he said she would ““never be good for anything any more,”” and ““there’s no use in [her] hanging on any longer”” (24). As Nancy’s story plays out, it becomes clear that she has been, essentially, worked to death. Moreland takes this occasion to observe and contrast the “Northern and Southern labourer, when reduced to a state of sickness and dependence” (27). Moreland considers that Nancy’s employer was not a wealthy man and could not afford to keep her employed as well as pay her “stronger and more healthy successor” (26). Unlike the Southern slave who enjoys

membership in the slave owner's extended family, Nancy has no claim on the landlord's affection; therefore, Mr. Grimby could dismiss her without "censure of unkindness or injustice" by a community in which, the narrator adds, "there were others far more able than [Mr. Grimby] to take care of her" (26-27). The situation causes Moreland to reflect upon "the sick and dying negro, retained under his master's roof, kindly nursed and ministered unto," who had no anxiety about his needs—"no fears of being cast into the pauper's home" or placed in a charity home not "hallowed" by "domestic relationship" (27). Demonstrating a type of *noblesse oblige* patronage that Northerners should mirror, Moreland subtly slips Nancy some money, after which Brooks, who notices this action, follows suit and does the same. This scene illustrates how the two regions can work together to help alleviate the burdens of the poor. Narration later reveals that, while sitting in church, some local villagers considered Moreland both wealthy and arrogant, but those who *knew* he gave Nancy ten dollars, "did not judge," and "they lifted up their hearts and blessed him" (39). The Church congregation mirrors inhabitants of the North, who either judged with prejudice or sympathized with the South.

Hentz uses Nancy's tragedy to castigate upper-class Northerners for not assisting their own poor and to illustrate, by comparison, that since planters treat their slaves like members of their families (thus Moreland's likening Albert as his brother), slaves enjoy more freedoms and fewer stresses than the Northern working class. Thus, Hentz's novel participates in the kind of sentimental fiction that Weinstein argues worked to redefine the family as an institution "based on affection and organized according to a paradigm of contract" (9). "Freely given love, rather than blood," binds the family together, and the rights of the family members are protected and guaranteed (9). To illustrate how the sympathetic family contract works better in the South than

in the North, Hentz's narrator sketches the lives of the "thousand toiling operatives of the Northern manufactories" who are "lured" from the protection of their families:

let the poor, starving seamstresses, whose pallid faces mingle their chill, wintry gleams with the summer glow and splendor of the Northern cities, tell; let the free negroes, congregated in the suburbs of some of our modern Babylons, lured from their homes by hopes based on sand, without forethought, experience, or employment, without sympathy, influence, or caste, let them also tell. (28-29)

The "starving seamstresses" and other workers were "lured from their homes" like runaway slaves were lured from their slave-owners' homes. Hentz's narrative argues that neither factory owners nor abolitionists provide workers/slaves the sympathy Southern families do for slaves.

The Planter's Northern Bride highlights a problem pervasive in the North—a de-facto segregation between classes and races. Through narration, Hentz invites readers to listen in on the thoughts of Hastings's housekeeper, Betsy. The housekeeper "toils" in her "drudgery" from dawn till dark for \$1.50 a week, which is not even enough to supply her own clothes, take care of her invalid brother, or pay his physician. Also, the meager pay does not allow her to put up money for a "rainy day" (66). Hentz uses Betsy to illustrate prescribed behaviors for the working class. Despite the long hours and little pay, Betsy has "'no ambition'" to sit with the Hastingses at dinner, an intra-textual reference to Grimby's breaking of a prescribed behavior; neither does she "'disdain the summons of a tinkling bell'" (66). Betsy also understands her employer's obligation towards his servants, which is that servants such as she should not be called to serve those below her class and race. Betsy refuses to wait on the runaway slave, Nat, whom Hastings took into his home. Betsy feels Nat "never had to work half as hard as she had" because he was, as she says to herself, "fat as a stall-fed beef, and as strong as a lion" (67). The housekeeper

essentially aligns the Nat with two distinctly different animals, one slow and stupid, the other swift and deadly.

Betsy's reducing the runaway slave to his biological physiognomy erases any potential qualifications for his inclusion in the national identity and reveals a socially permissible racist marginalization within the Northeastern regions. As Benedict Anderson explains, nationalism concerns itself with historical destinies, while racism contemplates "eternal contaminations" through "loathsome copulations" (149). Betsy alludes to a fear of racial contamination when she particularly objects to Nat's "'sway[ing] his huge limbs in the nice linen sheets'" that she had bleached and ironed and the subsequent need to remake his bed—a suggested intimacy over which she threatens to quit.⁵⁹ For many Northern White Americans, black Americans are not part of the imagined community, an idea supported by Moreland, who reveals to Hastings that he offered to free his slaves if they would submit to relocation in Africa, after which he reveals that they refused (109). Betsy, who listens in as Moreland visits with the family, understands what Hastings does not—Moreland has inherent gentility. The working class housekeeper approves of Moreland, who understands prescribed aristocratic behaviors concerning class/race mixing—both socially and intimately—declaring Moreland is a "real gentleman" and "sort of grand," and, as she tells Eula later, he would make Eula "'the lady you was born to be'" (68, 119). As a member of the lower stratum, Betsy adheres to the old feudal codes of Anglo Europe, which are closed to those outside the White national identity.

Chivalry and the Discursive Duel: Debating Slavery

Keeping with the romantic conventions of Old World Anglo aristocracy, Hentz refashions the slavery debate into an intellectual duel between two rhetorically significant

⁵⁹ In a similar way, Eula exhibits this contamination fear as well, albeit less vocal than Betsy, when she falls ill after her father welcomes Nat into their home, their table, and their guest bedchamber.

adversaries, the planter and the abolitionist. In doing so, Hentz uses several rhetorical devices to align readers' sympathetic identification with the planter. First, Mr. Brooks, the bridge character and unbiased mediator, tells Moreland that Hastings squandered his inheritance on "fruitless speculations and visionary schemes," and, while influential, Hastings is prideful and "not at all popular" in the community (40, 39); already he has sunk in the readers' esteem. For a generation newly emerging from the financial crisis of the previous decade, Hastings's actions communicate his inability to take on the responsibility of a community (like a slave community), much less an entire race. The editor and writer for a paper called the *Emancipator*, Hastings's "hobby which he rides without mercy or judgment" is the immediate emancipation of the Negroes (40), as opposed to the gradual emancipation or deportation to Liberia that Moreland and many abolitionists supported. Hastings had "great pride in his argumentative power" and saw the presence of a Southern planter in the village as a "dazzling opportunity" to display it. He, therefore, challenges Moreland to the debate. As a result, Moreland felt "the gauntlet was now thrown down; he must take it up and enter the lists of controversy, *coute qui coute*,"⁶⁰ which is Eula's hand in marriage and, metaphorically, the hopes for a North/South union (72).

During the antebellum era, the rising urban middle class sought to protect itself from hypocrisy in what Karen Halttunen calls the third social sphere—the parlor—a socially constructed space for mediation and negotiation where sincerity and hypocrisy were "confronted and resolved" (Halttunen 60). The chivalric code for dueling required a designated and isolated field of honor between two jurisdictional boundaries of authority, yet Hastings disrupts this code, by which Hentz implies his gentility is imitative rather than inherent like Moreland's. When Hastings arrived at the inn, Moreland, who "preferred a less public place" for the debate, invited

⁶⁰ *Coute qui coute* translates to "cost what it may."

him into the parlor, but Hastings took charge and moved their meeting to the public passageway, or “bar-room,” which serves as a “thoroughfare for loungers and smokers and drinkers” (Hentz, *PNB* 80). Throughout the early- to mid-nineteenth-century, social discourse was meant to express sincere emotion as opposed to mere posturing; however, the narration describes Hastings as one posturing before the public and feeding upon their applause (80). As an opponent, Moreland embodied the “class of men . . . against whom [Hastings] had commenced a deadly crusade, with all the fanaticism of Peter the Hermit, and the rashness of Richard Coeur de Lion,” both prominent medieval crusaders (61). Hastings’s actions verify the narrative description of his character, as one who viewed the debate with the planter as “a glorious field of disputation, where he would gather more laurels” (60). For the abolitionist, upstaging the slave owner in public equated to a successful *coups d’état* for “truth, justice, and humanity” (81). Moreland, in opposition, exclaims that he did not seek this confrontation. In constructing the conflict this way, Hentz depicts abolitionists as forcing the South to defend its honor. Like Hentz in her preface, Moreland likewise responds that his willingness to ““stand forth as the champion”” of his country since Hastings has compelled him ““to draw a dividing line between the North and the South”” (81).

When Moreland confidently counters anti-slavery arguments, Hastings angrily calls an end to the debate and surrenders the field, thus revealing Hentz’s vision for her own counterattack to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. During the public debate, the villagers—as well as Hentz’s readers—hear Moreland, with “an exceedingly clear, sweet, and finely modulated voice,” divert the blame of slavery onto ““that very British government which now taunts and upbraids us with such bitterness and rancor for the institution whose cornerstone itself has laid”” (87, 82). They hear Moreland describe slaves as ““helpless, ignorant, reckless beings on their own resources,””

indicating that they need caretakers, and he accuses the North, who ““hold[s] out no hand to redress them”” (83). In essence, the care for a whole enslaved race has been assigned to the South. In response to inquiries about cruel masters, Moreland acknowledges their existence; however, he claims the slaves’ “degradation” in Africa would have been far worse. To illustrate this point, he asks Hastings and those listening to imagine a distant and barbarous space: ““Have you never read of the hecatombs of human victims slaughtered at the grave of a barbarian chief, or the shrieks and groans of wives, sacrificed with the most terrific rites, to the manes of their husbands? I will not speak of the horrors of cannibalism”” (84). Moreover, Moreland invites listeners to question God for creating a “subservient and benighted race . . . devoid of beauty and grace,”” whose dark skin creates “a boundary line between” the white race and the black. He does, however, make exceptions for the mulatto, who “partakes of the beauty and intelligence of our race” (85). In every rhetorical volley, Moreland (and by extension, Hentz) perpetuates the illusion of White superiority, potentially feeding the egos of white Northerners.

Like Betsy the maid, Moreland reduces the native African down to his biological physiognomy; he asks, “[E]xamine his lineaments, features, and peculiar characteristics, and say if he came from the hands of God in a state of equality with ourselves, endowed with equal physical and intellectual powers”” (84-85). By de-humanizing black Americans, Moreland challenges their right for citizenship; moreover, by using the plural pronoun “ourselves,” Hentz invites her Anglo readers to imagine themselves as a physically beautiful and intellectually superior community—an Anglo aristocracy of sorts.

During the debate, Hentz uses the village onlookers, lounging in the passageway, as a type of Greek chorus, mirroring for readers their expected reactions. While Hastings is not popular in the village, narration reveals that the villagers highly respect him as an intellectual

leader—as “one of the greatest men that ever lived”—and typically align their opinions with his. While they are anxious to hear their eloquent leader humiliate the prideful planter, they are surprised by Hastings’s voice, “pitched on too high a key [which then] became thick and incoherent in the vehemence of argument” (87). On the other hand, Moreland maintained his self-command and his voice was “exceedingly clear, sweet,” a “melodious instrument [which] charmed the ear.” For the locals, “the tones, the manner, the sentiments were new”; as a result, the Northern witnesses begin to think, indicating readers should as well, that “there could be two sides to a question,” and that the other side “had some sense too” (87). They enjoyed seeing the stranger with “*spunk*” and respected that he “knew how to stand up for” himself. As they waited to see how the debate would continue, Hastings, fearing Moreland’s influence on the crowd, extended his hand and postponed the rest of the debate to another time. Moreland, who had “not sought this discussion,” likened himself as the “shield of defence [*sic*]” to Hastings’s “sword of aggression” (86-87). Portraying the debate as a metaphorical duel, the purpose of which is to restore honor and gain satisfaction for grievances, Hentz encourages the readers to view Hastings’s aggression and later surrender as dishonorable. Readers certainly understand from the narration that the local community—the “hotbed of [abolitionist] fanaticism”—is now daring to question both Hastings and the tenets of abolitionism. Hentz, in effect, uses Moreland’s harmonious and “charm[ing]” voice, indicating natural harmony, to seduce readers into considering the South’s position on the slavery debate. In *Affairs of Honor*, Joanne B. Freeman explains that in “a nation lacking an established aristocracy, this culture of honor was a crucial proving ground for the elite” (xv). The duel is Hentz’s most overt allusion to Old World chivalric romances, in which, as Bakhtin explains, the heroes’ “fidelity in love and their faithfulness to . . . the chivalric code” plays in the genre’s “organizing role” (*Dialogic* 151).

Pre-Ordained Cross-Regional Harmony

In counterpoint to such conflict episodes, Hentz embeds concepts of harmony throughout the narrative to suggest to readers the superiority of unity as pre-ordained by God, especially the union between North and South. Harmony brings soothing feelings of rightness while disharmony fosters feelings of tension and imperfection. Before Moreland ever sees Eula's face or debates her father about slavery, her harmonious singing voice captures his mind and heart while both are attending church services. Along those lines, Benedict Anderson explains that "unisonance," especially as expressed in poetry and in songs, suggests "a special kind of contemporaneous community" (145). Anderson uses national anthems to illustrate his theory: "No matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes, there is in this singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody. The image: unisonance." Unisonance "echoe[s] physical realization of the imagined community," as does simply listening to the music or following a recitation from sources such as *The Book of Common Prayer* (145). Unisonance in *PNB* occurs when Moreland and the churchgoers sing, *a cappella*, an anthem: "Before Jehovah's awful throne / ye nations bow with saved joy; / Know that the Lord is God alone, / He can create, and He destroy" (34). The words call forth a common nation and a common belief in God who can, alone, destroy the nation. Anderson calls this effectual feeling "ancestral 'Englishness'" (145). Unisonance works because it materializes ancestral time and space by calling forth a commonly inherited cultural memory—the church hymn. The familiar words inspire Moreland "to receive new impressions" (Hentz 34). Moreland feels "he had met this maiden stranger in some of the dim-remembered scenes of a past eternity" (*PNB* 36), implying divine pre-ordination for their union and, metaphorically, the national union. Later, at Hastings's home, Moreland and the family sing *a*

capella. Together he and Eula mingle their breaths over a shared songbook; the event carries Moreland back to his childhood when his mother “taught him the songs of Zion” (70). The unisonance and the childhood memories soften Moreland’s heart “to almost boyish weakness,” causing Moreland’s voice to break, so that Hastings mistakenly concludes that Moreland and Eula lack harmony (70-71). Interestingly, it is at the conclusion of this evening that Hastings and Moreland determine to debate the slavery question.

In *PNB*, the sole barrier to Moreland and Eula’s marriage is Hastings, the abolitionist. Viewing this plot strategy as a metaphor leads readers to conclude that it is the abolitionists, solely, who are inhibiting national unity and leading the country to civil war. Hentz emphasizes his stubbornness by portraying him as a good but prideful man, who boasts, ““once convinced I am *right*, you might as well attempt to move the everlasting hills from their base, as shake the groundwork of my firm and rooted opinions”” (72). After the debate, Hastings acknowledges to himself “the truth and candour of many of [Moreland’s] arguments,” but he would “never admit the possibility of his having been in error . . . at any sacrifice” (103). Frequently Hastings, who resembles William Lloyd Garrison, states—and even publishes in his fictional paper the *Liberator*—“that he would rather a daughter of his should be laid in the deepest grave of New England than be wedded to a Southern slaveholder”” (100). To put him to the test, Hentz uses the illness plot.

Illness Plots and Marriage Metaphors

Hentz, like the other writers in this study, uses the illness plot to influence actions and to metaphorically illustrate the potential for national death should the North/South marriage union be prohibited. During Hentz’s own time, slave debates placed the nation in a state of crisis. Senator Henry south to “balance” the Union’s slave- versus free-states via the Missouri

Compromise of 1850; however, the publication of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* escalated regional tensions over abolitionism and slavery. Therefore, it is not surprising that slavery becomes the key issue blocking a marriage between a Southern planter and a Northern abolitionist's daughter.

Hastings's concern is first and foremost his position as a publicly renowned abolitionist leader. When Hastings rejects Moreland's offer for his daughter, he tells the planter, "Were I to consent to this union, I should destroy, by a single act, the labour and devotion of years" (104). In return, Moreland explains that he can take Eula, "the flower of the village," to "a clime more congenial to the delicacy of her constitution" than the cold Northeast (44, 105). Moreland's statement suggests a frailty in Eula that makes her susceptible to consumption, and it is at this moment we first see weakness in Moreland. He loses his self-possession, his voice becomes "husky and tremulous," and his checks begin to flush (106). Moreland is growing ill. Hastings counters, consenting to the marriage if the planter would simply free his slaves. Moreland's slave-owning status serves as the sole barrier to Hastings's consent. Like many antebellum Americans, such as William A. Caruthers, Moreland would free his slaves if they would resettle in Liberia, but they refused. The law at that time stipulated that freed slaves had to remove to the North, and Moreland believed that their treatment there would be tantamount to "their direst curse," implying a Northern racism far worse than the South's (109). Interestingly, Moreland believes slaves should—and someday would—be free, "if man will wait [God's] leading" (110). Like McIntosh's Alice and Isabelle Montrose, Moreland views Christian planters as missionaries to God's African people. Ultimately the decision comes down to the two men: Moreland has to free his slaves or Hastings has to bless his daughter's marriage to a slave holder. Simply put, slavery versus marital unity metaphorically echoes legalized slavery versus

North/South national unity. Duty prohibits both men from capitulating. Their “duty” is directly linked to their regional ties during a time when existing tensions over slavery were approaching their breaking point. By that evening both Moreland and Eula are ill, he with brain fever and Eula with early signs of consumption. As Hentz’s narrative illustrates, deathly illness follows disunity.

In the illness plot, as noted in previous chapters, characters flounder in their sickbeds, typically of brain fever, in order to influence marital outcomes. Their illnesses possess inherent powers to influence characters and readers alike. Under the duress caused by their loved one’s afflictions, those prohibiting the marriage union must transform their prior positions or prejudices after agonizing soul-searching. They must weigh the lives of their loved ones against their values and sometimes their pride. For that reason, illness plots, like the double-proposal plots, are inherently dialogic in nature, as manifest in characters’ actions and their dialogues (internal and verbal) of reevaluation, renegotiation, and mediation. That night at dinner, Eula’s illness necessitates her remaining in her room, causing tensions to permeate the home’s atmosphere. The eldest son, Reuben, taught to “express independent opinions,” disagrees with his father, declaring he will travel the South to “judge for [himself]” (115). Hastings’s wife “rebel[s] against her husband’s cold and harsh decree” and worries that Eula will “fall into a consumption”; she thinks that if Eula could go “South, there wouldn’t be any danger” (114, 144). With feelings of sickness and rebellion infiltrating the home, echoing the present national discord, Hastings begins to question “his own principles, his own motives’ and wonder[s] if it were really his duty to sacrifice his daughter’s happiness to his own reputation” (122).

The illness plot also stimulates the attitudes of the local community—and by extension, the reading community—witnessing the events. Laid up in the public inn, Moreland’s life is in

peril. The townspeople, moved by the “paroxysm[s]” of Albert’s grief and the “affecting” visit of the consumptive Nancy to Moreland’s sickbed, gained a new understanding of the planter/slave relationship and the planter as a benevolent caretaker as opposed to the Northern merchant or industrialist. Cross-regional interactions caused the local residents to now reflect upon Moreland’s “humanity and courtesy,” which “softened many a bitter prejudice” (138), mirroring attitude changes Hentz anticipated in her contemporary readers. The villagers witness Albert nurse his master with “faithful affection [and] unwearied devotion,” and when his grief became “uncontrollable,” they see him rush outside “to give vent to the most heart-rending lamentations” (137). On the one hand, Albert’s “raving” emotions influence Betsy, who declares she doesn’t believe ““the stories they tell”” about the South’s cruelty to slaves, an allusion to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. She continues, ““Alfred says they are all lies,—that he’d a heap rather live there than here, and he as free as the rest of us. Free!—I wonder what they call free?”” (139). Betsy then contemplates her own lack of freedom while feeling the knots and calluses of her toil-worn hands.

On the other hand, Nancy’s fatal consumption places her in a closed realm Michel Foucault labels “heterotopias of crisis” (“Other Spaces” 26). As a figure in close proximity to death, Nancy’s body and mind signify power and influence (Williams x) to the townspeople. Nancy rises from her death bed, a sanctified space also marked as a heterotopias of crisis. Melodramatically described as “dragg[ing] her feeble footsteps” toward the inn, resting along the way and “stooping to pick up” wild flowers to “gladden the sick man’s fading sight” (139), Nancy’s actions exercise power influences over the community. Indeed, Mrs. Grimby now feels that she might have worked Nancy too hard, “that she had not been as kind and considerate as she ought to have been” (142), an additional accusation against the North’s moneyed class

neglect of their poor. In many ways, Nancy's consumption echoes Eula's potential consumption should she stay in the frigid Northeast climate.

Additionally, the illness plot provides an impetus for the villagers and skeptical readers to root for the doomed couple. The narrator states that "Nothing could exceed the interest manifested by the whole neighbourhood" who feel attracted by the "charm of romance, which even the most matter-of-fact beings appreciate" (138). As "anxious watchers," they observe the local minister (another bridge character), Dr. Ellery, walk daily with Mr. Hastings through gardens and the graveyard: "The villagers, who were well aware of the want of harmony in the sentiments of the two parties, wondered at this unwonted communion . . . and they shook their heads," remembering Hastings's stubbornness and his vow against allowing his daughter to marry a planter (145). The minister views "sickness and death" as the "ministers of God . . . and they always stand ready to do his bidding" (127). Therefore, the North/South lovers are ill because the denial of their union is against God's will. Subtextually, Hentz asserts that perpetual national unity is God's will—the states are providentially and spiritually linked and need each other for survival. After receiving counsel by the minister, Hastings can now "see the dealings of Providence" and confesses that the illnesses, the prayers of his wife, the opinions of the minister and his friends "have actuated [him] to revoke the decision [he] had made" (148-49). And as Hentz's narrative shows, communities can affect the outcome of regional tensions. When Hastings places Moreland's hand into Eula's, Moreland immediately "gaine[s] strength and . . . Eulalia's cheek recover[s] its soft oval outline, and the pale virgin rose once more blushe[s] under its transparent surface" (151). The North/South marriage between Moreland and Eula allegorically symbolizes a divinely-ordained national unity.

Usually sentimental novels culminate with a wedding; however, Hentz's couple marry in the first third of the narrative, allowing Hentz to refashion the formulaic heroine's journey towards marriage into an allegory about national unity through marriage. While the typical young and single heroine in woman's fiction has to fearfully find her own way in the world, journeying without emotional or financial support of a guardian or parent, Hentz's Northeastern heroine is already, as she explains to Moreland, "quite independent" and "not accustomed to escorts" (53-4). Though independent, Eula isn't complete; Moreland feels that "her character was only half developed," leaving readers to conclude that wedding the rich planter—her other half—will then make her whole. In fact, Moreland sees within her "a sleeping power" (101). Hentz uses these descriptions to imply that while the nation is comprised of independently functioning states, neither is it fully developed nor does it operate at full power unless all the states are bound together as a cohesive union. This concept plays out in Moreland's belief that together their love would be powerful enough to "break down the Jericho of prejudice and fanaticism" (106).⁶¹ After they marry, the two give and take equally. Moreland provides Eula with liberal financial support, and Eula provides Moreland much needed emotional support in dealing with his ex-wife and their unruly daughter.

The general idea of Hentz's supposition is that the North and South, bound in a union, can fulfill not only each other's needs but also the families of the united. For Hastings, his daughter's marriage to a Southern planter had the potential to fulfill some of his more deep-seeded, selfish needs. The narrator explains that once Hastings "actually passed the Rubicon of his prejudices, he could not help contemplating the worldly advantages of the union" (150). Foremost, he found that he could face the watchful villagers by establishing for himself the

⁶¹ "By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the army had marched around them for seven days." Hebrews 11:30.

“reputation of a martyr,” *sacrificing* his principles that both Moreland and Eula may live united (152). Mirroring Moreland’s earlier thoughts that Eula was only “half developed,” Hastings felt his daughter, “cradled in the lap of wealth” in the breezy Southern clime, would “bloom like its wild-wood blossoms” and become a missionary to the slave community (150). As an “ambitious man,” the Northern abolitionist desires wealth to dazzle “the eyes of the more lowly and obscure” (102). More importantly, he “wanted his daughter to marry a distinguished man, who would give consequence to the family, and increase his own influence” (102). These selfish desires paint him in an unfavorable light that supports Southern prejudices against Northerners, especially abolitionists. As an aristocrat, Moreland could make Eula the lady that Betsy felt she was meant to be. Like McIntosh’s *The Lowly*, a North/South union would also provide Hastings’s son, Reuben, who studies law, “a rich, influential brother-in-law,” for as Moreland tells him, the North has an abundance of attorneys whereas the South does not (150, 302). In short, the North’s union with the agrarian South is both prestigious and financially beneficial. And in the larger context, a united nation that includes the South’s “*more land*” would be perceived as more distinguished, rich, and influential to other nations, arguments that Hentz expects will sway Northern readers.

Additionally, Moreland’s wealth could help alleviate the burdens of the North’s poor working class. Before leaving for the South, Moreland leaves both Nancy’s mother and Betsy the housekeeper a significant amount of money. For Betsy, the gift equals ten weeks’ pay and will help her care for her crippled brother, again metaphorically indicating the healing nature of the union. Also, Moreland encourages Eula to send her mother money to distribute to the poor at Mrs. Hastings’s discretion. On the national level, Moreland’s cotton would go North, where the “merchant princes” would mill the cotton and sell it back to the South again, which satisfies the

outcome Congress sought through tax tariffs on international trade. Therefore, the North benefits financially by maintaining a relationship with the South, and by extension, slavery.⁶² And this relationship profits the South by bringing in new blood from the North.

Clearly, Hentz's strategy in this fictional world is to present the Northern bride as the spotless lens (as opposed to the abolitionists' jaundiced lenses) through which readers, particularly Northern readers, "see" slavery in the South. She is the Northern emissary and missionary to the South. As the newly married couple travel from the North to the South, the narrative slowly transitions, allowing Eula an equal share in the narrative voice and a greater share in the rhetorical argument. While Eula's voice and power gain strength through marriage and motherhood, Moreland, on the other hand, grows more Byronic and feminized.⁶³ Moreland is a divorced man, "wounded and betrayed," with a child he could not love, a fact which Eula knew, yet she "refused to hear what she knew would give him pain to reveal" (205, 102). Her reaction exemplifies how the North can help heal the South's damaged past. As Moreland's wife, Eula "will bring light and joy" to his home and "exercise a mother's holy influence over the child, doomed to the saddest of all orphanages" by teaching him how to love his daughter (106). Moreover, Eula sees herself "like the handmaid of the Lord," equating Moreland as the feudal Lord and herself as "the presiding Queen of his princely home" (155, 231). Metaphorically, Eula's groom is the sacrificial savior of the enslaved race; whereas, she is both the Virgin Mother and the bride of Christ whose divine mission is to be "a golden link of union between the

⁶² David Christy argued in *Cotton is King* (1855) that the industrial world was too dependent upon the South's raw cotton, touching a nerve and causing "a great deal of discussion" (Gerster and Cords 569).

⁶³ Moreland's Byronic persona foreshadows the gothic death scene involving the death of his first wife, Claudia. On her death bed, Claudia cries out, "Oh! If you knew what I have suffered!" (469). Moreland pleads to God, "Have pity on the frail and erring creatures thou hast made!" (475). In an ending that mirrors Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher," a falling tree splits the house just as Claudia dies, unrepentant.

divided interests of humanity” (136)—the North and the South. Conversely, “the sexual Other for Southern mistresses were black slave women, ‘Jazebels,’ who allegedly seduced” plantation masters (Tracy 72).

Like so many Southern antebellum authors, Hentz elected to remain silent about “sexuality, especially miscegenation” (Tracy 72), choosing, instead, to reference it subtextually through the planter’s ex-wife Claudia. While Hentz depicts the Northern bride as a pure, virginal mother, she depicts Claudia as the sexual Other—the promiscuous Lilith banished from the Garden of Eden (365, 372). Eula suppresses her sexuality; Claudia embraces hers. As Betina Entzminger argues in *The Belle Gone Bad*, Hentz racializes and sexualizes Claudia as a dark-eyed, dark-haired Italian gypsy with sensuous red lips. As a child, Claudia was raised by traveling gypsies, whom Hentz describes racially as “itinerant Minstrels,” before a rich Southern woman spotted her and paid her parents “to relinquish [their] claims” upon her (373-74). In other words, the rich woman bought Claudia as if she were a slave.⁶⁴

My analysis of Claudia builds upon Entzminger’s study by arguing that Hentz uses Moreland’s first marriage as an allegory for re-conceptualizing perceptions about the male planter/female slave sexual relationship. While displacing the blame for this sexual impropriety on the sexual Other, subtextually Hentz later breaks taboo conventions by sympathizing with the Other’s plight. To begin, Hentz essentially excuses the amorous weaknesses of Moreland—who represents Southern gentlemen in general—by shifting the blame to Claudia, who stands in for promiscuous slave women. Hentz describes Moreland, upon first meeting Claudia, as “in the first glow of manhood,” implying he is innocently naïve and not in command of his sexual urges. Claudia, on the other hand, has “a wild charm to her beauty that rendered it irresistible” (374),

⁶⁴ After their marriage, Moreland would also pay Claudia’s Italian mother “liberally for her future wants” if the mother would leave his home (375). Therefore, like the mother, he has bought Claudia like she were a slave.

which casts her as the guilty Lilith and Moreland the innocent Adam. Interestingly, the Biblical Lilith's name is connected with the Hebrew word for night, *Laylah*, and sexual promiscuity. The couple met “in the ballroom,” calling forth allusions to the quadroon ballrooms of the Deep South, where Southern men of means met mulatta beauties.⁶⁵ This reversal of Southern manhood feminizes the plantation master, who must conquer “the immanence of nature”—the feminine—if he is to become “the transcendent hero, the fallen God” (Tracy 73). In order to reaffirm the paternalistic ideology in which “ruling-class men maintain their gender superiority and their race and class dominance” (Tracy 75), Hentz disrupts the doomed cross-racial marriage by showing Claudia as incapable of domesticity. Soon after their marriage, Claudia “became the slave of her own wild passions,” and ultimately the innocent Moreland divorces—and thus conquers—the adulterous Claudia (344). Hence, the plantation master is re-established as what Susan Tracy, *In the Master's Eye*, terms “the prime enforcer of public morality, law, and justice” (75).

Subtextually, Hentz complicates a definitive analysis of the character Claudia when she subsequently casts her in a sympathetic light. When the opposing heroines meet, readers learn from Claudia herself that she encouraged Moreland to believe her to be adulterous when, in fact, she was not. Through the heteroglossic “Othered” voice, which embraces multiple perspectives, Hentz's readers learn from Claudia that she wanted out of the marriage because Moreland ““turned into my master, my tyrant!”” (366).⁶⁶ And like Claudia, the Biblical Lilith would not

⁶⁵ In an interesting account, one famous quadroon *placé* (a woman of color “placed” with a white man in an unofficial marriage called a *plaçage*) is Eulalie de Mandéville. While her name is eerily similar to Eulalia's, her history is similar to Claudia's. As a child, she was taken from her slave mother and given to her white grandmother, who raised her, just as the white patroness raised Claudia. See Katy F. Morlas, “La Madame et la Mademoiselle,” graduate thesis in history, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2003.

⁶⁶ According to Entzminger, Hentz frequently compared dutiful wives with dutiful slaves to highlight similarities of oppression. As a racialized woman and wife, Claudia rejects patriarchal authority. As a divorced woman, Claudia lives her life on her own terms—essentially free—which sends a subversive message about female subservience in

acknowledge Adam as her superior and leaves him (“Lilith” 622). According to Entzminger, Hentz frequently compared dutiful wives with dutiful slaves to highlight similarities of oppression and hint at the destructive influence of miscegenation on Southern domestic harmony (60). Yet, rather than living happily free, Claudia, like so many other literary mulattas, dies tragically. In all likelihood, Hentz racialized the tragic mulatta, Claudia, in order to placate Southern antebellum readers for increased sales and much-needed income. Still, Hentz communicates, albeit subversively, potentially restrictive roles for women in the marriage union.

While Hentz, in her other domestic novels, more overtly critiques white women’s oppression, in *PNB* Hentz empowers Eula, a “true woman,” as a vital partner in the plantation system. In fact, the subtext implies that the Northern Bride provides redeeming influences to the planter, his child, and the plantation system as a whole. Hentz uses Eula’s actions towards Moreland’s daughter Effie to demonstrate a more tolerant role for white wives of Southern men who have fathered bi-racial children.⁶⁷ First, Eula refuses to hear anything regarding Moreland and Claudia—either from Moreland or from gossiping servants. Once Eula does learn the painful details of his past, she excuses her husband as faultless, placing the blame instead on Claudia, whom she simultaneously pities. She also pities the child Effie, whom Weinstein incisively notes is a figure of Stowe’s Topsy. Eula calls her “the child of the sun,” a euphemism for people of African descent (545). To Moreland, Effie is a painful reminder of the mother she so strongly resembles (308). Moreland tries to erase Claudia’s connection to his daughter by prohibiting Claudia’s name to be mentioned in Effie’s presence. He tells Eula, “Make her like yourself, Eulalia, all that is lovely and good, and I will forget she ever had another mother” (217). In

marriage. But rather than letting Claudia live happily on with her freedom, Hentz kills her off in order to placate Southern readers.

⁶⁷ In literary tradition, Lilith, a succubus and incubus, seduces men and conceives their children (“Lilith” 622).

other words, Eula is to Anglicize Effie, thereby erasing both her and her mother's racial identity. On a related note, traditional mythology teaches that Lilith's children must be protected from becoming demons ("Lilith" 622). Like Topsy, Effie has a discipline problem, but when Eula sings to her, Effie becomes a "good girl" (307). Eula redeems Effie by "neutraliz[ing] the transmitted curse," which is Claudia's tainted blood, and "convert[ing] it into a blessing" (376-77). This is yet another instance in which Hentz incorporates harmony to imply rightness—and unisonance—in unity.

Hentz uses "the repudiated wife and the Northern bride of Moreland" to shed light on an existing cognitive dissonance regarding the effects of interracial sexual relationships (362). There was no shortage of bi-racial children born to antebellum white masters, and their wives could not escape the knowledge that they existed. Hentz sets up a paradigm—an implied resignation—in which the white plantation mistress takes in and loves the bi-racial child while both blaming and pitying its mother and reframing the master as a man seduced in his younger, amorously weaker years.⁶⁸ Hentz essentially attempts to set up a—notwithstanding faulty—win-win reading for all persons concerned in planter's multi-racial family. Ultimately, Eula brings healing to the Southern dysfunctional family.

The Northern Heroine Slavery Lens

For the South, Eula serves as the Northern representative witness to plantation slavery and as a mistress/missionary to the slave community. Moreland tells her, "You shall judge for yourself" (303). When arriving at the plantation, Moreland, wishing Eula "to witness a true plantation scene," orders the bugle blasted to call the field workers in from the cotton fields

⁶⁸ For both cognitive dissonance and inferred justification, I use the definitions provided by *Sensagent Dictionary*. Cognitive dissonance is the "motivational state produced by inconsistencies between simultaneously held cognitions." Inferred justification is the "specific strategy to cope with Cognitive Dissonance which 'infers evidence which would support the respondent's beliefs.'"

(331). All the slaves are happy to see their master, demonstrating their familial attachment to him with hugs and warm greetings. In fact, they gather around him so fast that Eula initially fears they mean to harm him. After witnessing this event, Eula then realizes that “she must share [the master’s] responsibility, assist him in his duties, and make the welfare, comfort, and happiness of these dependent beings the great object of her life” (332). Eula, who had guiltily struggled with her inherent feelings of superiority over Nat, and the black race in general, now understands that her mind-set was natural and just. As Eula watches her husband

standing in their midst, the representative of the fair sons of Japheth, wearing on his brow the signet of a loftier, nobler destiny, every lineament and feature expressive of intellect and power, and then at each of that dark, lowly throng, she felt a conviction that freedom, in its broadest latitude, education, with its most exalted privileges, could never make them equal to him. (332)

Hentz uses Eula’s thoughts to reveal to readers her new perception, which is contrary to her father’s: Whites and Blacks were not created equal.

Taking in the narrative as a whole, readers could come away with the impression that Eula is a nice person: she is kind and gracious to all she meets; she serves the slaves over whom she is mistress; and she is sensitive to God’s will. My own endeavors reading Hentz’s archives, which include her diary and her personal letters, as well as other accounts of her character, led me to the same impression of Hentz, though she did not own slaves. Yet it seems incongruent for these “gentlewomen” to have such outrageous sentiments of racial superiority. Today’s readers must understand that many Whites of the antebellum era believed they were racially superior, and they believed that scientific evidence and biblical interpretations supported this theory

(Moreau 142-46; Robbins 23).⁶⁹ Unlike readers today, antebellum readers were unable to see racist hubris in such statements. For Eula, Moreland's system of slavery was "tender and affectionate" (333).

Hentz describes Eula's tour and impressions of the plantation much like *tableaux vivants*, thus allowing readers to participate in a grand, feudal society (Anderson 150-51). Touring the plantation, she saw that it worked like a small, self-sufficient village. She saw a saw-mill, a blacksmith's shop, and a carpenter's shop, "where all the furniture necessary for the negroes was made" (340). She toured the weaving and spinning rooms, "where cotton and woolen webs were manufactured for negro clothing, and counterpanes of curious devices. Everything necessary for comfort and use was of home-work" (340-41). Each slave cabin had a plot of land for planting a garden, a poultry yard, and a melon patch. The slaves were also allowed to work extra jobs for extra money and sell their garden produce back to the master. They also had their own church, where Moreland and Eula occasionally visited. While there, Eula would "suffe[r] her seraphic voice to mingle with theirs," establishing evidence of White/Black harmony and rightness. Eula incorporated herself into the community so much so that one person thought her "born and bred at the South, instead of a simple New England village" (405). As Benedict Anderson explains, one can be naturalized into a community (145), and given Hentz's proclivity to identify with the South more than the North, one might think she viewed herself as a naturalized Southerner. Like the Northern-born Hentz, Eula becomes a naturalized Southern woman.

While touring the plantation, Eula meets Aunt Dilsy, who stands in for the approving mother-in-law, thus reiterating the planter/slave familial relationship. Dilsy raised Moreland and prayed God would send him a "good wife . . . to be his 'ziliary in 'nevolence and piety. Now

⁶⁹ See also Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* and the work of the antebellum French anthropologist Paul Broca, recorded in such works as *Race and Racism: An Introduction* by Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban (2006).

poor Dilsy willing to lay down and neber wake up no more” (335). It wasn’t long after that meeting before Dilsy was on her death bed with Moreland, Eula and the slave community surrounding her. At that time, Dilsy told them to

rejoice that ye eber hearn of de Lord Jesus and de blessed herarter. If we’d all staid in de heathen land, where all de black folks come, we’d neber known . . . nothing ‘bouts de hebenly ‘deemer or de golden streets of de new Jerusalem. Tink of dat, if Satin eber tempt you to leave good massa and missus. (351)

At her grave, Moreland repeated her dying message, asking the slaves if they wanted their freedom—if they thought ““freedom a blessing”” (355). The slaves denied, “earnest and emphatic,” any desire for freedom (355). Therefore, Moreland proposed they make a new covenant; they renewed their ““promises of fidelity and obedience,”” while Moreland pledged to watch over their ““best interests for time and eternity”” (356). If he ever became ““unjust, unkind, or tyrannical,”” they were instructed to bring him to Dilsy’s grave as a reminder. The new covenant here solidifies the allusion to the New Testament Christ, who promises, “This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time . . . I will be their God, and they will be my people” (*New International Version*, Hebrews 8:10). Moreland then asks his slave Paul (a religious leader in the slave community and a parallel to the biblical Apostle Paul) to “let us all kneel together, while you consecrate this burial spot by the breath of prayer” (356), further illustrating the blessing of the slave community upon the new covenant.

Abolition: Unity Disrupted

In order to test the covenant between the planter and his slaves, Hentz uses Brainard, a traveling abolitionist, masked as a minister, who is later revealed to be an escaped criminal. As a minister, he rejects Eula’s union with the divorced planter (420). Metaphorically, Brainard is

against the North/South union, and he disrupts the planter/slave covenant. Like McIntosh, Hentz blames abolitionist for instigating slave revolts. As the new minister of the local slave church, Brainard incites a murderous slave revolt; this fictitious revolt mirrors the Nat Turner and Chapel Hill revolts, both of which she describes as upsetting and horrific in a letter to her publisher (Letter to Hart, December 14, 1852). Hentz uses the public's fear of murderous revolts to expound the dangers of abolitionist sentiment. Hearing of the planned revolt, Moreland and Eula travel to the plantation where he subsequently calls his slaves to Dilsy's grave to remind them of his and their renewed vows and "solemn covenant" (499). The allusion here is that the master and his slaves are united by vows much like a marriage. Brainard, who opposes Eula and Moreland's marriage, sought to repudiate their divinely ordained covenant through the slave revolt. After reading a recent letter from a previously freed slave, Moreland quells his slaves' rebellious nature. The rebellion and disruption the abolitionist incites mirrors, for Southerners, the disruption *Uncle Tom's Cabin* created in the South.

The letter introduces polyphonic discursive exchanges for the slaves' benefit, allowing them to compare their "condition with those of the free coloured people at the North," whose domestic condition would cause them to "shudder" (501). Through the letter, the slaves hear the dying Davy bequeath his possessions and his family to Moreland, "just as if they had never been free" (504). Davy tells the slaves of his dissatisfaction with the Northern Whites' prejudice against, and the inequality of, black Americans. Davy also considers the free Black as "a low, miserable set, and folks that respect themselves won't have anything to do with them" (504). Moreland's slaves then drop to their knees and beg his forgiveness for the intended revolt.

Since Hentz's target audience is the privileged white community and not the slave community, she likely sought to ease the minds of those Whites who wondered if slaves would

have better lives in the free North. She attempts to do so by including a footnote to Davy's letter, stating, "This is a genuine fact, and the gentleman to whom the letter was addressed complied with the request it contained" (503). Therefore, in addition to black Americans discoursing cross-regionally with each other within the novel, Hentz uses the voice of a freed, black male (verified by her footnote) to speak cross-racially to her antebellum white readers.

The Cross-Regional Child

As evidenced in *PNB*, cross-regional progeny strengthens the nation and proves to be a useful tool in touching the nation's sentimental core. To illustrate, Eula's Northern physician praises the special nature of her and Moreland's son's identity, stating, "The blood of the North and the South is blended in its veins, and may he be a representative of the reunion of these now too divided parties!" (549). In a highly symbolic new covenant scene at Dilsy's grave, Moreland holds up his and Eula's newborn son before his slaves and vows to educate his son to be a kind master to them and their children. "This child," he tells them, "is your future master." Hentz uses this scene to imply that North/South marriage unions produce progeny who embody regional harmony and synthesized cultures. Moreland promises to teach the boy his duties to the slaves and to regard the slaves as "part of his own life and soul." His son will watch over their interests long after Moreland is "laid low in the grave" (509). In addition to symbolizing a nationally vested interest in the future of slavery, the hybrid child is highly significant because he represents the vested interests of both the North and the South as a healthy Union. The cross-regional son equates to what early twentieth-century sociologist Howard W. Odum called regionalism's "cultural line-breeding"—breeding across the regional line—unlike sectionalism, which he describes as "inbreeding" ("Regionalism Versus Sectionalism" 339). Regionalism brings in materials and resources, especially in "matters of social policy," through "outside

coöperation and cross fertilization of ideas” (339). According to Odum, line-breeding “develops new strength from old power through progressive line-breeding of new cultures, built upon the old” (339). Thus, these progenies symbolically ensure strong and perpetual national unity, yet they also represent a horrendous risk for both regions in a conflict.

Using the hybrid child as a highly charged symbol, Hentz implies that abolitionists pose a threat to the nation as a whole. Using direct address, Hentz’s narrator hypothetically creates a scenario for readers in which a New England son, looking for work, goes South to make his fortune. He marries a Southern daughter, and “the blood of the North and the South mingles in the veins of their children.” The narrator suggests to readers, “Would it not be well to pause and think of the consequences of all this?” (238). Addressing the abolitionists, she asks, “if through your instrumentality the fires of insurrection are kindled in the land, and the knife sharpened in the hand of the assassin, the blood of your son may cry to you from the ground” (239), thus creating visual imagery that would resonate with any parent of a military-age child. This risk is a greater travesty, according to Hentz, because abolitionists recklessly con their listeners into believing untruths. In *PNB*, the false abolitionist Brainard admits that he has “made a plenty of dupes” in the North. With one of Moreland’s rebellious slaves, he plans to go North and “deliver lectures on the South as will curdle the blood with horror.” He states, “No matter what I say—I’ll find fools to believe it all,” including “flesh torn from the body with red-hot pincers, of children roasted alive, of women burned at the stake!” (526). Again using direct address, the narrator asks, “Why . . . do they light the brand of discord, and throw it blazing into the already burning heart of a community, when the stars of the Union may be quenched in the smoking, and the American eagle flap its wings in blood?” (237-38). Hentz’s metaphor accuses abolitionists of dividing the Union and risking the lives of Americans of both regions. Splitting the Union, just

as splitting the divinely ordained North/South couple, will result in national sickness and even death. American regions, she implies, are physically and spiritually connected through common ancestry and culture, again equating national identity with whiteness.

Hentz concludes *The Planter's Northern Bride* by reminding readers that North and South are “branches of the same parent tree,” and hurting one branch will detrimentally hurt the other. While loving both the North and the South, the narrator states that the North “needs no champion to assert its uninvaded rights” (578-79). On the other hand, it is the “duty” of those Northerners who know the South has been “misunderstood” to “vindicate it, as far as their influence extends, from calumny and animadversion” (578). In *PNB*, Hentz uses the reformed Northern abolitionist to act out this defense. Mr. Hastings, now wiser due to his cross-regional understanding, has also learned to be chivalrous. He defends Moreland at an abolitionist rally Brainard holds in the Northeastern village; ““Northern justice,”” Hastings exclaims, ““will protect the South from aggressions and slanders”” like those of Brainard (565-66), an injunction that represents Hentz’s own mission and goal that, like herself, the North would come forward and defend the South.⁷⁰ Not for profit, the plural narrator states,

have we entered the lists as a champion of the South, but from a motive which we glory in acknowledging. We love it as the home of noble, generous hearts, of ingenuous and lofty minds. We love the magnanimity and chivalry of its sons, the pure and high-toned spirit that animates its daughters. (578).

Conclusion

As Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse argue, regionalist literature—such as *The Planter's Northern Bride*—recognizes itself as being “out of place” (*Writing Out of Place* 7).

⁷⁰ Even Mr. Grimby, the landlord of the inn, concedes, “I begin to think we have been a little too hard on the Southern people. It won’t do to believe everything we hear” (572).

Within *PNB*, readers cannot help but notice conversations throughout the narrative in which polyphonic pronouns such as “we” and “you” distinguish cultural and ideological cognitions based on regional, social, or racial identities. In cases of regional identity, the signifier “you” displaces the signified region as “out of place,” while “we” implies a shared identity (or a regional unconsciousness) that inherently casts opposing regions as alien. Hentz, through *PNB*, highlights antebellum regional prejudices as nationally disruptive and predicts, accurately, that continued strife will lead to a civil war. But again, the cost of a unified vision is the rejection of abolition. Seeking to heal the regional divide and thus circumvent war, she appealed to her white readers’ collective memory of chivalric romances and Old World aristocracy to invite a re-conception of antebellum America as one unified space. To illustrate, near the end of the narrative she brings in a third party—the West. Visiting from the west, Dr. Darley, born in what he calls “the Middle States” of the east before moving to Ohio, has traveled extensively throughout the U.S. Regionally informed, he tells the Northeastern villagers attending the abolitionist rally, “I love my country—my whole county. I recognize no North or South, East or West in the affection I bear it. I find no cardinal points in my heart, though they are convenient to use for geographical purposes” (570). Since the West represents the nation’s Manifest Destiny (more land) and its future, Darley’s words are imbued with highly-symbolic rhetoric.⁷¹

⁷¹ While researching through Caroline Lee Hentz’s archives, located at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, I serendipitously discovered letters between the Hentzs and Dr. Daniel Drake, who, with Caroline, was a member of Ohio’s Semicolon Club and a mentor to her son, Charles, who attended the Medical College of Ohio where Drake (a founding member) lectured as a professor. He also visited the Hentzs’s in the South on one of his research expeditions. In *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, Hentz’s character Dr. Darley strongly resembles Drake. He is a physician and mentor to the Planter’s brother-in-law, has curly hair, was born in the East and moved West, and never got over losing his late wife—all characteristics in line with Dr. Drake, who died during the time Hentz was writing the novel. She also added unfulfilled romantic tensions between the Planter’s sister and Dr. Darley, which are interesting. In reading Hentz’s personal diary and letters, I infer that she had affection for the doctor. In another interesting anecdote, her son, Charles, wrote in his autobiography about a scandalous scene occurring while the Hentzs’s were living in Ohio. Caroline received a note from an admirer. Her husband, Nicholas, on

Hentz also sought to invite a re-conception of the nation's Manifest Destiny as racially superior and White. In 1990, while "reading and charting" in American literatures the Africanist presence ("decidedly not American, decidedly other"), writer Toni Morrison suggests that, historically, national literatures describe and inscribe "what is really on the national mind," which was "the architecture of *a new white man*" (48, 14).⁷² Participating with both Northern and Southern writers of the antebellum era, Hentz contributed to the creation of new "time space"-based genres, such as cross-regional and anti-Uncle Tom novels and, more significantly, Southern mythologies. Explaining that the plantation mythology appealed to white America's innate "love of feudalism," Francis Pendleton Gaines informs us that "however violent may be our profession of political equality, however we may vaunt our democracy, our imaginative interests are keenly appreciative of social gradations, and our romantic hunger is satisfied by some allegory of aristocracy" (2). Therefore, it is not surprising that Hentz both begins and ends her novel with time-space shifts to chivalric nobility, thus encouraging her antebellum readers to imagine the national identity and cultural as White and elite.

During her lifetime and even for decades after her death in 1856, Hentz was a widely popular author throughout the United States. According to *Allibone's Dictionary of English Literature*, Hentz's novels "proved so popular that 93,000 were sold in America in the course of three years" (827). Publishers continued to reissue Hentz's fiction, poetry, and drama into the 1890s, and T. B. Peterson marketed uniform collected editions of Hentz's work starting in 1856,

pretense of leaving the house to go hunting, quietly returned and caught her answering the note. He flew into a murderous rage and challenged the man to a duel. Caroline, in fear, sent word to Dr. Drake, who arrived in time to stop the duel and calm tensions. Immediately after this scene, the Hentz's closed their female academy, packed up, and left Ohio. Caroline created a similar scene in *Lovell's Folly*, naming the would-be suitor "Colonel King" (Hentz, Charles 411).

⁷² Benedict Anderson, noting a culture's "fear and hatred of the Other," states, "nation-ness is assimilated to skin-colour, gender, parentage and birth-era—all those things one can not help" (141, 143).

with reissues in the 1860s, 1870s, and the late 1880s. *The Planter's Northern Bride's* popularity, in particular, warranted continued reissues well over a quarter of a century after the Civil War and the abolition of slavery. The evident popularity confirms the White reading public's desired hold on the national imagined community as culturally elite and White.

Despite Hentz's initial popularity, by the early twentieth century her name and work, like Stowe's, began fading from the public's notice. As early as the 1890s, readers were becoming more egalitarian and increasingly uncomfortable with Hentz's proslavery novels. *The Literary World* remarked as early as 1882, "It is amusing now to read [Hentz's] apologetics, invariably introduced, for the 'peculiar institution'" ("Some 'Lady Novelists'" 184). Listing *The Planter's Northern Bride* as one example, another critic, Kathleen Robertson, noted in 1926 how "strangely" the titles by "Those Genteel Ladies" of the previous century now "ring on our unaccustomed ears" (165). In his 1906 *History of Southern Literature*, Carl Holiday noted that Hentz's "attempts to portray the Southern phase of American life" are "so crude or so lacking in influence upon Southern Literature" that he could not strain his "charity" to give her any more notice than that (281). In recent scholarship on Southern Literature, *Tell About the South* (1983), *Writing the South: Ideas of American Region* (1986), *Southern Aberrations: Writers of the American South and the Problems of Regionalism* (2000), and *Our South* (2010) neglect to mention Hentz at all. In an ironic twist of fate, a slave and poet named George Moses Horton,⁷³ whom Hentz mentored while living in North Carolina, predicted "eternal fame" for this "immortal dame" in his poem "Eulogy," which he wrote for her in 1831 (qtd. In Sherman 11).

⁷³ In 1828, Hentz sent several of Horton's poems to the Lancaster Gazette, which published them. She also allegedly assisted him with his bid for freedom that same year and may have transcribed his poems for his book *The Hope of Liberty*. In her introduction to *The Black Bard of North Carolina*, Joan R. Sherman draws upon Horton's remaining letters and writings to describe his experience with Hentz. Upon Hentz's removal from North Carolina in 1831, Horton laments "the loss of her aid, which I shall never forget in life" (11). Thirty years later, Horton continued to praise Hentz "for the signal favors conferred on me" (11).

Pro-slavery texts like Hentz's deserve critical attention as cultural artifacts since they can provide valuable insight into a crucial and problematic period in our American history. While many Americans then and now agree that Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* helped bring the Civil War to fruition, reactionary works in the public press, such as Hentz's, likewise contributed to the national debate and fostered the heightened tensions that culminated in the deadliest war on our nation's soil. Rhetorically analyzing these texts as cultural artifacts can provide today's scholars with valuable insight into the ways in which prejudicial propaganda could persuade readers not only to keep an entire race of people enslaved almost a century after the nation declared itself independent but also to believe that they were morally and spiritually justified in doing so.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Current events prove that studies on regional tensions and propaganda are relevant. For while I was writing this dissertation, "Secession Fever" hit our nation. Spurred by the social media phenomenon after the 2012 presidential election, disgruntled citizens covering thirty states have petitioned for secession on the United States government's "We the People" website.

Coda

Concluding Thoughts

Throughout this project, I have focused on the intersections of cross-regional tensions, illness plots, and marriage metaphors in both historical and literary contexts. I have sought to demonstrate that during the unstable decades leading up to the Civil War, regional tensions between the North and the South prompted a regional subgenre I call “cross-regional” fiction and a rhetorical trope I call “the illness plot.” These cross-regional writers, I have argued, implemented “illness plots” to depict an unbalanced Union in need of regional healing and harmony. To that end, they incorporated metaphorical North/South marriage unions to illustrate regional balance in a reunified and healthy national Union. For these reasons, I have maintained that these cross-regional fictions participated in nation-building and attempted regional restoration by inviting contemporary readers to reimagine their nation as a harmonious community of culturally-diverse regions.

These writers proposed that a healthy union, double-voiced for the national Union, included regional unity and harmony. Indeed, Caruthers, McIntosh, and Hentz all included episodic moments when Northern and Southern voices join together in musical harmony. For those in harmony, the experience provides an “echoed physical realization of the imagined community” (Anderson 149). As Benedict Anderson argues, the tensions of the era created a moment in which the bonds of nationalism were “elastic enough, combined with the rapid expansion of the western frontier and the contradictions generated between the economies of North and South, to precipitate a war of secession” (64). The “elasticity” connotes a weak commitment to national unity at that time and signified a viable threat of secession. In fact,

Southerners Caruthers and McIntosh metaphorically used the West as a rival suitor for a Northern love interest. Additionally, each writer in this study anticipated with apprehension an approaching civil war. The earliest writer in this study, William A. Caruthers, alluded to the thirty-sixth parallel, resulting from the Missouri Compromise (due, in part, to Westward expansion), as dividing free and slave-holding states. Speaking metaphorically, he designated the parallel as a “line of demarcation” between “the diseased and the healthy flesh” (1: 165). In *The Linwoods*, Catharine Maria Sedgwick ended her novel with a warning about the “unscriptural doctrine of divorce,” advising couples to look towards the “joint stock of industry and frugality” (*The Linwoods* 360), a subject McIntosh also explored in *The Lofty and the Lowly*. McIntosh and Hentz both concluded their texts, written within a decade of the Civil War’s commencement, forecasting the Union’s death. For McIntosh, “Death lays his hand alike” on children of both “the chivalrous South” and “the enterprising North” (1:22). Similarly, Hentz, in *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, ended her narrative with a prophetic and horrific warning: “should the burning lava of anarchy and servile war roll over the plains of the South, and bury, under its fiery waves, its social and domestic institutions, it will not suffer alone. The North and the South are branches of the same parent tree, and the lightning bolt that shivers the one, must scorch and wither the other” (1: 210). McIntosh’s and Hentz’s linguistic choices, “children” and “parent tree,” inscribed nation with family, a frequent trope in regionalism. Claiming a multi-regional identity, each of these writers used illness figuratively to represent an ongoing national strife then threatening the Union’s perpetuity.

As this study has shown, in cultivating regional differences, cross-regional fiction is particularly well-suited for polyphonic and dialectical discourses, or what social and Bakhtinian theorist Andrew Robinson calls a performed “social heteroglossia.” As Robinson explains, “The

text appears as an interaction of distinct perspectives or ideologies, borne by the different characters. The characters are able to speak for themselves, even against the author” (Robinson, “Theory Bakhtin” n. pag.). Through social interactions, such as parlor-room conversation, balls, religious gatherings, or shared travel accommodations, characters gather and discuss regional and political differences, often uncovering misguided regional prejudices. My dissertation shows that, through travel, these characters became better citizens. Consequently, these writers propose that border-crossing travel is an educational experience that leads to uncovering prejudices and healing regional discord. Both Presidents Monroe and Madison would agree. They felt that improving roads and canals were crucial to national growth and unity. “New transportation,” Madison stated in 1815, would succeed in “binding more closely together the various parts of our extended confederacy.” Two years later, John C. Calhoun gave a congressional speech on internal improvements, and asked, ‘On the subject of national power, what can be more important than a perfect unity in every part, in feelings and sentiments? And what can tend more powerfully to produce it, than overcoming the effects of distance?’” (18). Furthermore, representative regional discourse travels across real and/or imagined borders, holding open what Stephanie Foote describes as “the meaning of America and Americanness” (Foote, “Cultural Work” 40). Therefore, my work proposes that these novels embrace multi-regional debates and bring into perspective a fuller understanding of regional and cultural differences.

Anticipated Contributions

As Charles Crow asserts in *A Companion to the Regional Literatures of America*, we cannot understand American culture and literature “without understanding the literature of regions” (2). By marking, studying, and introducing a new sub-genre, “cross-regional fiction,”

my work contributes to future scholarship not only by providing rich details about the cultural concerns of antebellum America but also by providing new approaches for reading cross-regional texts. Traditionally, scholars such as Stephanie Foote, Amy Kaplan, and Richard Brodhead have focused on regionalism as a place-based genre evolving primarily *after* the Civil War. This dissertation diverges from their scholarship by expanding that timeframe to the antebellum era. By doing so, I am able to reintroduce for critical study many once-popular texts published during the eve of our nation's deadliest war. For instance, many literary scholars and students have read and enjoyed Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*, yet her novel *The Linwoods* (1835) continues to remain understudied. Also, scholars like Nina Baym in *Woman's Fiction*, and Mary Kelley in *Private Women, Public Stage*, have brought our attention to previously overlooked nineteenth-century women writers such as Maria J. McIntosh and Caroline Lee Hentz. While the body of scholarship on these two writers continues to grow, they, too, still remain insufficiently studied. Despite the recent movement to rediscover nineteenth-century writers and fiction, most of the works in this dissertation, such as William A. Caruthers's *The Kentuckian in New York* (1834) remain virtually unknown in today's collegiate classroom. In fact, with the exception of Sedgwick's *The Linwoods*, the works I have researched remain available only through archives or *Google Books*. Lengthening the timeframe to the antebellum era has enabled me to examine cross-regional marriage metaphors through the regional lens.

Scholars of regionalism, such as Judith Fetterley, Marjorie Pryse, Josephine Donovan, Elizabeth Ammons, and many others have long held that regionalists fiction—a feminized genre—provides a healing function (Fetterley and Pryse, *Writing* 18; Crow 94). Yet such scholars of regionalism have yet to examine illness plots in connection to regional healing. Integrating their important contributions on post-war regionalism with Susan Sontag's *Illness*

Metaphor, Michael Foucault's theory of crisis heterotopias, and Karen Tracey's "double-proposal plot," my study has highlighted a rhetorical trope appearing across a notable number of antebellum narratives. Rather than analyzing illness as a plot device, Sontag's work analyzes literary illness metaphors in a social context, such as the blame-the-victim mentality. This dissertation also makes important contributions to literary scholarship by providing a methodology for examining illness plots as a rhetorically functioning and commonly used trope in nineteenth-century literature.

Within this study, I have theorized how these writers used "illness" as a subtext in four distinct ways. First, illness metaphorically represents a nation out of balance and in need of healing. Second, illness delays or disrupts action and intensifies consciousness, thus allowing characters time for reflection and reconsideration while encouraging them to reimagine life without the deathly ill character. Third, illness enhances the rhetorical agency of the sick and the sickroom by designating the space as a heterotopia of crisis accessible only to those who submit to rights of purification. Finally, illness and healing serve as the motivating factor in uniting North and South couples, thus ensuring and safeguarding perpetual unity.

While this project maps out valuable methodologies for studying marriage and illness plots in cross-regional fiction, these approaches can serve scholars with other types of fictions. For instance, Margaret Meredith Read's *Margaretta* (1807) ends with a cross-cultural marriage between British and aristocratic Lady Margaretta and William De Burling, described as a "true American." However, after Margaretta initially rejects him, he contracts "brain fever." Read's British/American marriage metaphorically supports the controversial Jay Treaty of her own era and frames her work as one of the early domestic fictions of "republican union that aligns marriage with nationalism" (Barnes 14). Like the novels in this study, Read's illness plot

participates in renegotiating the marriage union. Additionally, Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* (1884) has both a cross-racial marriage and an illness plot. In Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred* (1856), while having a South/South marriage plot, the bride-to-be and part owner in a plantation, Nina Gordon, dies of cholera before she can marry anti-slave advocate Edward Clayton. And to be sure, Caroline Lee Hentz's little known *Lowell's Folly* contains a North/South marriage plot and predates Caruthers's *The Kentuckian*. *Lowell's Folly* may be the earliest recognized cross-regional text and merits critical study. These writers understood the heightened political climate of their era and sensed the approaching war. Therefore, these works deserve critical attention for the valuable information they can provide us.

Going Forward

This project represents only a portion of the rich material derived from cross-regional texts awaiting study. In going forward, I would like to revisit these same novels and look further into the marriage unions I did not examine due to the parameters of my project. For instance, in *The Planter's Northern Bride*, Hentz included two cross-regional marriage plots that ended in death. Both marriages had Northern grooms. Noticing Northern grooms in both fatal marriages has caused me to wonder if these marriages were metaphorical, and if so, what rhetorical role does gender and power play in these plots? Hentz's, Caruthers's, and McIntosh's successful North/South marriages have Southern grooms. Moreover, McIntosh characterizes her sole Northern groom, Robert Grahame, much like a Southern planter. I find this interesting since traditional, domestic roles in nineteenth-century marriages placed the male as the head of the house. Likewise, in patriarchal Body Politic rhetoric, the male, as head of the family, symbolized government. That these writers intended their cross-regional families to mirror the national family raises questions for me about gender positioning. Were Hentz, Caruthers, and to some

degree McIntosh positioning the South as the politically dominant region? If so, how does gender in antebellum North/South romances compare with those of the Reconstruction Era? For example, I have observed that Constance Fenimore Woolson, in “Old Gardiston” (1876), marries her reluctant Southern belle, Gardis, to a Northern Union officer. Gardis’s lack of enthusiasm leads readers to feel dissatisfied in the match. Henry James’s *The Bostonians* (1885), though having a Southern expatriate groom, also culminates with an unenthused bride.

Additionally, I would like to conduct a comparative study of antebellum and Reconstruction-era, North/South fictional marriage. In particular, I am interested in surveying the number of pro-Southern versus pro-Northern affiliated writers before and then after the war and discovering whether or not a slanted regional affiliation affects the regional identity of their grooms. Since cross-regional fiction depends upon travel to perform regional comparisons, I would like to follow the genre into the late-nineteenth century to assess whether or not innovations in travel and infrastructure facilitated more publications of the genre. Finally, I would like to see what part illness plays in these fictions after the war. From my reading of both Woolson’s and James’s fictions, I suspect that illness has possibly been replaced with an unenthusiastic acceptance of union.

Lasting Impressions

Complications in understanding and defining regionalism plagued the study of regional fiction throughout much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Oftentimes, people associate “regional literature” with Southern sectionalism, New England provincial towns, or remote and backwater locales in western and mid-western locations. That is, many associate regional literature with geographical oddities. My research has shown that “regional” and “sectional” have a long history of mistaken identity both then and now. Because scholars often

conflate the two terms, my distinction between them was necessary in demonstrating antebellum regionalism, as a literary genre, struggled to differentiate itself from sectionalism and show itself as part of the national whole – the Union. Likely, the frequent confusion of “regional” with “sectional,” along with the difficulties in defining “regionalism” as a literary genre, has inhibited or delayed scholarship on many regional works.

Mary Austin admits that it is “not easy to put one’s finger” on assessing this genre, but readers can gain insight about regionalism’s generic nature by searching inwardly for evidence that, without having lived the action themselves, the narrative helped them to understand “in human terms the meaning of that country in which the action of the story takes place” (105). It is in this ability to find its own voice that regional fiction participates in nation building.

Fortunately, in recent years, regional literature has experienced a critical renaissance. In fact, Stephanie Foote claims in *A Companion* that “[r]egional writing might be the great comeback story of American literature” (“Cultural Work” 25). For the most part, many scholars highlight regionalist fiction as catering to the urban elite, as either escapism from rapid modernization or touristic images for entertainment value. Still others view the genre as local, “dialect” stories focusing on the rural rather than the urban. Most all view regional fiction as giving voice to the marginalized. Scholars such as Hamlin Garland, Frank Davey, Judith Fetterley, Marjorie Pryse, Josephine Donovan, and Amy Kaplan all maintain that regional fiction traditionally represents “voices from the margins” (Lutz 80). And Fetterley and Pryse have successfully argued that regionalism is a discursive marker that resists its “othered” status and the prejudices and oppressions that outside society would place on it. I embrace these definitions while also extending what I see as an elastic boundary to include the marginalized urban voice that seeks to

define and explain its own local neighborhood through the regional genre. We can observe this trend in the recent presidential election and discussions over “New York values.”

Therefore, I interpret nineteenth-century regionalism as a social construct, much like Benedict Anderson’s “nationalism.” Like nationalism, regionalism distinguishes itself by the style and cultural artifacts in which its members imagine themselves a community. Consider the Mason Dixon line, or even the term “Dixie,” a term that conjures images of utopia in loyal Southerners—a few examples of “cultural artifacts” by which many Southerners imagine themselves to be a community. In Caruthers’s and Sedgwick’s narratives, readers from New York could recognize their own cultural artifacts, such as Broadway, the Hudson River, Five Points, or even the City Hotel. Literary regionalism participated in constructing regional “imagined communities” within the broader, national whole, while also creating a way for communities to understand and value social difference.

By writing in this genre, authors invite their readers to better understand their regions different from their own; through *cross*-regional fiction, writers invite readers to re-conceptualize their nation as a community of culturally-diverse regions. Cross-regional fiction is inherently travel fiction as characters typically cross regional borders. Some of the features of form I have noticed include the stranger or tourist visiting a town. Each narrative in this study includes such a character who purposes to observe a particular region. For instance, the “Southerners” in Caruthers’s narrative intentionally travel to New York to observe the “Yankees” in action. Jasper Meredith desires to observe rural life at the Lee’s farm in *The Linwoods*. In *The Planter’s Northern Bride*, Moreland observes life in a New England village, and in *The Lofty and the Lowly*, Robert Grahame travels to Georgia to see for himself what to make of plantation slavery.

Juxtaposing distinctly different regional persons with distinctly different ideologies results in regional understanding and soothed prejudicial tensions.

In this sense, these works are dialectic and polyphonic (multi-voiced). Although each voice is distinct, the goal of the cross-regionalist is to show them working towards a harmonic whole. Indeed, these writers were more concerned about showing similarity than difference. In some ways, they anticipated William Dean Howell's claim that "a great number of very good writers are instinctively striving to make each part of the country and each phase of our civilization known to all the other parts" (144). Nonetheless, Anderson (who analyzes and explains Bakhtin's theories in more approachable ways) notes the problem with the linguistic blending of multiple ideologies: "Human consciousness is not a unified entity, but rather, is always conflict-ridden between different consciousnesses" (Robinson, n. pag.). For me, this fiction's inherently conflict-ridden consciousness explains why regional discord in America continues to this day. It also explains why these writers, who sought to achieve regional harmony through their fiction, failed.

The most obvious reasons for failure are these writers' neglectful and orchestrated efforts to narrow America's multi-racial culture to a solitary White identity. Then, too, dominant society has continually promoted a philosophy of "wait." Even Hentz's slave-owning planter proposed that abolitionists should "wait [God's leading]" (*Planter's* 110). But just how long should the marginalize wait? Over a century and half after Hentz's publication, Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote *Why We Can't Wait*, in which he so eloquently stated:

The words 'bad timing' came to be ghosts haunting our every move in Birmingham. Yet people who used this argument were ignorant of the background of our planning...they did not realize that it was ridiculous to speak of timing

when the clock of history showed that the Negro had already suffered one hundred years of delay. (63)

More recently, America's first president of African descent, Barak Obama, urged a young British youth who identified as "non-binary" to continue to fight for change. Continuing to field questions about racial profiling, Obama ultimately advocated a type of "wait" philosophy. "Change," he stressed, "takes time and oftentimes what you start has to then be picked up by your successors or the next generation" (qtd. in Hayden). The next generation has already started with television shows like the *United Shades of America*, in which comedian W. Kamau Bell seeks to reach across the aisle and uncover the origins of racial prejudices.

As Stephanie Foote argues, regional works "helped to establish a way of imagining communities that interrupted even as they sustained a national culture" and set the "agenda for many of the cultural concerns about multiculturalism" that we see today ("Cultural Work" 40). No doubt, the authors in this study were writing during one of the nation's most contentious eras, and in light of our own modern-day regional, racial, and international tensions, I felt their works—that flawed in many ways—had something to say about prejudices and threats to our union that we might want—or might need—to hear. This fiction provided readers and writers a dialogical space where opposing regions could, theoretically, come together and work out, or rather act out, their differences as examples and lessons for readers then and today.

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ABSTRACT

INFECTED REGIONS: MARRIAGE METAPHORS AND ILLNESS PLOTS IN
ANTEBELLUM CROSS-REGIONAL FICTION

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Infected Regions: Marriage Metaphors and Illness Plots in Antebellum Cross-Regional Fiction extends the timeline for regional fiction to the antebellum era, widening the critical lens enabling the recovery of many once-popular novels. As early as three decades before the start of the Civil War, the writers in this study produced fiction that provides today's scholars insight about existing regional, social, and racial anxieties that destabilized national unity. I maintain that during these unstable decades regional tensions between the North and the South prompted a regional subgenre I call "cross-regional fiction" and a rhetorical trope I call "the illness plot." The authors who make up this study all held claim to a multi-regional identity and wrote fiction in which characters *crossed* into unfamiliar locations seeking to uncover provincial prejudices. Analyzing these texts as examples of Body Politic rhetoric, I demonstrate how these writers metaphorically alluded to existing tensions as a national illness and incorporated sick, allegorical characters to disrupt marriage alliances, ultimately leading to North/South marriage unions. These unions symbolize healing and illustrate that building cultural understanding across the North and the South could heal regional discord and strengthen national unity.

In generating definitions for cross-regional fiction and illness plots, I selected novels with both marriage and illness plots involving couples from two contentious regions—the North and South—and inspired by three critical eras leading up to the Civil War: The Nullification Crisis of

the 1830s, the Financial Crisis of 1837, and the slavery debates of the 1850s. The primary texts for this analysis include William A. Caruthers's *The Kentuckian in New York* (1834), Catharine Sedgwick's *The Linwoods* (1835), Maria McIntosh's *The Lofty and the Lowly* (1853), and Caroline Lee Hentz's *The Planter's Northern Bride* (1854). This fiction provided antebellum readers and writers a dialogical space where opposing regions could, theoretically, come together and work out, or rather act out, their differences.