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Sympathy and Transatlantic Literature:
place, genre, and emigration

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Dedication and Acknowledgements

I am thankful for the encouraging direction of both Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor, both when I lived in Edinburgh and for their accommodation as they advised me through transatlantic distance when I moved to the United States. I am grateful to the University of Edinburgh and the British Council Overseas Research Scholarship for funding. Additionally, some of the material in Chapter Five came from a previously published article of mine: '"Was it proper to watch him at a distance?": spectatorship, sympathy and Atlantic migration in *Edgar Huntly*'. *Symbiosis*: *A Journal of Anglo-American Literary Relations*, 10.2 (Oct 2006): 133-146. Thank you to *Symbiosis* and Editor Chris Gair for allowing material from the article in this thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis posits Enlightenment articulations of sympathy, in its capacity for establishing connections and its failures, as an appropriate methodology to articulate transatlantic literary exchange. Focusing on the sympathetic gap, the space sympathy must traverse, this thesis investigates the effect of emigration and place on genre and follows the trajectory from documentary to fictive forms and from a small gap to one unable to be bridged. Because the gap of sympathy is a spatial argument, the distance between is crucial as it indicates relationship. The introduction outlines my argument, with particular attention to transatlantic criticism, what is meant by the gap of sympathy, and the triad of place, emigration and genre.

The first chapter discusses how Adam Smith articulated how one person is able to maintain a stable identity and is able to connect with another through imaginative comparison. The chapter establishes the trajectory of sympathy as the gap moves from smallest to unbridgeable, through comparison, sympathy and the failure of sympathy. In a series of case studies, Chapters Two through Five test out Smith's theories in literary works; they examine the trajectory of transatlantic sympathy, where the gap moves from rhetorically being small to gaping, and moves generically from documentary forms to fiction.

Chapter Two uses emigration guides written by British emigrants, who, because of their emigrant status, write from both an American and British perspective. The guides, because of their promotional intent, tend to underplay the gap of sympathy. Although they could be read as documentary and objective, the guides evidence ideological and rhetorical similarities to transatlantic fiction and thus serve as an entrance into the themes and stylistics one tends to associate with literary genres.

Chapter Three examines the transatlantic correspondence of the Kerr family. As the Kerr family corresponds transatlantically (separated in space by the Atlantic and in time by more than 50 years), the issue of space becomes paramount to understanding the correspondence as well as if sympathy works in this generic register. Generically, the transatlantic letter is meant to provide virtual presence amid long stretches of absence; it also becomes an analogue for the absent other and the means by which the family may continue to be imagined across the gap of sympathy.

Chapter Four examines Susanna Rowson's transatlantic works, particularly *Charlotte Temple*, *Slaves in Algiers*, and *Reuben and Rachel*. Rowson's own emigrant experience provides an entrée to the pain of transcultural sympathy that we see most clearly in *Reuben and Rachel*. Throughout her works Rowson also advocates a sympathy that is active and moral, rather than emotionally vacuous. *Reuben and Rachel* illustrates the gap of sympathy being bridged most effectively in cross-cultural adaptations and yet finally settles for a sympathy that must acknowledge separation and difference as well.

Chapter Five explores the failures of sympathy and sociability present in Charles Brockden Brown's gothic novels, *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly*. Characters' frontier locations and claustrophobic versions of sociability, as well generically, the gothic turn and failure of epistolary exchange, signals the moral ambiguity connected with becoming 'this new man' of America. Brown's epistolary fiction briefly considered offers another generic attempt to examine how the gap of sympathy may be bridged and extend beyond the confines of the family.

The Afterword points to the total breakdown of sympathy as a turn inward and away from sociability, where the self becomes frantic and frenetic (as evidenced by Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*); it points to some useful applications to the gap of sympathy for transatlantic literary studies.

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Introduction

J. Hector St John de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from An American Farmer* (1782) is a preeminent transatlantic literary text concerned with how one articulates identity in America.[1] It crosses both linguistic and geographic space, as it was published not in the author's native French, but in English and was published not in America, but in England. The author, alternately known by English and French names, 'transformed from a French lieutenant during the French and Indian War, to a loyalist British subject and farmer in rural New York in the 1770s, to a British prisoner, [and] to a French trade consul to the United States in 1784'.[2] Crèvecoeur's own travelling informs his book, and although 'The letters are [...] structured spatially'[3] as they move through American topographical regions they also follow a stylistic trajectory. This moves from confident, documentary detailing of the American land to a proto-gothic conclusion where the narrator joins the Indians on the frontier. By giving America 'its first moral geography' *Letters* 'explored both [the colonial and paradisal] models of emigration rhetoric'.[4] The question this thesis seeks to address, using Crèvecoeur's text as a guide, is what can account for the narrative trajectory that shifts from a confident documentary analysis of America towards one which is plagued by alienation, indecision and finally abandons previous forms of sociability? And, what is it about transatlantic dislocation (that both Crèvecoeur and his American Farmer experience) that results in a narrative that follows this trajectory? Specifically, what are the generic forms that writers use to register the moral ambiguities attendant upon 'this new man' of America (Crèvecoeur, 44)? I shall posit that the gap of sympathy provides a profitable answer to these questions.

This thesis arose, in part, from my study of actual emigrant narratives housed in the National Library of Scotland that form the basis for Chapter Two. What became intriguing and pressing after a study of these promotional documents were the similarities to more canonical forms of British and American literature of the period, and particularly the ways in which Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* provides a stylistic pattern for these literary forms which historically sit between British colonial literature and the literature of

[1] See Susan Manning, ed., 'Introduction,' *Letters from an American Farmer*, by J Hector St John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997). vii.
[2] Christopher Iannini, '"The Itinerate Man": Crèvecoeur's Caribbean, Raynal's Revolution and the Fate to Atlantic Cosmopolitanism,' *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61.2 (April 2004): 201-234. 202.
[3] Robert Lawson-Peebles, *American Literature before 1880* (Harlow: Longman-Pearson, 2003) 128.
[4] Stephen Fender, *Sea Changes: British emigration and American literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992) 12.

the so-called American Renaissance in the mid-nineteenth century. Crèvecoeur not only straddled national, linguistic and geographic insularity but his protagonist, Farmer James, does as well. Particularly, what is most interesting in *Letters* and applicable to this thesis, are the ways that Farmer James tries out various generic forms and styles in efforts to answer the question, 'What is an American, this new man?'[5] The worrying aspects of what it costs to become 'this new man' grow as the text progresses. *Letters* provides a literary model that, like Smith's articulation of sympathy, holds in tension an optative Enlightenment model of progress and its shadow side of disintegration. Rather than a simplistic sliding from confident, documentary narration to frenzied and gothic excess, Crèvecoeur's *Letters* explores simultaneously both the exultant connections inherent in sympathy in America as well as the costs of this pressure and who is excluded in order to maintain a sympathetic community.

As sympathy and its gap will be explored more fully in Chapter One, for now note that sympathy as a system of morality was most fully developed by Adam Smith in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Smith uses sympathy to 'denote our feeling of any passion whatever'[6] and to describe how one may be connected to another through fellow feeling. What is most applicable to a transatlantic reading is the gap that sympathy must travel in order for connection to be made. This gap forms the very basis of relation; for, in order for sympathy to travel between persons, this gap must be crossed through the imagination. This thesis investigates what happens when this gap is stretched across the Atlantic Ocean – for instance, between family members, as we shall see in Chapter Three, or between multi-racial generations in Rowson's transatlantic fiction in Chapter Four. As the gap widens through physical distance, what generic forms can stand in the gap to communicate presence to a missing 'other'? This thesis shall examine what the gap of sympathy looks through the lens of style: how a variety of literary expressions (from documentary writing, sentimental forms and gothic fiction) articulate the central problem of connection with others, especially as the 'other' is located across the Atlantic. One pertinent generic form is the letter: we shall see versions of epistolarity in the embedded promotional letters of Chapter Two, the actual letters exchanged in Chapter Three, and fictional letters in Chapters Four and Five. The distance that letters must travel (to take one generic example) can both create and cut off sympathy, as Julia Stern notes: 'As a potentially multivalent

[5] J. Hector St John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, Ed. Susan Manning, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997) 44.
[6] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Eds. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982). 10.

narrative form, epistolarity can promote genuine fellow feeling, or, in the case of pseudoepistolarity, it can masquerade as a channel for communion while really overpowering the voice of the other. The letter form functions either as a conduit for equal and open exchange or a guise for vocal tyranny'.[7] As letters travel they implicitly ask questions about relationship – Are letters vehicles of sympathetic transfer? Who is permitted to read them? For whom are they intended? And, what happens if they are intercepted? The use of a particular genre or style, then, is not simply an unencumbered vehicle to present information, but instead shapes the narrative and how it is received.

Let us look briefly at the argumentative structure of Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* to serve as an entrée into questions about genre and its connection with the gap of sympathy. The first letter in *Letters from an American Farmer* opens with the narrator, Farmer James, writing to Mr F. B., a European gentlemen who has asked to correspond with him: 'Who would have thought that because I received you with hospitality and kindness, you should imagine me capable of writing with propriety and perspicuity?' (11). The basis for transatlantic correspondence is predicated upon past hospitality, where a foreign stranger is 'brought home' (a phrase we shall see is used by Adam Smith in his explication of sympathy). Letter 1 is largely a dialogue between Farmer James, his wife and their minister concerning the reasons that Mr F. B. would want to correspond with James. Deciding that he will correspond with Mr F. B., James concludes that his letters will 'be the genuine dictates of [his] mind' (22) and that writing is 'nothing more than talking on paper' (13). Then in the self-consciousness of this and the next two letters 'the farmer of feelings' presents a bucolic American prospect (complete with his son riding on his plough) where writing appears a translation of one's thoughts to paper and where the letter form easily stands in for in-person dialogue, where James's voice is prominent (26). As Manning notes, 'Both the text's empirical and its moral authority derive from the authenticity of the farmer's voice, but that authenticity is necessarily compromised by the enlightened framework of its expression, and indeed by the very fact of that expression in printed form'.[8] Even in the confident narration of the beginning letters then, James' narrating voice cannot simply be understood as a transparent, objective account; for, as Manning points out, its very expression and printed nature call attention to its constructed quality. In Christine Holbo's perceptive article on *Letters*, she writes, 'the basic pattern of the *Letters* is one of imaginative

[7] Julia Stern, *The Plight of Feeling: Sympathy and Dissent in the Early American Novel* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997) 18.
[8] Susan Manning, ed., 'Introduction,' *Letters from an American Farmer*, by J. Hector St John de Crèvecoeur, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997). Xxi.

expansion – moving from what is known – the self – to what is associated with the self through links of social and commercial association'.[9] Thus the confident tone of the opening letters stem from James's initial confident sense of self and grows increasingly fragmented as James's world expands into 'increasingly broad and complex levels of geographical, political, and intellectual interaction' (Holbo, 20).

Letter 3, 'What is an American?', is the most famous of the book. James writes using a language of feeling, wishing to be present with an emigrant whom he imagines. Using the emigrant as a quintessential American allows James as narrator to articulate the way in which transatlantic travel typifies the 'American'. He writes: 'I wish I could be acquainted with the feelings and thoughts which must agitate the heart and present themselves to the mind of enlightened Englishman, when he first lands on this continent' (40). He then celebrates all that America lacks (anticipating both Nathaniel Hawthorne's and Henry James's catalogues of American lack) 'no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings […]', presenting it as a barren receptacle for emigrants (40). The answer to the famous question, 'What then is the American, this new man?' is that 'He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his antient [*sic*] prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced […]' (44). The 'American' – at least according to James's early rhetoric here – is then a *tabula rasa*, whose environment intimately shapes his modes of action and new connections once he has left his homeland and his 'antient prejudices'. The rhetoric of a 'new man', is intimately connected with the emigrant's geographical placement and,

> has had lasting consequences for both the American landscape and the American personality. A new land unburdened by history, a new people unhampered by their forebears […]. These feelings were rooted in perceptions of the landscape itself. Compared with Europe, America seemed a land scarcely lived in; American landscapes conveyed little sense of historical depth.[10]

This sense of vast space becomes a geographical representation for the creation of the 'American', filled with limitless opportunities; as Tony Tanner notes: 'One of the formative experiences of all those early American writers was of a sense of space, of vast unpeopled solitudes […]'.[11] By being 'transplanted' to America, this land of limitless space, these 'western pilgrims' were 'melted into a new race of men' (43, 44). This question of how Americans become American in Crèvecoeur's language proceeds through biological and

[9] Christine Holbo, 'Imagination, Commerce, and the Politics of Associationism in Crèvecoeur's "Letters from an American Farmer,"' *Early American Literature* 32.1 (1997): 20-65. 20.

[10] David Lowenthal, 'The Place of the Past in the American Landscape,' Geographies of the Mind: Essays on Historical Geosophy, Eds. David Lowenthal and Martyn J. Bowden (New York, 1976): 89-118. 90.

[11] Tony Tanner, 'Notes for a comparison between American and European Romanticism,' *Scenes of Nature, Signs of Men* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987) 27.

religious terminology, as either a 'great metamorphosis' (59) or 'a sort of resurrection' (57). This sense of new birth applied to American identity means, in the beginning of *Letters* at least, that being American requires a clean break with one's past. It also means that to be American necessitates an emigrant identity, but one which seems (at least in accordance with the rhetoric here) unencumbered by the past. James writes that 'The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas and form new opinions. [Now as an American] […] he is rewarded by ample subsistence' (44-5). However as we proceed through the *Letters*, Farmer James's rhetoric that emphasises American identity as new and unattached becomes increasingly plagued by the moral ambiguities that crop up despite requiring 'this new man' to have no past beyond his identity as American. The promotional rhetoric of Letter 3, akin to the guides to emigration in Chapter Two, begins to show its holes as it cannot stand up under the pressure of transatlantic distance. We find as readers that the confident tone of Letter 3 dissipates as the rhetoric of an unattached American rings empty.

The letters that follow empirically detail the idealisation of American space that James had earlier explored. Letters 4 to 8 are the empirical and documentary outworking of the paradise of government and land united through 'silken bands' of good government that James explored in Letters 1 through 3 (41). Here, writing about Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, James's focus is on the soil (an analogue for morality throughout), industry, and moderate religious feelings where zealousness 'evaporates in the great distance it has to travel' (51). The measure of happiness that James experiences in the early letters and to some degree through two-thirds of the book seems to be due to enclosure. He is on the frontier, and thus the distance between him and the colonial government and the 'mother country' is so great that an independent, local society can function but with the blessing of the wider government. In these letters he describes two islands cut off from the mainland, physically and functionally separated from the wider government, but bound by 'silken strands'. This ideal society begins to show its holes however. These letters hold in tension two modes that, according to Christine Holbo, Crèvecoeur inherited from Abbé Raynal: 'a narrative of Enlightenment, of progress toward a world united by sympathetic knowledge; and a narrative of disintegration, of an entropic worldwide slide toward slavery and anarchy' (32). These two modes we see throughout the *Letters*, as they move increasingly towards breakdown in the final letter; these modes also encapsulate the gap of sympathy, which both looks hopefully towards human connection through the vehicle of sympathy and yet acknowledges the impact of difference where one often cannot sympathise appropriately or at all (with social outcasts).

Although James praises the societies of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard through his focus on 'coming to the spot and observing […] national genius' (125), moments of 'disintegration' creep in: James casually mentions Indians being defrauded of their lands and smallpox and rum wiping them out before the 'superior genius of Europeans' without a sense of remorse (101-2); he likewise easily dismisses the custom of the Nantucket women who partake 'of the Asiatic custom of taking a dose of opium every morning' with this question: 'where is the society perfectly free from error or folly?' (144). Additionally the very land these societies occupy shift and change, and as Robert Lawson-Peebles has put it, the seascapes are 'horrifically mutable'.[12] These sorts of dismissals have a cumulative effect so that by the time James narrates his visit to Charles-Town in Letter 9 'aesthetics [are fully] detached from ethics' (Holbo, 46) and James's despondent observations move from individual societies to the general 'mankind' ('Introduction' xxxiv).

Letter 9 is the turning point of *Letters*, where the moral degradation of slavery and the problem of evil plunges James into despair. This is, however, not a new, abrupt shift, towards an 'entropic worldwide slide toward slavery' (Holbo, 32). It is instead, the sort of shadow-side of Enlightenment sympathy, which (like the opium-taking Nantucketers) underlies the progressive imaginative sociability of sympathy that cannot bear up under the pressure of breakdown – whether this breakdown is national, personal or stylistic. For James, the luxuriousness of the city built on global trade connotes moral laxity, where 'physical latitude spawns imaginative and moral latitude' (Holbo, 48). The ending to Letter 9 is a famous passage of the slave in the cage whose eyes have been picked out by the birds; James relieves the 'living spectre' with some water but 'oppressed with the reflections which this shocking spectacle afforded [him],' James walks away (164-5). It is not so much the actual experience of slavery and horror that undoes James (which is still deeply visually disturbing) but more affecting is the moral ambiguity attending the experience. Slavery leads James to question if there is a 'superintending power who conducts moral operations of the world, as well as the physical?' (158-9) Or, does this 'God' 'abandon mankind to all their errors and follies […]?' (159). The import of an absent or weak God is made worse for geographical distance: where the pervasiveness in time and place of slavery means that 'we certainly are not that class of beings which we vainly think ourselves to be'; instead, akin to a Darwinian survival of the fittest, James reasons 'every thing is submitted to the power of the strongest' (159).

[12] Robert Lawson-Peebles, *Landscape and Written Expression in Revolutionary America*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1988) 267.

The rest of *Letters from an American Farmer* detail this survival of the fittest and culminate in the movement away from previous social forms and end, stylistically, in the frenzied narration of Letter 12. Letter 11 seems an odd respite from the apparent degenerative turn of the book as a whole, as it is narrated by a Russian gentleman and concerns the backwoods botanist, John Bertram, whose estate is a picture of order and racial harmony. Here, Crèvecoeur introduces 'another community, an international community of intellectual affinities and sympathies' (Holbo, 50). But this universal sympathetic community lacks specific ties to American forms and landscape (it is instead the Linnaean system and Latin terminology which unites Bertram with learned letter writers around the globe). It points ahead to the ending of the book, where James anticipates some solace in an international community of letters. The final letter of *Letters from an American Farmer*, which will be discussed more fully in the Afterword, gives literary form to the fears of Letter 9, and ends with Farmer James moving westward to join the Indians. The frenzy comes as a result of James's inability to choose a side with the impending American War for Independence, and taking on qualities of Adam Smith's outcast, his thoughts are 'black' and he must flee society (*Theory*, 87).

The general trajectory of *Letters* is important to my thesis as it models the same movements of style that Crèvecoeur uses through the letters. Thus, this trajectory begins with an idealisation of American space coupled with a paradise of colonial government that is deregulated; James then goes on to detail empirically that space in Letters 4 through 8. The enclosure described in the early letters becomes initially a solace to James, as it allows him the benefits of a localised society while feeling connected to a wider sense of governance The stylistic turning point is the loss of regulation in society and the prevalence of moral evil, combined with his view of an absent God in Letter 9, and leads James to despair. He increasingly takes on Smith's outcast who becomes full of terror and amazement, whose thoughts are "black," and who must flee society. But it is his family that makes the experience more painful for James, this requires he preserve them and remove to the Indians – to join another society (in his view more primitive), that is a further remove westward, into more enclosures and further cut off from cosmopolitan civilization. The frenzy comes from his inability to chose a side that have lately become 'sides': British mother country or American independence. Because he can't chose one side but wants to retain something more complex, his narration begins to unravel and finally concludes he must leave and join the Indians.

This thesis emphasises the stylistic trajectory of Crèvecoeur's *Letters* as it proceeds from documentary to more fictional forms and from confident first-person narration to stylistic breakdown within the gothic mode. Spatially, the gap of sympathy begins with the assumption of a small gap rhetorically and moves towards total breakdown, where an unbridgeable gap finally collapses through the weight of relation. We shall see Crèvecoeur's trajectory in *Letters* worked out in terms of genre and style in this thesis through Chapters Two through Five (with Chapter One detailing the theory of sympathy within transatlantic literary studies). This general movement will be outlined specifically according to each chapter below; but first, the triad of place, genre and emigration must be briefly considered as the terms through which the gap of sympathy is articulated. The gap of sympathy is a spatial argument. Thus distance is crucial: physical distance often stands in for metaphorical distance as it indicates relationship. If becoming 'this new man' of America means that one's past is effectively obliterated, the consequences of this are worked out spatially. Thus, movement (of characters, emigrants, letters) is important in this thesis, as is placement (where people are oriented to one another in space) because the 'space between' illustrates the relationship between entities. Identity is 'constituted not outside but within representation'.[13] Therefore, how the gap of sympathy expands or contracts in written accounts is a question of style and genre. Style and genre are the governing ordering strategies for this thesis, rather than chronology, because they give literary form to a transatlantic trajectory of sympathy that proceeds from hopeful documentary connection to a gaping absence of relationship (that leaves the self terrifyingly out of relation). Emigration is the transatlantic reality that draws attention to the gap of sympathy, especially as the emigrant figure introduces 'the stranger' (an important phrase for Smith) into both British and American writing during the period.

The first chapter discusses how Adam Smith articulated how one person is able to maintain a stable identity and is able to connect with another through imaginative comparison. The chapter establishes the trajectory of sympathy as the gap moves from being rhetorically small to unbridgeable. In a series of case studies, Chapters Two through Five test out Smith's theories in literary works; they examine this trajectory of transatlantic sympathy, and generic shifts from the documentary to fictional forms.

[13] Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora,' *Colonial Discourse & Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (Wheatsheaf: Harvester, 1993). 392-403.
402.

Chapter Two utilises the documentary and empirically focused emigrant guides in similar manners to James's early letters, which focus on the empirical detailing of American space. The guides, like James's letters, besides working as empirical documents also provide a rhetoric for or against America as paradise. Here, as well as in *Letters*, the emigrant is the pressure site for the debate about American suitability. Chapter Two uses emigration guides written by British emigrants, who, because of their emigrant status, write from both an American and British perspective. The guides, because of their promotional intent, tend to underplay the gap of sympathy. Although they could be read as documentary and objective, the guides evidence ideological and rhetorical similarities to transatlantic fiction and thus serve as an entrance into the themes and stylistics we tend to associate with literary genres.

Chapter Three examines the transatlantic correspondence of the Kerr family. Transatlantic correspondence becomes an enclosed community (here, the Kerr family) like James' islands. Within the world of this correspondence, the small community of family members for whom the question of American emigration is actual, involves real people and places. Here the attention to empirical reporting is not just a technique to persuade someone to emigrate, but vital for imagining a community that is united despite Atlantic distance. As the Kerr family corresponds transatlantically (separated in space by the Atlantic and half of the American continent, and in time by more than 50 years), the issue of space becomes paramount to understanding the correspondence as well as if sympathy works in this generic register. Generically, the transatlantic letter is meant to provide virtual presence amid long stretches of absence; it also becomes an analogue for the absent other and the means by which the family may continue to be imagined across the gap of sympathy.

Chapter Four examines Susanna Rowson's transatlantic works, particularly *Charlotte Temple* (1791,1794), *Slaves in Algiers* (1794)*,* and *Reuben and Rachel* (1798). Rowson's own emigrant experience provides an entrée to the pain of transcultural sympathy that we see most clearly in *Reuben and Rachel*. Throughout her works Rowson also advocates a sympathy that is active and moral, rather than emotionally vacuous. Here in Rowson's works, more and more holes show up in the breaking apart of transatlantic sympathy, but on the whole this chapter operates akin to Crèvecoeur's Letter 11 through halfway through *Reuben and Rachel* (where they successfully adapt crossculturally to the Indians), but then like Letter 9 turns with war and the death of William Dudley, the uniting figure between the whites and Indians. At the end Reuben and Rachel choose a side (unlike James in *Letters*) and thus staves off the frenzied gothic turn. *Reuben and Rachel* illustrates the gap of sympathy being

bridged most effectively in cross-cultural adaptations and yet finally settles for a sympathy that must acknowledge separation and difference as vital to sympathy.

Chapter Five explores the failures of sympathy and sociability present in Charles Brockden Brown's gothic novels, *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly*. Characters' frontier locations and claustrophobic versions of sociability, as well as the gothic turn and failure of epistolary exchange, signal the moral ambiguity (and its breakdown) connected with becoming 'this new man' of America. To tie it to Crèvecoeur's trajectory both Wieland and Edgar Huntly are the frontier man, frenzied, caught in indecision. The Wielands have a terrifying view of an absent God as Wieland is allowed to kill his own family; they also have a very secluded and enclosed habitation. In *Edgar Huntly*, Edgar is conflated with the emigrant Clithero which is a breakdown of sympathy of another sort; he becomes what Farmer James fears (wild like the Indians; eating a jaguar and killing with a tomahawk), but it is finally Clithero who acts the Smithean outcast. Rather than following James' leave-taking and finding another society, Clithero drowns himself on the way to the asylum. Finally, Brown's epistolary fiction briefly considered offers another generic attempt to examine how the gap of sympathy may be bridged and extend beyond the confines of the family.

Before turning to the first chapter's explication of sympathy and its gap, the question arises more generally about the applicability of sympathy to a thesis concerned with transatlantic stylistics. Why is sympathy, a discourse prevalent in mid-eighteenth century Scottish Enlightenment contexts, an applicable methodology for American literature around the Revolution? This brings up another question, in even placing Scottish Enlightenment and American literature together: what is the relevance of transatlantic literary studies, rather than simple comparison? I shall attempt to answer these two questions together. In a timely essay, Joel Pace surveys the transatlantic critical field regarding Romanticism and notes that through transatlantic literary studies, critics 'are trying to make sense of a time period of global contact that nationalist narratives […] seek to deny or downplay'.[14] That is, transatlantic literary studies helps to recover the nuances, crossings, and conversations that happen outwith the boundaries of the nation state. Especially in the period following the American War for Independence, a strict exceptionalism between nations was anything but a reality of daily life for people on both sides of the Atlantic as Leonard Tennenhouse reminds

[14] Joel Pace, 'Towards a Taxonomy of Transatlantic Romanticism(s),' *Literature Compass* 5.2 (2008): 228-291. 236.

us.[15] In the growing field of transatlantic literary studies, it is the Atlantic that is seen as a point of connection between nations; rather than focusing solely on any one nation or area, transatlantic studies allows the critic to investigate the various indebtedness, borrowings, transformations, translations, importations and exportations of goods, peoples, and ideas across and around the Atlantic. This is useful as a methodology to re-assess the ways in which subjectivity, both individual and national, is constructed through a dialectic process.[16] Transatlantic literary studies also draws attention to the very constructedness of national paradigms through which we categorise literature. What follows is not meant as an exhaustive catalogue of transatlantic literary scholarship, nor is it meant to discuss the transatlantic relevance for an understanding of the gap of sympathy (that will be explored more fully in the first chapter), but it is meant to articulate briefly the ways in which transatlantic scholarship is a necessary paradigm for this thesis as well as providing an explanation for the use of sympathy here.

Pace helpfully notes that 'the majority of scholarly models and metaphors [for transatlantic studies] are spatial, though some are temporal' (239). This is pertinent both for my thesis which is a spatial argument about how literary meaning may be carried across a gap of sympathy, as well as applicable for transatlantic literary practice more broadly. How meaning is carried across space, whether through the medium of translation or travel, emphasises the common prefix trans-, which can mean: 'across, on the other side of, beyond', 'through' and more metaphorically, 'indicating change, transfer, or conversion'.[17] All of these 'trans-' examples encapsulate a form of literary criticism that is multiple in its borrowings and implications, as opposed to monochromatic theories of influence. Whereas 'comparative literature' has tended to establish comparison through the necessity of several different languages and whose methodologies tend to be focused on what George Steiner describes as the vague and 'hoary topic of "influence"',[18] it is the field of transatlantic literary studies that seeks to develop new methods of comparison outside of a hierarchical anxiety of influence where one (often 'culturally superior') national literature influences

[15] This is the main argument in his book: Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Importance of Feeling English*: *American Literature and the British Diaspora, 1750-1850* (Princeton and Oxford: PUP, 2007).
[16] Transatlantic studies embraces the continuities and disjunctions between any nation which borders the Atlantic; however, in my work comparisons will be made primarily between Britain and the United States as the impetus for this project arose from actual narratives of British emigrants.
[17] Trans-. *Oxford English Dictionary*. <http://www.oed.com>
[18] George Steiner, 'What is Comparative Literature?' *No Passion Spent Essays 1978-1996* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1997) 142-159. 152.

another. To 'read transatlantically'[19] then enables a type of comparison between national literatures that allows for the type of critical reading of emigrant narratives that follows in this thesis. Rather than typifying either the new American Adam[20] who must leave previous national affiliations and connections aside, nor able to fully maintain a British identity when one has been 'transplanted' to America, the emigrant writings considered here benefit from a transatlantic critique precisely in their attention to the process and pain involved in this crossing over. By acknowledging and tracing works that are 'framed in relation to an international readership',[21] transatlantic forms of comparison illustrate that juxtaposition through likeness and analogous models (rather than through influence), roots textual criticism in actual historical crossings that did move in relational circles beyond the nation. I shall take sympathy as one such example, and as a way to answer the query about sympathy's relevance to a thesis concerned largely with burgeoning American forms of expression.

The discourse of sympathy emerged out of an Enlightenment context, particularly from the benevolence of Francis Hutcheson and the 'moral sense' of Shaftesbury as well as the empiricism of Locke; these are then brought into Hume's and Smith's formulations of sympathy as a theory which sought to unite ethical action and aesthetic 'taste' and ideally to provide a basis for social action.[22] The discourse of sympathy thus developed through philosophical conversation and lectures, through a dialogue with Lockean categories and the loosening of the power of Christianity to infuse scholarship (although Hume did lose the Chair of Philosophy at Glasgow due to his sceptical beliefs), and through transatlantic travel.[23] In the case of sympathy as formulated by the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers, it provided a yardstick of personal ethical evaluation while also (in a transfer of forms) allowing for the popularisation of the sentimental novel in both Britain in the eighteenth

[19] The aim of Susan Manning and Andrew Taylor's edited collection, *Transatlantic Literary Studies: A Reader* (Edinburgh: EUP, 2007) 11.
[20] The phrase originated with R. W. B. Lewis' book, first published in 1955, which considered the trope developed from Crèvecoeur's 'new man' of America: *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, U Chicago, P, 1968).
[21] The phrase comes from Newman's introduction of Wordsworth for a transatlantic reading; see Lance Newman, 'Introduction: A History of Transatlantic Romanticism', *Sullen Fires across the Atlantic: Essays in Transatlantic Romanticism*, *Romantic Circles Praxis Series*, Fall 2006, http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/sullenfires/toc.html.
[22] See chapter 11 on an overview of the philosophical tradition of sympathy in James Engell's *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard UP, 1981).
[23] Gregg Camfield discusses the turn from a God-infused knowledge of the world and a moralistic worldview based upon Lockean empiricism; he describes 'Shaftesbury's "moral sense"' as 'an additional human faculty that could innately perceive right and wrong by allowing one person to experience another's pains and pleasures through the power of sympathy'; this 'allowed Shaftesbury and his protégé Hutcheson to put absolute morality back into Locke's world'. Gregg Camfield, *Sentimental Twain: Samuel Clemens in the Maze of Moral Philosophy* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 1994) 30.

century and in the United States through the early nineteenth century. Sympathy, then in its crossing over into different disciplines and generic forms, models a transatlantic movement where interpenetration of ideas moves beyond the local and beyond the nation – and into new forms of expression that 'perform cultural work that is meaningful across diverse social contexts'.[24] For within the new space that ethics occupied, the moral sentiments could not be divorced from their wider implications and reverberations in the arts, as we shall see in the following chapters that focus on novels and travel literature.

Sympathy itself travelled beyond its immediate national, Enlightenment context. For instance, D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie note the immediate popularity of *Theory of Moral Sentiments* after its first publication in 1759 particularly in France, Germany (Kant was said to have known and valued it), and England (25-31). The influence model – where we could, for instance first trace which American authors had *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* in their library – is actually much harder to prove than the pervasiveness of sympathy as a cultural discourse that effected the generic forms of both American and British writers, whether these were documentary or fictional forms.[25] We shall then see in this thesis instead, sympathy, as such a pervasive cultural discourse, worked out in the ways that writers experience dislocation through emigration (either personally or through fictional characters' histories of migration). That is, the chapters that follow take the discourse of sympathy into popular forms of literature – actual emigrant letters and guides – from both sides of the Atlantic; sympathy then provides a way in which to articulate connection. Even though the writers may not have been immediately familiar with Smith's text, the issues of placement and connection across distance that Smith's explication of sympathy articulates share continuities (though in different discourses and generic forms) about how to reckon with transatlantic distance.

There are generic implications for a transatlantic reading of sympathy; for embedded within an Enlightenment view of sympathy, there is a shadowy underside to the precariousness of the sympathetic relationship that is also a vital part of sympathy. The ways that this shadow side of sympathy continually reasserts itself within both documentary and more novelistic forms illustrates that genre and style are affected by sea change. The breakdown of sympathy that we see in Crèvecoeur's *Letters* is indeed premised on the discourse of sympathy itself, where its gap finally remains unbridgeable; for, the gap of

[24] Margaret Cohen, 'Traveling Genres', *New Literary History* 34.3 (2003): 481-499. 495.
[25] Proving influence from the presence of a book on a shelf brings up more questions than it answers; for instance: was the book read or used as a status symbol or something else? How can we even ascertain the effect of a book on another's thinking, let alone its effect in fictional portrayals?

sympathy must increasingly emphasise distance and separation as vital not only for sympathetic discourse but also for the political differentiation between Britain and the United States after Independence. It is therefore this gap of sympathy which, this thesis argues, articulates how the self is conceptualised within the context of sociability, especially when this is extended across the Atlantic. The literary forms of expression of this gap – from empirical documentary modes, to the sentimental, to the gothic – likewise illustrate the tension between stylistic continuities and discontinuities that transatlantic distance engenders. It is to the particularities of this 'gap' that we now turn.

Chapter One:
Adam Smith, Sympathy, and the Transatlantic Gap

The central problem that this thesis seeks to address arises from the particular historical situation of the late eighteenth century. Within this period, personal identity increasingly became defined *in relation* to others and to one's context. Although this thesis focuses on the literary expression of this problem, the widening of one's sphere of reference directly impacted the works of literature produced around the end of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. This self-in-relation arose in part, in response to the increase of Atlantic commerce, literacy and epistolary novels[1] and laid the framework under which Adam Smith's concept of sympathy arose, as they each, in various forms, bring the spectator in contact with strangers since 'those social situations that give the greatest stimulus to developing self-command are those where individuals are regularly put into contact with […] others who do not or cannot be expected to share one's own feelings' according to Jerrold Siegel (152). Daniel Walker Howe, in his book, *Making the American Self*, credits the 'balanced self' arising from growing American evangelicalism and commercial relationships which 'led people to encounter strangers more often than subsistence husbandry did' and a corresponding 'new form of polite culture' which developed from such contact.[2] Both Howe and Siegel helpfully point out that the 'self' was formed in the context of larger communal networks, where these networks increasingly moved beyond the confines of the individual, local community, or the nation.

It is important to note that when we examine the connection between 'commerce, literacy, and epistolary novels,' terminology – especially concerning 'sympathy' and 'sentiment' – becomes an issue. The word 'sentimental' is a slippery term and confusion about its meaning is quite old. As early as 1749, Lady Bradshaigh wrote to Samuel Richardson,

> Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you (I forgot it before) what, in your opinion, is the meaning of the word *sentimental*, so much in vogue amongst the polite, both in town and country? In letters and common conversation, I have asked several who make use of it, and have generally received for answer, it is – it is – *sentimental*. […] I am

[1] Jerrold Siegel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experience in Western Europe since the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005) 151-65.
[2] Daniel Walker Howe, *Making the American Self: Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: OUP, 2009) 9.

> frequently astonished to hear such a one is a *sentimental* man; we were a *sentimental* party; I have been on a *sentimental* walk.[3]

In the letter above, 'Sentimental' stands in for a descriptor of one's character, one's group dynamics and one wonders when the term is applied to a walk, if that connotes the walk itself, the person's inner states when walking and reflecting, the landscape meant to induce one towards sentimental feelings or something else entirely. Even at the turn of the century, when 'sentimental' began to go out of fashion in Britain (as Todd notes, the adjectives change[4]) its meaning was still unclear: in the 1799 *Complete and Universal Dictionary* it was regarded to have 'no precise meaning'.[5] Likewise in literary criticism of the last forty years (ever since Ann Douglas's revitalisation of the 'sentimental novel' in *The Feminization of American Culture* [1977]), confusions between 'sympathy', 'sentiment', 'sentimental', and 'sensibility', abound, primarily due to the terms' own slippery geneses, as Lady Bradshaigh attests above.

Ten years after Lady Bradshaigh's letter, Adam Smith writes of sympathy in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 'for this sentiment [deriving sorrow from others' sorrow], like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility' (2). Smith brings together the terms under greatest contestation in the debate about the sentimental novel: 'sentiment', 'passions', 'virtue', and 'sensibility'. According to Smith, as a 'sentiment', sympathy combines both rational reflection through the impartial spectator and emotional sensitivity, that which is often termed 'sensibility' (as evidenced in the physical signs of sympathy, that can stand in for the entirety of what is meant by sentiment).

In more recent criticism of sentiment and sensibility, literary critics tend to categorise 'the sentimental novel' by focusing on either a history of ideas approach (at least mentioning Hume and Smith) and following a British trajectory of sentimental fiction from Richardson to Sterne to Mackenzie (Ellis, Todd), or a focus on mid-nineteenth century American domestic women's writing, highlighting issues of gender, class and race in antebellum writing, always alluding to Stowe (see Tompkins, Douglas, Dillon, Dobson).[6] There are two

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[3] Dorothy Bradshaigh, Letter to Samuel Richardson, *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*, Ed. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, 6 vols. (London: Richard Phillips, 1804), IV, 262-83. Qtd. in Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 36.

[4] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London and NY: Methuen, 1986) 7.

[5] Marie Banfield, 'From Sentiment to Sentimentality: A Nineteenth-Century Lexiographical Search,' *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 4 (2007), http://www19.bbk.ac.uk.

[6] Although Markman Ellis traces the various strands of sensibility, he gives more weight to a history of ideas approach: *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, gender and commerce in the sentimental novel* (Cambridge, CUP, 1996). See also Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London and NY: Methuen, 1986), Jane Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790-1860*, Oxford: OUP: 1986; Ann Douglas,

bodies of work referred to as 'sentimental': depending on the focus of the critic, 'sentimental' is either a male-dominated form with Sterne and Mackenzie's 'man of feeling' or a female form (what Tompkins called the 'Other American Renaissance'[7]) dominated by Stowe and Warner; it is either of primarily British origin or American reinvention; it is either focused on the history of ideas or rooted in physiological nervous sensation; it is either political or domestic, and either aesthetically subversive or 'writing gone bad' (Douglas). But rather than seeing sentiment as one generic or physiological example of binary ways of relating, by recovering the transatlantic genesis of such modes we begin to recover their interrelatedness. For example, Markman Ellis' first chapter of *The Politics of Sensibility* (1996) helpfully traces the genealogy of sympathy through an amalgam of discourses: moral sense philosophy, history of aesthetics (taste), religion, history of political economy, sexuality, physiology and popular print technology (8). This amalgam then points to the ways that actual travel not only has ramifications for real encounters with people different from oneself, but also how sympathy alters the crossing-over of generic forms and style (which also change when they encounter 'strange' forms).

Such a movement of sympathy, where one is confronted with another who does not simply mirror one's own feelings, allows the self to develop in response to an 'other' who puts the self in relief, as proper comparison yields a clearer picture of each. As migrants, travellers, and novels crossed the Atlantic in the late eighteenth century people on both sides of the ocean were put into contact either in real-life or virtually (through reading) with others, who though they may perhaps have been similar to one another in ethnic origin, were often strangers in outlook. Contact with strangers and migration require the self to connect with others through sympathy rather than through local, national or kin-networks.

Even as early as the 1730s, the number of ships crossing the Atlantic each year tripled from two generations prior (from 500 to 1500 ships);[8] this increase only continued throughout the next century. In a world that was becoming increasingly global, the individual began to be defined less by networks of kin and village and, in America, the influx of migrants even meant that national and ethnic origin were no longer enough to constitute a

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The Feminization of American Culture, 1977; Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, 'Sentimental Aesthetics' *American Literature* 76.3 (September 2004): 495-523. Her *The Gender of Freedom* (2004) traces gender throughout the American republic through the Colonies to Stowe. Even Joanne Dobson's 'Reclaiming Sentimental Literature', *American Literature*, 69.2 (June 1997): 262-288, only sees 'sentimental' in the context of women's antebellum writing.

[7] Jane Tompkins, "The Other American Renaissance," *The American Renaissance Reconsidered*. Ed. Walter Benn Michaels and Donald E. Pease (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1985): 34-57.

[8] Alan S. Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Viking/Penguin, 2001) 302.

stable identity. The previous markers that constituted identity – nationality, ethnicity, connection to the land, a trade passed down through the family – slowly began to erode due to the increasingly transatlantic nature of life. As Kristin Bourdreau notes, the language of sympathy was increasingly used to unite groups, starting from John Winthrop's 1630 speech, 'A model of Christian Charity'; so that

> one hundred years later in fact, moral philosophers of civilized European countries were beginning to struggle with the same conflict between isolated individuals and their larger societies, and their solution, like Winthrop's, was to promote a natural sympathy that infused individuals with an acute sense of otherwise alien subjectivities. (4-5)

As people travelled more for leisure, as products crossed the Atlantic so that even the objects with which people were surrounded were 'exotic' rather than entirely local, individuals had to reckon with the question of identity in the contexts of increasingly transient cultural spaces.

The historical pressures of placement and emigration evidence themselves through particular literary forms that will be explored further. It is the literary expression of the consequences of transatlantic sympathy that is the focus of this thesis. The particular context of transatlantic travel brings to the fore the question of how personal identity is construed in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century in Britain and America; and, in turn, how this is constructed through literature. It was not simply individual identity but larger relational networks that were also being defined during this period. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776) and William Robertson's *History of America* (1777) are just two contemporary works that take the idea of stadial history – that cultures progress through a maturing process from barbarism to a civilised market society – and posit that sociability is a product of maturity. That is, as both individuals and cultures move through time, they progressively improve and social structures become increasingly refined in the process. Stadial historiography, though a contemporary discourse of space and time, is a model that embodies a comparative approach and ultimately fails to account for the transforming nature of travel that a transatlantic and sympathetic approach addresses. Adam Smith's focus on the 'commercial' aspect of identity, explored most fully in *The Wealth of Nations*, has lead to what has been termed the Adam Smith problem, where *Wealth of Nations* and his earlier *Theory of Moral Sentiments* are deemed incompatible. Although this so-called problem will be briefly addressed further below, it is worth mentioning now that 'commerce' was not entirely tied up into meanings of accruing wealth or the exchange of goods and services. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'commerce' both as 'intercourse in the affairs of life;

dealings' and with the more often-used meaning, '[…] buying and selling together; trading […]'.[9] Smith's project in both of his works takes up both meanings; *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, written before *Wealth of Nations*, but continually revised throughout his life, employs 'commerce' in both senses.[10] As such, one's interactions with others cannot be understood in abstractly economic terms, as if 'commerce' was an amoral entity, or that human connection and harmony does not have practical, and even economic, implications. The increase of transatlantic commercial traffic then helps people to imagine (even virtually through reading) a lengthening of sympathetic boundaries that has the potential to move the self into wider spheres of relation.

Before we address Smith and his concept of sympathy, actual transatlantic travel requires us to articulate a transatlantic methodology to explain the loosening of those markers which had constituted the sense of self – whether they be individual or nation – and how that self must be re-imagined as the world imaginatively grew. To have a transatlantic methodology we must begin by seeing the Atlantic in its symbolic capacities. Critic Jean-Phillippe Mathy remarks (proceeding from Paul Gilroy's work in *The Black Atlantic*) that 'An ocean, obviously, can be a barrier as well as a threshold, an interrupter and a facilitator of fluxes of all kinds, a daunting obstacle as well as a means of communication, a metaphor precisely, that is, in the original meaning of the Greek word, a way to the beyond'.[11] The Atlantic then is more than simply the gateway through which goods, peoples and ideas were literally exchanged and transformed, but in its capacity as a connector and partition it is the site where such exchanges are both encouraged and resisted. If the Atlantic can work as a metaphor does ('to carry over'), it has the potential to either work as a bridge for peoples and ideas by a 'carrying across' or to disconnect if it fails. Through this process it also defamiliarises stable markers of identity (whether personal, collective or national) and posits knowledge formed through relationship and comparison.

Although Mathy's conclusion – that the Atlantic serves as 'a way to the beyond' – is vague, I think this vagueness is unavoidable as it points to something mysterious both about metaphor and transatlantic exchange; the journey to 'the beyond' by way of the Atlantic reinforces the ways in which it is a journey whose end is unknown due to the transformative

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[9] 'Commerce,' *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. 2nd ed. <http://dictionary.oed.com>
[10] See for example, his use of 'commerce' as harmony on p. 39, as trade on p. 136.
[11] Jean-Philippe Mathy, 'The Atlantic as Metaphor,' *Atlantic Studies* 1.1 (2004): 107-117. 107.

effects of 'crossing over'.[12] For if we see the Atlantic metaphorically (however, never discarding the Atlantic's very literal trade of products and bodies during this period), it opens a discursive space, a 'contact zone'[13] between the Old World and the New and one which is the means for *both* the inception of and cessation of cross-cultural dialogue.[14] Like ships crossing the ocean, seeing the Atlantic metaphorically gives entities on either side of the ocean a dialogic space where they can potentially come together in a third space and in so doing, redefine one another.

Another quote from Mathy is helpful here to discuss the type of interaction afforded by a transatlantic methodology. He writes:

> If the Atlantic is a metaphor, it is so in the original meaning of the word, that of a vehicle or shuttle, a way to go from one place to the next […]. Could it be that the Atlantic failed in its metaphoric function, that it was, as far as the Enlightenment legacy is concerned, more of an obstacle than a passageway, a barrier, rather than a conduit?' (111-2)

Mathy's exploration of the Atlantic as a metaphor is important; the issue of metonymy and metaphor (literally 'to carry over') – especially visual metaphors – will be of particular importance to my thesis; emigrants when defamiliarised by the landscape of the New World, reach after metaphors as a stylistic tool to understand both their new land and themselves after crossing over. The use and idea of metaphor is stylistically suited to comparative study as it emphasises defamiliarisation, multiplicity of meaning, suspension of judgement, and the filling of 'logical gaps'.[15] I would contest this notion that because not all Enlightenment values were effortlessly transported across the Atlantic, that the necessarily Atlantic served as a barrier. For at the very least, even if the ideas exchanged via the Atlantic met immediate condemnation through a quick comparison and repudiation, this still indicates that ideas (although hostilely received) *were* received and were reacted to, even in the process of rejection. Mathy seems to imply that transatlantic interaction must be symbiotically harmonious to work; for as we shall see through the trajectory of this thesis, rejection of ideas does not, however, negate the circulatory possibilities of an Atlantic methodology. It is often only through first comparing entities on both sides of the ocean (with its accompanying hierarchical ordering) that one is able to then enter into sympathetic exchange. It is therefore

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[12] In this sense, transatlantic exchange may be likened to a 'voyage of discovery'; see O'Gorman's *The Invention of America*.
[13] This is Mary Louise Pratt's phrase from *Imperial Eyes* (1992) 7.
[14] Recent work in transatlantic literary studies has capitalised upon the images of the material cultures of transatlantic exchange and plumbed it for its metaphoric value. See for instance, Paul Gilroy's use of the ship in *The Black Atlantic*, Margaret McFadden's use of the transatlantic cable in *Golden Cables of Sympathy*, and international copyright in Claudia Stokes' 'Copywriting American History: International Copyright and the Periodization of the Nineteenth Century' *American Literature* 77.2 (June 2005): 291-317.
[15] Katie Wales, *A Dictionary of Stylistics*, 2nd ed (Harlow: Longman and Pearson, 2001) 250-1.

one aim of this chapter to establish how, in the late eighteenth century, the Atlantic became this site for comparison, for the generation of successful sympathy and the possibility of its failure – in short, a space of connection across the gap of sympathy.

If we are to understand the Atlantic as a space through which we are able to analyse the process of sympathy extending beyond the nation, the difficulty, however, comes at the point of connection, Pratt's 'contact zone' (7). When looking at a precise point of connection, here the Atlantic, it allows us to observe the 'social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other' and 'the space in which people geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations'.[16] Pratt's terminology is helpful in its recognition of the locus of interaction, where the connecting relationship is always imaged as spatial zones of interaction, as lateral areas which retain some measure of sovereignty even while one zone overlaps with others, and also allow for the interpenetration of this individuality. Tilar Mazzeo is particularly helpful in extending Pratt's nomenclature of the contact zone: she describes transatlanticism as 'not only [involved in] exchange and interpenetration culturally, but in terms of national identity [it] designates instances of Anglo-American hybridity, in which the possibility of "both/and" exists'.[17] Pratt's use of the contact zone tends towards exposing unilateral and vertical readings of postcolonial cultures whereas the term 'transatlantic' as used by Mazzeo emphasises a symbiotic (a 'both/and') relationship. Thinking of the Atlantic as 'contact zone' is helpful to a point in naming how spatial constructions are involved in exchange – but where Mazzeo's definition is valuable is in how it opens up the Anglo-American relationship beyond comparison ('us' versus 'them') to allow for lateral sympathetic exchange.

To better understand how a transatlantic methodology works in the study of texts, consider one example of literary criticism. In her analysis of generic and national cross-fertilization (following from David Marshall's emphasis on spectatorship in the theatre), Margaret Cohen writes concerning sentimental fiction: 'That this process [the 'cross-fertilization between dramatic and novelistic forms'] [in the eighteenth century] was an exchange between a genre that depends on spectatorial presence and one that works through distance is telling, for sentimental community extends the affective bonds of presence to

[16] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) 4, 6, 7.
[17] Tilar Mazzeo, 'The Impossibility of Being Anglo-American: The Rhetoric of emigration and Transatlanticism in British Romantic Culture, 1791-1833,' *European Romantic Review* 16.1 (January 2005): 59-78. 77.

define bonds of absence'.[18] The notion of the sentimental community will be discussed further in this chapter in relation to Smith's concept of sympathy. However, for the moment, consider how Cohen helpfully draws attention to the ways in which generic cross-fertilisation, a metaphoric crossing over, allows the characteristics of the theatre to work within more novelistic forms so that both are changed in the interaction. That is, new genres and sub-genres emerged in response to actual transatlantic travel and the questions this travel raised. Elsewhere, she examines transatlantic sea fiction, where what is important for my purpose, is her discussion of the portability of forms and its propensity to travel. She writes 'that international thematics are not necessary for a form's portability; that forms with a circumscribed focus can travel well if they perform cultural work that is meaningful across diverse social contexts' (Cohen, 'Traveling', 495). Moreover, 'Genres that travel must not only contain elements that can pass from national literary context to national literary context, they also have flexibility and play, offering a way to negotiate cultural differences' (496). The migration across the Atlantic whether of people, ideas or of genres, to use Cohen's example, opens up comparison and through the process helps to dilute singular nationalist rhetoric. As we move the forms and manner of comparison outside of the strict boundaries of the nation-state to take our point of comparison as the Atlantic Ocean, we are afforded a heightened use and awareness of 'flexibility and play', while also needing to define 'bonds of absence'. Thus the Atlantic can work as much as a threshold of possibility as a blank spot, a sort of 'space between', depending on the cultural work that the objects migrating across it perform before departure, en route, and upon arrival. Having begun to explore the nature of a transatlantic methodology, let us now turn to the problem of personal and social identity that the increase of transatlantic travel intensifies.

Sympathy: The Self in Relation

In *The Idea of the Self* (2005), Jerrold Siegel's explication of identity emphasises both interior reflectiveness and social and bodily rootedness; he paraphrases Thomas Nagel's understanding of the self: 'a defensible notion of selfhood must comprehend both the nature of first-person selfhood, the "I" that we know from "inside," and whatever we can know about third-person selfhood, the "someone" considered from "outside"' (28). In the remaining section of this chapter, I discuss how Adam Smith's concept of sympathy helps to expand and reckon with the concept of identity in both the first- and third-person sense. That

[18] Margaret Cohen, 'Sentimental Communities,' *The Literary Channel: The International Invention of the Novel* (Princeton: PUP, 2001) 106-132. 113.

is, how personal identity is shaped by others, 'the "someone" considered from the "outside"'. Specifically the question that this thesis addresses is, does sympathy work transatlantically and if so, what are its generic forms? This question is explored through the literary trajectory set by Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*: nearly all of the works considered in this thesis have first-person narrators (whether these are, for example, in novels or actual letters) and all of the works are deeply shaped by an emigrant consciousness. And like Crèvecoeur's *Letters*, the structure of this thesis proceeds from confident, first person narration to empirical accounting for the benefit of others and finally, to a pseudo-Gothic inwardly turned narrative style. As was briefly explored in the Introduction, this trajectory arises directly from a sense of displacement, from an assumption of both America's familiarity and an alienation from its foreignness for the British emigrant. And it is particularly Adam Smith's analysis of sympathy that provides a vocabulary of how people respond to one another as distance increases, a particularly appropriate problem for those migrating to America in the early national period and into the nineteenth century.

As we turn our attention to the workings of sympathy, it is important to note that Smith's version of sympathy proceeds from work by other British empiricists, Hutchison and most notably David Hume. A Humean concept of first-person identity is predicated upon third-person identity; in other words, there needs to be an 'other' from whom one's own existence is verified. By the middle of the eighteenth century, it is not God but society (and specifically the mechanisations of mutual sympathy) that plays the part of this 'other' perceiving mind. Writing of the self as a bundle of associated perceptions, Hume asserts in his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40), 'The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations'.[19] The analogy Hume reaches for to describe the soul, the seat of personal identity, is corporate as well, 'a republic or commonwealth' (309). We have access to this identity through a combination of time, memory and imagination: atomised moments of past consciousness are recreated and combined imaginatively as we remember them so that we extrapolate continuity from single moments. Whereas God had stabilised personal identity for earlier philosophers such as Bishop George Berkeley, without that requisite faith commitment, Hume posits that an essentialised identity is impossible, and focuses instead on identity existing within memory and in the context of society.

[19] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Ed. Ernest C. Mossner (London and New York: Penguin, 1986) 301.

It is sociability that brings us home to ourselves. Concluding his first book of the *Treatise*, Hume launches into pseudo-Calvinist rhetoric about the shipwreck of the soul. This is not due to his sense of spiritual depravity; instead, the 'forlorn solitude' in which he fancies himself 'some uncouth monster' is due to his philosophic position. What he fears is not separation from God but rather not being able to 'mingle and unite in society […] expell'd [from] all human commerce, left utterly abandoned and disconsolate' (311-12). These thoughts do continue to grow until he comes to fundamental questions of personal and corporate identity: 'Where am I? or what? […] What beings surround me? and on whom have I any influence, or who have any influence on me?' (316). The question of location – here, existential – quickly moves into questions of location *in relation to* others; because, according to Hume, 'all kinds of reasoning consist of nothing but a comparison' (121), one can only know about oneself by considering personal identity within the context of larger social networks. It is not the certitude of solitary reason that is able to bring Hume back to himself, out of his philosophical melancholy, but his participation in social life: 'I dine, I play a game of backgammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends; and when after three or four hours of amusement, I wou'd return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any farther' (316). The activities Hume mentions (dining, gaming, dialogue) bring him out of his philosophical melancholy precisely because they are activities of engagement: they are instances of reciprocal connection that, like the transatlantic methodology discussed above, operate through give-and-take, mutual interpenetration and lateral ways of relating. Personal identity must always be understood to exist within a larger framework of community.

Adam Smith's concept of sympathy, like Hume's, is also contingent on the presence of others. Indeed as a recent critic has noted in the *The Oxford Handbook of Adam Smith*, sociability, for Smith, is fundamental to what it means to be human.[20] As the editors to the Glasgow Edition of the Works of Adam Smith make clear, 'Sympathy is the core of Smith's explanation of moral *judgement*. The motive to action is an entirely different matter. […] These motives include self-interest […]' (Raphael and Macfie, 21-22). They go on to briefly engage the so-called 'Adam Smith problem,' which states that Smith's earlier theories of sympathy were based on benevolence while his *Wealth of Nations* focuses on self-interest as the motivator of human behaviour. It is the oft-cited passage in *Wealth of Nations* that proponents of the Adam Smith problem use: 'It is not from the benevolence of the butcher,

[20] Christel Fricke, 'Adam Smith: The Sympathetic Process and the Origin and Function of Conscience,' *The Oxford Handbook of Adam Smith*, Oxford: OUP, 2011. 177-200. 180.

the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest'.[21] This so-called problem concerns how to reconcile this apparently contradictory approach to human motivation, with proponents of the 'problem' attempting to accentuate differences in Smith's earlier and later versions of *TMS* as compared to *Wealth of Nations*; but as the editors note, 'new material in edition 6 is simply a development of Smith's earlier position and at the same time reflects some of the interests of WN' (24). Adding to this, Duncan Kelly notes, 'TMS therefore offers the intellectual foundation for Smith's conjectural history of commercial society published in WN but also earlier presented earlier in his lectures on jurisprudence. The literature dispelling the supposed difference between the place of sympathy in TMS and self-love in WN (the Adam Smith Problem, as it was known) reflects this unifying approach of Smith's works'.[22] What is most relevant for our purposes is not to differentiate between a Smith concerned with benevolence and one concerned with self-interest, but rather to see the focus particularly of *TMS* is *how* we make moral judgements – not on one's motives towards action (which may be self-interest). Smith's concept of sympathy, which will be discussed at length below, then articulates the process of human connection, concerning how one person is able to profitably enter into the feelings of another. As physical and ideological distance increased between those on either side of the Atlantic Ocean, particularly at the end of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth, Smith's model for sympathetic connection is quite applicable.

Sympathy as understood in the eighteenth century by Hume and Smith became a way of describing interpersonal moral connections where the sentiment of one person was somehow transmitted to another; it is this 'somehow' that is here under discussion, for this word helps to get at how sympathy worked and more broadly than that, how any proper comparison may be achieved. Before Smith's fuller articulation of the workings of sympathy, Hume discusses the effects of sympathetic exchange in Book III, 'Of Morals', in the *Treatise*:

> As in strings equally wound up, the motion of one communicates itself to the rest; so all the affections readily pass from one person to another, and beget correspondent movements in every human creature. When I see the *effects* of passion in the voice or gesture in any person, my mind immediately passes from these effects to their causes, and forms such a lively idea of the passion, as is presently converted into the passion itself. […] No passion of another discovers itself immediately to the mind. We are only sensible of its causes or effects. From *these* we infer the passion: And consequently *these* give rise to our sympathy. (626-7)

[21] Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, London: Penguin, 1999. 41.
[22] Duncan Kelly, 'Adam Smith and the Limits of Sympathy,' *The Oxford Handbook of Adam Smith*, Oxford: OUP, 2011. 201-218. 203.

Hume describes sympathy as a sort of synaptic travelling in one's imagination as the 'affections readily pass from one person to another' with corresponding individual reactions.[23] It is important that Hume notes this travelling of feeling is based upon imaginative identification, for although sympathy arises from physical observation (its effects) this is then translated to an idea and then into the observing person's own sympathetic manifestations. To discuss sympathetic exchange Hume uses a metaphor of musical strings being wound up and passing vibrations onto other strings where the whole plays a single note of sympathetic affection. The actual travelling of vibrations is imperceptible and yet, like sympathy, observable in its effects. It is also worth clarifying that the process of Humean sympathetic exchange is more constructive than James Engell's reading of it suggests. Engell states that: 'When examined closely, sympathy is likely to turn out to be nothing more than a contagion or infection of feeling. This kind of experience – indeed all sympathy – only repeats our own original feelings and whips them into a state of excitement'[24]. His language of contagion implies pure passivity, as something that infects people at random, while also not having the capability to move beyond the self, as it 'only repeats our own original feelings'. Such a statement sees judgement involved in sympathy as a re-enforcing of a position, rather than viewing the judgemental act as that which begins the process; it is first requisite that the original passions of the person with whom we sympathise are inferred from their own reactions, which requires that to some extent we analyse – and therefore step back from (rather than a 'whipping up of excitement') – the markers of another's feelings.

As Hume's metaphor of travelling thoughts and sound is helpful to expose how sympathy moves through imagination, the language of contagion is another way of helpfully envisaging this transfer of sentiment. Moving beyond Engell's use of 'contagion,' James Snead's more recent article referencing African literature is helpful here as it reclaims 'contagion' for shared activity rather than as an isolated passive event. As opposed to the systematising forces of literary universality, Snead proposes the 'benevolent *contagion*, not of disease, but a shared awareness of shared energy', enlarging 'contagion' to imply more than Engell's simple infection, and of course, moving to a sympathetic interpenetration ('shared awareness') rather than a vertical, comparative ordering on which Engell's

[23] Markers of this feeling were demonstrated most clearly in the sentimental novel. The individual reactions were nearly always physical – fainting, swooning, crying, becoming agitated, etc. – and gendered: women were the storehouses of sympathetic feeling, although of course men were not exempt (see Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* for one obvious example).

[24] James Engell, *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard UP, 1981) 147.

definition capitalises.[25] Snead goes on to explain the use of this term: ‘Perhaps the most important aspect of cultural contagion is that by the time one is aware of it, it has *already happened*’; once sympathy becomes conscious, there is always a loss involved. Although it is active it still operates at least on some level as an unaided, ‘natural’ response, as self-consciousness only emerges after the fact. Snead continues, ‘Contagion, being metonymic (*con* + *tangere* = ‘touching together’), involves […] an actual process of contacts between people, rather than a quantitative setting of metaphorical value’. It also ‘represents the existence of recoverable *affinities* between disparate races of people’. Snead reclaims contagion from its disease-laden connotations for a metonymic quality where various elements (here, ‘disparate races’) interact and in the process of touching, recoverable affinities become possible. In the process of juxtaposing one thing with another – considering that the differences remain, for they are simply juxtaposed rather than fused – comparisons emerge so that a point of connection is possible. Hume’s analogy of wound-up strings, also metonymically united, similarly communicate comparison across one another as a person first ‘forms such a lively idea of the [original] passion, [so that this is] presently converted into the passion itself’ in the beholder. The complexity of sympathy, in its associative action, allows for this understanding of contagion that Snead discusses as a way in which to enact and communicate outside of the self.

However, the particular problem for this sort of ‘shared awareness of shared energy’ and for sympathy is distance. Hume (as well as Smith) notes the importance of distance in sympathetic relations: ‘We sympathize more with persons contiguous to us, than with persons remote from us: With our acquaintance, than with strangers: With our countrymen, than with foreigners. But notwithstanding this variation of our sympathy, we give the same approbation to the same moral qualities in *China* as in *England*’ (631-2). Sympathy, like imaginative connection more generally, resides between stationary rigidity and random connection. Moral qualities in China and England are viewed according to universal rules, flattening out morality into a singular code of conduct, while there is still room in which personal contiguity in time, space, and behaviour allow for varying degrees of closeness; sympathy is resilient in its judgements but capacious in its feeling and both aspects are equally a part of sympathetic exchange. Leonard Tennenhouse, in *The Importance of Feeling English*, describes distance as a problem for Smithean sympathy:

[25] James Snead, ‘European pedigrees/African contagions: nationality, narrative, and communality in Tutuola, Achebe, and Reed,’ *Nation and Narration*, Ed. Homi Bhabha (New York and London: Routledge, 1990) 231-249. 245.

> When he came up with his model of sympathy, Smith was obviously thinking in terms of a nation whose inhabitants were invariably attached to a place where everything one needs to know about them is already known. Thus, he can declare with some confidence that most members of the community have the capacity to overcome the natural tendency to act out their emotions too emphatically if they experience some passion or too quickly identify if they witness the spectacle of another's passion. […] Individuals possessing the same standard of judgment will naturally resemble each other more than they differ in responding to emotional stimuli. (114)

This thesis takes up the problem of that spatial distance to which Tennenhouse refers, and if the gap of sympathy can hold up under transatlantic dislocation (which is physical, spiritual and is expressed through generic and stylistic choices in texts). It shall examine what happens to sympathy as it moves beyond the 'nation whose inhabitants were invariably attached to a place' and intimately known, increasing disjunction occurs as individuals lack 'the same standard of judgment'. The stretching of sympathy across the Atlantic must contend with the sympathetic gap, which widens as geographic and affective distance increases. A more recent critic on Smith, Fonna Forman-Barzilai, clearly articulates both how Smith references distance when describing sympathetic relations, while also extending it to current cosmopolitan critiques; she writes, 'Smith approached distance in affective and cultural/historical terms as well – which means that I may be remote from someone sitting just before me, or close to someone across the globe. In this sense, Smith provides a framework for thinking in fresh ways about new sorts of human connection that emerge in a global age'.[26] This sort of rendering of affective distance becomes especially relevant as families were separated through migration across the Atlantic, as we shall see in Chapter Three. Forman-Barzilai writes concerning sympathy, 'Sympathy was not the spontaneous emotional connection we tend to associate today with compassion or empathy […]. Sympathy was a social practice through which individuals who share physical space participate together in an ordinary exchange of approbation and shame, and through repetitive actions over time learn to become "social" – learn to adjust their passions to a "pitch" commensurate with living in a society with others' (12-13). Her book then discusses the often conflicted view of the self, as both motivated by what was called in the eighteenth-century, self-love, and more 'other-regarding tendencies' (12). She thus addresses the 'Adam Smith problem' while also doing careful work in analysing Smith's moral theory. We will now turn to Smith's explication of sympathy and how it contends with the very literal gap of the Atlantic in the texts that follow this chapter.

[26] Fonna Forman-Barzilai, *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy: Cosmopolitanism and Moral Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011. 5.

Smith discusses a sympathetic gap between people that is traversed by right projection and imaginative identification, and derived from notions of proper feeling and appropriate moral action. So, what is sympathy for Smith? Smith opens his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* by acknowledging that 'How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him' (8). This capacity to think and feel beyond the self is what he describes as sympathy. He continues, 'As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation' (8). The sympathetic gap is bridged by travelling across and an entering into, where sympathy happens in the space *between* the actor and spectator in a 'momentary' connection (21). Thus sympathetic identification is not only a conjuring up of feeling, as if one were in the actor's position, but Smith writes, 'but I change persons and characters' (317); sympathy then, is an exchange of character that happens momentarily in the imagination.

In Smith's revisions to Humean sympathy he adds the idea of the impartial spectator, which is unique to Smith's theory. This impartial spectator is a third subjectivity, neither the actual actor nor spectator. One of the opening paragraphs of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* begins thus:

> As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation. Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. They never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. Neither can that faculty help us to this any other way, than by representing to us what would be our own, if we were in his case. It is the impressions of our own sense only, not those of his, which our imaginations copy. By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. His agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at last to affect us, and we then tremble and shudder at the thought of what he feels. (9)

The phrase 'as it were' is where the whole project of sympathy hangs, linguistically marking a metaphoric crossing over in imagination between the actor and spectator as they 'chang[e] places in fancy' (10). Following from Hume, Smith makes clear it is 'by the imagination we place ourselves in his [the actor's] situation' (9). As in Hume, it is the imagination that provides the connection between disparate elements, which transports the spectator outside

himself past the realm of empirical sensory perception and into the experiences of another. The imagination has a terrific unifying quality: it momentarily collapses the physical space between the spectator and actor while also enveloping the many ideological and circumstantial differences that separate persons, so that the spectator may enter into the sentiments of the actor.

Although Smith's exposition of the sympathetic imagination begins by resisting categories of knowledge acquisition through sensation, it still operates by Lockean empirical categories. That is, it is a moral theory based on perspective – a point which will have particular relevance for Chapter Two and the emigrant guide, but which is applicable throughout the thesis. Through visually observing the pains endured by one's brother on the rack, one receives the impact of his sufferings through the bridging quality of the imagination; even as it resists knowledge based purely on observation it nevertheless affirms this through the initial interaction of the spectator and the actor. Where sympathy differs from simple rational analysis of another's situation is in a sort of imaginative moving beyond whereby the spectator becomes 'in some measure the same person with him [the sufferer]'. My language describing this imaginative connection must be, at least at some level, necessarily vague. Smith himself cannot pin down this connection any more clearly. He notes it is the imagination which is the vehicle where 'we enter as it were into his body' and 'in some measure' become the same person. We form 'some idea' and 'even feel something which' is like his own feelings, though different in degree. The indistinct language points to the inability to pinpoint not only the precise workings of the imagination but also where and how connection happens. As an abstract entity, from personal interaction (again following from Locke and yet signalling the advent of Romantic individualism) we are aware that we do *experience* sympathy, but the precise modalities of this interconnection between people remain at one level mysterious.

Forman-Barzilai notes the stages of sympathy as '*surveillance*,' where the spectator observes another person's behaviour, and '*discipline*,' the socially cognisant aspect of the actor where s/he modifies his/her behaviour.[27] This two-fold process is contingent upon the impartial spectator; Smith writes that to make a comparison between my interests and another's we must view them 'from the place and with the eyes of a third person, who has no particular connexion with either, and who judges with impartiality between us' (135). The capacity to judge if another's sentiments are appropriate to be entered into derive from this

[27] Fonna Forman-Barzilai, 'Sympathy in Space(s): Adam Smith on Proximity,' *Political Theory* 33.2 (2005): 189-217. 192. This is also described in her book, *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy* (2011).

‘third person’, the impartial spectator, becomes the basis for connection. Because both the actor and spectator experience sympathy (one through tempering his actions to elicit it, the other by judging the other’s actions to bestow it), this sentiment becomes the means of connection.

Ironically, in order for connection to occur, division is necessary: there is not only the division between spectator, actor and impartial spectator, but self-division as well. In order to enter into the feelings of another, one’s own actions must first be assessed. Smith describes it in these words: ‘I divide myself, as it were, into two persons; and that I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into and judged of. The first is the spectator […]. The second is the agent, the person whom I properly call myself’ (113). Again Smith uses his ‘as it were’ phrase which here points to the method of self-scrutiny but also acknowledges this process is in no way clear-cut. Through this process, the ‘I’ who has conducted an action into which s/he is interested in its propriety, must ‘step back’ and begin to not only see things from the perspective of an impartial spectator but must also revisit the particular event, by returning in the imagination to the time of the action while also analysing it from the perspective of it being already completed. Temporally straddling the past coupled with the inescapable knowledge of the present, the self seeks to narrate the event back to oneself who has taken on the role of impartial spectator. Sympathy is ‘a spectator theory’ of the past rather than the future for it is ‘more comfortable with passing verdicts on what has been done in the past than with considering and deciding what should be done in the future’ (Raphael, 31). Like Hume’s concept of the self as a collection of various fragments which we only perceive to be in any sort of wholeness – what we know as a cohesive identity – so also Smith notes the compartmentalisation of the self through the process of narrating the story of sympathy. To facilitate connection outside oneself, one must first become divided; essentially, sympathetic imagination must originate in the self before one is capable of extending comparison outside the self. Nagel’s ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ experience of the self occurs as the spectator’s conscience (here, interchangeable with the ‘impartial spectator’) mediates between felt momentary experience and reflection from outside the self.

It is the mechanism of the conscience, which in Smith’s formulation reaches beyond pure self-referentiality as ‘the vicegerent of God’ (130), that reorients the self by bringing him/her into relation with other selves. Conscience, as ‘the man within’ is:

> the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. It is he who, whenever we are about to act

> so as to affect the happiness of others, calls to us, with a voice capable of astonishing the most presumptuous of our passions, that we are but one of the multitude, in no respect better than any other in it; and that when we prefer ourselves so shamefully and so blindly to others, we become the proper objects of resentment […]. […] the natural misrepresentations of self-love can be corrected only by the eye of this impartial spectator. (137)

Thus the conscience allows us to 'see what relates to ourselves in its proper shape and dimensions;' and enables us to 'make […] proper comparison between our own interests and those of other people' (134). The conscience mediates between the inescapability of knowing oneself in the first person and seeing oneself as one of the multitude, from the third person, and helps us to understand individual identity only in relation to one's role in wider society. Importantly for Smith the conscience is also 'a social product, a mirror of social feeling'.[28] Comparison, in its judging function, then is a moral exercise, that in Smith's context only makes sense in light of sociability.

Referring again to relating to others, Smith repeats the phrase 'proper comparison' on the following page: 'Before we can make any proper comparison of those opposite interests, we must change our position. We must view them neither from our own place nor yet from his, but from the place and with the eyes of a third person, who has no particular connection with either, and who judges with impartiality between us' (135). Christel Fricke clearly articulates the connection between the conscience and the impartial spectator: 'According to Smith, the acquisition of the moral conscience is an essential part of a person's moral education. My claim is that moral conscience as conceived by Smith enables a person to intentionally take the role of impartial spectator. Such a spectator makes moral judgments […] based on sympathetic processes rather than on the application of general moral principles' ('Sympathetic Process,' 178). Fricke highlights the personal nature of reflection, what Forman-Barzilai discusses as the 'Smithean spectator has no resource but her own lights' ('Sympathy,' 194). Additionally Smith's discussion of the conscience as the impartial spectator is always couched within a language of vision. Conscience allows proper perspective so one is not 'blind' but sees 'proper shape and dimensions' regarding him/herself and others. In sympathy the self experiences a change in the moment, but in order for this change to be understood, the self must reflect back upon this event. This process requires the self to become aware of one's judgements retrospectively, and in doing so reflexivity merges into a reflective practice that does not encourage solipsistic reflection but encourages social interaction, as we have seen in Hume's own reaching after social

[28] D. D. Raphael, *The Impartial Spectator: Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: OUP, 2007) 35.

amusements to reorient his first-person sense of self.[29] This sociability is the practical outcome of identity being rooted in third-person selfhood; as an individual's community extended beyond the family, town and nation to incorporate larger transnational networks, we must have a theory of sympathy that moves with it.

Transatlantic and national versions of sympathy

Sympathy in its methodological implications allows a potential traversing from an individual, subjective consciousness to making connections not only outside oneself to one's immediate community but also, web-like, opens up the possibilities for any number of connections. This is the crux: because sympathy concurrently depends upon absolute distance and presence, upon coherence and disjunction, it opens up dialogic gaps within seamless continuity, always inserting the possibility of another perspective into a narrative of exclusivity. Forman-Barzilai is particularly helpful here; she notes how for Smith a vivid narrative can engender sympathy so that 'the vividness of the description *replicates* physical proximity' ('Sympathy,' 199). She continues, 'physical proximity appears to not be necessary for sympathy, [and] it also appears not to be sufficient' (200), noting how for Smith, differences in class and status can alienate one from another person, even in close proximate distance.

The workings of sympathy articulate a particular spatial relationship that has a direct bearing on this thesis and transatlantic literary studies generally. While sympathy provides potent metaphors of connection we must not forget the actual distance of sympathy. The 'gap' that often was bridged in sentimental literature had to do with hierarchical, rather than lateral, structures that were assigned as the pinnacle of a person's meaning (for example, a woman could not transgress her gender roles or the black slave his race). The actor was often the one in the place of inferiority (Brown's black slave in *The Power of Sympathy* or the eponymous heroine in Richardson's *Pamela*), whereas the spectator (propertied male and/or the middle-class reader) occupied the locus of meaning-making in his/her judgement of the actor. As these examples illustrate and because sympathetic exchange is more complicated than simply crossing a gap, it is the imagination which may allow the spectator to inch away from his privilege and see things with 'new eyes'. As was stated earlier, the two dominant critical discourses on the sympathetic novel – the eighteenth century British literature of sentiment and the later American sentimental novel of the mid-nineteenth century -- are

[29] This reminds me of both Hume and Boswell who, in response to prolonged self-pondering, sought the outlet of social interchange to bring the self back to itself. For Boswell, this was evidenced rather destructively in his drunkenness and whoring after Hume's death (which was serene and non-religious).

helpful in negotiating the terms of sympathy and sentiment. However, this thesis is concerned primarily not with either of these bodies of literature, even as they provide a useful starting point, but instead with literature historically between the two and also, along with novels, with genres which are more promotional (such as letters and guides). Sympathetic exchange can only be facilitated between disparate objects, and, these objects can only be metonymically united if the other can be imagined, compared and sympathetically identified with. Imaginative works of art, or even more generally representation (Smith's 'brother on the rack' is an example), become the space upon which imaginative identification is possible; because of the gap always involved in representation, there is always the promise without always the requisite fulfilment of imaginative connection, which we shall see in relation to the failure of sympathy below. It is this gap of sympathy as it is expressed through writing, which is the subject for this thesis. How one articulates 'this new man' of America, from whichever side of the Atlantic s/he writes, must contend not only with crossing the literal gap of the Atlantic through travel and written communication, but also the Atlantic's imaginative possibilities as imaged through the gap of sympathy.

Sympathy is useful for my purposes precisely in its transatlantic rather than nationalistic manifestations, in its *trans*-ness than in its insularity. For a transatlantic concept of sympathy broadly extends the context of third-person selfhood and thus, as one comes into contact with 'the stranger', questions of personal and national identity clamour to be answered with an urgency not seen in more isolationist contexts. But first, we must step back a moment to consider American uses of sympathy. Many critics (most notably Elizabeth Barnes, Caleb Crain and Gregg Camfield) see the sympathetic project primarily as a national one; and in the context of burgeoning American nationalism, especially of the first decades of the nineteenth century, sympathy is viewed as the answer for increasing national fracture, that culminated in the Civil War. As Camfield notes the 'high water mark' of sentimental realism is in the works of Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose work brought together the 'disparate races of people' to which Snead refers (xi).[30] It was not only the Civil War that called for a system that would speak across vast differences. For earlier, seeking to unify colonies into a nation, sympathy provided an appropriate model of connection and thus, several critics have turned to sympathy and to the sentimental novel more particularly to discuss the forging of the nation's selfhood. For instance, Caleb Crain writes, 'I argue that for a time the special

[30] Shirley Samuel's edited collection argues for the racial uses of sentiment, particularly in mid-nineteenth century America. See: *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992) as well as Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* and Amit Rai's *Rule of Sympathy.*

task of American literature, like that of American politics, was the representation of bonds between men that kept men free […] and the peculiar fate of all these things in America' (2). Elizabeth Barnes also draws attention to:

> Sympathetic identification – the act of imagining oneself in another's position – signified a narrative model whereby readers could ostensibly be taught an understanding of the interdependence between their own and others' identities. In a time when American national as well as individual identity was in question, it is not surprising that American literature brought such issues as identification, unification, diversity, and autonomy so directly to the fore.[31]

Contemporary critical studies of sympathy tend on the whole to be concerned with how national sympathy was created, particularly with regard to the tenuousness of the early American republic. The idea was that the localism of the new republic would engender stronger sympathetic ties from American citizens (rather than with the 'mother country'), even as the notion of 'American' was varied. Transatlantic studies imagines a different conceptual geography than such readings; not that an Americanist reading is unhelpful to transatlantic studies – because it may usefully point out the nuances in a national position – but in that it often neglects reflectivity in its own constructions. Still, the concept of the nation as the supreme narrative through which fiction is filtered is very present with us. John Carlos Rowe helpfully reminds us that the reason why 'imagining communities other than the nation is difficult, [is due to] in part because of the powerful grip of nationalist rhetoric on our theoretical models, intellectual methods, and educational institutions'. He writes: 'The national form is indeed compelling, perhaps even compulsive, not because it is inherent or natural to human beings – it is of recent invention – but because its history is so much a part of us'.[32] There are, however, instances that overturn our proclivity towards nationalist readings. April Alliston notes the prevalence of sympathetic communities transcending national borders in literary Channel-crossing. She notes 'these novelistic sympathetic communities *decentralize the nation-state geographically*' as well as drawing attention to racial hybridisation and the blurring between public and private spheres that allows for a replacement of the national category by the sympathetic community[33]. What could be gained through imagining interaction through forms of transatlantic sympathy, for instance, is an opening up and a complicating of the narrative of national formation so that the 1776 ceases

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[31] Elizabeth Barnes, *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) ix.
[32] John Carlos Rowe, 'Nineteenth-Century United States Literary Culture and Transnationality,' *PMLA* 118.1 (January 2003): 78-89. 88.
[33] April Alliston, 'Transational Sympathies, Imaginary Communities,' *The Literary Channel: The International Invention of the Novel*, Ed. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton UP, 2001) 113-148. 145.

to be a watershed where everyone becomes American; that these moments of reversal, indecision and confusion surrounding the Revolutionary years reverberate more than the static stories of American identity that we ritualise as we perpetuate them.[34] Similarly, we are so focused on the nation as the critical interpretative category that we are not able to see or read with diasporic eyes; by reading texts by people who were dislocated or who migrated, it opens our eyes to reading across and beyond, in short, to read transatlantically.

And although recent critics note the potential problems of extending sympathy past proximate physical distance,[35] sympathy was not isolationist in the new republic – consider for example the many real and fictional characters that crisscrossed the Atlantic, from Jefferson, Franklin, Wheatley and Irving, to the protagonists in *Charlotte Temple*, *Arthur Mervyn*, and *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon*. Transatlantic sympathy, when it works, and to a greater extent than national versions of sympathy, implies hybridity. Travel back and forth across the Atlantic opens up questions of how meaning is made and interpreted as characters, authors, emigrants and travellers come in contact with at least one other perspective. This opening up of perspective enlarges vision so that increasing connections (a web-like matrix is one visual representation[36]) are possible. Sympathy in this fictional world serves as the foundation upon which society is built rather than one based on divisions of labour, religion, class or nation. Sympathy, because it is predicated on a system of philosophical morality that is available to all, lends itself to transatlantic comparison with its focus on networks of relationships that reach beyond binaries and rather to the ebb and flow of mutual exchange and transformation. As critics have pointed out, there are limits to Smithean sympathy, with distance being the most obvious, particularly as one leaves behind smaller realms of relationship.[37] However, as discussed earlier, sympathy in its very essentials is concerned about bridging a gap and about a travelling *across*. It thus allows

[34] Leonard Tennenhouse's *The Importance of Feeling English* is one book which seeks to articulate the cultural staying power of Englishness beyond American Independence.

[35] Fonna Forman-Barzilai's work focuses on this as she extends sympathy into realms of cosmopolitanism; Christel Fricke also discusses if sympathy could 'embrace the whole of mankind' (179) in *The Oxford Handbook to Adam Smith*.

[36] See the use of the web in Tony Tanner's *Scenes of Nature, Signs of Men*. Other helpful examples which pick up on this branching quality are J. Hillis Miller, 'American Romanticism, English Romanticism: What's the Difference' *Theory, Now and Then* (1991) and McFadden's *Golden Cables of Sympathy* (1999). In a new formulation of this relationship, see specific works on network theory, such as Duncan J. Watts, *Small Worlds: Networks between Order and Randomness* (1999) and Jeremy Boissevain, "Network Analysis: A Reappraisal" *Current Anthropology* 20 (2) 1979. 392-3.

[37] Both Forman-Barzilai and John Durham Peters take note of the differences between Smith's sense of distance and his own cultural knowledge and our own. See Chapters 5 and 6 in Forman-Barzilai's *Adam Smith and the Circles of Sympathy* and Peters', 'Publicity and Pain: Self-abstraction in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*,' *Public Culture* (7) 1995: 657-684.

connection to be made beyond the world of the novel and into national and transatlantic relations. Given its capacious bridging possibilities, however, sympathetic exchange is also precariously poised since it can fail to begin, and fail to be entered into because one cannot imagine oneself into another position. The gap is then sympathy's defining characteristic that articulates spatially the ideological and experiential divides between persons, groups, and even, nations.

Failure of sympathy: the precariousness of distance and imaginative failure

The Atlantic as a space of opening up closed off narratives stretches sympathy so that it makes connection more difficult, although not impossible, as both Hume and Smith noted. The widening of sympathy across the Atlantic brings to the fore those areas of connection which were buried under national antagonisms that not only expose the nation as a constructed category but also reinvest the concept of national differences with more nuanced meanings. In any sea change where stability is loosened in favour of potential transformation, being shipwrecked is as likely as is an effortless conveyance across the Atlantic.[38]

Always remembering the precarious relationship where sympathy can easily fall apart or remain intact, the sympathetic gap is the prerequisite for sympathy and thus it is not merely a discursive space to be unproblematically traversed, but is integral to sympathetic imagination. As this gap widens, it is the gap, rather than the thin strands of connection across it, that hold sway. When sympathy does occur (and it is by no means assured) it operates at the level of tenuously bridging this gap, opening points of potential connection or potential breakage and allowing solidarity and comparison in its bridging capacity. Indeed, as Hume notes, there is always impending disjunction built into sympathy because in any form of connection 'each remove considerably weakens the relation' (59). The spectator is both merely a spectator, requiring a necessary distance from the action in which to observe, while he is also in his imagination united within the action, so that in imagination he *is* the actor. Thus, sympathy depends upon distance – from which point it becomes possible to see and assess the propriety of the actor's sentiments; and yet for sympathetic exchange to occur (a 'changing places') sympathy also depends upon an eradication of that same distance. Caleb Crain remarks, 'There is something mysterious about sympathy. It allows us to bridge a gap that seems as though it ought to be unbridgeable' (2). David Marshall concurs: 'For Smith,

[38] See Hume's use of the shipwreck analogy at the end of Book 1 of the *Treatise*; he also uses it when discussing sympathy in Book 3. See also Susan Manning's discussion of the end of Book 1 in her *Puritan-provincial Vision*, 45f. Fear of literal shipwreck also plays a part in some emigration guides, the subject of chapter 2.

the impossibility of sympathy is founded in a system that insists on the distance between people, depends on that distance, and dreams of making that distance disappear'.[39] Marshall's language points to the fragility of successful sympathy for if one 'sees [others] at too great a distance to be much affected by them' (*Theory* 35), sympathy breaks down. Kristin Boudreau also discusses this gap of difference:

> Because sympathy attempts to bridge gaps between individuals, its usefulness depends upon a starting point of difference: only when subject and object are separated by experience, appearance, or perception does one need to call upon sympathy to bring these individuals together. Sympathy, then, relies on difference – either original or produced – in order to create a need for itself, for the imagination that conquers difference. (12)

For the transatlantic imagination that can 'conquer difference' sympathy provides a spatial methodology to cross the gaps between cultures on both sides of the Atlantic.

Amit Rai also brings out this defining feature of Smithean sympathy, the gap between the actor and spectator that is at once left open while also being bridged. He perceptively reads Smith's opening passage concerning 'his brother on the rack':

> I suggest the impossibility of this line of questioning [that sympathy is either performed from nature or representation] – situated as it is on the border separating representation and nature, and the body and the mind – leads Smith to qualify his notion of sympathy with such phrases as "some measure" and "some correspondence," and necessitates a crucial admission: an irreducible difference will always also be part of the sympathetic relation. Paradoxically, for the observer to correspond to, and with the other, this gap of difference (both space and time) must in some measure be closed. Hence, Smith's repeated metaphors of "bringing the other home" and "beating time with the other."[40]

Rai however unilaterally tends to see this gap through Foucauldian discourses of power imaged in gender and race rather than also acknowledging the ways in which a momentary connection of difference *could* be positive and mutually beneficial. Succinctly stating this gap of difference, Rai later quotes Thomas McCarthy: 'Sympathy "is contingent on an apparent paradox: the gap, or separateness of the individual parts, is a *sine qua non* of the process; but equally important is the fact that the individual identities remain intact despite their co-operation in the whole"'.[41]

Indeed, sympathy both facilitates and resists connection. Smith states regarding the nearness of connection: 'my imagination is more ductile [than my body], and more readily

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[39] David Marshall, *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith and George Eliot* (New York: Columbia UP, 1986) 180.

[40] Amit S. Rai, *Rule of Sympathy: Sentiment, Race and Power, 1750-1850* (New York and Basingstroke: Palgrave, 2002) 47-8.

[41] Thomas McCarthy, *Relationships of Sympathy: the writer and the reader in British Romanticism* (Ashgate: Scolar Press, 1997) 29. Qtd in *Rule of Sympathy*. 66.

assumes, if I may say so, the shape and configuration of the imaginations of those *with whom I am familiar*' (*Theory* 29, emphasis added). This both extends Hume's imaginative morphology, as well as capitalises on the importance of nearness that Hume had discussed in relation to national imaginative proximity. Although nearness is encouraged, a corresponding distance is always present. This may be one reason why Smith's exposition of sympathy maintains strict boundaries between the actor (the 'brother […] upon the rack') and the spectator, whereas elsewhere in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* Smith blurs the distinction between the actor and spectator and their imaginative identification. Smith's statement that 'when they [our brother's agonies] are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, [they] begin at last to affect us' aptly illustrates the borderline that sympathy treads between connection and disjunction. For even when the actor and spectator are close in proximate distance, the spectator is only connected to his brother on the rack when the imagination fulfils its bridging characteristic and even then, this is only accomplished momentarily. For we are 'brought home to ourselves' – we retain a measure of individuality even as we 'change persons and characters' in fancy – and thus it is only through the pulling apart of connection that the initial connection can be understood. Thus sympathy always has a certain 'pastness' about it, a self-consciousness that Snead wrote in a different context 'by the time one is aware of it, it has *already happened*'. As Rai and McCarthy noted, spatial distance is also integral for sympathetic connection to occur, for without a necessary distance sympathy collapses as another's experience cannot be properly judged of or recognised as different from our own; on the other hand, if the spectator and the actor are imaginatively miles away from one another sympathy may never provide a connection.

One way that sympathy fails, where the gap cannot finally be bridged, is seen in Smith's example of the outcast and lawbreaker. Here the problem is not spatial distance, but affective distance. Smith writes that the 'desire to be believed' 'is, perhaps, the instinct upon which is founded the faculty of speech, the characteristical faculty of human nature' (336). He continues that speech gives birth to order, belief, and leadership in society. But negatively, 'It is always mortifying not to be believed, and it is doubly so when we suspect that it is because we are supposed to be unworthy of belief and capable of seriously and wilfully deceiving' (336). Moving from the person who is (falsely) not believed, Smith considers one who deceives wilfully: he 'forfeits all title to that sort of credit from which alone he can derive any sort of ease, comfort, or satisfaction in the society of his equals' (336). That is, the person who wilfully lies becomes a social outcast, because he cannot be

trusted. Sympathy, for Smith, is not an infinitely extendable and inclusive, utopian vision. According to Smith, there are certain people with whom we cannot sympathise. Here, if one is not believed and therefore shunned from society, sociability – instead of 'bringing [one] home' and into relation with others – further alienates the self. The outcast then 'dread[s] the thought of going into it [society]' and may 'die of despair' (336). This section is notable because it does not advocate a limitless extension of the self under the mechanism of sympathy.

Another barrier to sympathy – where the gap cannot be crossed – is in the example of the Smithean lawbreaker. For even though 'mankind' 'has a natural love for society, and desires that the union of mankind should be preserved', this again does not put forth an endless extension of the self into relationship with anyone and everyone (89). Smith discusses the 'lawbreaker' who has been transformed by remorse:

> By sympathising with the hatred and abhorrence which other men must entertain for him, he becomes in some measure the object of his own hatred and abhorrence. The situation of the person, who suffered by his injustice, now calls upon his pity. He is grieved at the thought of it; regrets the unhappy effects of his own conduct, and feels at the same time that they have rendered him the proper object of the resentment and indignation of mankind, and of what is the natural consequence of resentment, vengeance and punishment. The thought of this perpetually haunts him, and fills him with terror and amazement. He dares no longer look society in the face, but imagines himself as it were rejected, and thrown out from the affections of all mankind. He cannot hope for the consolation of sympathy in this his greatest and most dreadful distress. The remembrance of his crimes has shut up all fellow-feeling with him from the hearts of his fellow-creatures. Their sentiments which they entertain with regard to him, are the very thing which he is most afraid of. Every thing seems hostile, and he would be glad to fly to some inhospitable desert, where he might never more behold the face of a human creature, nor read in the countenance of mankind the condemnation of his crimes. But solitude is still more dreadful than society. His own thoughts can present him with nothing but what is black, unfortunate, and disastrous, the melancholy forebodings of incomprehensible misery and ruin. The horror of solitude drives him back into society, and he comes again into the presence of mankind, astonished to appear before them […] (84-5)

The Smithean lawbreaker (Smith used a murderer as an example) is transformed from the wilful lawbreaker above to one consumed and repentant, haunted by his crimes and 'filled with terror and remorse'. The lawbreaker desires to 'fly to some inhospitable desert' because of his crimes, finding a suitable place in which to house his transgressions. But importantly, 'solitude is still more dreadful than society' and so the lawbreaker returns to society, driven back by the greater horror of solitude. For Smith (as for Crèvecoeur and Charles Brockden Brown) the horror of solitude requires that one make a choice about returning to society, even if such a return means that one will still be outside the boundaries of that society, if

others refuse to accept his remorse. For Smith, identity only makes sense within the context of sociability. Even those like Rousseau's 'solitary walker' or Thoreau, who exult in the individual's spiritual solitary communion in nature, it is notable they still seek a wider audience through publication – forming sociability through the medium of print with like-minded intellectuals.

When sympathy fails, it is often a failure of the imaginative ability to conceptualise another position often quite different from one's own. The failure of sympathy is often the inability to properly imagine outside oneself despite efforts to do so. This failure of sympathy occurs through a widening of the sympathetic gap: because the proximate or affective distance is too far between people, they cannot enter into the same imaginative space. Let us take one example; as a preview of the guides to emigration that will be the subject of the next chapter, one emigrant writes to his family concerning the benefits of American life. In one of the most popular emigration guides of the time, S. H. Collins compiles letters from successful emigrants to America in 1830. One letter by Theophilus Fowle (in America) of August 25, 1828 concludes: 'you have no idea about it [America]. I cannot tell you half of the advantages';[42] he then ends the letter without enumerating any advantages. Of course this comment is a postscript to the bulk of the letter written by his brother, which had enumerated some of the advantages to be had in America. However, even given this, there is the disjunction between the two relatives on either side of the Atlantic inherent in such a comment. The point being that the British cousin is unable to really imagine America – even given the proliferation of details concerning the similarities and differences in the original letter – is because the two are now too far apart ideologically; the one who has not travelled has a corresponding dearth of imaginative projection, something that transatlantic travel facilitates, to really enter into his cousin's American experience. Even given the letter's reporting of empirical detail about the American space, the American writer still assumes that his British counterpart would be unable to imagine something so vastly different from his own context.

Smith discusses this distance, this failure of sympathy, more generally in the context of national differences as well. He writes: 'The propriety of our moral sentiments is never so apt to be corrupted, as when the indulgent and partial spectator is at hand, while the indifferent and impartial one is at a great distance' (*Theory* 154). A person is often

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[42] S. H. Collins, *The Emigrant's Guide to and Description of the United States of America*; Fourth edition, (Hull: Joseph Noble, 1830; Jerome S. Ozer, publisher, 1971), The American Immigration Library, a Facsimile Reprint Collection. 158.

surrounded by people who share similar ways of life and values as oneself, and it is only by coming into contact with the stranger (often in the context of transatlantic travel) that one is able to gain a wider perspective and begin to imagine another perspective. On a national scale:

> Of the conduct of one independent nation towards another, neutral nations are the only indifferent and impartial spectators. But they are placed at so great a distance that they are almost quite out of sight. When two nations are at variance, the citizen of each pays little regard to the sentiments which foreign nations may entertain concerning his conduct. His whole ambition is to obtain the approbation of his own fellow-citizens; and as they are all animated by the same hostile passions which animate himself, he can never please them so much as by enraging and offending their enemies. The partial spectator is at hand: the impartial one at a great distance. In war and negotiation, therefore, the laws of justice are very seldom observed. Truth and fair dealing are almost totally disregarded. […] The just man who disdains either to take or to give any advantage, but who would think it less dishonourable to give than to take one; the man who, in all private transactions, would be the most beloved and the most esteemed; in those public transactions is regarded as a fool and an idiot […] and he incurs always the contempt, and sometimes even the detestation of this fellow-citizens. (154-5)

The neutral nation and its neutral citizen then do not much influence the citizen (of another country) to whom Smith refers. Because the partial spectators with whom one is surrounded perhaps cannot, but at least certainly do not want to, imagine another perspective, one is often lead to please his or her neighbour by becoming more isolationist and 'enraging or offending their enemies'. The impartial spectator, whether nation or individual, is 'almost quite out of sight' and as such, one is unable to take on the position of the impartial spectator and is then left without a third vantage point from which to view a particular situation. Without this third perspective, sympathy breaks down and another perspective is unable to be imagined. The ability to sympathise, to imaginatively enter another's space, depends upon an appropriate amount of distance (and a wider perspective) imaged in the gap of sympathy. As discussed earlier, Hume mentioned 'We sympathize more [readily] with persons contiguous to us' (631), thus it is *easier* to enter into someone's frame of reference with whom we share particular qualities, particularly similar cultural backgrounds. However, because sympathy requires distance, transatlantic sympathy (to take one example) has the greater potential to transform perspectives than does sympathy with those closest to us because the distance needing to be traversed is physically and ideologically greater and therefore the return is greater. But when this distance becomes too great, or if the people with whom we are sympathising are outside of the boundaries of proper social behaviour, or when one rejects the opportunity to imagine him/herself into another's position, sympathy fails.

Sympathy, as it theorises how sociability works, which in turn is necessary for understanding both personal and corporate identity, provides a potent methodology for literary transatlantic studies. If there is an appropriate distance which allows the sympathetic space to be bridged, how does the Atlantic – as this distance – test such an idea? Furthermore, if Mathy's acknowledgement of the Atlantic Ocean as 'barrier as well as a threshold, an interrupter and a facilitator' is correct, how does the Atlantic then close off, invite, stall or encourage connection? Subsequent chapters will act as case studies to investigate the ways in which the Atlantic serves as an appropriate space of sympathetic distance and exchange. Thus while it opens up questions of 'the nation' as an all-encompassing category, transatlantic sympathy moves away from simply deconstructing the nation to positing a model that encompasses imaginative acts of projection, rejection and reception that, like a threshold is a liminal multivalent space of transformation. This 'threshold' of transformation across the Atlantic will be discussed further as the next chapter considers guides to emigration and how emigrants attempt to bridge the gap of sympathy.

Chapter Two:
The gap of Atlantic sympathy, empiricism, and rhetoric in the emigrant guide

Hume clearly articulated the proximate and affective space of the gap of sympathy in his *Treatise*: 'We sympathize more with persons contiguous to us, than with persons remote from us: With our acquaintance, than with strangers: With our countrymen, than with foreigners' (631). As people travelled for leisure and to emigrate, sympathy between people is stretched with their actually travelling, so that as distance increases, sympathy tends to decrease. For sympathy to traverse the metaphorical distance not only between people, but between people on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean, metaphorically there needs to be a particular migratory crossing to bring the two together. This may be, for example, through the ties of family, or similar ideologies which are more important for the individual or group than their physical or national placement. To theorise and articulate a version of sympathy that can move effectively across the Atlantic, we can see the applicability of Hume's association of ideas or Smith's ductility of the sympathetic imagination explored in the previous chapter, and, as we shall see in this chapter, the application here of actual transatlantic travel by emigrants from Britain to America. Emigration guides then, are one genre, which tests out the sympathetic parameters of Smith's theory as these texts attempt to bridge the gap of sympathy. The collection of emigration guides housed in the National Library of Scotland, provide in both their form and content an argument that the gap of sympathy – even when stretched across the Atlantic – can be traversed through a language of shared vision. The movement of the emigration guides proceeds from Britain, is transformed in America and yet must write back sympathetically to those who have not yet made the choice to emigrate. These guides to emigration were chiefly written by men who emigrated ahead of their families and who published their guides in Britain as accounts of 'truth' supplying all the necessary information for future emigrants to follow in their paths; as a genre (of which more will be said later) the guides focus on experience, first-person narration, and detail much practical information about how to go about emigrating. The challenge then, for writers and travellers in this period, is how to maintain sympathetic ties (or to create them with an anonymous reader) when the gap of the Atlantic threatens to dismember sympathetic feeling. This chapter argues that as the emigrant relocates and he experiences dislocation, it is how he dually positions himself (to his new community and the one which he left) that determines whether he is able to straddle sympathetically both his

culture of origin and one of adoption. The physical space an emigrant inhabits (whether in America as a new American, traveller and critic or on his way back to Britain), takes on connotations which move far beyond the actual experience of being here or there. And it is the genre of the emigrant guide, particularly through the writers' use of language concerning visual perspective, that operates as Bannet and Manning note:

> as a sort of *lingua franca*: a common language joining peoples across distance and difference and contributing (in Benedict Anderson's terms) to the process by which contemporaries on different sides of the ocean were able to imagine themselves as one transatlantic Anglophone community: But this would only be half the story.[1]

For of course, the discourse of emigration divided as much as it united; Marilyn Baseler describes the backlash against emigration in the late eighteenth century: 'By the middle of the 1780s, virtually all of the European nations that had established trade with the American states were lamenting the loss of people that their commercial links facilitated and were taking steps to prohibit the emigration of valuable subjects'.[2] And she continues:

> In depicting the United States as a land of social chaos, economic depression, and political licentiousness and as an asylum fit only for scoundrels, British publicists claimed to be performing a public service – protecting the credulous from smooth-talking Americans who stopped at nothing to seduce British subjects from their homeland and natural allegiance. (171-2)

The emigrant guide, then, participates in this discourse and attempts to bridge the gap between American and British experience, either through encouraging or dissuading from emigration. When taken as a body of work, the guides operate as a critical conversation surrounding the emigration debate, particularly from the 1780s through the 1830s; recently, Wil Verhoeven notes the genre's intertextuality:

> The expansive body of travel and emigration literature that emerged in the course of the 1780s and, particularly the 1790s constituted a degree of intertextuality seldom seen before or since in the history of print in Britain. It is this very printedness of the emigration debate that uniquely allows it to be explored and recovered as part of what was a complex transatlantic sociology of texts.[3]

I shall argue that this 'complex transatlantic sociology of texts' can best be understood through a language of vision. Vision, as in Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*, is the mechanism of empirical discourse; vision informs Crèvecoeur's letters on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard where Farmer James mentions that it is only by 'coming to the spot and observing' that one can understand the people's commercial success (125). Here, in the

[1] Eve Bannet and Susan Manning, eds., *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2012) 3-4.

[2] Baseler, Marilyn C. *"Asylum for Mankind" America, 1607-1800* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell UP, 1998) 159.

[3] Wil Verhoeven, 'Transatlantic Utopianism and the Writing of America', *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1800*, Eds. Eve Bannet and Susan Manning (Cambridge: CUP, 2012) 28-46. 42.

emigration guides the injunctions to be present in America signal not only a privileging of empiricism but also that these, through their focus on empirical detail, these supposedly documentary (and therefore rhetorically simple) documents actually make epistemological and existential points about the nature of what it means to be an American, 'this new man'. Focus on vision and the 'eye' reverberates across American writing, from these promotional tracts to Emerson's famous 'transparent eyeball', as key to a particular American character in *Nature* (1836). As Tony Tanner points out, Emerson thought one could get fixed in his ways of looking like one can get fixed on his ways of thinking: 'Consequently [Emerson] wants the eye to be washed clear of those selective and interpretative schemata which prevent us from "an original relation to the universe"'.[4] With Emerson's 'transparent eyeball'[5] then, 'visual relationship [is] between the eye and the world, [where] the eye stands completely passive and unselective while the world flows unbroken into it' (Tanner, 31). This cleansing of vision that allows for the self to take the 'world' into it – of which more will be said later – , in its insistence on a solitary, revelatory experience of nature where one is 'uplifted into infinite space', privileges the individual revelation over forms of corporate solidarity (Emerson, 39). Emerson's use of the eye – of the individual consciousness as preeminent – then challenges sympathy as a mechanism of self- and corporate knowledge. The insistence on immediate presence and personal insight alienates one from solidarity, effectively increasing the gap of sympathy. Here in the guides, the language of vision both works to expand and contract the gap of sympathy as the guides' writers alternately focus on the bridging qualities of vision and the imagination, or the Romantic versions of the self alone in the landscape[6]. Like the opening letters of Crèvecoeur's *Letters*, the emigration guides work both by detailing the wondrous space of America, while also providing a way of reading that space, its 'moral geography' (Fender, 12). The way in which the guides work to bridge this gap of sympathy is through the figure of the emigrant himself, and through the common tropes we find throughout the guides, particularly as they explore a language of visual perspective, even amidst a genre whose conventions emphasise practical knowledge rather than (in most cases) literary accomplishment.

The emigrant in many ways is at the fulcrum of the pressures from both sides of the Atlantic – to either be a new convert to the land of plenty across the sea or to bemoan the

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[4] Tony Tanner, *Reign of Wonder: Naivety and Wonder in American Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 1965) 31.

[5] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature and other essays*, Ed. Larzer Ziff (New York: Penguin, 1983) 39.

[6] It is important to note that the collection of emigrant guides extends from the 1770s to 1850s and although most are from the early 1800s, they typify changing literary tropes on both sides of the Atlantic.

lack of civilisation amongst the Americans. The emigrant also enacts the idea of 'the transatlantic', a term which calls attention to the site of exchange of political ideas, commodities and the 'trades […] in mutual fantasy, the barter of myths and illusions'[7] and implies mutual circulation and exchange of both economic and ideological products. The emigrant in travelling from his regional identity in Europe to America, is not fully defined by belonging to one nation (as he has renounced his homeland but has yet to adopt America entirely), but is *both* a European *and* an American simultaneously; the identity in being classified as 'emigrant' draws attention to identity constructed by and through transatlantic travel (which as Stephen Fender notes in his *Sea Changes* was not always one-way traffic [50]) with the Atlantic Ocean as the site of pressure where questions of identity are enacted. Whoever one was on one side of the Atlantic can change as one crosses the Atlantic to a new nation. Similarly, if one back-migrates, the story told of oneself and America can change from the first story about migration. Both British and American, this 'double consciousness' must be communicated through a particular, promotional style that uses forms and language familiar to his British audience while promulgating a uniquely American vision of opportunity[8]. Although such texts are often purported to be purely documentary and objective, the guides evidence ideological and rhetorical similarities to transatlantic fiction of the period and thus serve as an entrance into the themes and stylistics we tend to associate with more literary genres, which will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five in this thesis.

Even considering the rhetorical necessity to make the gap of sympathy disappear between writer and reader to promote emigration, the guides' writers tend to get stuck on one side of the divide – either forgetting Britain and becoming full-fledged Americans (Crèvecoeur's 'new man') or disavowing their intention to emigrate and returning to their British way of life. In many ways there are profitable overlapping connections with emigration and religious conversion[9]– and when a religious convert neglects to wrestle with doubt in his or her new identity, the new identity becomes a meaningful marker but one that lacks mature authenticity; similarly, when the emigrant crosses over from one national identity to another without the accompanying doubt and reticence necessary to change

[7] Malcolm Bradbury, *Dangerous Pilgrimages: Trans-Atlantic Mythologies and the Novel*. (New York: Penguin, 1996) 1.
[8] Paul Gilroy's phrase from *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993).
[9] See Patricia Caldwell's *The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression* (1985) on the transatlantic conversion narrative. Stephen Fender makes the same point: 'Emigration was itself a conversion experience: a mass movement at times, but one motivated by a multitude of individual decisions, acts of forward planning, achievements and setbacks, endurance and imagination' (*Sea Changes*, 164).

cultures, his writing tends to underplay the dislocation that is inherent in mature sympathetic exchange. Because of their promotional intent, emigrants display in their texts the confidence of Crèvecoeur's Letter 3 – where 'by the power of transplantation [to America] […] they have taken root and flourished!' (43) – without the corresponding fracturing of that same confidence that characterises Crèvecoeur's later letters.

Although each emigrant wrote for different audiences and for different purposes several commonalities between form and content in the guides arise as we consider them together. The guides were composed by successful emigrants, failed emigrants (who became self-styled 'travellers' or back-migrants), and sojourners in America. Thus these emigration guides 'write back' to Britain the experiences of the New World for those seeking to emigrate[10]; this collection is a valuable source of the experiences and reflections on emigration that have largely been critically overlooked, at least by literary scholars, principally from a false dichotomy between documentary and fictive forms of communication. For purposes of cohesion and clarity I have limited myself to only emigrant guides written by travellers, emigrants, and residents from Britain to what is now the United States of America[11].

The emigrant guide is a genre which tests out the parameters of transatlantic sympathy. Its very existence participates in the project of how to create a personal and communal identity outwith the structures of local and national stability. The Edinburgh publisher, William Chambers, commenting on America in 1857 succinctly expresses a common motif running throughout the guides: 'In forming an opinion of a country, much depends on the point from which it is viewed. The point of view for America, as it appears to me, is America itself. To look at it with English eyes and English expectations, is surely unwise'.[12] Perspectival metaphors and imagery are used in the guides to express a sense of disjunction between Europe and America, between the emigrants' present and past, between differing vistas of landscape, between language differences, and countless other differences lodged by the emigrant in his guide. These perspectival metaphors often concentrate on a crisis of identity and existence (that we get in a different form from the ending of Hume's

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[10] The phrase comes from Edward Watts' book, *Writing and Postcolonialism in the Early Republic* (Charlottesville: Virginia UP*,* 1998) which is particularly helpful in applying a postcolonial critique to early American literature.

[11] Research on Scots migration to Canada has been explored in Marjory Harper's books: *Adventurers and Exiles: the great Scottish exodus* (London: Profile, 2003) and *Emigration from north-east Scotland* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988).

[12] William Chambers, *Things as They Are in America*, (London and Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1857) 343.

Treatise) and apply it to the very practical concerns of making a living in America. Focusing on vision within the guides also illustrates that these documentary texts display a confidence in empiricism – that we can know something, through our senses. Although the guides move this sort of query into the realm of pragmatic promotional literature – a staple in the repertoire of the problem of transatlantic distance – they also participate in wider circles of discourse about knowledge gained through the senses. From Locke, all knowledge comes to us through the senses, where sight is the most powerful. This sensory focus worked its way through the disciplines: medical discourse was concerned about the mind and sensory provocation; there was a philosophical education of the senses, from which morality was based (it is after all, by *seeing* one's 'brother on the rack' that we are able to sympathise with him); and, in legal environments, questions were being raised about if we can trust one's senses[13]. For travel narratives, they depend on first-hand experience and the articulation of that experience through writing. Thus even questions of physical and national dislocation are predicated on a discourse that we are able to know something through the senses. This dislocation has a placement: emigrants must physically create a place for themselves in a new society; this, in turn operates stylistically in a dual function in the guides – as a rhetorical strategy, to plainly provide guidance and advice for the realities of emigration, and secondly, to consider the epistemological questions these very practical questions point to, questions of personal, communal and national identity.

Structurally, because the guides were intended to be read by family and community back home, and usually for a wider audience through publication, they walk the line between truthful messages sent from abroad to pamphlets of propaganda, although the guides' authors reiterate that they are transparently recording reality. The guides cover all manners of things relating to emigration: from recommendations about choosing a ship, provisions to take on the journey, whom to avoid, how to cross the Ohio River, how to purchase land or hire oneself out for wages, where to settle, expectations regarding climate and soil changes, common prices for foodstuffs and other goods, and countless other practical pieces of information to the would-be emigrant. Most guides do not concern themselves too much beyond the practicalities of emigration but may include an occasional editorial remark concerning personal experiences. Stephen Fender discusses the import of these itemised lists: 'Taken as a whole, the itemized lists imply a whole political economy – and a morality as

[13] For an overview, see for instance: Alexander Broadie, *The Enlightenment: An Anthology*, (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1997). For a variety of perspectives on Enlightenment medicine see: Roy Porter, ed., *Medicine in the Enlightenment* (Atlanta: Amsterdam, 1995). On legal discourses see: Dieter Paul Polloczek, *Literature and Legal Discourse: Equity and Ethics from Sterne to Conrad* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).

well: the material richness of ordinary commodities as against vain expectations of luxury; trade as against hoarded wealth; the potential for improvement as against instant gratification' (50). The lists then, like the proliferation of detail in the guides on the whole, signify a deeper preoccupation with the effects of emigrating and trading national identities. In all the guides surveyed here, preoccupations with the situation of emigrants and of understanding the United States comes through their language in metaphors of land and farming, of infancy and degeneration, of wilderness and Edenic renewal.

As is conventional for the 'guide' genre, most tend to spend their pages discussing practical details necessary for emigration, while some may also include journals and editorialising comments throughout the accounts. Philosophical or poetic reflection on the psychological effects of emigration is largely missing from the guides surveyed here. This is due to the guides' promotional intent: emigrants read the guides to extract information about *how* to emigrate after they had decided *why* to emigrate, and what they needed was practical information, not philosophical conclusions about being in a liminal transatlantic space, neither fully British nor fully American. This is not to say, however, that the process of emigration cannot be garnered from a comparison between the guides. Even when espousing propaganda detailing America as a second Eden or anti-emigration tracts bewailing the dearth of society in the backwoods barbarity of America, the language the authors use often hints at or returns to an issue at the core of emigration: the construction of identity; this is evidenced primarily through the perspectival language running throughout the guides. Language of perspective, vision and ocularity provide textual markers for ideological perspective and progressive and spiritual vision, and evidence how one becomes 'this new man' of America.

Formally, emigration guides resist easy generic classification. Many fed into the British imagination concerning America, some going through several editions, and some were reviewed in prominent journals. A quotation from the *Edinburgh Review* in 1807 will serve as an example. The reviewer derides a guide, calling it:

> A vast mass of anecdotes, facts, declamations, pictures, quotations from noted works, excerpts from unknown books, songs and other verses, newspaper advertisements, and many other articles, are thrown together by a sort of manual exertion; then made into chapters by the same kind of labour, adorned with preface, index, and title-pages; and then advertised for sale.[14]

Add to this, the reviewer's comments that the author has 'made no regular tour', follows customary conventions of appealing to friends' curiosity for the work that the reviewer calls

[14] Anonymous, rev. of *Stranger in America* by Janson, *Edinburgh Review* (1807): 103-116. 103.

a ‘hasty performance’ and an author whom he deems ‘neither capable of selecting his materials, nor of arranging them’ (103). In short the reviewer wants logical progression – not only in the manner of travelling akin to a European Grand Tour – but also reflected in the style and manner of writing. Continuity, regularity and order are prized above the practical amalgamation that is necessary for the emigrant guide to adequately provide direction. As a bit of a travelogue, geographical treatise, journal, epistolary novel, propaganda tract, and statistical account, the emigrant guide, is a hybrid genre and thus can never satisfy the requirements of the reviewer above. I posit, the guide both anticipates thematic concerns embedded in later canonical American fiction – particularly in its transatlantic negotiations of sympathy – and also generically is a forerunner of transatlantic fiction, as we shall see particularly in Chapters Four and Five.

Stephen Fender’s book, *Sea Changes: British emigration and American literature* remains a relevant and appropriate point of departure when discussing the discourse of emigration. Throughout his critical work on emigration letters and American literature, Fender likens emigration to a rite of passage characterised by separation, liminality and aggregation (according to ethnologist Arnold Van Gennep) (122). As he examines the crossovers between American literature and the literature of emigration, he argues that ‘the experience of emigration was – or rather, was constructed as – a fundamental human experience, like birth, adolescence, perhaps even death, and therefore most appropriately dramatized in symbols and figures that transcend (though never completely elide) immediate influences’ (43). He moves on from discussing emigration as a rite to its identity as a ‘passage’; he describes the motion of emigration thus: ‘The rite is a ritualized journey out to the borders of the culture and back again, whereas the passage – which is what “successful” emigration actually is – goes one way only’ (15). This one-way journey (one-way at least in the writing of it) marks a radical break with family, culture and national allegiances. Fender images it thus: ‘Emigrants to the United States had burned their boats: not only left their neighbors and extended families, but also cut the apron strings of imperial hierarchy and the purse strings of government preferment. They had undergone a reformation of the spirit – of behavior, belief and expectation’ (355). The process of emigration thus constituted a radical remaking of the emigrant, akin to the breaking away, dislocation and relocation within a faith community that we see present within earlier Puritan conversion narratives. Both Fender and Paul Giles in his *Virtual Americas* (2002) use this language of crossing over when referring

to American literature. Particularly the 'idiom of dislocation and estrangement'[15] which Giles traces in the dialogism of British and American literature is present already in emigration guides. Like Fender, Giles seeks to 'map […] [the] text onto a kind of national grid' (2), thus foregrounding the ways in which British and American writing deviated from one another by excluding a 'transatlantic imaginary' (1). Giles also draws attention to the 'particular perspective of the Old World in relation [that] was being thrown disconcertingly into relief' through America (17); this mirroring of the Old World in the New is present not only in more 'literary' accounts Giles discusses but also in the documentary writings of emigrants themselves. In fact reading the emigration guides before turning to more canonical works of literature later in this thesis, we can see – rather than a story of influence where one leads to the other – conceptual continuities between the more documentary forms in this and the following chapter and between more literary expressions (in Rowson and Brown). These continuities arise out of the problem of the transatlantic; that is, how to articulate continuity across distance. And as we turn to the emigration guides as a form entirely concerned with making very literal transatlantic connections, we shall see how perspectival metaphors in the guides enact a methodology of transatlantic sympathy.

Crossing Over

Many, if not most, of the emigrant guides stress the importance of physically being present in America in order to understand the country, its customs and the prospects for emigrants. Of course, America may be imagined before emigration (as mentioned by Malcolm Bradbury[16]) – and this is partly what the guides intend to facilitate for future emigrants – but America may be best understood through physically setting foot in America. Having a 'change of eye', both literally and metaphorically seeing and absorbing the new space of the American continent, seems to be partly how one becomes American according to the guides' authors' injunctions to be present (Tanner, *Reign*, 33). The importance for emigrant texts is to give both practical advice but also through the writing to self-authenticate, to articulate the conditions for being an American, and, like earlier Puritan narratives, to create oneself anew in the process (Caldwell, 124). Writing becomes a register of identity and spiritual progress for these earlier Puritan emigrants; latently this is passed

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[15] Paul Giles, *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002) 7.

[16] Bradbury mentions in *Dangerous Pilgrimages* (New York: Penguin, 1996): 'It was never necessary to visit America in order to imagine it, to have a share in the fantastic American dream, or toss in terror with the American nightmare' (7). See also O'Gorman's *The Invention of America*, Anthony Pagden's *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800* (1987), and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991).

down in the genre of the emigrant guides. Thus, like the 'distressed European' of Crèvecoeur's Letter 3, the emigrant is promised a conversion from distress to plenty, based upon the conditions of being American: 'If thou wilt work, I have bread for thee; if thou wilt be honest, sober, and industrious, I have greater rewards to confer on thee—ease and independence. I will give thee fields to feed and clothe thee; a comfortable fire-side to sit by [...]' (Crèvecoeur 66).

The emigrant writes back about how America cannot be perceived or understood by those who haven't seen it in a dual act of self-projection and self-perception as the American land becomes a displaced reflection of the emigrant's ideologies and the emigrant becomes a metonym for 'America'. The most obvious use of perspectival language involves the author requiring those who would understand America to be physically located within the country. In an anonymous largely negative guide written as a series of letters by a 'gentleman to his friend in England', entitled Emigration to America, candidly considered published in 1798, the author returns to England after residing in the country for one year. 1798 also was the same year as the passing of the Alien, Sedition, and Naturalization acts. These acts, which restricted emigration to the States and severally limited rights in the United States, were xenophobic legislation that were seemingly meant to differentiate who could and could not be 'American', which emerged amid fears of French subversion after the XYZ Affair. This guide to emigration concludes that the truth of America may be known only through observation:

> For a man to have a perfect idea of America, he must come and *see* it: it is so different in every respect almost from Europe, and yet so difficult to communicate by writing wherein that difference consists, that I feel myself very unequal to the task of giving you an idea of it adequate to what I could wish; I can only represent to your mind an imperfect conception of the reality.[17]

America may only begin to be conceived through physically locating oneself in America and through this experience, the author implies the differences 'in every respect almost from Europe' may be intuitively grasped, because these differences are incapable of being articulated without direct empirical observation. 'Americanness' through the genre of the emigration guide, then requires physical experience and a cleansing of vision that removes 'all [the emigrant's] atient [*sic*] prejudices and manners, [and replaces them with] new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced' (Crèvecoeur, 44). The emigrant author writes according to a trope of the land 'exceeding description' (characteristic of the sublime) and

[17] Anonymous, *Emigration to America, candidly considered*, 1798 (Upper Mary-Le-Bone Street: Printed and sold by Thomas Clio Rickman, 1798) 25-6. Emphasis added.

applies it to America – a trope that goes back to John Smith calling England 'Babel' and America, 'Canaan';[18] this idea of America as the land of plenty insinuated that in America, the land houses democratic ideals, and 'nature and liberty afford us that freely, which in England we want'.[19] This American variant on the sublime uses a European aesthetic category which originated in Longinus's *On Sublimity* and gained currency in Edmund Burke's *Enquiry on the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757). Of course the guides' authors were not reading moral philosophy or aesthetics, but there are shared empirical bases for both Burke's theory and the emigration guides as well as how both forms of writing concern themselves with articulating an experience of ineffability (though they express ineffability through different generic registers). Burke emphasises ideas of the sublime in particular as originating only in the senses; he states, 'When we go but one step beyond the immediate sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth'.[20] Burke's emphasis on observable, sensationist knowledge reiterates the Enlightenment's focus on reason obtained through visible and logical means. Burke proceeds to outline the sublime and the beautiful, stressing that the sublime is apprehended through the excitement of the 'emotion of the mind' (7) and which usually results from vast objects, sounds, or darkness. The sublime is firstly a bodily and mental experience, where sensations such as headache and dizziness as well as emotional passions, reverie, awe, and incommensurability serve as instant textual markers. The Burkean sublime later expanded to its better-known Romantic versions in Wordsworth, or Emerson where the poetic self expands into nature, becoming the pantheistic 'transparent eyeball'. The use of the sublime here within the emigrant guides, then, borrows the sublime's language but uses it for the very pragmatic purpose to influence one's decision to emigrate.

To return to *Emigration to America, candidly considered*, this trope of American excess is reversed in a trope of American lack – a political move that essentially uses the land as analogue for moral or political degeneration; this degeneration the author enumerates later: 'She [America] has a loss of character to begin with' (35). The 'perfect idea of America' is not a static notion or even communicable; however the act of writing presents America to the reader's mind even though such a written experience of America is but an 'imperfect conception of reality' according to the author.

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[18] John Smith, *Advertisements for the Planters of New-England* (London 1631; Da Capo Press, Amsterdam and New York, 1971) 29.
[19] John Smith, From *A Description of New England*, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. A: Literature to 1820, Ed. Nina Baym (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2003) 116.
[20] Edmund Burke, *Enquiry on the Sublime and Beautiful.* Vol. XXIV, Part 2 [1757] York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909–14; Bartleby.com, 2001. www.bartleby.com/24/2/. 1

John Knight's *The Emigrant's Best Instructor* (1818) questions the literal experience of America since Knight's guide is not his own written experience of America but a compilation of four travellers 'being men of real and extensive knowledge' who are themselves located in America. Knight concludes that because of their experiences 'their accounts may therefore justly be deemed of the utmost validity and importance' (3). Two extracts from Birkbeck, a well-known emigrant who bought up large tracts of land to sell to his British countrymen who immigrated to Illinois, are particularly relevant. Knight writes that Birkbeck says 'the condition of people in America, is so different from any thing we can *see* in Europe, that it is difficult to convey an adequate idea of them'.[21] Again, like rhetoric of the sublime, the difference between European and American manners, society, landscape, and culture is intuitively felt but unable to be clearly articulated. Where European blindness elicited contempt in the anonymous gentleman's account, here it is a reason to praise America. National difference is lodged within ocular language: the American experience is unable to be perceived by Europe and therefore the idea of America is likewise occluded from European sight. Just as Chambers mentioned later that to look at America with English eyes and expectations is unwise, so here Birkbeck foreshadows Chambers' point: America is actually unable to be perceived except by the emigrant who with a type of double vision, with both European and American eyes, has the potential to see America and attempt to make it communicable to a Europe that can only imagine it; this 'double vision' however is aimed at a particular practical purpose, being able to articulate the would-be emigrant's concerns while also describing America and creating a vision for (or against) emigrating.

Even in the details of emigration, attention to sight is prevalent. Wiley and Putnam's *Emigrant's Guide* of 1845 stresses in-the-moment experience: 'The emigrant should not choose a ship because it is puffed in print. *Let his own eyes be his judge*'.[22] Ironically because such a statement is itself in print it somewhat invalidates its own advice. There is no substitute for first-hand experience because it is considered to transmit a conclusive statement of reality via the senses. Although the writers do not evidence a sense that writing risks or creates fictionality as it interposes itself between empirical experience in the mind of the subject and the audience, a distrust of (other) written accounts is embedded in the genre.

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[21] John Knight, *The Emigrant's Best Instructor, or, the most Recent and Important Information Respecting the United States of America*, Second Ed. (London: Mr. Souter and J. Knight. Printed by J. Leigh, 1818) 64. Italics mine. Also see his: *Important Extracts from Original and Recent Letters written by Englishmen, in the United States of America, to their Friends in England* (Manchester: Printed by Thos. Wilkinson; Published by J.K [himself], 1818) 2 series.

[22] Wiley and Putnam, *The Emigrant's Guide* (London: Wiley & Putnam, 6 Waterloo Place; and all the respectable booksellers in the United Kingdom, 1845) 16.

Ocular language is also used metaphorically: William Chambers, whose *Edinburgh Journal* and *Information for the People* 'attained a phenomenal circulation, especially among farm servants and artisans who had hitherto read little',[23] also comments on the clarity arrived at by observation; he states, that 'the eyes of all Europe are directed [at New York] as the actual metropolis of the New World' (171). Because of distance, Europe may only perceive New York through the imagination, specifically through the elucidating function of guides such as Chambers', which makes clear the ambiguities of hearsay. Chambers comments on the clarity arrived at by observation; he states

> It is a very curious thing that nobody, till he sees it, can properly understand the situation of New York. Accounts of it are not clear. Our minds are perplexed by two opposite circumstances. The city is said to be on an island – the island of Manhattan – and yet is connected with the mainland. I now got rid of this mystification. (171)

Writing, which may give an idea of America to Europe, cannot provide the lucidity that direct perception can. According to Chambers, writing obscures the reality of New York. Although 'the eyes of Europe', connoting its focus, essence and perspective, are directed toward New York, its particularities can be known only through personal observation. Yet underlying Chambers' emphasis on physical experience is the corresponding undermining of the experience by putting it into writing; Chambers' observations become another account of New York for an audience to translate from his experience to their imagination. And yet writing down one's visual experience becomes a testimony to the emigrant's change in status and his self-identity as an American. Thus 'seeing' as these authors advocate becomes more than simply getting straight the geography of a place that the reader has never seen, it becomes akin to a new spiritual reality: 'I once was blind, but now I see'.[24] Vision as a motif used in the guides, though used for the practical purpose of declaiming the differences between Britain and America, also is used metaphorically as it indicates that a re-birth or cleansing of vision happens through emigration. The focus on vision also iterates a capacity to see clearly into nature through being present in America; this clarity occurs as the transatlantic crossing is meant to signal a re-birth, into a new identity as an unencumbered 'new man', who leaves behind and cuts off Europe in order to start anew (Crèvecoeur, Letter 44).

[23]Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration 1607-1860* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961) 150.
[24] John Newton, 'Amazing Grace', 1779. http://www.hymnsite.com/lyrics/umh378.sht

Bridging the gap: Sympathy through ineffability

The discussion of physically experiencing America and the lack of specificity in one's narrative account of the experience is not unique to Chambers' observations. In most of the guides, the authors come up against America and are no longer able to write effectively of the experience. Rather than distancing the reader from the guide, the use of ineffability as a trope serves to make the author more reliable and human; for if he as an experienced writer and emigrant has a difficult time explaining the impact from setting foot in America, then the future-emigrant reader is able to trust him. In one the most popular guides of the time, S. H. Collins compiles letters from successful emigrants to America in 1830 – the beginning of the decade that Hansen notes as an influx of immigrants 'five times that of the preceding decade' (178). The embedded letter within the emigrant guide lends an air of authenticity and intimacy. One letter by Theophilus Fowle of August 25, 1828 concludes: 'you have no idea about it [America]. I cannot tell you half of the advantages' (158); however, he ends the letter without enumerating any advantages. In quite literally bridging the transatlantic gap the emigrant is in a particular position to translate, re-write, or create America for Britain, which in his process of writing, is both attempted and elided. In all acts of linguistic and cultural translation proceeding from an empirical experience of multiple cultures, the translator experiences what Michaela Wolf calls a 'crisis of representation'[25] in translation that is 'a multi-layered process of action and communication' 'between already hybrid cultures' (189). In the case of the emigrant guides, this 'crisis' then manifests itself in the inability to articulate differences and continuities across the Atlantic (although there appears a corresponding desire to mention the disparities between the two) in a similar manner to the requirement to *see* America while also requiring the would-be emigrant to only *read* America in the guide. The experience of the new location and its import on the emigrant as it stands in for a new life, dislocates the emigrant existentially. The challenge then for the guides' author is how to write back his experience so that Britons across the ocean sympathise with him so that he is pitied or becomes a forerunner to future emigrants.

Although the comparison between America and the Old World in the guides is at times no more than a mention of the recipient having no idea of America, there always exists at the very least a putting of this admission into words. Patricia Caldwell makes the point in *The Puritan Conversion Narrative* (1983) '[…] just as in spiritual autobiography the

[25] Michaela Wolf, 'Culture as Translation – and Beyond Ethnographic Models Representation in Translation Studies,' *Crosscultural Transgressions. Research Models in Translation Studies II*, Ed. Theo Hermans (Manchester, UK and Northhampton, MA: St. Jerome Publishing, 2002): 180-192. 182.

disclaimer about inexpressibility accompanies an intense verbal performance, so [attention to…] ineffability was not to discourage but to encourage communication – with oneself first, then with others'.[26] Although Caldwell's research deals with an earlier America and a different genre of representation, her analysis suggests continuities as both Puritans and emigrants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries experience dislocation associated with an Atlantic crossing. In the emigrant guides there is the same not knowing how to express the American scene and also like the conversion narratives, an attempt to put this into words regardless of the ineffability of the situation. This struggle with language, with not as able to put into words the physical experience of America, indicates perhaps a reticence or inability to describe the vastness of his experience for a foreign audience. But being this inexpressibility refers not to God (as it does in Caldwell's texts), but to physical topography and customs, the language of confusion and silence may be the beginnings of the literary employment of vastness as shorthand for the 'indescribability' of America. This lack is often highlighted in the disparity the emigrant observes between what the writer sees and writes. There is both an authorial struggle with the inadequacy of language to describe empirical experience and a critical distrust of other writers (evidenced as we shall see below in the critical jabs at other authors in the guides' Prefaces); but both reactions use visual imagery as a metaphor for the emigrant's perception of America and his relationship to it, and maintain trust in both the communicable qualities of the senses and of writing to articulate sensate experience.

The inability to describe America results not only from the emigrant's fascination with America but also from the emigrant-traveller's distaste for it. To 'ascertain the naked truth, in all particulars relating to emigration to that land of boasted liberty'[27] an English farmer, William Faux, undertook a tour of the United States between 1819 and 1820, at the height of Anglo-American suspicion following the War of 1812. Again focusing on the importance of factual reporting, Faux's 500-page account attempts to make emigration no longer 'a journey in the dark' (329) and to paint 'things as they are' in America rather than 'things as they should be' (328). His guide is perceptive and engaging and yet although he can write of the benefits and hardships of emigration based on class, he cannot answer the question he poses towards the end of his guide: '"to emigrate or not to emigrate? That is the question!"' and comments, 'It is easier to propound than to answer this inquirey' [*sic*] (484).

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[26] Patricia Caldwell, *The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983) 91.
[27] William Faux, *Memorable Days in America* (London: Printed for W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, 1823) Viii.

His whole account may then be seen as an illustration of language being inadequate to answer the question of emigration. It provides the would-be emigrant with a fuller imagination of America but cannot ultimately advise him on a plan of action. Faux's guide attempts to bridge the gap between his perception of America and his readers' imagination of it but runs up against the limits of language. When describing a forest in the west on 13 May 1819, clearly referencing tropes of the sublime in nature, he writes,

> Language is inadequate to describe a journey through this interesting, romantic, fantastic forest. At one time the eye beholds large fleets or groves of naked masts, […] at another, roads apparently conducting to the houses of great men; spots, too beautiful for description […]. The roads and paths are so constantly and suddenly winding, and withal so beautiful, that common mortals might fear to proceed further, expecting to meet some mighty prince or celestial spirit in these sacred haunts; or perhaps some gigantic monster, rushing out of these dark shades to annihilate all. Imagination is here highly and almost fearfully excited. It is, therefore, difficult to rid one's self of the idea that one is certainly moving into some castle or palace, by favourite concealed paths, ornamented with magnolias. (52)

Like Caldwell's observations on Puritan conversion narratives, here as well the nod to the inadequacy of language leads to a profusion of it. But rather than wrestling with the ineffability of American landscape confronting the emigrant or traveller, rather than dealing with the 'crisis of representation' (Wolf, 182), Faux drapes his experience in aesthetic terms and spectres of fairy tales. The imaginative possibilities occasioned by the forest in Faux's repetition of 'or's provides multiple exits to the literal forest that lead to fictive entrances into storybook tales. The 'great men', 'prince', 'spirit' and 'monster' provide fictional figures familiar to Europe and reduce the actual American topography to a setting for a story authored by Europe. Faux begins with his notice of 'large fleets or groves of naked masts' but this is immediately translated into fictions. The first perception of the forest is ignored for the benefit of its transformation into writing and yet there still is the inability of language to capture the American experience; the forest (and more broadly America) is here, even considering Faux is present physically to perceive it, left to become only an imaginative reality based upon European readings of the sublime or picturesque. To the sublime description of American landscape, Faux thus adds increasing literary associations, from the fairy tale and Germanic stories to the 'imaginative reality' that we see in Irving's tales (such as 'The Spectre Bridegroom' or 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow'), published in 1820. The ineffability of language and the sublime landscape in particular, allows Faux registers with which to position his own emigration narrative.

William Amphlett's *The Emigrant's Directory to the Western States of North America* (1819) is notable in its attention to and reflection on natural detail, but differs from

Faux in that Amphlett stays closer to the landscape although his writing tends more towards a dressing up of journalistic transparency rather than toward epistemological inquiry. In his passage to America on 2 June 1819, he comments: 'How unequal is language to depict the effect of a wild and broken sea, […]. It is a perfect chaos[28]. One week later he states, 'Nothing on paper or canvas can give an adequate idea of their [the icebergs'] various brilliant beauties, as they glittered in the sun, with the green waves and white foam of the ocean lashing their crystal sides' (27). Amphlett's clichéd poetics of glittering crystal describe his attempt 'on paper or canvas' to 'give an adequate idea' of the experience of the icebergs, although he negates such a possibility; this also resonates beyond this emigration guide as it echoes contemporary literature in its spiritual experience of nature (the restorative walking in *Frankenstein* or the crime against nature of the killing of albatross in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*). That is, Amphlett's guide (like Faux's) borrows from contemporary imaginative writing many of the same themes and interactions with space and place; here it is the individual's relationship to nature within the particular context of a transatlantic crossing. Perhaps he imagines this serves as a textual marker of nature's incommunicability. Although Amphlett acknowledges such attempts to capture what he experiences, he continues to write the experience because although it may not do justice to what he observes, its written presence confirms its existence and the emigrant's identity as observer tied up within it: if it is on paper, if friends and family read of it back home, it has meaning beyond the personal loneliness of the emigrant.

Amphlett's strongest sense of the inadequacy of language results as a sight of land after a month-long ocean voyage:

> No language can describe our pleasurable sensations: it seemed as if we had never lived before! We know not how to express our happiness to each other: we seem all as a felicitous company of brethren; perhaps in another hour or two the slightest trifle may set us all at variance, or a sudden change of wind sink us into the most gloomy despondency! Such is human life! and such is human nature!
>
> Omnium rerum vicissitudo.
>
> At present, all our happiness seems centred in that one word, *land*! We think of nothing else: we talk of nothing else; forgetting that there awaits us the lot of all mankind, - disappointments, and toil, and disease, and death! (50)

It is not just that nature and America cannot be communicated to an audience and that because of this America cannot be perceived except in scattered imaginings, but also that this new experience becomes a metaphor for understanding the emigrant experience; the rhetoric of emigration means one has become reborn in America and Europe disappears in

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[28] William Amphlett, *The Emigrant's Directory to the Western States of North America* (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-Row, 1819) 20.

comparison. The sense of rebirth and the community imaged as ‘brethren’ translates biblical metaphors of spiritual growth and the church into a crossing over from the Old World to the New, effectively becoming ‘this new man’ of America. This borrowing of religious terms to explain the emigrant experience does not provide hope or an answer to ineffability, but rather further leads to Amphlett’s reflections on the inadequacy of language to express emotion and on the mutability of the human condition. The use of Latin, like the biblical references, removes the immediacy of the experience by filtering it through another mode of representation. It is as if by distancing the thoughts occasioned by emigration, in effect by putting it ‘on paper or canvas’ – a written perception of the thing, there remains the hope that some purchase on the experience may be gained. But all that results are thoughts of the present and a common fate of ‘disappointments, and toil, and disease, and death’. Only a small semicolon – a syntactical mark of expectancy and continuity – separates Amphlett’s reflections on the moment and its forgetfulness of the common ‘lot of all mankind’. In the end, Amphlett has nothing new to communicate because his reflections on the emigrant experience – travelling across the ocean in search of a better life – move the problems of the ‘crossing’ to reiterate the difficulties of common human existence.

William Chambers’ preoccupations with language largely serve as a register for the inability to accurately portray America. He states,

> How, for example, am I able to communicate a just notion of the intelligence, the refinement, the enterprise of the Philadelphians – their agreeable and hospitable society, their pleasant evening-parties, their love of literature, their happy blending of the industrial habits of the north with the social usages of the south? All this must be left to conjecture, as well as the Oriental luxury of their dwellings, and the delicate beauty of their ladies. (317)

Perhaps Chambers’ equivocations about describing Philadelphia have to do with his acknowledgement that ‘Philadelphia is somehow associated, *par excellence*, in the minds of the English with the idea of America’ (318) – particularly as the then-capital city of the United States, Philadelphia symbolised the country as well as its associations as the ‘city of brotherly love’. The actual experience of the city and the subsequent writing of it are too much in the face of the imaginative value the city has acquired as the location of colonial rebellion; the reality cannot stand against the idea. Like the other accounts, he acknowledges the difficulty in writing of America, but rather than quickly transform the landscape into European fictions or borrowing language of Christian experience like Faux and Amphlett, Chambers briefly mentions the specifics of Philadelphian society and ultimately leaves these ‘to conjecture’. Philadelphia becomes a microcosm of the United States which, although the Civil War was to break out four years after publication of Chambers’ guide, is presented as

the perfect union of north and south. Perhaps it is only the ‘Oriental luxury’ that complicates Chambers’ positive picture of Philadelphia – as Philadelphia was a union of the North and South, the dominant cultures readily associated with the States at that time, it was explainable; but when added a third ‘Oriental’ category, it suggests an impending ideological division that implies a consciousness that would soon fracture the country. Thus Chambers leaves Philadelphia to the imagination and to the general idea, allowing the British audience to fill it in – as they do for the actual geographical space of America.

The emigrants’ recognition of the difficulty of imagining America for a British audience, even given the similarities of language, aids the transition of emigrant identity from observer to active participant. What is visually perceived seems almost impossible for the authors to translate into a written perception. As in an experience of the sublime, the mental idea moves clumsily towards writing because the experience is often overpowering. This difficulty of translation which touches at the centre of the psychological process of emigration – because the emigrant cannot convert his ideas produced by his new homeland into accessible language whereby those he left in Britain can imagine it – is expressed in visual terms, often specifically by the sensation of ‘dazzlement’.

The anonymous *Emigrant’s Guide; or, a Picture of America* published in 1816 dissuades emigration to the United States on account of its lack of society, its political deviations from Britain and mental degeneration resulting from ‘the circumstances of learning having never arrived to that degree of perfection in which it may be found in Europe, and there being no writers of eminence on any branch of literature among them’;[29] *Emigrant’s Guide* thus deviates from Bishop George ;’s poem which imagines empire fleeing a decadent civilisation and ends:

> Such as she bred when fresh and young
> When heavenly flame did animate her clay
> By future poets shall be sung
>
> Westward the course of empire takes its way
> The first four acts already past
> A fifth shall close the drama with the day
> Time’s noblest offspring is the last.

The poem’s emphasis on ‘westward the course of empire’ has spawned a significant amount of commentary regarding Berkeley’s ‘translatio’ motif;[30] briefly, here learning and ‘the rise

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[29] *The Emigrant’s Guide; or, a Picture of America* (London: Printed by W. Clews; For W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, 1816) 20.

[30] George Berkeley’s poem, ‘Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America,’ *Poems of Places:* An Anthology in 31 Volumes, Ed. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Boston: James R. Osgood & Co.,

of empire and of arts' stay in Europe rather than journeying westward to 'await a better time'. The guide opens by discussing the dazzling or disconcerting tales of emigration:

> AMERICA has been considered, by those who have been *dazzled* by the infatuating sounds of democracy, independence, liberty, and equality, as the only happy spot upon earth; where all necessaries, comforts, and luxuries of life, flow spontaneously, or are to be obtained without that perseverance and industry which are required for their attainment in other civilized nations. (7, emphasis added)

What the author of the *Emigrant's Guide* here draws attention to is what Jean Baudrillard refers to as the 'hyperreality' of America 'because it is a utopia which has behaved from the very beginning as though it were already achieved'.[31] Via the 'infatuating sounds' of American political ideals, the European mind at times imaginatively perceived (or desired to perceive) America as utopia achieved and as 'the only happy spot upon earth', a concentration of ease, decadence and exoticism. The guide's author disrupts the hyperreality of imagined American life by drawing attention to the written perception of America in what Edward Watts describes as the text 'deliberately liv[ing a] double li[fe], wherein secondary narratives about the act of writing itself coexist with otherwise recognizable primary narratives telling a story about something else' (18). Focus on the act of writing is not in a narrative subplot, as is the case in Watt's analyses, but in the writer's language of perspective; the author's intent to provide the guide as a 'beacon to warn those who too hastily conclude on emigration' (8) steps back from his own reflections and into a critical conversation surrounding emigration and specifically to the dazzling accounts of America that have propped up a false sense of America as an utopia already achieved; in other words the author refutes the tropes of plenty associated with an invented America,[32] while still engaging with them. Because both the emigrant and his text live 'double lives' (the emigrant as both British and American, and the function of his text as simultaneously a promotional tract, an autobiography and work of criticism), they emphasise 'transience' and 'process' that Watts describes as indicative of later canonical works of American fiction (19). Part of this dual perspective is explained through the various visual metaphors employed by emigrants, particularly the idea of dazzlement.

The *OED* gives the first, now obsolete, reference of the verb 'dazzle' as: 'To lose the faculty of distinct and steady vision' and the more commonly used definition as 'To

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1876–79) Bartleby.com, 2011. www.bartleby.com/270/. For some helpful explications of Berkeley's poem (and *translatio studii et empirii*) see: Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Importance of Feeling English*, 12f; J.G.A. Pocock, 'The Historiography of *Translatio Imperii*,' *Barbarism and Religion Vol. 3, The Decline and Fall* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003):127-150; Susan Manning and Francis Cogliano, 'Introduction,' *The Atlantic Enlightenment* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008) 5f.

[31] Jean Baudrillard, *America*, Trans. Chris Turner. (London: Verso, 1986 (French), 1988 (English)) 28.

[32] See Edmundo O'Gorman's analysis in his book, *The Invention of America* (1961).

overpower, confuse, or dim (the vision)'[33]. To be dazzled implies unsteady and blurred vision that results from being visually overpowered or off-balance. It can both positively imply a cleansing of vision and spiritual experience of nature as one is transfixed. Negatively it implies one's perception is askew because one has passively received something, usually powerful light, which upsets the normal way of seeing. The word is also used figuratively not just to apply to the physical faculty of sight, but also of the mind; the *OED* describes the adjective 'dazzling' as figuratively 'that [which] dazzles the mind of the observer'. The word literally applies to vision but figuratively to the mind; as such it performs a similar function as 'perspective' and 'perception' and provides linguistic (not just philosophical) precedent for associating the categories of sight with the mind. The word also has physiological implications that connote spiritual insight or vision.

Given the widespread association with physical and mental perception, it is interesting the author of the *Emigrant's Guide* uses a mixed metaphor to describe what he would consider as over-zealous attempts to promote emigration in terms of being 'dazzled by the infatuating sounds'. The intertwining of visual and auditory language arrests the reader on these accounts where the 'luxuries of life, flow spontaneously', providing a readerly re-enactment of a moment to pause in reading similar to the would-be emigrant purportedly being dazzled by written accounts. Just as the utopian picture of America implies a loss of consciousness or entrance into a dream-like state as one experiences idyllic ease, so also do the sounds of this written utopia imply an entrancement, a 'moment of vision'. This moment of fixation is akin to a type of personal clarity or eschatological revelation which is both imperial and spiritual according to Berkeley's poem, referenced earlier, which ends: 'Westward the course of empire takes its way; / The four first Acts already past, / The fifth shall close the Drama with the day; / Time's noblest offspring is the last'. Visual dazzlement, however, goes beyond receiving of visual stimulation of an object where the object may be said to exist in one's mental perception of the thing, and is instead a mental sublime moment of fixation where the mind is overpowered by the object in view. Here it is the 'sounds of democracy, independence, liberty, and equality' that transfix the British person disposed to emigrate and transform him into an emigrant. Additionally, it is the moment of transfixing that can become the moment of 'crossing over'; as St. Paul saw a blinding light on the road to Damascus and it was from that point that he quit persecuting the Christian church to becoming its principal proponent, here, too, the effects of light transfix the emigrant and

[33] 'Dazzle.' *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. 2nd ed. <http://dictionary.oed.com>

signal re-birth. But this is not exactly a spiritual re-birth (though it borrows that language), but instead a 'crossing over' from Briton to American[34]; (conversely, dazzlement is used by pro-British proponents to argue against conversion into Americans). The gap of sympathy is effectively bridged as Britons become the 'new man' of America.

Hugh Murray, like the anonymous author of *Emigrant's* Guide, dissuades emigration in 1829 and also uses the language of dazzlement in his *Historical Account of Discoveries and Travels in North America*. He writes:

> Emigration to America, as already observed, presents no longer any of those vague and brilliant prospects which dazzled the eyes of the early adventurers. They can hope no longer to share the spoil of kingdoms, to open sources of golden wealth, or to return and dazzle their countrymen with the treasures of the Western World. To earn simple plenty by a life of labour is all that America now offers. Yet such is the pressure of circumstances that thousands for this alone gladly abandon all that is attractive in the idea of country and home, and become the citizens of a remote and almost savage territory. (528)

Murray's account distances dazzlement to a thing of the mythic past and confines it to the stories of early adventurers. Yet, Murray stipulates, because of this tradition of dazzlement, emigration continues unabated – especially given the upsurge in British emigration due to poor harvests at home – the emigrant is met with a 'life of labour' and cultural exile from civilisation into savagery. He also uses the common physiocratic terminology that America is the land of the farmer, the land of the independent man whose virtue is tied to the soil. This is the sort of thing we see in Crèvecoeur where the minister writes his sermon while following the plough and James 'ploughing with his child, and to feed his family' extends the physiocratic basis of virtue in the soil by including reference to 'the emperor of China ploughing as an example to his kingdom' (28).

Whereas in Faux's guide his defamiliarisation from the landscape afforded him the imaginative play of princes and monsters stepping off the storybook page, the situation is reversed in Murray's account where the dazzling stories of America are not allowed to permeate the landscape. There is a disjunction between the placement of the emigrant and his access to the metaphorical possibilities that landscape entails. Murray's story of emigration is one framed by 'reluctance and regret' for the emigrant to leave his 'deep attachment to their native soil' (503) and leading to the present emigrants coming 'in the hope to improve their circumstances, to escape from the pressure of care and difficulty, and to acquire that dignified position which arises from the possession of property in the soil' (437). Murray, like the gentleman author of *Emigration to America,* in order to counteract dazzlement, tells a

[34] See Acts 9 in the Bible for the story of Paul's conversion.

purely practical tale and concludes that 'America is the farmer's country' (16) (an injunction that was proposed fifty years earlier in Crèvecoeur's *Letters*). The language of dazzling evidences an author's assessment of another's written experience of emigration and moves the writer on from sympathy extended to other emigrant writers simply because they have undergone a similar experience. Instead, the intratextual arguments that value or devalue emigration prospects move beyond simply evaluating the veracity of others' claims (though the guides do do this), to intimately involving the emigrant-author as transplanted and liminally situated. As the authors engage with other emigrant-authors and critique other guides within their own, increasing focus on the emigrant leads to a surfacing of fears about emigration itself. In the language of the gap of sympathy, we can see that the promotional ends of the guides can often belie the actual gap of sympathy – that literal fears of the crossing and overland journey, as well as larger fears of identity formation and finding a community, continue to resurface throughout the guides, even as they focus on practical concerns.

Needing to articulate America for a British audience, some of whom are hostile towards emigration, causes the writer to need to tie his experience to his writing as closely as possible to authenticate it. The authors of the guides are cognisant of this difficulty, which rests on a struggle with language, and their reflections on language slippage leads back the particularities of the emigrant's experience of America and his written guide, another story about America considered alongside past and present fictions. The emigrant's doubled status (by virtue of being able to speak back to Britain and to Americans) is due to his particular transatlantic viewpoint from which he is able to 'virtualise' America or to see 'native landscapes refracted or inverted in a foreign mirror' while also seeing foreign landscapes through a native mirror, depending upon individual perspective (Giles, *Virtual Americas*, 1-2). Bradbury also notes that this 'doubled transatlantic refraction […] became a fundamental narrative […of] two related and yet deeply different visions of the world' (*Dangerous Pilgrimages*, 9). The narratives of the emigrant guides when compared with one another present 'different visions of the world' and each becomes the setting for a kind of Bakhtinian dialogism, where the guide becomes the place upon which differing voices interact through the guiding point of view of the author's written perception of America. Alongside the emigrant's story is the desire to distinguish between fact and fiction and reality and fancy among the various emigration accounts. This act of discernment between reality and imagination does not leave the emigrant solely in the position of omniscient critic (or an omniscient narrator), but ushers in doubt, and acknowledges the gap of sympathy that lies

underneath their confident narrative critique; accompanying this is the realisation that language cannot fully describe America as we have seen above, and thus the emigrant then begins to explain and question the categories of reality and imagination.

In writing their own story of emigration and evaluating others', the guides' authors often play the part of critic, easily delineating between what is constituted as fact and what is understood to be fiction (a division that we shall see throughout this thesis does not hold). William Faux writes on 23 August 1819 of real and imaginary evils: 'Those who [...] come here to know that their evils at home were comparatively imaginary and unreal, cannot return too soon' (132). According to Faux, America as an imagined utopia fails upon closer view, while an experience of America is what is necessary to gain the proper perspective on Britain. The reality of oppression in one's homeland becomes simply imaginary as temporal, spatial and ideological distance increases. Similarly, the author of the *Emigrant Guide* comments,

> Doctor Priestly [*sic*] and most of his political followers and partisans, who suspected no deceit from the sons of democracy; and who fled from *imaginary* evils in their native land, to experience *real* ones in that which their phrensied imagination depicted a paradise, bartered their english guineas for a quantity of republican soil worth nothing. (66)

Within the author's story, there is no consideration of Priestley's emigration resulting from the 1791 'Priestley riots' in his native Birmingham, which would seem to substantiate real evils (not imaginary ones) in his native land. Priestley does seem to have been welcomed to the United States at least by Jefferson who wrote of Priestley as the pinnacle and apostle of 'science and honesty'[35] (letter of March 21, 1801). Nevertheless, by privileging the overtly reactionary and conservative element to his narration of Priestley's emigration (that is anti-Jacobin and anti-Revolutionary), the author turns the story of America as utopia achieved on its head. America becomes the seat of real evils, while the British emigrant can only consider the 'evils' of his native land as imaginary rather than as the real evils he considered them to be. It is only through experience of both places that the emigrant can authenticate his imaginative claims.

The author of the *Emigrant's Guide* refuses the provisional, perspectival possibilities described earlier (that we see in Murray's account) as he instead dissuades emigration based upon his presupposition of anti-Revolutionary sentiments. Calvin Colton's *Manual for Emigrants to America* (1832) – published the year America saw a huge influx of European

[35] Thomas Jefferson, 'Letter to Joseph Priestly', March 21, 1801. Available at: http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/thomas-jefferson/letters-of-thomas-jefferson/jefl137.php

immigrants due to severe winters[36] – recognises the written bias of emigration. He writes, 'It is impossible for them [the successful emigrants] to write to their friends on this side of the Atlantic without extravagant praise, as for the ill-natured or purchased libeller to write without detraction and extravagant censure. Neither the one nor the other are [*sic*] to be trusted. The truth lies between them' (4). The transatlantic emigrant, as nationally dislocated, embodies this in-betweenness present in Colton's advice to realise that 'truth lies between' extremes. In an in-between space, the emigrant occupies a 'Third Space of enunciation, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process'; [37] this ability to see both sides is a hallmark of the emigrant and more generally of a transatlantic figure, but it carries with it ambivalence that the genre of the emigration guide seeks to downplay in its promotional intent. Where the *Emigrant's Guide*'s author expressed one of 'two related and yet deeply different visions', Colton's guide implies a dialogue of the two. Colton emphasises that America 'should be exhibited in her own naked and undisguised forms, in all that she is' both worthy and unworthy (4-5). But one realises such a 'naked and undisguised' account is impossible, given that he also writes 'it is impossible' for both the successful emigrant and the libeller to write objectively of America. This viewpoint belongs to a different context than Revolutionary viewpoints discussed above that focus on America as the farmer's country. Here, one's account is always underscored by ideology, which in the 1830s, would see an increasing expansion of actual space through the aggressive nationalist tenets of Manifest Destiny, the Panic of 1837, as well as through Emerson's *Nature* a sense that 'naked and undisguised' nature can connote spiritual realities. Colton later remarks on the fictionalisation of an emigrant's life: 'It can never be said, in America, for the blasting of hope and enterprize, that every station is occupied and every place is full. In America a man may *create* stations and *make* places, and may always find such already open, as might satisfy any reasonable ambition' (62, emphasis added). The emigrant may create a niche and make a role for himself in an American context.

Colton's reflections on fact and fiction focus on the writing of emigration as ideally located between extreme biases. William Faux, on the other hand (like the author of the *Emigrant's Guide*), himself defines what is real and what is imaginary. Before his judgements concerning fact and fiction, he describes his status as author; on 1 April 1819 he

[36] Hansen notes that some of these migrants returned or were disappointed because of the huge influx of immigrants into America and due to the outbreak of cholera, which spread back to Europe as migrants returned (*Atlantic Migration*, 127).
[37] Homi Bhabha, 'The Commitment to Theory,' *Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001) 2377-2399. 2396.

experienced a strong gale on his Atlantic crossing and wrote, ‘My fears were not great; but I felt rather loth to die without telling my own tale, or enabling others to tell it for me’ (24-5). Fear of death without being able to tell one’s story is a common fear among emigrants as their identity is predicated upon their authorship; without this their decision to leave their homeland in search of a better life is empty and meaningless. The successful landing of Faux’s ship in America allows him to tell his tale of critique.

In the vein of reality always being disappointed in relation to one’s imagined or invented expectations, he writes on 10 July: ‘I, too, fancy I see something like a strong and general feeling of disappointment, pervading almost all I meet, who have recently emigrated; and, on examination, I find that my observation does not deceive me. All have over-rated America. Hope told a flattering, lying tale, and they believed her to their own undoing’ (102). ‘Fancy’ here has resonances across space and genre; for example, across the Atlantic, Leigh Hunt’s poetry, writing in Britain in 1819, in his ‘counter-poetics [to Wordsworth’s imagination] of the Fancy’[38] emphasises a poetics of personal expansion (which has later crossovers in Emerson as well). In Hunt, ‘fancy’ ‘with its juxtapositions, excesses, its expansiveness beyond normative domains of consciousness – seeks a vision of inclusiveness, embracing dream and reverie states as well as democratic ideals’ (Robinson, 15). Faux’s guide, though of course in a different register and for different generic purposes then, is meant to correct the fancy of an American paradise, and oppose the expansiveness of the ‘democratic ideals’ that Fancy puts forth.

Use of ‘fancy’ for Faux, in this sense maintains two senses of the term in the *OED*; the first is as in the expression, ‘I rather think’ and the second concerns itself with mental conception as in to ‘conceive, imagine’ or to ‘suppose oneself to perceive’. With the word ‘fancy’ we do not have the division between ideas of the sense and ideas of the imagination and Hume’s delineation between impressions and ideas – impressions being more powerful and ideas deriving from them through memory and imagination. The word implies a mental idea derived from sensory impressions – the only reality we can be sure of according to Hume – and a manufactured idea derived from fiction. The word ‘fancy’ thus blurs the line between what is considered fact and what is considered fiction even while the author may be strongly convinced concerning the distinctions between the two in his experience and guide. Faux’s observations on disappointed emigrants proceed from his fancy, but he uses his observations to confirm his imaginative insight, rather than proceeding first from ideas of

[38] Jeffrey C. Robinson, *Unfettering Poetry: The Fancy in British Romanticism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 139.

sense to ideas of the imagination; a sort of 'playfulness of mind' that Robinson discusses characterising the poetry of the Fancy, is here also characteristic of the emigration guide (15). Faux thus fictionalises emigration. Based on his own imaginative renderings of recent emigrants, he concludes that his observations are fact while the fiction of 'a flattering, lying tale' deceives the emigrants' imagination so it blinds them from the 'evil reality' of America.

Beyond juxtaposing the deception of earlier accounts of America with his own, Faux extends his critique of America as imagined paradise (and its evil realities) through his consideration of emigration. He writes on 11 July, 'The American, so called, although his father or grandfather was perhaps a British convict, despises all recent emigrants, because he fancies, that they who know most, must despise him. Fancy and jealousy then, must bear the blame' (103). Even though Faux has been concerned with the careful separation of 'British' and 'American' – in discussion of both country and people – he acknowledges the identity of an American to be fraught with confusion. He questions the validity of the term 'American' – if it exists concretely or is simply a 'so-called' construct of imagination. Again the word 'fancy' here implies imaginative belief. Faux's claim regarding the emigrant's supposition concerning newer emigrants makes the reality of the situation more inaccessible and further ponderings on it no more than fictions.

'Fancy' is again employed as both describing mental perception and imaginative speculation by William Chambers. He writes, 'In this [the plain, dull, monotonous Philadelphia] as in many things, the fancy dresses up a picture which is dispelled by actual observation' (305). Chambers holds up 'actual observation' as that which breaks the spell of imaginative construction. But whether one has a picture of Philadelphia from 'actual observation' or from imagination, the 'fancy' is equally capable of transforming it. In other words, 'actual observation' is never free from the influence of fancy, imagination and perspective because an entirely 'objective' viewpoint cannot exist as the perspective and diction of the author colour his mental perception and written record. Like Faux's attempt to write naked truth and Colton's desire for America to be written in her 'naked and undisguised forms', Chambers employs a similar vocabulary and supposition: observation will undress what fancy has dressed up. All three of these writers by using such 'naked' language imply their guides' cancellation of various fictitious stories of America. But what each author fails to make clear is his own perspective in constructing his own writing. While accusing other accounts of fanciful fiction, each presumes his account to present an objective America through impartial empirical eyes. However, an emigrant's empirical experience of America is determined according to his physical and mental perception of it, subsequently his

written perception is coloured by his mental perception and underlying bias. This perspective on narration moves the emigration guide as a genre away from notions that as a form it provides unequivocal or 'objective' knowledge; instead, it foreshadows the degeneration of an objectivity associated with becoming American that Crèvecoeur's *Letters* illustrate.

Murray complicates the unilateral notion of America as imagined. He presents (an imperial) Britain, rather than America, as fantasy:

> The British gentleman, in his tastes and habits, is almost quite an artificial being. The remotest extremities of the earth must contribute to his humblest meal. He cannot breakfast unless the tea of China be combined with the sugar of Jamaica; the wines of France or Portugal must be placed on his table; the spices of India must season his victuals; he must be dressed in the cloths [*sic*] of Wiltshire, the silks of Lyons, and the linens of Silesia. (530-1)

Remaining stationary, and a recipient of global commerce, the British gentleman, receives the world's goods to create an artificial amalgam of luxury for the British breakfast. The combination of spices, linens and food create an experience incapable of being repeated or occurring naturally in any one place and emphasise the imaginative hold of exoticism implemented in practicalities of daily living. Whereas America may be a repository of projections that may be distilled through physical observation of the country, the British breakfast symbolises a purely fictional reality through its combination of goods that are severed from their indigenous contexts and made to fit the tastes of a fictional or 'artificial being'.

William Amphlett deviates slightly from the guides' authors who consider themselves objective critics. He observes the dilemma of the love of country regarding the emigrant: 'It is easily overcome by all-powerful interest; by real or fancied injuries' (8). Amphlett complicates the more simplistic rhetoric of love of country that other guides' authors do not; for instance, Scotus Americanus in 1773 draws attention to 'the strongest attachment to the place of […] nativity'[39] and Hugh Murray in 1829 discusses 'a deep attachment to […] native soil' (503). In these accounts emigration is entirely a push response that severs the emigrant from a mythic connection with his homeland based upon real or fancied evils at home. Amphlett does not eradicate love of country but does not reduce emigration to simply a response to one's homeland and a (possibly imagined) land of liberty through an exilic turn of phrase. Amphlett's story of emigration is that it is both a push and pull response, based on interest or injury and not confined to the validity or fabrication of one's 'native soil' or

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[39] Scotus Americanus, *Informations [sic] concerning the province of North Carolina, addressed to emigrants from the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland* (Glasgow: James Knox; Edinburgh: Charles Elliot, Edinburgh, 1773) 3.

America. Rather than the truth or fiction of emigration guides it is the story the emigrant tells himself about the incentives to emigrate that matters; indeed as Faux remarked 'to emigrate or not to emigrate that is the question!' which renders the empirical experience of emigration an emotional quandary. Like Crèvecoeur's *Letters*, these apparently empirical documents thus articulate epistemological and existential questions about the nature of identity – who is an American? Can one transform into an American? What is the cost for doing so? Part of this quandary is enwrapped in the 'mythic surplus' and imaginative exchange between America and Britain, where 'many millions have gone to America in search of a fictional dream' (Bradbury, *Pilgrimages*, 3). Bradbury continues, 'But they [myths and tales] also belong in the province of art, the realm of image and fiction. Such fictions existed from the beginning' (3). Bradbury describes this 'mythic surplus' as resulting from both the historical process of emigration and the 'realm of image and fiction'. However he neglects to relate emigration and fiction other than as two diverging strands of his enquiry into myth-making. I would argue that the two strands are inseparable (especially as we begin to read the guides through literary parameters) and that the emigrant not only critiques and writes American myths, but is also a part of them in his articulation of emigrant identity.

Creating Oneself Anew and Fear of Losing Oneself in America

The process of writing America for Britain in the form of emigrant guides requires the writer not only to wrestle textually with his mental perception of a foreign landscape and politics, but also that he attempt to put these observations into an accessible language for an audience of whom he is both a part and from which he is cut off – effectively then traversing the gap of sympathy. The emigrant writer occupies a position of authority translating American ways for a British reader while also expressing his idea of Britain and America in terms of disappearing, a word which registers an active or passive visual and mental abandonment – and possibly theological abandonment as well (as well as the guides' similarities with conversion narratives discussed above). This 'disappearing' motif highlights the suppressed ambiguities of becoming 'this new man' of America, as in the process of disappearing an emigrant is removed from forms of sociability. Although most authors unassumingly delineate between the 'already hybrid cultures' of Britain and America and do not always appear thrown off-balance by the 'crisis of representation', their use of terms like 'real' and 'fancy' not only signal their judgements but also complicate the clarity of their so-called objective vision (Wolf, 182). 'Fancy' becomes a hallmark both of mental conception and imaginary fictionalisation and what the authors write as two opposing terms – reality and

fancy – often become confused. Thus Amphlett writes in his Emigrant's directory, 'A real or fancied superiority, which might keep John Bull's tongue a-going by the hour, might operate to seal the American's lips, or only open them to extract something from you [country farmers]' (86). John Bull continues to talk and whether the superiority that causes him to talk is real or imagined is inconsequential because this superiority controls the farmers' lips. The line between fact and fiction is not only blurred but here is also irrelevant because the effect remains the same regardless of the truth or falsity of an Englishman.

This blending of what is real and what is imagined de-stabilises emigrant identity. The rhetoric of American newness where one can 'create stations and make places'[40] is turned on its head as the emigrant also uses the language of disappearing. What is unique to a comparison of the guides is that these are not phases emigrant-authors proceed through; rather, the emigrant writer may still occupy a position of authority in easily authoring his experiences for the benefit of future emigrants while also expressing his idea of Europe and America in terms of disappearing and forgetting, two words which register visual and mental abandonment. What is real and what is fancied become difficult to distinguish as the author turns from his role as perceiver to the fears that he is not being perceived; this is then written as fear of (and sometimes as inducements towards) disappearing. His writing validates America's existence, but if his writing is ignored he loses his identity. What then constituted fear of disappearing, now seems to be a cultural legacy; Baudrillard notes that from America 'When you turn around, it [Europe] has quite simply disappeared' (29). Part of the fear of disappearing is literal, such as Faux's fear of death during the Atlantic crossing and the subsequent loss of his tale to posterity. It is also historical – the Puritans, these emigrant guides writers' literary forefathers, also felt redundant and unseen after the Restoration, as they were no longer a 'City on a Hill'.[41] Fears of disappearing also take a more personal route when the emigrant is beset by loneliness in the 'wilds' of America, a theme we shall see germane to the early American fiction of Charles Brockden Brown, where physical dislocation symbolises existential uncertainty.

Another way in which the emigrant eludes geographical placement – and therefore social stability – is through internal westward migration. That is, movement in space begins to complicate that one can easily and unilaterally become 'American'. From the early nineteenth century, the guides only recommend settlement in the western territories beyond

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[40] Calvin Colton, *Manual for Emigrants to America* (London: F. Westley and A. H. Davis, 1832) 62.
[41] See the biblical reference (Matthew 5:14) and Winthrop's use of it aboard the *Arbella*, 1630, 'A Model of Christian Charity,' *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, *Vol. A: Literature to 1820*, Ed. Nina Baym (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2003) 206-217.

the Alleghany Mountains as the eastern seaboard and the port cities in particular were considered full and too expensive for the labouring poor. It also severs the emigrant from his British roots. Baseler comments that during the American War for Independence, 'American expansion into the backcountry was also seen as inimical to England's interest. By settling far from the coast, the colonists severed themselves from the English trade network that they were supposed to serve' (122). This migration across the Atlantic and the accompanying overland journey plunges the would-be emigrant into a solitary landscape where civilisation and society, much like his employment and status, are absent and must be created. The self is tied into its ability to visualise and imagine. It is important to note that as we move away from forms of community – including religious – the likelihood of further disintegration of the self increases.

American 'lack' seemed to challenge the idea that sociability was inherent to what it means to be human (which we have seen in both Hume and Smith in the previous chapter). Following from eighteenth century views of sociability as the fabric of identity, Amphlett writes of Ohio, 'Society here is considerably advanced; and what is existence without the charms of social life? Let bears and wolves inhabit the forests: man was made for conversation and rational intercourse, and without them becomes a brute himself' (185). Sociability, rather than perceived economic advantages, is what constitutes existence and without it a man disappears and degenerates. Without society the emigrant can create it, but on this hinge of creation, there remains the fear that the emigrant will be subsumed into the void of landscape, effectively disappearing, without constructing a society that provides meaning in the mundane.

Amphlett later observes, 'Americans, if they are not quite satisfied, move on, and think nothing of it; and numbers of them are for ever thus moving: […] but the western country is a "bourne from which no traveller returns." We never hear of families emigrating thence into the eastern States, which is surely one strong proof of the superiority of the soil and the climate' (195). The western country is likened to the 'undiscover'd country' in the famous soliloquy in *Hamlet*:

> But that the dread of something after death,
> The undiscover'd country from whose bourne
> No traveller returns, puzzles the will
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of? (III.i.77-81)

By comparing the unknown western parts of the United States to existence after death, the author posits fundamental questions, such as, do I exist after death or is it merely a

suspension of consciousness? Where am I going? Do I go anywhere?, not regarding the sphere of death but regarding emigration. Knowledge and certainty concerning existence after death is as shadowy as the 'undiscover'd country' of the western territory and consequently the existence of the westward-bound emigrant is as unclear as the region to which he emigrates. The emigrant's placement mirrors his inner state, where, by moving westward he has 'disappeared' because he moves outside the bounds of society. Hamlet's soliloquy also captures the epistemological problem of existence as he realises the unknown 'puzzles the will' and intensifies the wavering between what is known and what is unknown in a striking similarity to some guides' authors who evaluated the question of emigration based on 'real' or 'imaginary' evils. Amphlett supposes the absence of hearsay of westward to eastern migration as evidence for superior western prospects, but rather, like the one-way rhetoric of emigration itself, those stories that run counter to the dominant narrative are often suppressed.

Western migration is also written as a disappearing act in John Knight's *The Emigrant's Best Instructor* (1818) where disappearing is not only the consequence of not being perceived but an active disappearance. (Part of this exultation in an active disappearance may have been the result of a successful American war with Britain following the War of 1812 and the reclaiming of the frontiers upon which emigrants like Birkbeck planted themselves). Knight reports that Birkbeck states, 'we have turned our backs on the old world, and got into the stream of emigration; Old America seems breaking up and moving westward […]' (62). It is not just that Europe cannot see America properly, but also a further distancing of America from European sight is based on voluntary American seclusion. Europe has disappeared because the emigrant may dodge European perception by moving beyond what others may imagine; to European eyes, the west is simply the place of 'retrograding and barbarizing' (*Memorable Days*, 241). Faux also comments on Birkbeck in his journal of 24 November 1819 and concludes that although many emigrants consider themselves deceived after reading his accounts when confronted with reality, Faux finds the 'emperor of the priaries [*sic*]' interesting and his estate well kept. He re-writes Birkbeck reversing the equating of 'American' with 'farmer': '"I had enough of farming for thirty years in England. I came here to rest. It ought not to be expected of me that I should incumber myself with much business"' (283). Birkbeck writes another story of America, where western migration provides rest, luxury and voluntary exile and his role is one of inactivity, formulated by a sort of Keatsian desire for loss of consciousness within a western landscape. Notably, in another example of transatlantic confluence, John Keats's brother,

George (accompanied by his wife) followed Birkbeck to the 'English prairies' in 1818 in efforts to increase the family fortune. This transatlantic migration of John Keats's best friend and brother opened up the philosophical and poetic space for Keats' great odes written in 1819 ('Ode to a Grecian Urn,' 'Ode to a Nightingale,' 'Ode on Melancholy')[42]. In relation to the gap of sympathy, the idea of the solitary Romantic genius which Gigante's book puts forth (where Keats's lack in sociability allowed him to write his best-known poetry) changes the ending of Crèvecoeur's trajectory. Instead of the frantic narration of the self on the edge of the wilderness, Gigante paints Keats 'chos[ing] between despair & energy' and, choosing energy, is able to write his most famous Odes when deprived of his brother 'who stood between [him] and the world'.[43] Without the presence of his brother, Keats turns to another medium of expression (poetry instead of conversation). The gap of sympathy between the two brothers that is left gaping with George's emigration becomes the site (here, positively) of transformation.

Like George Keats was promised, the New World offers the emigrant the chance to begin life anew. When one crosses the Atlantic, the real or imagined evils, family, neighbours, hereditary land and reputation all disappear to be newly created or transformed in America. Without these externals to validate one's existence in the transition from Europe to America, the thief can turn himself into an upstanding citizen and the wealthy may lose the deference to which they were used. European roles are not obliterated in America, but hold less sway especially on the western frontier, 'the bourne from which no traveller returns', which authors often see as a place of 'retrograding and barbarizing' and filled by the 'refuse of [the] population' as Faux puts it (32). Movement westward, of the type that Birkbeck became famous for, widens the gap of sympathy as it moves an emigrant further from his point of origin. Without long-standing relational networks, the emigrant is poised for transformation. One can disappear from Europe not only by turning one's back on the Old World and creating a life of ease in the west like Birkbeck, but also by creating a new identity, which we shall see fearfully played out in Brown's *Wieland* (1798) and *Edgar Huntly* (1799).

There is of course an underside to the upstanding emigrant farmer. Chambers describes the 'unfortunates' of New York in the mid-nineteenth century as: 'men ruined by

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[42] Denise Gigante, *The Keats Brothers: The Life of John and George* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2001) Also see: 'John Keats and his greatest love – his brother George: Q&A with biographer Denise Gigante', http://bookhaven.stanford.edu/2011/11/denise-gigante-tells-a-big-hearted-story-john-keats-and-his-brother/.

[43] Letter from Keats to Miss Jeffrey, 13 May 1819, *The Letters of John Keats*, Ed. H. Buxton Forman (London: Reeves & Turner, 1895) 337.

follies and crimes in the old country; "outfitters" sent abroad by friends who wish never more to see or hear of them; […] immigrants weakened and demoralised by their treatment on board ship; and to sum up with an item which includes nearly everything else – intemperates living upon their wits and the bottle' (*As They Are*, 196). Chambers' discussion of these emigrants widens the scope of emigration beyond the farmer to desolate people in hope of a new start. Using the language of vision, but in a change to the earlier possibility of 'dazzlement', Chambers writes that these emigrants are 'flourishing in dark holes and corners, just as it is seen to do in any large city of the Old World (197). Without physical, economic or spiritual light (or so the metaphor implies), these 'unfortunates' seem to have truly disappeared. In the absence of light they cannot be seen and yet, the urban centres are still a holding ground for these people where in 'dark holes and corners' they can blend in and begin to create themselves and flourish (counter-intuitively even in the dark). Collins warns against emigration of these 'unfortunates': 'If any hope to escape, by emigration, the odium attached to a vicious character, they will find they are in error; for they will suffer no less in the opinion of their neighbours in the new country, than they have already suffered, unless they have first reformed their conduct, and commenced a life of active, useful, and honourable employment' (75). During the first few decades of the nineteenth century, immigration to America from Ireland and Germany, rather than from Great Britain, meant that the nationality, religion (often Catholic instead of Protestant), and class (poor instead of farmers) of emigrants changed. Between 1828 and 1837 nearly half a million Irish immigrated to the United States; this influx moved increasingly away from Anglo-American Protestantism and became more focused in the growing urban centres on the eastern seaboard. Corresponding to this new wave of urban emigration, America was touted as the land of opportunity but according to Collins, it is opportunity only provided for those who are 'active, useful, and honourable'. Collins expects the would-be emigrant to transform his character before emigrating rather than seeing emigration as a process of transformation. He also neglects the possibility of emigrants re-writing their past in accordance with a desired future providing a clean break from the past way of life, a secularisation of the earlier Puritan association of the Atlantic crossing as baptism and a new birth.

Colton also comments on the emigration of ill-reputed characters:

> As clouds of Europeans of all sorts are flocking to America, a foreigner there is no novelty. And as too many of the dishonest and outlaws have gone there for refuge, without mending their manners or their ways, all emigrants to America should be careful to carry with them proper certificates of character, or expect to submit to the ordinary course of earning a reputation. (65)

Because people have fabricated their identity upon immigrating to America, it is necessary that 'certificates of character' provide a tangible link, continuity and credibility from one's identity on one side of the Atlantic to the other. Certificates of character were not only concerned with emigration but also were used by the those who wanted to become members of a church as well as that which vouched for the integrity, morality and identity of blacks, some of the most notable being forewords to the writings of Phillis Wheatley and Sojourner Truth[44]. Certificates of authority presuppose the superiority of the certifier and communicate a British superiority over American and white over black. Without the certificate the emigrant cannot translate his identity but must re-create it by 'earning a reputation', being born again and starting anew, a use of religious rhetoric for the re-birth of becoming American.

Whether the emigrant is unperceived and voluntarily disappears, and whether his certificate of character establishes the continuity of his self or he must earn a reputation, the response to the past is generally to leave it behind and forget it. This seems to support what Stephen Fender writes about as the 'discourse of emigration' always needing to be thought of as only a one-way journey – on the part of the emigrants themselves and those who passed on the discourse. In his conclusion, Faux advises those who do emigrate to leave behind Britain:

> Learn, therefore, yourselves to forget, and as far as in you lies, teach your posterity also to forget, and to remember only what they ought to remember. A British origin will be ever honourable in their heraldry. This is well worth remembrance, and may they never stain, never dishonour it; but in whatsoever lands they wander, may they seek the good and peace of that land, for in its good and peace they shall have peace themselves! (485)

Faux presents a near impossibility for emigrants: to wilfully forget their homeland but to also remember it to the extent that one's posterity may honour it through their conduct. He recommends that Britain be no longer part of a lived or imagined experience, but rather that it provide a base for 'nostalgia without memory',[45] evidenced in heraldry and living up to a British name. Faux's insistence that there is some vestige of Britishness in the emigrant – through a British 'origin […] be[ing] honourable in their heraldry' – he does not completely negate forgetfulness of Britain, and thus, his guide does not entirely exemplify what Fender

[44] See the 'Preface' to Wheatley's *Collected Works* with the signatures of 17 Bostonian men attesting to the validity of her authorship. Phillis Wheatley, *Complete Writings* (New York: Penguin, 2001). See also the ending with 'certificates of character' in: Sojourner Truth, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (New York: Penguin, 1998).

[45] This phrase comes from Arjun Appadurai's discussion of globalisation and its production of 'ersatz nostalgia' as creating simulacra, or the sign without any context (or at least not one's immediate context) Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press. 1996) 30.

calls the ‘discourse of emigration’. Faux advocates that the identity created by the emigrant – the fiction he tells himself – be that which defines his reputation as a bearer of peace wherever he may live. Faux does not only imply emigrants forget their homeland but also themselves. One’s past should be erased from one’s memory and one’s future is not transformed to that of an American but as a wanderer, another classic Romantic trope in, for example, Coleridge, Maturin and the wandering Jew. Sloughing off national allegiance, the emigrant may re-write himself according to experience or fancy.

The emigration guides here considered open up the rhetoric of one-way emigration where a person seamlessly makes a transition from Briton to American; the emigrant typifies the liminality present in transatlantic crossings-over and his promotional text (either supporting or dissuading emigration) continues to still register his existential dislocation through a language of vision. Although he may have ‘relinquished [the society] of Europe’ he has not yet become attuned to those ‘whose ideas are as wild as the woods that surround them’ (*Letters on Emigration*, 18). On the threshold of identity creation, the emigrant first experiences America, attempts to write his experience and finally constructs a story of America and of himself. As some of independent America’s first storytellers, emigrant writers create an imaginative world based on their real-world experience of America but one that tenuously bridges the gap that draws some to it while distancing others, depending on one’s point of view. This opening up of national and generic borders, both through the prevalence of immigrant characters in early ‘American’ literature and through the very genre of the emigration guide as an amalgam of forms, this being *in* one place but not *of* it and the questioning and construction of identity that the emigrant figure occasions also models the Christian motif of the sojourner in a strange land and thus follows in some ways the tradition of some of the first sojourners to America, the Puritan emigrants. The emigrant is a potent image not only necessary to our re-evaluation of the American literary tradition as inherently transatlantic, but also one whose writing both models and provides the reflexive framework whereby America and the self-declared new American are not only imagined but also created in later canonical works of American fiction. Even as the writers of the emigrant guides sought to traverse the gap of sympathy based on pro- or anti-emigration rhetoric and connect with an anonymous reader, their texts still register the inherent instabilities of being born anew into an American identity as Crèvecoeur’s third letter advocates. However, the promotional intent of the guides rhetorically reduces the space of the transatlantic gap, as the guides emphasise the rhetoric of transformation through emigration, whilst the texts themselves chart actual existential dislocation, rather than seamless transition from Briton to

American. The amount of personal loss occasioned by the potential failure of the guide to cross the gap of sympathy is relatively small due to the guides' promotional intent. However, the personal transatlantic letters explored in the next chapter evidence the precariousness of the gap of sympathy and the loss that is occasioned if it is uncrossable.

Chapter Three:
Transatlantic Correspondence and Hesitations of Form

In 1771, Alexander Thomson, his wife, and twelve of their thirteen children emigrated from Scotland to a farm about 150 miles outside of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania. Thomson and his sons supported the American cause when war broke out with Britain and he remained on his farm until his death in 1800. In 1773 after receiving a letter from Rev. Mr Thom in Scotland through a visit from James Whitelaw and David Allen, agents for the Scots American Company of Farmers, Thomson replied to Thom, in a letter that was published at his request in Glasgow that year.

Thomson's letter bridges the gap between the genre of the emigration guide in the previous chapter and the transatlantic letter, which we shall look at in this chapter; it opens up pertinent themes and conditions of the genre. Thomson's letter is used for particular effect in this chapter: it attempts to maintain the balance between public and private (a private letter which was published); it displays the emigration rhetoric that typified the guide genre that was discussed in Chapter Two, and yet maintains the intimacy of the transatlantic letter, which shall be explored more fully below. Obviously Thomson's letter is indicative rather than exhaustive. For instance, it is only one of many letters in Wolfe's compilation, *Discoveries of America: Personal Accounts of British Emigrants to North America during the Revolutionary Era*. Notably as well, are other compilations and analysis of emigrant correspondence by Marjory Harper (books which cover the same period as this thesis include: *Emigrant Homecomings*, *Adventurers and Exiles* and *Migration and Empire*). Elizabeth Errington's *Emigrant Worlds and Transatlantic Communities*, although it considers Canada rather than the United States, is a wide-ranging study of emigrants' personal documents of the emigration experience in the early to mid-nineteenth century. All of these studies (as well as Thomson's own example) illustrate the crossings over not only of the actual emigrants, but also of their texts; their writings cross over between personal, documentary and so-called factually objective writings with writing that is more promotional, imaginative, and fictional. However, it is worth noting that whereas the emigration guide as a documentary, promotional form dealt with a gap of sympathy by connecting the guide's author with an unknown audience, it differs here. In this chapter, the transatlantic letter-writer and reader were intimately known to one another as family members; the transatlantic letter must then stand in for the presence of the missing family member. The transatlantic

letter must confer bursts of virtual presence amid long stretches of absence given the amount of time for letters to be exchanged. And the transatlantic letter must enable the missing other to 'see' with emigrant eyes.

Thomson's letter participates in the rosy rhetoric of crossing over from Scotland to America, as he clearly attempts to persuade his immediate reader and perhaps more broadly, the reader of the published letter, to emigrate. He begins by explaining the reasons for his emigration (notably, he was 49 when he emigrated). Raised a farmer and wanting to provide for his numerous family by enabling his sons to farm nearby, he writes he 'rode around 20 miles from the place where I lived; but tho' I found plenty of vacant farms, I told you before, and declare it again on the word of an honest man, that I could see no farm for which the laird did not ask more than double the rent that it was worth'.[1] This inability to provide for his large family as well as a growing dissatisfaction with the lairds (111), leads to his decision to emigrate.

This is how Thomson describes his response to changing countries:

> Dear Sir, I do assure you I am well pleased with the country, and with my situation in it. I bless God that I came here, and I heartily thank every man who encouraged me and helped me to get the better of that fear which a man is under when he is to venture over so wide a sea, and indeed when, excepting my eldest son, I was to carry along with me all that was dear to me in the world, I could not but be anxious about them; but I was determined in my mind, and providence hath been very favourable to us. We are all at present in good health; and blessed by God, we have always been so since we came into this country. (113)

Although a personal letter to a Rev. Mr Thom, Thomson's letter was also published along with other letters as part of an emigration tract in Glasgow; as both a personal letter and emigration tract, it therefore, fulfils the requisite opening for the genre: acknowledging God's leading (following in a Puritan tradition of emigration as a spiritual rite of passage), crossing the formidable Atlantic, and mentioning one's good health upon arrival. Upon emigrating, the American prospect is nearly entirely positive as befits promotional literature. Contradicting the tropes of degeneracy in America as well as placing importance on empirical experience of America, Thomson comments, 'Till I came into this country, I did not, I could not imagine the climate was so fine and so healthy' (114). As in the emigration guides, Thomson represents himself as unable to imagine the prospect until he sets foot in America, where an experience of the country changes his entire outlook. He comments that when he and his sons stop for a break from farming, 'the sight of the heavens and smell of

[1] Alexander Thomson, Letter to Rev. Mr. Thom 16 August 1773, *Discoveries of America: Personal Accounts of British Emigrants to North America during the Revolutionary Era*, Ed. Barbara DeWolfe (Cambridge: CUP, 1997) 108-121. 111.

the air give me a pleasure which I cannot tell you how great it is' (114). The nod to ineffability here is, as we saw in the previous chapter, a rhetorical way to present American superiority over European ways of life (and privileges physiocratic ideals). Because the full experience is only hinted at, it is enticing; at the same time because it is unarticulated we are stopped from entering into the experience with the writer. This simultaneous intimacy and distance becomes an analogue for the way that the transatlantic letter works more broadly: the intimate address from one person to another provides a measure of closeness and yet the actual distance in time and space that transatlantic letters travelled and the distancing of the foreign topic, means that the form that is rhetorically presented as the most intimate, can have a peculiar way of separating reader and writer. This effect was exacerbated during the early nineteenth century as Britain and the United States became increasingly distant following the War for Independence, Britain's attention aimed at the Continent in the Napoleonic Wars and lack of Anglo-American border or power changes following the War of 1812.

As much as Thomson's letter sings America's praises, his allegiance has not fully left his native soil although the rhetoric of 'becoming American' seems to pervade the letter. When making comparisons between Scotland and America regarding the differences in soil and weather, for instance, he calls Scotland rather than America 'home'; elsewhere he distances himself from Scotland calling it 'your country'. He writes that 'My plantation [in Pennsylvania] I have called Corkerhill, after the name of the farm where my father lived and died, and where I lived so long' (112). Thomson's farm's name is a literal homage to his father, a generational legacy that migrates with him from Scotland to America. Thomson symbolically takes his father's farm with him, in a similar manner to the actual plants and seeds that cross the Atlantic with the Kerr family, as we shall see below. By replanting Corkerhill in America, Thomson synthesises the two farms, apparently creating a seamless lineage between his farming life in Scotland and his new one in America; this 'transplantation' ties him to his Scottish heritage whilst simultaneously divorcing himself from it since it is now in America, thus instantiating a gap between the two, even considering that on the surface the renaming of the farm appears to make the two farms continuous.

Thomson follows in line with emigration tracts that encourage emigration as befitting good hardworking Britons and by painting a picture of America as better than their homeland. He writes, 'They say here, that the air and climate of Pensilvania agrees better with European constitutions, than even the air of Europe itself, and I am inclined to think that this is true, from that constant health which my family have enjoyed' (113). America is a

paradise more properly attuned to the European constitution than even Europe; he does however, not describe America as a second Eden with fruit ripe for the picking (a trope more popular with earlier colonial writers), but instead: ‘this country is chiefly profitable to those farmers who bring along with them one, two, or three hundred pounds; […] and I believe there are no farmers in the world who live on so coarse and so poor food as do the generality of farmers in poor Scotland’ (115) – a line of reasoning Benjamin Franklin used in his own essay on emigration. Vision, as in Chapter Two, is paramount: he both verifies his own personal experience with what he sees and encourages emigration tacitly: ‘I see emigrants in crouds [*sic*] passing this way almost every week’ (118). The first-person narration founded on visual experience presents an incontrovertible authority on America within the letter form.

Like the emigrant authors in the guides, Thomson focuses on truth gained from empirical experience. The factual and documentary forms of the emigrant guide and transatlantic letter, although purportedly only about the empirical experience of being in America, borrow the rhetoric that we see in more imaginative or fictive forms. He steps back from the facts of experience to his supposed doubtful audience who must compare his account with those that are less flattering to Thomson’s new home:

> and I’m sure that no man who knows me will suspect that I have written any thing here but the truth. If tradesmen, or labourers, or farmers design to come over at all, they ought by all means to come immediately, before they be too old or turn so poor that they will have no money to bring with them, nor even to pay their freight. (120)

The injunction to ‘come immediately’ proceeds from his attempts to overcome hesitation in his readers and to create a persona which is truthful and authentic; but, as Amanda Gilroy and Wil Verhoeven have put it, the problem with the letter form more generally is that ‘correspondence promotes dissonance and difference as well as well as connection and community’.[2] Just as the *sine qua non* of sympathy is its gap, which for Smith, ‘insists on the distance between people, depends on that distance, and dreams of making that distance disappear’, so also do we see this gap within the epistolary form (especially stretched across the Atlantic) (Marshall, 180). Both sympathy and the mechanism of the transatlantic letter insist on a difference between letter-writer and letter-reader and yet the letter is also meant to bridge actual and metaphoric distance between writer and recipient to bring them together. The letter, as a generic form meant to create and maintain the most intimate of sympathetic bonds, may separate as much as link writer and reader. This push and pull of presence and distance seems to mirror some of the contemporary historical shifts present at the time as

[2] Amanda Gilroy and W. M. Verhoeven, eds., ‘Introduction,’ *Epistolary Histories: Letters, Fiction,* Culture (Charlottesville, VA: Virginia, UP, 2000) 15.

well; published in 1773, Thomson's letter enters a dialogue that encompassed a political situation which was, at least for another ten years, heavily divided about loyalties between 'America' and 'Britain'. Even after the close of the War for American Independence in 1783 and following the drafting of the Constitution in 1787, America was in no ways united practically and culturally. Thomson's letter enters into this middle ground, where America is considered a prominent appendage of Britain but with particular economic incentives for those who are willing to work hard and start anew.

The fact that Thomson's letter is published adds a further dimension of difference between him and his reader(s). To attempt to bridge the gap of sympathy, Thomson aims to interject his own experience. He comments:

> […] when I was in Philadelphia, I saw some Scotch news-papers in which a great deal was said about the death of emigrants by sea and their wretched state after they have come to the American towns. As I have said already, I never heard of any ill happening to emigrants by sea, and if they suffer any harm here, it will be rather from the hospitality than from the cruelty of this people; no doubt those who are forced to indent must be in a state of dependance [*sic*] till they have served out their time, and I pity their case. But as I have told you, I know several people here who served to pay their freight, who have now good plantations. (121)

The intended reader then must either experience the situation himself or take Thomson's word, which, though a published account like the newspapers, because it is in letter form bears the marks of intimacy and truth. Newspaper accounts, which in their manner of address tend to distance the reader, tend on the other hand to lack the same personal touches of the epistolary form. The direct references to Thomson and Thom's relationship, then, become potentially extended through publication as the anonymous reader can partake of their sympathetic bond virtually.

The publishing in Glasgow of Thomson's letter of 16th August 1773 at his own personal desire was, like the letter form itself, both an act of distancing and of drawing near to his readers. He writes:

> but there are two reasons which make me wish that this letter were made publick: one of them is because of a report which hath been sent abroad among you that I am discontented, and that I have made an ill bargain, and that I am ruing my race, and wanting to be home again; which are great untruths; and may be there is some malice at the bottom of them; I want therefore that all my friends and acquaintance know that I am very happily settled, that all is very well with me […]. The other reason for my desiring that my letter should be published is, That I hope it may be of some use to my dear countrymen. I hear as I have told you, That many farmers and a very great number of labourers and tradesmen are in more distressing circumstances than they were when I came away. (120)

Although Thomson's letter tends to unequivocally put forth the benefits of America over Scotland, the making public of his letter undercuts this sentiment. Caring so much about what

others thought on the other side of the Atlantic, Thomson writes to correct his own reputation (even asking Thom to correct his spelling and grammar) and secondly to encourage his 'dear countrymen' to follow his example and emigrate. The publishing of Thomson's letter also brings to the fore a central point of this chapter: that of a third implied reader within every correspondence. In an insightful essay on the epistolary form, Gerald Maclean neatly analyses that as 'matters of discourse [letters] invariably entail – directly, implicitly, or by way of exclusion – the position of a third person, singular or plural'.[3] This third person can of course be actual: consider for instance the opening of letters by 'intelligence' operatives, as both Bannet and John mention.[4] The 'third person' may also be metaphoric, where the writer shapes the text according to the imagined other, and what the writer is projecting is what the actual reader wants to hear. In a similar manner to Smith's actor and spectator needing to temper their reactions in order to attain sympathy, the letter writer and reader also temper their writing to maintain a precarious transatlantic correspondence, that is very similar to the genre of the emigration guide. Fender notes the similarities between emigration guides and emigrant letters, countering Charlotte Erickson's argument that emigrants believed only personal letters (*Sea Changes*, 41). He writes:

> emigrants' letters home now being discovered and edited employ much of the same language of attraction and distaste – the same rhetoric of the drama of emigration – as do the promotional tracts. Either the "real" emigrants didn't distrust the speculators and politicians as fundamentally as historians now think they did, or they were moved to imitate the general outlines of their arguments while declining their biassed [*sic*] particular advice on where to settle. (43)

This has applications to the third space of the published actual letter embedded within the promotional guide, as Thomson's is. From the perspective of the anonymous reader, the sentiments or advice Thomson offered to his original recipient may be accepted or discarded according to his viewpoint. As both promotional and intimate in its style, Thomson's letter can be broken up by a British reader and used only in parts. This is the fear underlying the gap of sympathy; but without a relationship which has the potential to stabilise critique (as it does with the letter's original writer and recipient), as the gap of sympathy includes wider circles of relation, there is the increasing tendency for the gap to remain unbridgeable (or altered as Thomson's letter can be). The Kerr correspondence, on the other hand, suffers for a different reason: because letter writers are close family members and have worked in close

[3] Gerald Maclean, 'Re-sitting the Subject,' *Epistolary Histories: Letters, Fiction, Culture* (Charlottesville, VA: Virginia UP, 2000) 176-197. 177.
[4] Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1680-1820* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006) 13. Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: the American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1995) 42-3.

proximity to one another, the transatlantic distance becomes too great a distance to effectively create sympathy across. For the Kerrs, the gap becomes increasingly unbridgeable due to the loosening of relationship, rather than simply to the form's inability to confer presence effectively.

Thomson uses the trope that the letter confers his presence to the absent reader. Thomson writes, 'I sincerely thank you for your last kind letter, which I received from the companys [*sic*] commissioners; I read over it with pleasure, and thought I was just conversing with you, as I used to do, and that frequently, in your own house. If it is not troublesome I beg to hear from you at times' (121). Thomson perpetuates the illusion that like Crèvecoeur's Farmer James, 'writing letters is nothing more than talking on paper' (13). The distance across the Atlantic and across ways of life and national affiliations is elided as the letter purportedly puts the author within the house of its recipient. But the façade of 'talking on paper' seeks to ignore the gap of sympathy between writer and reader, because there is always an implied third reader lurking in the background, the intimacy purportedly experienced through the letter feels much more like a performance than an intimate conversation. For conversation implies dialogue and at best the letter form encapsulates a series of monologues protracted over long stretches of distance and time.

The final aspect where Thomson's letter is particularly relevant to a discussion of transatlantic letter-writing, is his focus on gaining sympathy with the letter's primary recipient (Mr Thom, a Scottish Presbyterian minister) through a shared language of faith. And it is not simply that both Thomson and Thom have similar theological viewpoints, but that rhetoric of heaven as 'a better country' (121), just as the letter form intends, again unites the writer and reader together. Thomson places his discourse on emigration into a theological frame:

> The providence of God hath been wonderfully kind to those who have emigrated from your country. For two or three years past, many vessels freighted with emigrants have yearly sailed from the coast of Scotland; and I never knew of any calamity or grievous accident that befel any of the vessels. […] But the same providence that preserves your honest people in their way to America, seems to frown upon them while they remain at home. (120)

To Thomson, God has no national preference and yet seems to smile upon the emigrant-sojourner, perhaps anthropomorphically taking pity on 'the stranger in a strange land' (1 Peter 2:11-12).[5] Most final lines of letters tend to ask the reader to remember fondly the

[5] The 'stranger in a strange land' goes back to Old Testament stories of wanderers, exiles, and sojourners, particularly as Israel is enslaved in Egypt, but also has touchstones in the stories of, for instance, Moses, Joseph, Ruth, and Jesus.

writer, and Thomson's letter is no exception; but the turns of phrase that he uses are particularly interesting from a transatlantic point of view. He writes: 'I have come to America, but I hope both you and I are seeking for a better country, and that we shall at last meet in that city which hath the sure foundation' (121). The sentiment acknowledges Thomson's crossing over from British to American allegiances, but then places heaven as a 'better country' as a common ground between two countries, that would, just two years after the publication of the letter, be at war. Beyond even the injunctions to come to America that pepper the letter, the closing offers hope for reconciliation beyond national affiliation. As a city with a sure foundation, heaven – and more generally the shared faith between writer and reader – bypasses national allegiance to offer a 'better country' than either the one of Thomson's birth or of his new, adopted country.

Thomson's letter is exemplary in its articulation of those qualities that are relevant to a larger transatlantic understanding of letters as a form that seeks to bridge the gap of sympathy. Within the purview of the transatlantic, it is the letter as genre which is not 'a teleological, linear history but rather a narrative of historically specific cultural connections and disconnections'.[6] It is these connections and disconnections built into the letter form itself that are brought to the fore through transatlantic correspondence. As Maclean simply states, 'Letters require places. More precisely, what is required are the spaces separating the places between which the letter travels. Letters are directed from here to there, across a space in between, the abode of the never entirely absent other' ('Re-siting', 177). As we shall see below, this space between is both physical – as the letter travelled across the Atlantic and often across America – and also affective as the gap of sympathy stretches with long periods of epistolary silence in between bursts of presence through the receipt of the transatlantic letter. When compared to the trajectory in Crèvecoeur's *Letters*, the actual transatlantic letters considered here – particularly the Kerr correspondence – operate in a similar manner to the closed island communities of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. The transatlantic correspondence of the Kerr family involves a small community of family members for whom the question of American emigration is actual and an intimate concern, and involves real people and places. Here the attention to empirical reporting is not just a technique to persuade someone to emigrate (as in Chapter Two), but vital for imagining a community that is united despite Atlantic distance. As a form, the letter cannot hold up under the weight of needing to create and confirm this imagined familial community and we begin to see a start

[6] Amanda Gilroy and W. M. Verhoeven, eds., *Epistolary Histories: Letters, Fiction, Culture* (Charlottesville, VA: Virginia, UP, 2000) 20.

to the breakdown of transatlantic sympathy. Sympathy is maintained when the emigrant returns (as John Kerr does) and order is reinstated. The hope (though often unrealised) is that the transatlantic letter in the Kerr correspondence enables the family to imagine themselves as a unit despite transatlantic distance, a distance that shall be discussed more fully below. The growing distance between family members separated by the Atlantic – especially as the political realities during this period mean that Britain and America become increasingly distinct from one another – start to break down and show rents in the fabric of transatlantic sympathy. The transatlantic family as expressed within the letter form cannot finally hold together under such distance. Although the letters of the Kerrs cover a wider period of history than the novels which follow in subsequent chapters, the focus in this chapter is rather on the genre itself. That is, as this chapter considers actual emigrant correspondence it differs from both the promotional emigrant guides of the last chapter and the embedded fictionalised letters that we see particularly in Rowson's *Reuben and Rachel* and Brown's *Edgar Huntly*. Here the letter form itself makes attempts at familial connection, while also serving in some manner to argue for or against emigration prospects (as in Chapter Two) as well as provide a level of intimacy that letters intend to convey in the fictional works of this thesis' final two chapters. This chapter then bridges the generic gap between the documentary and promotional thrust of the guides and the fiction in the following chapters. At first glance the ordering of this chapter may appear anachronistic given the Kerr correspondence proceeds into the middle of the nineteenth century and the following two chapters consider novels written around the turn of the nineteenth century. Although the letters coming out of the beginning of the correspondence differ in context from later letters, they all follow a similar pattern of attempting to create a virtual presence of sympathy across transatlantic distance. Moreover, it is important to note again that this thesis places emphasis on the generic shifts that sympathy takes through the particular context of emigration. The transatlantic emigrant letter – written in the late eighteenth century or the middle of the nineteenth century – offers a different generic example that either the promotional tracts discussed in Chapter Two or the novels in Chapters Four and Five. Additionally, these historical letters help to illuminate the fictional letters in the following chapters and also follow Crèvecoeur's trajectory in his *Letters*; they operate as enclosed communities which both have a marked sense of self-sufficiency and also begin to show the constructed nature of such a community. The Kerr correspondence was chosen for its most complete qualities, particularly letters which have replies, rather than for its dating. Therefore, even though the letters quoted were in many instances written after the novels which I discuss in following chapters, they serve as a

helpful generic example for the following chapters. Before considering the Kerr correspondence at length, first I shall discuss the generic and sympathetic pressures put on the transatlantic letter in the late eighteenth century through the nineteenth.

<u>The transatlantic letter</u>

Richard R. John's book on the postal system, *Spreading the News* (1995), describes several sentiments about the quickness of the American postal system between the late eighteenth century through the 1840s; quoting several contemporary users of the postal system, he writes about the postal system as an electric current: '"Distance is thus reduced almost to contiguity; and the ink is scarcely dry, or the wax cold on the paper, before we find in our hands, even at a distance of hundreds of miles, a transcript of our dearest friend's mind."' And, '"Time and distance are annihilated" […] describing the effects of the receipt of a letter from a childhood friend, and "we are there"'.[7] These letter-writers marvelling at the quickness of the post saw it is a network uniting friends and family and annihilating distance in time and space, and (like Thomson's letter) putting friends separated by distance into the homes of each other.

Before the laying of the first transatlantic cable in 1858 which shortened the communication distance between Britain and America from ten days (to receive a letter by ship) to one, the speed with which letters travelled overland within America and the speed with which they travelled the Atlantic was roughly the same. Eve Bannet, in her book *Empire of Letters* writes, 'The mail generally crossed the Atlantic to Britain's American mainland and island colonies on whatever merchant ships were heading that way' (9). In fact, before American independence, mail would reach America from England before Scotland, based simply on the extension of the postal system. Bannet notes that 'The post office became a single, integrated, government-run service in England only in 1685. The service was extended to the American provinces in 1693, and to post-Union Scotland in 1711' (9). Indeed, 'Before the post reforms in America under Benjamin Franklin during the 1750s, it could take as long for mail to travel from New York to Philadelphia as from London to New York – forty-nine days on average, *if* the winds were fair, *if* the season was right, and *if* the vessel happened to be going directly to New York' (9). Thus the actual distance that letters traversed – not to mention that they were frequently waylaid – had the effect of stretching the

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[7] Leonard Bacon, 'The Post-Office System as an Element of Modern Civilization,' *New Englander* 1 (1843): 10-13. Qtd. in Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: the American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1995), 10-11.

gap of sympathy in both directions: from American to Britain and across the United States. As we shall see below in relation to the Kerr family correspondence, letters between family members on either side of the Atlantic attempt to stand in the gap not only to create fellow-feeling between the letter-writer and letter-reader but also between all members of the family, as one American immigrant may hear news from his brother (also in America) from the hand of their Scottish father.

Letters, broadly as a genre, purport to erase the gap of sympathy between the writer and reader. As they operate here within a family community they are meant to elicit sympathy and to create a transatlantic imagined community (to use Benedict Anderson's phrase) based on the relaying of empirical detail within their letters; notwithstanding the actual distance in space and time that the letter must travel, when received it is meant particularly to 'bring the other home', a much closer relation than an emigration guide or novel.[8] It is the concept of home itself which is particularly vexed within this period. As we shall see in the following chapter regarding Susanna Rowson and her works that particularly foreground gender, the idea of 'home' becomes complicated, especially in a transatlantic context: Whom does 'home' include and exclude? Where is it located? Is it doubled: are both my home country and my adopted country referred to as home? Is home simply where I am not located? The illusion of home as a fixed entity in space and time is furthered by the rhetoric of the letter, and by what the letter is meant to achieve. In her book on epistolary form, Janet Altman notes both the linking and dividing qualities inherent in the letter, complicating notions of place and belonging: 'the epistolary author can choose to illuminate either the distance [between writer and reader] or the bridge'.[9] That is, because of 'the letter's power to suggest both presence and absence, to decrease and increase distance' (15), the letter form itself has the capacity either to unite or to distance. What the transatlantic letter does particularly is neither to simply neither unite nor divide, but rather to do both simultaneously.[10]

We see this simultaneous unification and division within the Atlantic correspondence of families. As Jane Errington's work on emigrant communities illustrates, 'families were rooted in face-to-face communities – both physical and imagined – and the very experience

[8] Amit Rai discusses Smith's metaphors of 'bringing the other home' (*Rule of Sympathy*, 48), which was discussed in Chapter One.
[9] Janet Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 1982) 13.
[10] Besides the works surveyed here, other pertinent works on epistolarity and the transatlantic include: Philip H. Round, 'Neither Here nor There: Transatlantic Epistolarity in the Americas,' *A Companion to the Letters of Colonial* America, Eds. Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005): 426-445. And, Rebecca Earle, ed., *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-writers, 1600-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999).

of migration continued to shape those communities for some considerable time'.[11] The form of this imagined community was the transatlantic letter. Errington observes that 'Letters were also a means of integrating the Old World and the New, of tying the familiar domestic landscapes, people, and relationships of home into the new and increasingly familiar world of a face-to-face colonial community. On both sides of the Atlantic, receiving or sending even one brief letter reaffirmed who one was and where one fitted into the world' (138). Errington's view of the transatlantic letter is helpful in the ways in which she foregrounds Atlantic communities, however, it is too idealistic; the transatlantic letter does attempt to bridge the gap between emigrant and his country of origin but it is far from a form which provides integration, or confirmed identity. Frequently – notably in fictional portrayals from Richardson's *Pamela* or *Clarissa* to Mackenzie's *Julia de Roubigné* – the letter registers psychic and stylistic breakdown rather than connection. Of course the epistolary form differs whether it is actual letters exchanged between family members (as we shall see in the Kerr correspondence below), letters embedded in promotional emigration tracts (as we see in Thomson's letter above), or epistolary fiction. As this chapter discusses actual letters, it is worth noting that these are more fragmented than their fictionalised or promotional counterparts, given the realities of transatlantic communication. Ideas concerning 'Where one fitted into the world' become increasingly muddled given the double reality of emigrants – needing to be both maintain ties to family and friends back home while also forming new communities in the present, as well as considering the economic concerns: paper was expensive and spending time writing instead of ploughing was generally looked down upon. Piecing together transatlantic conversations across the Atlantic space, considering the multiple writers of the correspondence, and the distance of time (between letters and their answers, and between the beginning and ending of the collection) means that fragmentation is part of understanding this letter-writing process. Spatially the gap of sympathy gives form to this fragmentation, as the various letter writers writing from both sides of the Atlantic write in order to imagine the family beyond the confines of the nation.

In addition to the fiction of the letter as offering immediate presence, more recently, epistolary discourse as a feminine, privatised space is being revised. In a 'Postscript' to an essay by Gerald Maclean, Nancy Armstrong asserts, 'herself included, feminist critics have made a rather big deal of epistolary fiction for just this reason, that here a distinctly feminine subject first found a vehicle for cultural expression'; Armstrong goes on to assert with

[11] Elizabeth Jane Errington, *Emigrant Worlds and Transatlantic Communities: Migration to Upper Canada in the First Half of the nineteenth Century* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 2007) 176.

Maclean that all letters ‘need to perform a kind of writing that only appears to be private but might in fact be subject to scrutiny at any moment by an unknown third person’ (*Epistolary Histories*, 192). Moving away from a discourse of letters as a private, feminine space, Armstrong notes that all letters exist as ‘purloined letters’, ‘written as if they were going to be intercepted’ and thus, ‘Always present in the mind’s eye of the letter writer is the third party who leaves a mark of such awareness on the letter’ (192). The epistolary form then, always has built within it the illusion of privacy with the concomitant sense that a letter was always in danger of being read over one’s shoulder or in danger of being intercepted. Maclean notes, ‘Letters may insist on the identity of the first-person who writes and on the specificity of the second person or persons addressed; but this only makes sense in light of the presence of an absent and excluded third’ (‘Re-sitting’, 178). This ‘third person,’ like the impartial spectator in Smith, who is always present to actor and spectator, allows the opening up of the letter form rather than an inwardly focused dyad.

Yet the dyad rhetoric was powerful. Ivy Schweitzer describes the history of this idea: ‘for the ancients, the friendship dyad was the building block of republican community. In this pair, the mirroring effect of friendship was so potent that it rendered the friends virtually and visually interchangeable’.[12] This is the (unattainable) teleological hope of letter writing, where the extension of intimacy between writer and reader is so great that they become interchangeable. Again, as Schweitzer points out, much has also been made of the relationship between correspondence and particularly *national* affiliation; for instance, Elizabeth Hewitt argues in her book *Correspondence and American Literature*,

> American authors in the first half-century of nationhood so often turn to the epistolary form as a means by which to theorize the kinds of social intercourse necessary to the articulation of a national identity and a national literature. They turn to the genre that inscribes social intercourse in an effort to interrogate the most crucial question of national construction: how will we be united?’[13]

Thus, ‘Federal union is literally crafted out of correspondence’ according to Hewitt (3). National unification, then, depends on the physicalities of the letter as a democratic form that is undergirded by a postal system whose primary purpose is to unite its constituents in distance and to provide an opportunity for assimilation into the whole. Hewitt goes on to draw attention to Alexis de Tocqueville’s experience riding with the American post into the Michigan backwoods in 1831:

The post, that great instrument of intercourse, now reaches into the backwoods; and

[12] Ivy Schweitzer, *Perfecting Friendship: Politics and Affiliation in Early American Literature* (Chapel Hill, NC: North Carolina UP, 2006) 14.
[13] Elizabeth Hewitt, *Correspondence and American Literature, 1770-1865* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004) 2.

> steamboats have established daily means of communication between the different points of the coast. An inland navigation of unexampled rapidity conveys commodities up and down the rivers of the country. […] He crosses the country in every direction; he visits all the various populations of the land. There is not a province in France in which the natives are so well known to one another as the thirteen millions of men who cover the territory of the United States.
>
> While the Americans intermingle, they assimilate; the differences resulting from their climate, their origin, and their institutions diminish; and they all draw nearer and nearer to the common type. […] This continual emigration of the North to the South is peculiarly favorable to the fusion of all the different provincial characters into one national character. The civilization of the North appears to be the common standard, to which the whole nation will one day be assimilated.[14]

Tocqueville's sense of united American character is a result of the exchange of letters, that the American postal system works as a network, spreading out in divergent paths, through cart and steamship, connecting postal hubs together, in order to facilitate the nation-building project – that of eventual assimilation into a Northern ideal. Tocqueville's analysis of the postal system is based upon the fiction of letters always serving the function of unification, where the process of assimilation and homogenisation moved towards a national character. Focusing on a national character though, neglects networks that were affectively more close and yet perhaps further in proximate distance (for example, these familial letters passing across the Atlantic). What is lacking in Tocqueville's analysis is the importance of Maclean's third person that is excluded from the letter-writing dyad. Bannet concurs with the idea of this outside reader: 'But reading them [letters] merely as texts ignored that the interlocutor was everywhere inscribed in the text, as well as the eighteenth century's constant identification of correspondence and conversation' (*Empire*, 78). As the conversation widens, the letter form has the potential to create meaningful sympathetic networks that move beyond family or nation.

The epistolary mode is one that when stretched across the Atlantic, hopes to maintain a closer affective distance between the letter writer and reader and yet because of the actual distance in space and time needing to be bridged, as well as the uncertainty and long delays of the transatlantic postal networks, is a form that alternates between bursts of presence in between long stretches of absence. The long gaps of time between letters (if the letter reader replied quickly usually at least four to six months, before transatlantic steamer ships and telegraphic cable) were punctuated with receipt of the long-awaited transatlantic letter that became a communal reading event. This long space of absence between letters puts a certain pressure on the transatlantic letter to deliver the presence of the absent letter-writer to the

[14] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (London and New York: Penguin, 2003) 452.

recipient. Yet such incapacity (about how long it takes a letter to reach another) is built into the form so that – in a similar manner to the ineffability of American landscape in the emigrant guides – the writing down of one's inability to describe or complaining of the space of absence, actually has the possibility of increasing sympathy between writer and reader. The letter is meant to serve as the eyes of the writer about the strange land of America, interpreting it for his or her Scottish kin. But as we have seen, vision not only clarifies but also obscures and dazzles – it both connects and distances. As we shall see in the rest of the chapter in the examination of the Kerr Family correspondence, the transatlantic letter is meant to bridge the gap of sympathy when friends and family are separated in space, time and fellow feeling. As the emigrant experience split families, the gap of sympathy comes to play in a different way from the emigrant guides in Chapter Two. The gap of sympathy to be traversed through the emigrant guide genre was to establish a virtual connection with an anonymous reader and persuade *him* to emigrate (it was often the case that the husbands would precede their families in emigrating). When we consider emigrant correspondence it is not that the audience is unknown, but rather that they have crossed over, and once in the 'undiscover'd country from whose bourn / No traveller returns', the gap of sympathy that now must be traversed is one of how to respond to one who was close and has been potentially made foreign (*Hamlet*, III.i.77-78). The rest of this chapter shall attend to ways that this gap of sympathy is traversed through the transatlantic letters of the Kerr family, where the transatlantic letter is meant to stand in the gap of the Atlantic, to confer presence across it and to maintain sympathetic ties across physical and ideological distance.

The Kerr Family Correspondence

The National Library of Scotland has an extensive collection of emigrant writing, both guides to emigration examined in the previous chapter, and emigrant correspondence. The Kerr Family correspondence, composed of 32 letters written between 1820 and 1883, is unique to the collection in that it is the only two-way transatlantic correspondence in the collection. Most of the letters are addressed to or concerning the senior member of the family, Hugh Kerr, based in Dalry, Ayrshire, and his wife, Jean, née Boyle; other writers include Hugh Jr., a wright in Dalry and later shawl maker in Paisley and Glasgow, and son John (and wife Martha), an immigrant farmer in Illinois (from 1841-50), who returned to Scotland by 1853 and thereafter worked as a baker. Although the correspondence is comprised of several different letter writers over the course of more than sixty years, they tend to be written primarily between the 1820s to 1840s and are generally concerned with the

practicalities of life back home or in America: detailing crop prices, sharing news of friends and family, and answering questions from home.[15] It is worth mentioning again that although the correspondence stretches past the historical timeframe of the novels discussed in later chapters, that the Kerr correspondence is particularly relevant to them in its use of the emigrant letter. If the fictional letters highlighted in Chapters Four and Five primarily serve as barriers to transatlantic connection, here in the actual correspondence of the Kerrs the sympathetic gap between letter-writers on both sides of the Atlantic is still bridgeable. Generically then, this collected correspondence attempts to reconstruct the familial connections despite transatlantic distance. However, the pressures simply become too great to maintain the same sort of connection given transatlantic distance, unless the loved one returns (which John does). Moreover as America becomes increasingly animated by national concerns in the 1820s and following, the emigrants come to a tipping point: they must either continue to identify with their relatives and homeland, or put in their lot with an independent American identity which is emerging. As we shall see in the fiction in the following two chapters – most particularly in Brown's gothic works – it is here at this tipping point where characters finally must either sever ties to previous forms of sociability to become 'this new man' of America, or return to old places of sociability back in Europe, or find new frontiers by lighting out for the territory.

The Kerr correspondence participates in the rhetoric of the emigration debate, using the 'same language of attraction and distaste' (Fender, 43) but it does so within the context of personal connections; letter writers advise whom should emigrate and how much cash one should take in order to provide sufficiently for a family; they almost always include itemised lists of crops and produce, like the emigration guide, and focus on the health of the emigrant, and contain comments on growing wealth (or lack thereof) of either Scotland or America. The migrant authors also, like the guides' authors, wait at least a year or two before the first letter home is sent, and according to Fender's explication of the discourse of emigration, 'The act of writing was itself the proof of their success, the letter home the badge of the initiate' (157). But the Kerr correspondence does not fit neatly into Fender's 'discourse of emigration' that promulgates a one-way rhetoric: not only did John Kerr return to Scotland, but the injunctions to emigrate come more from questions from Scotland or an outside supposed reader to whom the immigrant Scots respond in their letters. Actual transatlantic

[15] The Kerr correspondence has been reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland, Manuscripts Division, Acc. 11416. Thank you particularly to Maria Castrillo for her help with the letters. Spelling has not been corrected or modernised, except in brackets, where clarity is an issue. All letters quoted hereafter are indicated from one another by their date of correspondence within the body of the text.

letters, then, seem to complicate notions that the transatlantic gap of sympathy may be easily crossed. Like the hard-working Nantucket women in Crèvecoeur's *Letters* who take opium to get by (a detail which is astonishingly left hanging by the narrator), here the letters also often neglect to explicitly address the problem of transatlantic distance and instead focus on the practicalities of daily life.

As Fender notes above there are several similarities between the emigrant letter and guide. It is not only in the sorts of things that both genres include (for example, lists of produce sold, instructions about how to build a house, list of immigrants affected by disease, etc.) but also in the injunctions to be empirically present in America through a language of vision that we saw in the previous chapter. Several of the phrases present in the Kerr correspondence echo those of the emigrant guides. John Kerr writes to his father from 'Kerrsland' on July 21, 1844: 'let them come here and see with there [*sic*] […] own eyes and judge for themselves'. Likewise in a letter from John Beaver and Ann Kerr (sister to Hugh Sr.) to Hugh and Mrs Jean Kerr dated 14 May 1823, they write: 'Brothers & Sisters and to your numerous offspring for me to say weather [*sic*] you had better Emegrate to the United Sates I can't say[.] I will tel [*sic*] you the truth and leave you to judge for yourselves'; he then proceeds to launch into a topographical description, reminiscent of the guides which need to make the lay of the land apparent to an unknown reader: 'First the state of Virginia[,] it is large as Old England[:] there is a large part of the state that is not settled […]'. Both letter writers and guide writers then needed to both assert a level of authority in describing the new land and emigration prospects while also leaving decisions based on that information to the reader. However, one clear difference between the two is the overwhelming promotional ends of the guides versus the more nuanced perspective we get in personal letters addressed between family members. Consider the letter from John to Hugh Sr. on July 21, 1844: 'I believe I would have been as well about you as here – but I am here[.] I want to give this country a fair trial and will purh [pursue] any trade awhile here and if I do not get on better at it than farming I think it likely I may return to Scotland before two years goes round'. The poor harvests and famines in Europe in the 1840's surely lead to a view of America as a profitable place to start over. Whereas the discourse of emigration Fender discusses, present in both documentary emigrant texts and early American literature, seems not to allow for return, here in the Kerr correspondence we do not quite see the imagined but impossible return ('the journey is always desirable, never possible' [*Sea Changes*, 153]) but instead, the practical day-to-day acknowledgement by the emigrant author that returning home may just be more profitable economically. The emigrant's experience here in these letters then turns

to a language of vision, not to primarily create an authoritative voice for the writer writing home to Britain, but rather to be an intermediary putting pictures into the imaginations of those at home, in order to bring the foreign place closer to the reader. Focus on empirically detailing the new space, through a language of what the emigrant sees, helps to facilitate a sense of communal connection through the letter.

There is also the sense of comparing the prospects of both Scotland and America, not to assert the exceptional value of one over the other (that we can tend to see in the guides), but to simply make the new place and situation understood in relation to the old, which both letter writer and reader know. In a fragment of a letter to Hugh Jr. of 11 October 1849, the writer (probably John) communicates:

> I know that you have dull times now but we have it dull here too, you must push on as well as you can – you must do as we do here and not be very nice about the kind of work but take hold of anything that you can get to do. When I left Dalry I thought that […] you might find one advising my friends and acquaintances to come to this land that is said to be flowing with milk and honey. But No I cannot say to you come here and you will be better – I do not think that you would be that much better here – as would warant [*sic*] one to advise you to come. There is no mason work. If you wanted to be your own master you could get a piece of land – or you could get into farm service at a wage from fifteen to twenty pound a year […].

Both Scotland and America have 'dull' prospects that are quite different from what the writer expected to write about (perhaps because he had read emigration tracts making America into a paradise flowing with 'milk and honey'). However, because of the close familial relationship presumed, the emigrant writer steps back from the rhetoric of America as paradise to make comparisons, not to paint a rosy picture in order to have the real presence of his family member through emigration, but to seek to tell the truth in plain language (harkening back to the Puritan emigrants 'plain style') about his transatlantic experience. The discourse of emigration then in these personal letters exists simply as another topic through which to attempt to bridge the gap of sympathy, to make the New World present within the terms of the Old World, and thus to make the emigrant present again imaginatively in the minds of the family back home.

Lastly, attention to vision and the rhetoric of emigration is apparent in a letter from William Rodger (a friend most likely, as it is addressed 'Dear Sir') to John Kerr, of 15 April 1842; he writes in one of the more imaginative moments of the entire correspondence: 'I see you at your fireside, with Martha and two or three brawling – when here [Scotland], I respected and esteemed you both and you have my best wishes for your welfare wherever you are'. The domestic comforts of hearth and home overlay the more prosaic realities of day-to-day farming, bartering and the necessities of making a living in America as the

Scottish writer imagines the emigrant farmer in a moment of leisure. Such instances of imaginative projection – though entirely imagined – make the distant transatlantic emigrant closer and turn the letter form into a metonym for the absent other. The dual process of both making the other present through the physical reading of the letter as well as imagining the other as William Rodger does strengthens the bond of sympathy across the space of the Atlantic. There is, however, always a gap: because this sympathy is imagined and resides only within the mind of the letter writer – it is not actual in-person conversation – it can potentially put sympathy off balance. For example, the emigrants who must spend so much of their time simply clearing land, building houses, and hunting (as their letters document) most likely do not have the same imaginative space to devote as the transatlantic other has, comfortably remaining at home.

Sarah Pearsall posits that the letter form created peace amongst a growing Atlantic world; her book 'look[s] at the ways that families enduring transatlantic distance used letters to make sense of chaos and to maintain a burgeoning Atlantic world'.[16] Pearsall of course has examined a different body of emigrant texts, but her analysis ultimately presumes too much for the genre; although the 'letter had to stand in for [the body]', creating the need to constantly translate oneself into the words of a letter and then for the reader to imagine the letter writer from the words on the page and in turn translate his physical response back into letter form, it is presumptuous to see the letter form as that which 'makes sense of chaos' (89). The transatlantic letter has the potential to unite families distanced from each other, but the Atlantic operates not only as a conduit but also as a barrier, where emigrants go unheard of and letters are waylaid (for instance, Robert Kerr, one of the Kerr brothers, emigrated to America and is presumed dead for lack of letters). The transatlantic letter is often a frail attempt to create a transatlantic community, using the letter as a metonym for the missing other and to hope that the gap of sympathy can be crossed by moments of epistolary reception. Pearsall helpfully comments on the effects of sympathy in relation to transatlantic correspondence: 'Sympathy is a necessity for letter-writers whatever the age. They have to enter into the same fantasy in which time and distance are obliterated, projecting themselves forward and backward in time and place' (84). This is a helpful summary of how the letter attempts to bridge the sympathetic gap as it conflates distance and time through the moment of reading the transatlantic letter. Reading and holding in one's hands the physical letter written on by the absent other helps to conjure up the other for the reader; the letter serves as

[16] Sarah M. S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the later eighteenth century* (Oxford: OUP, 2008) 5.

a conduit between family separated by the Atlantic, where the long spaces of waiting for a letter can overwhelm the waiting reader as s/he waits the moment of virtual reunion through reading.

Although the Kerr family correspondence does not reveal a sophisticated sense of heightened sensibility in its projection of relationship across the Atlantic, that is in fact what the letters themselves attempt to accomplish. For the Kerr family, it is their constant request for letters that indicates the desire to have the transatlantic correspondent close at hand. This takes the form, for example, of brothers interceding for their father; Hugh Jr. writes to his brother John in America on 17 July 1846, requesting letters and more importantly for his return to Scotland: 'I should be very glad to see you home for Father's sake, your wife cannot have offended him…' John's wife Martha received the following injunction to write from her brother Archibald Currie on 4 June 1842: 'We are all well – would that we knew you wer [*sic*] all so' and it continues:

> I write on a point which I hope you will not overlook – the longing we have to hear of your health – If you consider our feelings looking at you all in a new clime + country anxious to be assured that you are continuing healthy – you shurely would send us a letter every 3 months that would give us a letter every month you could write for Agnes [John and Martha's daughter]: doo attend to this – there is nothing in this letter But all your Sisters may know its contents[.] Tell them we are uncomfortable that we doo not hear from you all much oftener.

Martha's sister-in-law, Janet Currie writes to John and Martha Kerr on 3 June 1844: 'Mother is busy with the pirns[17] she looks for A leater every day but is alwase [always] disapointed[.] John Millar or James Peterson [emigrant friends] might write altho there [*sic*] wives do not'. The mother sitting at a weaver's wheel illustrates the importance of localism in supporting sympathy. It also places letter writing within the purview of the female sphere, as the woman both spins and waits for correspondence. The request for transatlantic communication from those who have crossed over becomes increasingly agitated as the months go by without letters. The 'gap' thus is characterised by increasing anxiety when translated into the passage of time. Sociability begins to break down and become more ridden with anxiety; silence through long periods of time makes the absence of signs of the relationship intolerable. The requests for letters can be direct as in the example of Archibald Currie's letter stressing the importance of attending to writing, while Janet's more passive request asking for letters on behalf of their mother accomplishes the same end: evidencing the concern present about hearing from family overseas. When all one has is a letter to validate that the other is still alive and thriving, the letter is imbued with the sympathy that one has for the absent other.

[17] I am grateful to Dr. Robert Lawson-Peebles for pointing out this Scots word as indicating a weaver's wheel.

Having to literally and metaphorically hold the presence of life and death (both births and deaths are reported in letters and receipt of the letter stands in for the actual presence of the absent other), the transatlantic letter begins to lose the power to translate sympathy across the ocean because of the weight placed upon it. The near-frenzied demand for letters stems from a fear of losing the transatlantic other across the sea, with the requisite hope that receipt of the letter can make the other present at least in the imagination and through the tangible remembrances (such as hair or plants) discussed below. The gap of sympathy continually extends in both space as it travels the Atlantic Ocean and often across the known United States (John Kerr and his family lived in Illinois territory) and in time as writers wait not only several months for receipt of the letter, but also because the writers in America often delay writing. Thus, the request for written communication is at least a confirmation of continuing existence, and often, a request for virtual presence. At its most ideal, the transatlantic letter becomes the fantastic space 'where time and distance are obliterated' (Pearsall, 84) and the other is brought home; the request for the transatlantic letter hopes to do away with the ever-present gap of sympathy, to fantasise that it does not exist, as the letter writer wishes for a stream of constant presence – turning correspondence into in-person conversation (which we see in the several examples of one person imagining the other at their fireside and wishing the letter was a conversation). The transatlantic personal letter is a final effort to re-create the same community of origin virtually across the Atlantic. As physical and ideological distance increases, there is the fear that the emigrant other will be lost, transformed into an unknowable American. It is worth noting though as an aside that this fear of the other becoming a foreign American is lessened for the placement of the emigrants; they are in wilderness and in rural communities out West, rather than in cultural centres of the Eastern seaboard. As such, their placement, distant from the centre of the United States, renders them more accessible to their Scottish family as they both are operating from rural localities. The transatlantic familial letter then only 'works' if the emigrant other does not fully cross over and leave behind his European identity (what successful emigration entails according to most guide authors and Farmer James).

Additionally, the physicality of the letter itself is important. In her examination of letter manuals, Eve Tavor Bannet notes the space of the letter to confer social standing:

> There was also a semiotics of blank spaces. Correspondents were told to represent graphically the social distance in which they stood relative to their correspondents at the beginning of the letter by the amount of space they left on the page between the superscription and body of the text, and again at the end, by the distance they left on

the page between the text of the letter and the subscription of their own name. (*Empire*, 67)

Bannet's study focuses on letter manuals that would have been available to a different class (aspiring businessmen and office clerks rather than farmers) than the Kerr family. However, her point that the physical space of the letter indicates relationship also applies to the Kerr correspondence. Because paper and postage were quite dear, in most of the letters all of the available space is used up, and even written in margins and over previous handwriting. One of the most interesting uses of space in the correspondence is from Archibald and Janet Currie. Archibald Currie went to send Janet's letter to their relations in America and noticed that she had left large spaces between her lines. He then proceeded to write in between them, his own letter, so that to read the letters one must alternate lines. When one's 'paper [drew] to a close' (letter of 16 August 1845), the letter writer used the paper in unconventional ways with their text wedged into blank spaces. Rather than following the decorum of social rules that Bannet implies were part of a 'proper' commercial correspondence, the letter writers of the Kerr correspondence tended to see the page itself as an open space in which to fit as much as possible of themselves into the transatlantic missive to make oneself present to the other; of course this is also practical, as writing in all the available space makes the best use of expensive space. Throughout the correspondence the script is often small and cramped to make room for more words; this seems to imply not only that writing was an economic issue, but also that the space of the page can be used up in order to carry the writer's sentiments across the ocean, where more words serve the function of transcending the transatlantic distance.

The physical letter was, of course, essential to maintaining intimacy and presence across the Atlantic. But the Kerr letters themselves also contained 'tokens of remembrance' beyond the letter, such as newspapers, hair and seeds.[18] These artefacts that go beyond the reading and re-reading of the letter within the community, allow for visual and tactile reminders of home. Aside from a general request for newspapers, the Kerrs in America tend to not request tokens of remembrance, although they did receive them. Their Scottish family, however, does request emblematic artefacts and participates in selling the emigrant's American products in Scotland. For example, in a letter of 16 August 1845, Hugh Jr. writes he has received his brother Robert's bird skins for sale in Scotland and will be sending him the proceeds of £10 by the next steamer ship. Most of the letter is devoted to explaining that Hugh has been to Glasgow and plans to go to Edinburgh to offer samples of the skins and

[18] This phrase comes from John Kerr's letter to his father of 21 July 1844.

how much Hugh hopes to fetch for them; he writes ‘the most valuable of the skins sent are the parrots, worth, if good, 3/6’ and ‘Humming Birds are the most valuable you could send and I suppose there are some with you’. There are also several letters that document the economic downturn in Scotland and Hugh’s difficulty selling David’s lathe.

But beyond the transatlantic trade in goods and mementoes, where American goods are sold back in Scotland for those with expendable income and interest in exotic and foreign products, the exchange of tokens of remembrance serve a much more personal function. Objects become imbued with the presence of the absent other. Because ‘Objects that can be touched or seen can also catalyze a system of thought’,[19] the objects the Kerr family exchanges take on particular resonance. The objects, more so than the letter, become imbued with the presence of the absent other. It is particularly the locks of hair that are exchanged a few times throughout the correspondence which serves the function noted by Margot Finn: ‘it [locks of hair] offered an ideal material mechanism for the circulation of family memories and identities among kin’.[20] Although Finn’s study centres on Anglo-Indian connection, her comments that the ‘traffic of gifts […] inculcated habits of sociability’ is entirely germane to the Kerr correspondence (218). Janet and Archibald Currie – resident in Dalry and brother and sister to Martha Kerr – write for news: ‘we know but little of your country you know almost all we know of the old’; this desire for news not only of their family but also for the new country is accompanied by a request for something tangible to make the transatlantic other real to them. They ask for a lock of their great-niece’s hair: ‘I am glad to hear Agnes is so good[.] you neglected to send a litle of her hare [sic][.] send it nixt [next] time you write’ (letter of 3 June 1844). The tense reminder that the family in America neglected to send the lock of hair heightens the obligation for them to be present to one another in the form of keepsakes, and thereby to extend sociability across the Atlantic. Of course we cannot know if the Kerrs on either side of the Atlantic were influenced by the Romantic notions of the memento, where ‘The Romantic fashion for the sentimental, for a cultivation of wrought-up and drawn-out feelings contributed to the desire to share the emotional intimacy gleaned from giving a friend, relation, or lover a lock of hair […]’. [21] Exchanging locks of hair has a much larger history than can be discussed here, but keeping hair, even as a ‘postmortem

[19] Margaret Burland, David Laguardia, and Andrea Tarnowski, ‘Editors’ Preface: Meaning and its Objects,’ *Yale French Studies* 110 (2006): 1-7. 3.

[20] Margot C. Finn, ‘Colonial Gifts: Family Politics and the Exchange of Goods in British India c. 1780-1820,’ *Modern Asian Studies* 40.1 (Feb. 2006): 203-31. 212.

[21] Deborah Lutz, ‘The Dead still among us: Victorian Secular Relics, Hair Jewelry and Death Culture,’ *Victorian Literature and Culture* 39.1 (March 2011): 127-142. 129.

relic' attached the absent other to the deceased, where even in death the body's 'ruins could be adored' (129). Though the Kerrs may not have known of the memento nor of the literary history of exchanging hair (for example, *The Rape of the Lock*, *Pride and Prejudice*), both literary and documentary forms then, reach after something physical to infuse the absence of the absent other, where a surrogate presence can be experienced through the lock of hair even in the final absence of death.

Another lock of hair is exchanged within the correspondence, sent from America to Scotland. In a postscript to a letter of 14 May 1823, John Beaver writes to Hugh Kerr and his wife, Jean: 'this lock of hear [hair] is of your sister [Jean's sister, Ann] and grod [growed] on her head and I Cut it of my self[.]' The paratactic phrases seem to situate the giving of hair within a larger discourse that privileges empirical experience ('grod on her head' and 'I cut it'), to promote authenticity of the artefact. These examples seem to agree with Margot Finn's analysis that 'individuals […] were immersed […] in collective kin obligations that were expressed through the body by the exchange of gifts, commodities and other signifying artifacts' (231).

Whereas Robert's American bird skins and David's lathe illustrate the ways in which family members on both sides of the Atlantic participated in transatlantic commerce, and the exchange of hair illustrates the ways objects are imbued with meaning based upon transatlantic distance, there is a further instance of goods crossing the ocean in the correspondence. In a fragment of a letter of David Glen to Mrs Jean Kerr, written most likely later than 1823, he sends tobacco seeds to her. The ellipsis in the following quotation signifies missing text:

> you will recive [*sic*] too [*sic*] ears of corn one to Jean Stuart Lien[?] and one to Ann Kerr you will also recive some Tabaco seeds which you must … into a brush heap and soo [sew] it therein and then …about 3 feat apart and when it has .. be opening for to shor then save it and in the later end of the year befor the frost comes pul it and dry it in the shed[.] then press it and boyl the stem and fruit […].

David Glen's sending of tobacco seeds and the instructions about how to grow them is more than simply sending a product from the New World to the Old. It seems that it has the potential to act like the locks of hair and be something growing and a constant reminder of the New World, given tobacco was not grown in Scotland. But it is much more than this: given the so-called tobacco lords of Glasgow who became enormously wealthy in the middle of the eighteenth century off of the American colonists need for ready cash, David Glen's package of seeds to Scotland seems to turnover the exploitation into an opportunity to forge transatlantic trade based not on an 'us' versus 'them', but through a family network focused

on shared resources. It thus centres the family, rather than the nation, as the network of commerce and travel, especially during a time frame in which rural communities on both sides of the Atlantic were easily exploited by larger central trade networks.

Whether the letters carried hair, seeds or skins, or simply serve as a connection across the gap of the Atlantic, the letters themselves were never private, but meant for a community. Amanda Gilroy and W. M. Verhoeven remark 'how the letter puts pressure on the distinctions between public and private' in their transatlantic study (*Epistolary Histories*, 21). Indeed the letter form perpetuates the rhetoric of a private interchange but the reality was never so personal. On this point, Bannet writes:

> One of the important things to understand […] is that letters were not construed by eighteenth-century manuals, or indeed by writing masters, as a primarily private or closeted genre. When they spoke of reading, they meant reading aloud. The letter, which was conceived as issuing from speech and as returning to speech at the point of oral delivery, was a shape-changer. It reconfigured itself through a variety of media – manuscript, print and voice – as it traveled across space and time. (*Empire*, xvii-xviii).

The Kerr correspondence is quite clear about the ways in which letters were shared by the community and used as a vehicle for circling information. One letter mentions that they have not written because they know that other emigrants have written home to Dalry and circulated news about their health (letter of 4 June 1842). When John Kerr wrote to his father on 21 July 1844 about letting those 'come and see with there [*sic*] own eyes', discussed above, what preceded this was: 'Let all my friends see this, I do not regard criticism[.] being conscious of no evil I defy the Clever Smart ones to destroy my piece [*sic*] of mind'. John grants permission to share his letter and sentiments about his emigration, almost in a dare to the 'Clever Smart' ones, knowing that letters became common currency for the debate about emigration, or fodder for griping about the lack of work in Britain. Thus the supposed 'private' letter form becomes the generic base for a transatlantic argument about emigration; it crosses the gap of sympathy as the words of an absent other infused in-person sociability and debate. It is also particularly of its time, as increasingly through the 1840's Scots were choosing to emigrate due to the reorganisation of Lowland agriculture, the prevalence of famines and the decrease in cattle prices.

Bannet is again helpful in her emphasis on the vocality of the letter genre. As we saw in the discussion of Thomson's letter and my allusion above to Crèvecoeur's Farmer James who advocated that writing is simply 'talking on paper', there is an intimate connection between letter writing and the voice. Bannet explains, 'In the eighteenth century […] the expectation was that both written and printed letters would be read aloud either to a "public"

or “in company” to family, friends, neighbors and acquaintances, and that they would thus be returned to the speech from which they had issued’ (*Empire*, 89). Letters were communal property rather than simply intimate dyadic exchanges. Besides being shared together to garner news from home or away, the transatlantic letter also delivers the voice of one to another. Consider the following from a letter from Hugh Sr. to his son John, in November 1841: ‘I request that you will give him [his brother Robert] your best advice[.] Say to him I do not forget him and you all thou [although] at a Great distance from one another’. This instance recalls how conversation (here John meaning to advise his brother regarding America) issues from the letter as the father in Scotland makes his presence known.

We also see a letter from Ann Anderson to her sister Martha Kerr that expresses this desire for conversation; the fireside here is a place of imaginative travelling and connecting through the voice (similarly, Farmer James in his Letter 6, it is also at the fireside where he hears residents’ stories and so imaginatively ‘has travelled with them’ [125]):

> Dear Sister I hope by this time you will agane [again] have taken your seat by your one fireside[.] O how I would like to have one ours [hour’s] conversation with you now to talk over what you hve gone threw and heare what you think of Alton now or if you thoght I would have any Chance for work theare as I am very Anctus [anxious] to heare about that. (30 October 1841)

As the transatlantic letter must stand in for the absent person, the desire for conversation is natural, as is the longing for the letter to become more than simply a letter, but to convey the actual presence of the longed-for sister. Across transatlantic distance, the actual receipt of the letter, rather than offering a brief consoling sense of real presence of the letter writer, effectively points to the absent Martha and actually makes the distance more painful. What is longed for is actual presence and conversation rather than a surrogate version of that through the letter. The idea that transatlantic letter writing is ‘talking on paper’ dismisses the pain of the gap of sympathy between family members separated by the Atlantic. It also serves a very practical purpose as the sister inquires about work in America; this combination of very practical ends with the felt longing to preserve the family across transatlantic distance illustrates the push and pull tendencies in transatlantic epistolary communication.

The letters then point to the importance of actual bodily presence; each side wants the other to return. There are several dismissive comments about the emigrant not wanting news of Scotland because those left behind presume they no longer wish for news of Scotland (despite their request for newspapers). This again changes when John writes that he will be returning home. Letters from Scotland then become more concerned with local Scottish news: ‘because having made up your mind to return to Scotland you wil feel more interested

in news form it' (letter from Hugh to John, 2 February 1845). It is the local and the present reality of the ambiguous double identity of the emigrant – both Scot and American – which fills up their pages as they seek to make known their present reality to the transatlantic other. Because the American writers in the correspondence do not write with the same abundant enthusiasm to emigrate that the guides' authors may have, they are clear exactly what it would take for one of their family members to emigrate. Even though Hugh Jr. is seized with 'mania for America' (letter of James Laird to Martha and John Kerr, 7 February 1843) because his wife did not consent to move, he uses the letter form to not only maintain transatlantic familial ties but also to garner more information about emigration prospects. There are also encouragements to return to Scotland throughout: Hugh Sr. writes to John, 'I can say that it is unversal oppinoing [opinion] of all your well wishers that you would be much better heir [here]' (letter of 9 September 1844); and again on 1 June 1846: 'Your Farm has now been got sold, you should lose no time in returning to Scotland'. The gap of sympathy begins to widen throughout transatlantic correspondence as the letter fails to deliver the wished-for presence of the family member across the ocean; fantasies of reunion then become more prominent, such as we saw above with Ann Anderson wishing her sister were at her fireside. The ultimate reunion the Kerr family tends to reach for in their brief moments when they step aside from the practicalities necessary to procure a livelihood is a rhetoric of a new country apart from national affiliation, looking forward to heaven.

Letters become a communal family conversation and indicate longing for physical presence of the absent family member. Not only were they simply read and shared amongst family members, but they also become the basis for critique and explanation. Hugh Jr. writes to his brother John: 'with regared to the letter sent you by him, I ought to mention that it was written hurriedly at his declaration, and mostly in his own words, without any prompting on my part, the statement of [?] giving him greater pleasure than seeing you comming [*sic*] down the tunnul was wholy [*sic*] his own' (letter Hugh to John, 17 July 1846). Hugh's candidness with his brother about his father extends the father's desire to Hugh to both see John back in Scotland. As the transatlantic letter evidences a grasping towards a reunion of the family, the injunctions towards union tend to either focus on the necessity for the return of the emigrant or to look forward to a heavenly reunion, emphasising shared Christian faith. Consider how Hugh Sr. writes to his son Robert, in a final farewell from the dying father to a son he knows he will never see again. As a recognisable type of letter it thus moves through its own formal qualities (summing up a life, injunction to the son to live well and follow God), but these are made more pressing given the geographical distance that separates father

and son. Here, the tone of the letter changes registers from writing concerning material prosperity and physical health to focus on his son's salvation:

> Dear Robert my Son […] I Kno not what to say to you we often speak of you and you may belive [believe] I would be Glad to See you before I go to the place where I Shall not return[.] but the place Being So plesant in your esteam I can Scarce cheeries [cherish] the hope of ever Seeing you in this place but we are all pour [sic] chang[e]able creatur[e]s that we cannot Say what we may not do but dear mind that the Great Goad [God] that we all have to do with is an unchang[e]able Being whom we are responsable [*sic*] unto[.] Therefore I Bech [beseech] you to remember your Goad [God] and the God of your fathers that that the Short Span of your liff [life] is fast Short[en]ing[.] my desire and prayer is that you may be Saved in the day of the loard [Lord] and be found at the land upon Christ right hand at the last day and meet that kindly welcam well don[e] though ged [good] and faithful Sarvant [servant] enter thou unto the Joy of thy loard[.] I remain your dying Father HK[.] (letter of 14 September 1843)

Hugh Kerr borrows biblical language to extend the 'God of your fathers' to literally include himself, as Robert's father; the reverberations of biblical phrases ('last day' 'good and faithful servant') and the focus on mutability at the close of his letter, become a way of both connecting over the long distance of the Atlantic and give a safe and conventional way of communicating ultimate loss – Hugh Sr's approaching final loss of life, which is made all the more final given the geographic space between the two. Hugh Kerr's use of the biblical patterns of salvation are akin to the sort of adaptation necessary in what Susan Manning describes (in an essay that makes brief use of the Kerr correspondence) through Toni Morrison's 're-memorying' (from her novel *Beloved*): a phrase which 'implies an imaginative level of engagement with the past that goes beyond mere memory, keeping places and people alive in the mind, sometimes by reinventing them'.[22] For Manning, the poem attached to the end of a prosaic letter of James Boyle to Mrs Jean Kerr and Hugh Kerr (dated 29 August 1822) 'adds an emotional dimension apparently inconsistent with the enterprise and aspiration of the prose description' (152). Similarly here in this letter, Hugh re-memories the biblical phraseology to provide a depth of relationship between him and his emigrant son, and like the poem attached to Boyle's letter, it, too, extends the often prosaic tone of the letter as it shifts registers. This shift into biblical metaphors or poetry (though more rare in the correspondence) provides a socially sanctioned outlet to describe the pain of separation. The gap of sympathy – which gapes in any relationship as one prepares to ultimately 'cross over' into death – here, is made more painful through transatlantic distance.

[22] Susan Manning, 'Robert Burns' Transatlantic Afterlives,' *Robert Burns and Transatlantic Culture*, Eds. Sharon Alker, Leith Davis, Holly Faith Nelson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) 149-168. 155.

The fear of separation moves beyond simply emigration beyond the sea, to ultimate separation through death. In the letters though, emigration and death are intertwined where going to that 'undiscover'd country' stands in both for America and for final separation in death (*Hamlet* III.i.78). That is why when Hugh writes to his brother in America, John, that 'I much fear our Brother [Robert] has died and among strangers', the emphasis is that his death is not where it should be, amongst family, but as a 'stranger in a strange land' (letter of 17 July 1846). Similarly a letter from David Glen to his relatives in Scotland, Hugh and Jean Kerr, describes the death of his mother, Jean's sister. The letter is worth quoting at length as it provides a biblical rhetoric for dealing with death that transcends national affiliation and also gives voice to some of the fears associated with emigration. Here, in this example, the gap of sympathy may be crossed through a shared language and experience of faith, and a looking forward to reunion after death:

> It is with feelings of extream grieaf that I write to you of the death of my Mother your Sister who deid [*sic*] on the 19 day of August 1823 of the which you will have notise [noticed] befor this time by Mrs Patton[.] she got sick on the Wagon too days befor we came to Pitsburg and continud so till we came to Mariata where she died[.] she had it very calm and esey passing out of this world unto one which is far better even into one which his uncoruptabel and which fadeth not away[.] she never complaned of any pain but lay quit [quiet] and esey all the time and if we had asked at her if she feelt any pain she said she was just weckly [weakly][.] we had too different doctors at her but all in vain it being the Lords will to tack [*sic*] her hence[.] […] she was buried in all order and sollemity on the twenty [20th] at Mariata in the burel ground there[.] we had above twenty Scotsmen at her funeral[.] (letter of 18 October 1823)

Like Hugh Sr's letter above, David Glen also uses stock biblical phrases to give voice to his grief: she has passed 'unto one which is far better even into one which his uncoruptabel and which fadeth not away', citing the 'Lords will' and her burial with 'order and sollemity'. Since the writing of the letter is several months past the death of David Glen's mother most likely the space of time allows for a more decorous explication of her death for the writer, finding solace in biblical language after the shock of her death has passed. This is a different type of 'gap' – that of time passing between the event and its recording and communication to family in Scotland. What is especially notable in this section is the mention of twenty Scots at her funeral. The rest of the letter seems to want to mourn the fact that she did not die in Scotland, or even in her new American home, but rather en route to it, in a space of transition that seems utterly unsuited for his mother's final resting place. David Glen again uses religious imagery to provide solace for this unmentioned desire. He continues:

> Dear Aunt no dout but you will be sinserly sory at the deth of your sister my Mother but we aught not for to freat and complen ainst the holy desres of god for it was not yesterdays though nor the other years statut but it was forordened when and where

> she should die by the lord and who can teach him knolegs [knowledge][.] we ought rather for to preaper ourselves for death as we know not how soon we may be called hense ourselves and god transpalants his flowers at all ages[.] I say transplants becase the being still remens: just as A going down star is not anichelated [annihilated] but sheweth in another hemispher: think her not last who is firm in Crist whe has only exchanged time for eternaty mortal for imortality […] [.] she deid in a strang land that is true but here is alick nearness to heven out of all qarters of the earthe[.] with the Lord it maks no difference whether she deid at Mariata or on the very bed she was born on[.] (Letter of 18 October 1823)

Glen's letter disallows space for the explication of grief – the opening statement mentions his 'extreme grief' but this is moved quickly past in what follows, as the text hurries along and intends to usher his aunt from the event of her sister's death to a confidence in the foreordination of God. If the outpourings of grief were articulated in the letter there is the thought that such lively sentiment could fracture the tenuous connection that the writer and his Scottish relatives have, given the distance between the two and the now present reality of losing a vital link in the familial chain. Beyond the actual reporting of the mother's death, the letter uses metaphors that are particularly suitable to the problem of connection across the Atlantic. Most obviously, Glen's religious language unites those in America and those in Scotland not just to one another through a shared faith, but also to the departed. Glen's religious imagery also includes the idea of transplanting one from earth to heaven, but it also within this context takes on added meaning: this is the idea of being transplanted from one country to another, taken out by the roots and re-planted in another place (a metaphor which we shall see is particularly useful to David Currie's letter below) and also calls to mind Thomson's 'replanting' of his farm Corkerhill above. Thus, because God foreordained the time and place for her death, and has effectively transplanted her from earth to heaven, Glen concludes that 'with the Lord it maks no difference whether she deid at Mariata or on the very bed she was born on'. But it does matter to David Glen – hence the reference to 20 Scots at her funeral, which illustrates the importance of being surrounded by those from 'home'. David Glen's reporting of his mother's death seems to sidestep issues associated with transplantation between countries – waiting several months to write of his mother's death and in his prose hurrying onwards without describing his own grief. But perhaps expiation of grief in writing is a later, more Romantic concern (for instance, Wordsworth's 'We are Seven' or the musings about his infant in Coleridge's 'Frost at Midnight') and we should not expect the same in Glen's letter. Even if that is the case, the language he does use – reaching towards reunion in heaven through biblical language, using a language of transplantation and of a star re-appearing in another hemisphere – evidences the anxiety about the increasing distance between himself and his relatives in Scotland as well as the

unbridgeable space between him and his mother. The gap of sympathy remains tenuously connected, as links in the chain of connection are removed through death, and the gap predominates over the 'silken bands' which connect it (Crèvecoeur, 41).

David Currie, another relation of the Kerrs, and resident in Alton, Illinois, wrote back to his relatives in Scotland on 7 February 1854. Currie's letter is interesting in its self-conscious prose and thus differs from much of the correspondence; for example, almost as a picturesque prospect hunter, he takes pains to note the presently 'dull' prospect of the Mississippi River out of his attic window but also provides for his reader a sense of its beauty in warmer months. Part of this self-consciousness is no doubt due to its later date; consider his discussion of flowers:

> I suppose by the time this reaches you you will be moved out to Dalry[.] I am afraid you wont think much of Dalry now but your flowers will grow much Better than in Glasgow and a lover of flowers with opportunity to cultivate them never feels the same solitude as the generality of mankind[.] I am afraid this is but a poor country for flowers[.] the spontaneous weeds grow with such Luxuriance. William Ferguson says there are good Dhalias in this Country[.] I have no doubt but if the subject had been paid any attention to they would have found flowers though of a different class from those grown in Scotland that would have fitted the soil[.] there is one thing I would like to try if it could be had that is the Fuchias I never seen one in this western country. I think they would do well here as far as I recollect they seed[;] if so I wish you could send me a little of it if you think it would keep[.] I am glad to see that John Kerr is become an compettitor [*sic*] we saw by the papers he had all the Dhalia prizes last year [John Kerr had since returned to Scotland][.] I suppose Jeanie and Agnes will be grown a good deal since I saw them and getting to be good writers and readers[.] I should like to seem them[.] I often minded them when I cam across any patch of wild flowers, and I tell you there is some pretty ones, I have seen several of the annuals I used to get from you growing wild though I had forgot their names, by the time this reaches you it will be drawing nigh to the [?] time which begins the time of posie gathering which was always a pleasant time and brings to mind those who are no more[…][.]'

At first glance the letter simply discusses the prospects for flowers in both Scotland and Illinois, interspersed with some discussion of those back home, but when we attend to how this discussion of flowers helps to articulate the gap of sympathy, its import grows. He begins by noting the impact of his family's move from Glasgow to Dalry and how it will afford them better flowers and then philosophises how cultivating flowers will make a sense of solitude disappear (perhaps because he anticipates they will feel more solitary moving from city to country). Then there is a curious juxtaposition: those with 'the opportunity to cultivate them never feels the same solitude as the generality of mankind[.] I am afraid this is but a poor country for flowers'. Of course he may simply be stating the way in which America does not fit into a sense of cultivated picturesque nature that was seen in British

landscapes with manicured lawns and flowers, where America does not even allow the cultivation of flowers; but the juxtaposition also implies that America is generally lacking. This seems an almost melancholic musing rather than what we saw with anti-emigration tracts almost comically exposing the dearth of society or lack of culture in America. To supply this lack he asks for a transplant of fuchsias to be sent to him, hoping a vestige of home would thrive (perhaps like him) in this new environment (he also asks for 'a good Scotch song Book'). Lastly, the transatlantic distance calls to mind his family overseas like an associative memory when he writes, 'by the time this reaches you' it will be near the time for 'posie gathering'. The distance in time for his letter to make the transatlantic passage is the space of time required to put the writer back in the commemorative space of home. Transatlantic distance (both the space of the Atlantic and the time it takes for his letter to arrive) is turned into a re-memorying of past times spent gathering posies that looks back to happy times and farther back to those who have died and gone ahead of him. Currie's letter brings to mind the passing of time and particularly, for Currie, his own national transplantation. The flowers become imbued with the weight of the transatlantic distance and one could easily see how the following could apply for Currie's thoughts on flowers in his new home:

> These beauteous forms,
> Through a long absence, have not been to me
> As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
> But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
> Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
> In hours of weariness, sensations sweet, [23]

Although for Wordsworth it is the passage of time more than the discursive conditions of negotiating the Atlantic space, for both Wordsworth and Currie, imagining places in the past imbue the present with hope, as the two are brought together through association, and which closes the gap of sympathy. This sort of melancholy musing on the past may have held sway throughout Currie's life. Another letter of David Currie's is in the collection, written from Elevator A (he was a night elevator operator in St. Paul) on 16 July 1883. It is a fragment of a letter and one that sums up the gaping relationship between family on both sides of the ocean. It thus serves as a fitting coda to the generic failure of the letter to effectively provide presence across transatlantic distance, especially as in the latter half of the nineteenth century America and Britain were moving increasingly away from another towards distinction. He writes to his nephews and nieces, sorrowful that he has not had recent news and sadly to

[23] William Wordsworth, 'Tintern Abbey,' *The Complete Poetical Works* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1888) Bartleby.com, 1999. www.bartleby.com/145/. Ln 23-28.

inform them of the death of their uncle Robert, who drowned close to his home. He writes, 'one by one the links are Broken – althou I was not much there for several years I feel a sad silence gathering around me[.] he had some faults so have we all[.] his were generally readily forgiven[.] he had many friends and I guess no enemies'. As an older man, David Currie feels alone, transplanted from those back in Scotland and perhaps forgotten by them given the distance in space and time between them; and with the death of Robert, the links are broken.

The transatlantic letter, as the example of the Kerr correspondence illustrates, holds out the hope of a virtual community to unite both those at home and their emigrant relations; created from the moments of presence that the letter affords, there is the hope for an imaginative transatlantic community. But as we have seen, the sympathetic gap widens based upon a reliance on the transatlantic letter as it puts too much pressure on the form so that it is not able to hold up under it. More is always required – such as the 'tokens of remembrance' or a reaching after a heavenly reunion or the here-and-now actual return of the loved one. As a generic form of connection, the pressure on the transatlantic letter at the end of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century is simply too great to sustain presence effectively. The width of the gap of sympathy expands into the early years of the American republic especially as America began to increasingly define itself in exceptionalist terms. To effectively communicate in both 'here' and 'there' a certain two-footedness is necessary and one that we see in both the transatlantic emigrant life of Susanna Rowson and in her transatlantic novels, the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter Four:
‘A Heart Divided’: Susanna Rowson, her transatlantic works, and generic sympathy

If the actual letters exchanged in the previous chapter illustrate the difficulty of sympathetic connection (even within the intimate bonds of the family) when stretched across the Atlantic, then what are the implications for crossing the gap of sympathy when we move into different generic registers? As Crèvecoeur had moved from empirical documentary modes in *Letters* to proto-gothic modes, here, in Susanna Rowson’s fiction the move from sentimental novel to drama and to historical saga illustrate, on one level, the capaciousness of transatlantic sympathy. But like Crèvecoeur’s text, Rowson’s works also become increasingly anxious about what ‘this new man’ of America looks like (although her works stave off Crèvecoeur’s gothic turn). For Rowson, this anxiety stems from her own emigrant experience, that, when translated into her fiction, illustrate both the possibilities and problems attendant upon the travelling of sympathy for her female characters.

Cathy Davidson’s recovery of *Charlotte Temple* in her *Revolution and the Word* (1986) paved the way for a re-evaluation of Susanna Rowson and her works. However, it is only recently that Rowson’s entire oeuvre – excepting *Charlotte Temple* – has entered the transatlantic canon. She gets a few pages in *The Cambridge History of American Literature* (while Brockden Brown and Irving get chapters) just a mention in Lawson-Peebles’ *American Literature Before 1880*, and aside from prodigious amounts of critical work on *Charlotte Temple*, the first book-length study of her works was only published in 2008 (Marion Rust’s *Prodigal Daughters*)[1]. Reading Rowson’s transatlantic experience of national two-footedness not only establishes Rowson as an entrepreneurial, active woman but also as a transatlantic author, and most importantly for our purposes, evidencing an emigrant consciousness that conforms neither to a ‘pure’ American nor British appellation. Her works discussed here try out Smith’s proposition that sympathy happens imaginatively as ‘we change persons and characters’ (*Theory*, 317) as Rowson’s characters cross and re-cross the Atlantic entering into others’ geographical and cultural spaces and roles. Rowson’s works also test Hume’s focus on the precariousness of distance inherent within sympathy, and for

[1] Robert Lawson-Peebles, *American Literature before 1880*, (Harlow: Longman-Pearson, 2003). Marion Rust, *Prodigal Daughters: Susanna Rowson’s Early American Women* (Chapel Hill, NC: UNCP, 2008).

my purposes specifically, how and if sympathy works stretched across the gap of the Atlantic[2]. If the hallmark of sympathy across the Atlantic is its gap, then Rowson's works offer a particular gendered, generic and spatial answer to bridging this gap. Throughout the works explored in this chapter, Rowson explores female forms of sympathy that hopefully (though momentarily) extend to different races, religions and ideologies; her version of transatlantic sympathy is at its most capacious in frontier-like spaces and within compounded generic forms that give form to the divided heart resulting from straddling Anglo-American identities, such as what we see finally in her later novel, *Reuben and Rachel* (1798). The trajectory in Rowson's works considered here, from more facile interactions across the gap of sympathy to more complex ones in *Reuben and Rachel*, also moves to finally acknowledge that in negotiating the Anglo-American relationship, that difference and separation (between Britain and America at the end of *Reuben and Rachel* particularly) become vital. In the Kerr correspondence, the pressures of Atlantic distance was alienating so that distance was either obliterated by a return to Scotland (with John Kerr) or a melancholy final cutting off (with Robert Currie). In this chapter the Atlantic distance that sympathy must cross finally settles for separation and differentiation, into separate nationalist spheres. In addition, like Crèvecoeur and the emigrant Scots of the previous chapter, Rowson's own transatlantic crossings deeply inform her writing.

Though Rowson is a canonical figure in early American writing, her national affiliations are much more complex. Having lost her mother in childbirth, Susanna Haswell was left in the care of a British nurse while her father went off to America to fight in the American War of Independence. At age 5, Susanna was taken across the Atlantic to be with her father and his new American wife. She remained in America until the War intensified, remaining under house arrest for her father's Loyalism and finally was deported to England as part of a prisoner exchange, returning to England sixteen years after she'd first left it. Rowson's formative years were thus in both location and time fraught with divided loyalties between her 'new' and 'old' home (neither really losing the title of 'home'). After a further 15 years, she returned again to America, this time for good, with her husband Thomas Rowson, and supported her family as a writer, actress and preceptress to the nation's elite daughters. Her first works were published in England, with *Charlotte Temple* issued in both countries (1791 in England and 1794 in America), she was 'both English (by birth) and

[2] As was discussed in chapter 1, Smith discusses that the ductility of the imagination is that which allows us to 'change persons in fancy' (*Theory*, 10) and Hume discusses, 'We sympathize more with persons contiguous to us, than with persons remote from us: With our acquaintance, than with strangers: With our countrymen, than with foreigners' (*Treatise*, 631).

American (by residence),' 'both from an elite background and dependent on her own labor for economic survival,' and both 'vernacular and genteel' (Rust, *Prodigal*, 42). Rowson's transatlantic syntheses and adaptations help to expand and problematise polarised national understandings of both the author and her works. In her 'Preface' to *Trials of the Human Heart* (1795), Susanna Rowson reflects on her return to England:

> […] the truth is, that equally attached to either country, the unhappy dissentions affected me in the same manner as a person may be imagined to feel, who having a tender lover, and an affectionate brother who are equally dear to her heart, and by whom she is equally beloved, sees them engaged in a quarrel with, and fighting against each other, when, let whichsoever party conquer, she cannot be supposed insensible to the fate of the vanquished.[3]

Although Rowson may here be playing up her allegiance to America given the American publication of her works following her 1793 emigration, the Preface nevertheless establishes Rowson as transatlantic, attached to both England and America simultaneously, what Marion Rust calls 'flexible national allegiances'.[4] She does not position herself in male postures of traveller: adventurer, chronicler, explorer, but instead places herself as conservative woman author – clearly fitting in her authorial persona within the trajectory of womanhood, even using the language of coverture: she has moved from under the authority of 'affectionate brother' to 'tender lover', from Britain to America. But rather than simply acquiesce to a position of inactive femininity, Rowson attributes both sentimental feeling and action, and later, continued movement outside the domestic sphere, to women. Her language of sensibility, signalled in her language of affection, imagination and compassion for the vanquished, puts Rowson not only in step with many of her fictional heroines but also in a long history of sensibility[5].

More than 25,000 copies of *Charlotte* Temple were sold in the United States shortly after publication, surpassing the novel's initial print run of 1000 copies within a few months, with multiple editions immediately following its 1794 publication; in England the initial print run of 1000 sold out and a further edition was not published until 1819[6]. Why was Rowson

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[3] Susanna Rowson, 'Preface', *Trials of the Human Heart*, *a* novel, Philadelphia: Wrigley & Berriman, 1795. *Literature Online* <http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&r_es_id=xri:lion&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:pr:Z000017380:0> Xix.

[4] Rust, 'Introduction,' *Charlotte Temple: Norton Critical Edition*, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2011. Xvii.

[5] From Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768) sensibility has often been elicited upon coming up against the 'other' in the context of travel; Dobson notes that 'in the sentimental vision, the greatest threat is the tragedy of separation' in Joanne Dobson, 'Reclaiming Sentimental Literature,' *American Literature* 69.2 (June 1997): 263-288, 267.

[6] See: Ed. Pattie Cowell, 'Introduction,' *Charlotte Temple* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011) 5. Robert A. Gross and Mary Kelley, eds., *A History of the Book in America Vol. 2: An Extensive Republic: Print, Culture and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840* (Durham, NC: UNC Press, 2010) 448.

so well received in America, her adopted country, and little appreciated in England?[7] Eve Bannet convincingly reasons that Rowson's ability to combine Federalist and more radical positions on women's roles alienated her: 'In England […] this effort to combine conservative and radical positions was ineffectual, and Rowson was heard by neither side,' stating the principle difference was that 'in America, Christianity remained a prominent accompaniment and influential discursive formation for the expression of both [and] was […] invoked by all sides' (249). Neither writing from a radical perspective nor unproblematically accepting a conservative rhetoric that viewed women principally operating within a private realm, Rowson utilises notions of Christian sympathy to cause her eighteenth-century reader to critically examine what is meant by 'home' and to begin to identify with the stranger. As many literary critics are also looking beyond *Charlotte Temple*, this chapter will put *Charlotte Temple*, and Rowson's play, *Slaves in Algiers*, in dialogue with her later novel, *Reuben and Rachel*[8]. *Charlotte* and *Slaves in Algiers* help to set up a pattern of transatlantic relations more fully explored in *Reuben and Rachel* that while hopeful, is deeply ambivalent about the limits of sympathy, especially as it crosses the Atlantic. Proceeding from the previous chapter's focus on the increasing distance of sympathy that the transatlantic letter articulates, Rowson's fiction illustrates the beginnings of a transatlantic sympathy that must negotiate difference and separation. When compared to the trajectory in Crèvecoeur's *Letters*, Rowson's cross-generational and gendered versions of sympathy operate as in Crèvecoeur's Bartram on the frontier in Letter 11, as a high point of transcultural harmony. But in the end, Rowson's fiction moves into more sentimental modes and her characters choose the side of 'true born Americans' in order to stave off the frenzied gothic turn we see in Farmer James's final letter.

As Smith and Hume had argued, as geographical distance increases, affective distance decreases. Each of Rowson's works considered here are intimately concerned about familial relations. Charlotte's travelling away from England and her family signals her downfall and she is unable to form a successful family on the other side of the Atlantic; in *Slaves in Algiers*, the white Anglo-American family unit is reunited, while cross-cultural marriages are elided. The family unit becomes the first location of sociability and extends

[7] Eve Bannet explains her poor reception in England as a matter of rhetoric: Rowson was using 'language usually deployed by Tories and Evangelicals […] to promote positions on fallen women and on social justice that were espoused by egalitarian writers […] who eschewed all forms of traditional Christianity.' Eve Tavor Bannet, 'Immigrant Fictions: Carey, Rowson, and *Charlotte Temple* in Philadelphia,' *Age of Johnson* 19 (2009): 239-272. 248.

[8] The following journal issue considers Rowson's historical novel: *Reuben and Rachel*: *Studies in American Fiction* 38:1-2 (Spring and Fall 2011).

outward to community, nation, and in some instances transcultural relationships, especially in *Reuben and Rachel*. In Rowson's historical saga, she chronicles ten generations extending from Columbus in Spain to his eighteenth century descendants as they intermarry with others from South America, Europe and the United States; in the novel, travel moves from a binary 'there and back' pattern to encompass a circum-Atlantic movement composed of North and South American nations, coastal and inland travel. In the novel the family takes on primary importance as it forms the basis of the American nation, but is a family composed of South American nations, native peoples, and Europeans and Catholics, Protestants and Quakers. Works can be 'transatlantic' in various ways: we can see how Rowson's works start with *Charlotte Temple*'s very literal inclusion of the transatlantic crossing as her fall; in *Slaves in Algiers* the transatlantic moves from simple transatlantic crossings within the plot of the play to viewing the transatlantic as another way to describe cross-cultural adaptations that happen across the space of the Atlantic where characters exchange places in fancy. In the final novel considered here, *Reuben and Rachel*, transatlantic crossings not only signal divided loyalties and compound identities, but also in the novel's generic mixture, as a 'transatlantic novel' it utilises a form that is appropriate to the experience of multiple cultural crossings, both geographically and generationally.

In many ways, *Charlotte Temple* is the pattern with which Rowson's other novels interact and from which they deviate in important ways. Rowson's later works moved beyond the one-way transatlantic journey (where Charlotte dies in America) to promise glimpses of cultural exchange that reverberate beyond a sense of Englishness that remains unchanged even as it crosses the ocean as it does in *Charlotte Temple*; the women particularly in Rowson's play, *Slaves in Algiers* and her novel, *Reuben and Rachel*, though they hold to particular views of 'Americanness' which appear routed in a hierarchical understanding of class and race, they nevertheless are deeply affected by the secondary female characters who seem to make borders of class, race and religion more permeable. Rowson's works considered here – the sentimental novel, the play and the historical saga – offer generically different ways of reading the transatlantic situation at the turn of the nineteenth century, each more open-ended than the other and as they are taken together, advocate for an activist sentimentalism (as opposed to a emotive sentimentalism[9]) that has the potential to move beyond sentimentality and even can cross oceans.

[9] This is the sort of thing we see in the mourners at 'Charlotte's grave' in Trinity Churchyard, where there is a venting of feeling and no subsequent action.

Charlotte Temple: The Failure of Transatlantic Sympathy

In *The Importance of Feeling English* (2007), Leonard Tennenhouse argues that in the late eighteenth century, Americans, although detaching themselves from Britain politically, continued to identify as culturally English. He goes on to argue that the anxiety of being both English and not-English perpetuated stories that took up family relations – including aberrant forms such as incest and rape – to interrogate what the Anglo-American relationship looked like. If as Tennenhouse claims, Americans still considered themselves English and 'If Anglo-Americans imagined their culture as a woman – that is, as a Mary Rowlandson, a Charlotte Temple, or even a Clarissa Harlowe – then the perpetuity of that identity would depend on her remaining faithful to her origins' (64). *Charlotte Temple* seems to bear out this claim, whereas Rowson's later novels, which will be considered below, seem to validate Tennenhouse's argument much less so. *Charlotte Temple* is a novel ultimately concerned about the purity of Charlotte's origins and the eventual return of her daughter, Lucy, a sort of 'new Charlotte' to England. Here, America serves as an exotic testing ground for the characters' Englishness rather than a locale that affects a total sea change. As the characters cross the Atlantic and move through American space, American placement does not demand the same attention as it had with the emigration literature explored in the previous two chapters. Instead, at least in this novel, what is important is that it is not-England and not-family, rather than that it *is* America. Generically, borrowing from melodrama and the seduction novel, Charlotte plays the part of the classic female victim of sentimental plots; hers is the story of a young English girl who is seduced by a British officer and accompanies him on the transatlantic journey to America. En route she becomes pregnant, her seducer Montraville refuses to marry her once they arrive in America, leaving her abandoned in a small country house. Through the devious mechinations of Montraville's comrade, Belcour, and Charlotte's French schoolmistress, LaRue, Charlotte becomes increasingly alienated and deluded, until she finally gives birth to a daughter (whom she entrusts to her father, who shows up right on time) and dies.

In *Charlotte Temple*, events signal her continual journey away from an English centre, without any sort of transatlantic, cross-cultural adaptation. Generically, the failure of epistolary exchange signals an incipient worrying about the possibility of transatlantic sympathy. This is the same sort of fear we saw from the Scottish Kerr family writing to their emigrant family members in America: because the letter is the last link of connection across the Atlantic, if letters are lost or go unanswered, it signals death. In *Charlotte*, the Atlantic figures heavily as that which distances her from home in her letter writing; Charlotte desires

reincorporation into community wanting to return to her parents, she compares herself to a sailor adrift: 'would not the poor sailor, tossed on a tempestuous ocean, threatened every moment with death, gladly return to the shore he had left to trust to its deceitful calmness?' (921). This image of the sea-tossed sailor can be traced back to Pauline biblical metaphors, Calvinist and Puritan pilgrims and even Hume in the *Treatise*.[10] Charlotte's use immediately associates her current solitude with her Atlantic crossing. As her plight becomes more overt, so does her linking of her fall with her travel. Throughout the novel, Charlotte's failed letters (which Montraville destroys), then, are a material marker of her actual transatlantic distance and a metaphorical marker of her psychic stasis. The proliferation of syntax in her letters mirrors not only inner turmoil but also delivers a moral message for *Charlotte*'s readers: for appropriate sociability, no matter one's location, restraint and sensibility must be carefully monitored or one may end up like Charlotte, continually disintegrating mentally without a sympathetic community to move her beyond moral failure. More broadly, the danger then for letter-writing's 'unmediated intimate contact' within a transatlantic context is that it opens up the imagination to the potentially 'wrong' people.[11] If epistolary communication is one genre which increases one's vulnerability by encouraging self-disclosure while leaving the results of such self-disclosure to the imagination given the distance between writer and reader, then by placing it within a transatlantic context and without the reinforcing boundaries of close kin networks (such as we saw in Chapter Three), one is apt to become increasingly cut off from appropriate forms of community. We see this with Charlotte as she is lured away from geographic and affective proximity to her family. Letter-writing attempts to stand in the gap between her physical and moral travelling away from her parental centre, but her transatlantic dislocation disables actual reception of Charlotte's letters and thereby dislocates Charlotte from any sympathetic community, and particularly, from an English sympathetic community. Because her own sympathies become increasingly moved by Montraville and without the benefit of self-knowledge, Charlotte's transatlantic travel results in her demise rather than imaginative engagement or enlargement. Charlotte's travel to America cuts off the possibility of successful epistolary communication both for herself and as a form that promotes genuine imaginative sympathy. If Charlotte cannot command herself and has travelled away from parental authority, we as readers need another mother – the narrator – to guide us into sympathy with Charlotte.

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[10] See the end of Book 1 in Hume's *Treatise* and Susan Manning, *Puritan-Provincial Vision: Scottish and American Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990) 45.

[11] Blythe Forcey, 'Charlotte Temple and the End of Epistolarity,' *American Literature* 63.2 (1991): 225-41, 234.

We thus expect the narrator, unlike the failed letters, to be able to close up a sympathetic gap. We are instructed exactly how to read *Charlotte Temple* through what Julia Stern terms the 'omnipotent maternal narrator' who is to guide the reader into appropriate feeling for Charlotte[12]. However, as several critics have mentioned, the narrator's own overwhelming presence in the novel actually removes us from Charlotte. The narratorial interludes, rather than moving us forward into sympathy, distract and detain us; this narrative swerving (as Rust mentions) occur as the narrator moves 'without seeming rhyme or reason between appeals to disciplined detachment and appeals to sympathetic identification'[13]. Throughout the novel, Charlotte is stuck, as a passive heroine of sensibility – she is always lying down (swooning, fainting, reclining, unable to do anything but sleep once she is abandoned); correspondingly we as readers are inactive, only able to weep (at best) for Charlotte. Julia Stern notes particularly that the narrator's 'moralistic interruptions, highly rational exhortations deployed to appeal to the mind as well as merely to the feelings of the reader, take us back to the scene of loss and *replay* it without allowing us to move on' (Stern, 492, emphasis added). Marion Rust concurs:

> The Rowsonian narrator is thus at her most confessional at the very moment she puts us at the furthest remove from the details of her story. She appeals to our sympathetic and our censorious tendencies simultaneously and leaves us, like Charlotte, like the narrator herself, unable to do anything effective. Instead, we dwell in the kind of anxious self-doubt that Charlotte found so painful. (*Prodigal Daughters*, 76)

This replaying is perhaps what made Charlotte dear to thousands of Americans who visited her supposed grave in Trinity churchyard. This same inability to move onward appears the very antithesis of the adaptation necessary to both enter into and sympathise with cultural others.

While readers may sympathise with Charlotte, the novel does not lay a foundation for successful transatlantic sympathy, even for Anglo-American sympathy; it is only a replaying, where repetition stands in for reciprocity. *Charlotte Temple* is perhaps the preeminent text where:

> […] the vivid depiction of emotionally overcharged scenes became a way of transacting feeling between text and reader; the literary text encouraged the reader to sympathize by imagining him/herself in the place of the suffering victim, or, more often, in the place of the suffering witness of the suffering victim. The reader, in effect, is moved by the spectacle of another's suffering through a process of emotional reflection; he or she imagines and then mirrors the feeling of a model.

[12] Julia A. Stern, 'Working through the Frame: the Dream of Transparency in *Charlotte Temple,*' *Arizona Quarterly* 49.4 (Winter 1993): 1-32.

[13] Marion Rust, 'What's Wrong with Charlotte Temple?' *William and Mary Quarterly* 60.1 (Jan 2003): 99-118. 115.

> Sympathy is thus quintessentially mimetic and to some extent defined the project of mimesis in late eighteenth-century British fiction.[14]

Nandrea's understanding of sympathy as 'emotional reflection' rather too simplistically articulates the concept of sympathy, which for Smith, is predicated on intellectual and imaginative travelling that moves beyond emotionalism. And yet Nandrea's articulation of 'emotional reflection' is the sort of flattened out version of sympathy that was true to the experience of reading *Charlotte Temple*. Referring to the pilgrimages to Charlotte's grave site, Rust argues that the novel 'made imaginary engagement (reading) result in specific subsequent action' (Rust, 'What's Wrong', 118); there was an action elicited by Charlotte's tale of woe – namely, weeping and visiting Trinity Churchyard – but such action veers far from what the novel seems to intend in advocating sentimental propriety and sympathy for other 'fallen' women. Such weeping at a grave (or cynical jabs about the heroine's impropriety if one did not sympathise with Charlotte) does not extend sympathy or cross cultural borders, it simply instantiates a version of sentimental emotionalism that does not travel beyond the self. It highlights a 'sensory susceptibility – a willingness to be played upon, to be altered' (Nandrea, 115) rather than engagement outside the self as the supposed 'sympathetic' object simply becomes a useful way for the reader to expiate her own feelings.

Julia Stern writes of a universal, millenialising version of sympathy she thinks is sought in *Charlotte Temple*, but her critique ultimately misses the point. Stern advocates the novel seeks

> a fantasy of unobstructed relations of sympathy – figured as the indivisible bond between an omnipotent maternal narrator and an audience whose constitution is infinitely expandable, unlimited by the distinctions of race, class, or gender that exclude the republic's "others" from the promises of the Founding – *Charlotte Temple* imagines, creates, and attempts to enfranchise a post-Revolutionary community linked by claims of universal compassion. (Stern, 'Working,' 485)

Stern, in her utopian version of sympathy however, neglects the very nature of Smithean sympathy and its inherent self-monitoring and, indeed, its ambivalence about its extension, especially as physical distance increases. That is, in Smithean sympathy one is always cognisant of the *distance* that sympathy can travel – both actual and metaphorical – for we sympathise more readily with those to whom we have a strong attachment and who are close in proximity to us; one, therefore, must also constantly monitor one's actions and expressions by the 'judge within'. A key to Smithean sympathy is its rootedness in both personal and societal sociability. Charlotte ultimately remains a child; as she is unable to sympathetically

[14] Lorri G. Nandrea, 'Desiring Difference: Sympathy and Sensibility in *Jane Eyre*,' *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 37: 1-2 (Fall 2003-Spring 2004): 112-134, 113.

enter into relationships with others, including her infant daughter, she cannot grow up and change and thus the only available action for her is death. If the transatlantic crossing is often symbolically used as an image of growth and renewal – as evidenced in both earlier and later migration narratives – for Charlotte the ocean journey has failed to constitute a 'radical remaking of the subject'[15] and has instead left her disoriented. It is of course Charlotte who is the stranger to whom we relate as readers. Charlotte is a version of the Smithean outcast, 'who had the misfortune to imagine that no one believed a single word [she] said, would feel [herself] the outcast of human society, would dread the thought of going into it, or presenting [herself] before it, and could scarce fail, […] to die of despair' (*Theory*, 336). Her story is only believed by the English emigrant, Mrs Beauchamp, who subsequently disappears until Charlotte is on her deathbed. Charlotte is unable to frame her present in terms of her future; in the absence of a sympathetic community (and specifically a mother), she retreats into and longs for the past, without being able to actually modify her present state. For Charlotte the focus on the present while excluding the present's repercussions only ends tragically.

The one-way pattern of the novel differs from many of the sentimental novels of the period, if only in its location of the heroine's 'fall' as on the Atlantic Ocean. In her book *Freedom's Empire*, Laura Doyle traces the transatlantic crossing in Anglo-American and African-Atlantic fiction; she writes, 'The fainting swoon marks the crossing of a social and ontological threshold' and 'the self in an Atlantic swoon moment faces an abyss, losing its old social identity as it faints – only to reawaken uprooted, and yet newly radicalized, "born again" from its own ashes' (6-7). Doyle even mentions *Charlotte Temple* as participating in the swoon motif she highlights (6). However, the Atlantic movement of the characters does not open them up for adaptation and change, but rather reinforces and replays Old World narratives in a new location. Whereas frontier and wilderness spaces in both *Slaves and Algiers* and *Reuben and Rachel* allow characters to cross cultural borders previously shut to them in their originating cultures, in *Charlotte Temple*, contrary to Doyle's hopeful narrative of death and rebirth, Charlotte fails to successfully cross the Atlantic (if such indicates a refashioning of identity). Indeed, it all ends where it began. *Charlotte Temple* concludes with Charlotte's parents bringing Charlotte's infant daughter Lucy back to England. 'After the first tumult of grief was subsided, Mrs Temple gave up the chief of her time to her grandchild, and as she grew up and improved, began to almost fancy she again possessed her Charlotte' (945).

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[15] Laura Anne Doyle, *Freedom's Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2008) 6.

In the posthumously published *Lucy Temple* (1828), Lucy Temple succeeds where her mother did not – successfully employing herself in alleviating the poor through her compassion and industriousness where ‘her bosom sympathized in their sufferings and her judgment suggested the relief likely to be of most benefit’.[16] That which changes the course of Lucy’s ending (from her mother’s end) is the successful receipt of a letter from her guardian, a friend of her late grandfather’s. The letter rehearses Lucy’s lineage and that she will come into great fortune if she does ‘not marry one with the name of N—’; here, however, the letter ends as ‘the stroke of death arrested the hand which held the pen’ (216). This means that for much of the novel, Lucy is unsure of whom she is not to marry (it was intended to be ‘Montraville’). Although the letter is received successfully, its cryptic ending introduces the ambivalence about the form’s ability to effortlessly convey sympathy. The successful transmission of the letter differs of course from *Charlotte*, so much so that once Lucy finds out that her love interest, Lieutenant Franklin, is actually Montraville’s son (and her half brother), the two abandon one another. Lucy never becomes overwhelmed by sentiment (Lucy simply leans in doorways rather than fainting or swooning like her mother did), and moderates her feelings and relationships. After giving her heart to a man she discovers to be her brother, she runs from marriage thereafter, preferring singleness and philanthropic benevolence that keeping her fortune allows. The novel ends with the receipt of another letter from Mrs Franklin (Julia Franklin, Montraville’s wife), informing them that ‘she had purchased a beautiful seat on the banks of the Delaware, and was living there in the enjoyment of all the happiness, which was to be derived from the society of her family and the delightful serenity of nature’ (263). However, the circumstance that marred her happiness was the death of Lieutenant Franklin, her son, who ‘never lost an opportunity either of signalizing himself in action or relieving the distresses of those who suffered the calamities of war’ (263). The fact that letters within this novel are successfully exchanged indicates a neatly closed gap of sympathy, so that sentiments are communicated easily and directly, in a construction that seems too neat considering both Lucy’s failed romantic relationship and her mother’s transatlantic downfall. The moralising ending of the novel (complete with Julia returning to America, Lieutenant Franklin conveniently killed and Lucy happy to live as a single benefactress) reverses the ‘seductive influence of passion’ of Charlotte with Lucy’s ‘richest fruits of virtue and happiness’ that proceed ‘out of the most bitter and blighting disappointments’ (265). It would seem that this final ‘message’ of *Lucy Temple* clearly

[16] Susanna Rowson, *Charlotte Temple* and *Lucy Temple*, Ed. Ann Douglas (New York: Penguin, 1991) 148.

focuses on an appropriate use and extension of sympathy through the nation (as it stays in Britain and deviates from a potential incestuous relationship); however, what is ultimately dissatisfying about the novel is the lack of reciprocity that is a hallmark of Smithean sympathy (where one 'changes persons and characters', [*Theory*, 317]). Although the narrative has come full circle back to Britain as Charlotte returns in the person of her infant daughter, able to 'atone for' her moral and geographical fall away from the centre, this is not the sympathetic transformation we look for as readers. Whereas Charlotte could hardly bring herself to any action, Lucy Temple carefully moderates her sympathy to appropriate action, but this sympathy seems a passé nod to out-dated novelistic sentimental conventions and portrays sympathy not as a reciprocal imaginative crossing – it remains hierarchical and class-based – for Lucy Temple suddenly come into fortune is able to alleviate those hard-working poor with whom she comes in contact. And Lucy remains admired though not close with others: 'and though no one presumed to invade the sanctuary of her private griefs and recollections, yet all admired the serene composure with which she bore them' (264-5). And although her active benevolence for others appears of a religious nature, she remains largely unchanged through the exchanges (264). Sympathy, if it is to work transatlantically, must penetrate both parties beyond the emotional venting we see in *Charlotte Temple* or the staid benevolence in *Lucy Temple*; it must go both ways, both across the Atlantic and opening up multiple parties to reciprocity and shared feeling.

<u>*Slaves in Algiers*: A Play of Gendered Hierarchies</u>

As Rowson's fictional locations move beyond a there-and-back, linear line of transatlantic travel in *Charlotte Temple* so does the circle of sympathy widen to encompass women with differing cultural, religious and national allegiances in Rowson's other works. If *Charlotte Temple* presents a pattern for transatlantic sympathetic relations that is a linear return, where Charlotte abandons her family and country, dies in America, and her daughter Lucy returns to England thereby supplanting her mother's place in the family, *Slaves in Algiers* moves on from this pattern, a sort of 'anti-*Charlotte Temple*' according to Elizabeth Maddock Dillon[17]. Performed in 1794 *Slaves in Algiers* not only addresses the recent American captivities in the Barbary Coast, but also mobilises the audience to sympathetic identification with the Anglo-American slaves. The play focuses on the dispersal of Anglo-American values of liberty amongst the North African captive community. Specifically the

[17] Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, '*Slaves in Algiers*: Race, Republican Genealogies, and the Global Stage," *American Literary History*, 16.3 (2004): 407-436. 409.

play follows the American Rebecca, who with her son, Augustus, has been captured by Barbary pirates. She is being held by Ben Hassan, waiting for ransom money to arrive from American friends while fending off sexual advances from her captor. Meanwhile, there are other 'captives' in the play: the native women who Rebecca teaches – Fetnah, daughter to Ben Hassan, and Zoriana, the Dey's daughter – and also more Anglo-American captives, the British Constant (whom we find out to be Rebecca's long-lost husband) and his daughter, Olivia as well as Olivia's lover, Henry, and his comrade. While in captivity, Rebecca's teaching 'nourishe[s] in the mind a love of liberty' for the captive North African women, who rebel against the cultural power strictures placed on them as women[18]. At the conclusion of the play Rebecca is ransomed and reunited with her Anglo-American family and returns to America, while the North African women are barred from crossing spatially into American freedom, stay in Algiers and remain within the same roles they occupied at the beginning of the play.

Rowson's play participates in the increasingly popular literature exploring captivity by Barbary pirates in the late eighteenth century. A generic form that has a transatlantic genesis as:

> the Early English captivity narrative morphed into the American Indian captivity narrative in the hands of early American settlers, only to be revived in the new Republic to address the depredation of Barbary pirates on American ships at the turn of the nineteenth century; and how the American captivity narrative, in turn, evolved into sentimental "captivity romances".[19]

As a form that has gone there-and-back at least two times, one expects that Rowson's use of the Barbary captivity narrative in her play will be the genre that plays most in both theme and form with the repercussions of transatlantic dislocation, but it is instead her historical saga, *Reuben and Rachel*, which most clearly gives generic form to the compounded identities inherent in transatlantic travel. The Algerian backdrop in Rowson's play becomes less about Rowson arguing for an American nationalism or transatlantic cultural crossing but works more as an impetus to explore concepts of female liberty.[20]

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[18] Susanna Rowson, *Slaves in Algiers, or, a Struggle for Freedom*, Ed. Jennifer Margulis and Karen Poremski (Acton, MA: Copley Publishing, 2000) 16.

[19] This quote describes Lise Soreson's chapter in the volume, which will be discussed below. Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning, eds., 'Introduction,' *Transatlantic Literary Studies 1660-1830* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012). 4-5.

[20] Besides the works quoted here on the Barbary captivity narrative and the American captivity narrative, the following are literary critical studies on the genre that are useful for a transatlantic approach: Eve Tavor Bannet, 'Captivity and Anti-Slavery,' *Transatlantic Stories and the History of Reading: 1720-1810 Migrant Fictions* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011). Michelle Burnham, *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682-1861* (Lebanon, NH: UPNE, 1997).

Lawrence A. Peskin notes that in Rowson's play 'references to Algiers are so generalized that one might even question that the play had any relation to the events of the 1790s',[21] and that it 'focuses more on gender issues than on slavery' (79)[22]. The play is peppered with stock Islamic characters, vague descriptions of the Dey and his environs, and so lacks the geopolitical specificity to embody the actual experience of captivity faced in the 1790s[23]. The upsurge in patriotic texts stemming from this stream of captivities, of which Rowson's is perhaps the most well known, very clearly creates an antagonistic dyad: 'Captivity narrators direct their discourse to an audience of their compatriots, coreligionists and comrades, to an "us" who will share the grief of the bondage of one of "ours" at the hands of "them"'.[24] Placement in the play then creates the potential for a negotiation of liberty that could transcend political borders since the play occurs in the imagined space of Algiers (the play bears little resemblance to the capital city of Algeria); although, this leads to an 'us' versus 'them' dynamic, the characters who have the opportunity to upset the captor/captive dynamic are the native women, who imbibe Rebecca's teachings.

Both the form and content of *Slaves in Algiers* appear most apt to upset the neatness of *Charlotte Temple*. In *Charlotte*, not only was the transatlantic crossing simply one-way (both actually and metaphorically), but also the form itself was much more stable. Vocal forms (like the play) and generic combination, then, appears most apt to house the dissonances and adaptations that are a part of transatlantic adaptation. The 'omnipotent maternal narrator' steers the reader into exactly how one is to feel upon reading the novel and keeps the narrative on-track (she apologises for her digressions), while the reader is barred access to the letters that could have opened the text to multiple voices and points of view. Diverging from the clarity the sentimental novel afforded her, as Rowson moves to increasingly less stable forms – ones more open to vocal adaptations and improvisation, – so also does the *possibility* of transatlantic sympathy grow. American ideals of liberty – more important than any religious credo – have filtered down to the racial 'others' in the play, particularly the women Fetnah and Zoriana. Just as Rowson chose a 'setting that would

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[21] Lawrence A. Peskin, *Captives and Countrymen: Barbary Slavery and the American Public, 1785-1816* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2009) 79.

[22] Barbary captivity narratives have seen an upsurge in literary criticism in the last fifteen years, particularly with the advent of transatlantic, global, and hemispheric studies. Particularly helpful resources are, besides Peskin, Paul Baepler's originating anthology, *White Slaves, African Masters* (1999); Linda Colley's *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600-1850*; and Gordon M. Sayre, 'Renegades from Barbary: the Transnational Turn in Captivity Studies,' *American Literary History* 22.2 (2010): 347-59.

[23] Without the protection of the British Navy following US independence, up to 120 Americans were captured in 1793 until they were ransomed for 1 million dollars three years later.

[24] Gordon M. Sayre, 'Renegades from Barbary: the Transnational Turn in Captivity Studies,' *American Literary History* 22.2 (2010): 347-59, 351.

capitalize on the American public's immediate interest in Algiers, she also picked a subject that allows her to address women's morality, race, slavery and freedom', commenting less on slavery itself than on 'hierarchies of power between men and women' ('Introduction' p xxvii, xxviii).

As in *Charlotte*, we are lead to sympathise with the white, helpless woman, here, Rebecca, a victim of sexual advances, who has been separated from her children and has no foreseeable way to find her husband or return to her native land. Although the play's story focuses on the white, American-born characters, the racial 'others', though not afforded the same flexibility of movement as the Anglo-Americans, usher the audience in to question gendered forms of nationality. There are two sympathetic communities in the play which vie for allegiance: during captivity there is the female community that is comprised of white, Jewish, and North African women from different nations and faiths; and then there is the Anglo-American household that supplants the feminine community. Captivity produces a cross-cultural mixing akin to Crèvecoeur's 'melting pot' of emigration in the United States (44); it also affords the characters, because of their shared sense of oppression (whether they are actually captives or simply unable to conduct commerce or marry whom they choose), the ability to cross cultural and religious lines.

The sort of generational and national 'mixing' that we shall see more plainly in Rowson's later novel, *Reuben and Rachel*, is hinted at here, though it is only of an Anglo-American variety, with cross-cultural marriage strictly avoided. As the Anglo-American family uproots a transcultural feminine community, borders are re-erected. We find out towards the end of the play that Rebecca's husband, Constant, was a British officer, to whom Rebecca 'was privately married' (69). Alienated from her father for several years, on her father's deathbed Rebecca took her infant son to visit him; in the process the war intensified, she believes her husband dead and her daughter taken away. As we move to the narrative present, Rebecca and Augustus sail to Britain to find Constant, while Constant and their daughter Olivia sail from India to Portugal, when both parties were captured and eventually reunited in Algiers. The parents and children substantiate an Anglo-American lineage that uses familial sympathy – and indeed, marital bonds of choice – as the basis for crossing cultural borders, though it is important to note that the borders crossed do not finally intermingle with the North Africans. Sympathy is only extended briefly to those in Algiers and only if they are moral receptors of American ideals of liberty. Early on, Rebecca chastises Ben Hassan:

> How readily does the sordid mind judge of others by its own contracted feelings; you, who I much fear, worship no deity but gold […] think other hearts as selfish as your own; […] Blest spirits of philanthropy, who inhabit my native land, never will I doubt your friendship, for sure I am, you never will neglect the wretched. (21)

Without any allegiance to nation, religious creed, or community, Ben Hassan is entirely incapable of extending sympathy, as his judgements of others are simply reflections of his own desires. Whereas Charlotte on the whole failed to elicit sympathy (except in the reader), Ben Hassan becomes an object of pity and derision, whilst being unable to imaginatively enter into others' experiences. We must wonder if he (like Carwin, in the following chapter) has crossed too many borders (from Jew to Muslim, from England to Algiers) to be able to maintain a stable enough identity in order to extend sympathy, or if sympathy, because it is a moral framework, cannot function if however many borders that are crossed are only crossed due to personal aggrandisement. Sympathy must ultimately be other-oriented; the language of philanthropy here, are the hands of feet of sympathy: Rebecca is waiting for financial relief from friends in America to pay her ransom[25]. It is interesting that it is only through distance that America takes on Promised Land qualities; equality and liberty become an idealised rhetoric that, however true or untrue in practice in America, function within the slave community to bestow hope.

Sympathy works, finally, hierarchically in *Slaves*, where the gap of sympathy is transcended only when all of the women are considered captives together. Additionally the Atlantic is only crossed twice in the play – from America and back to America – and although the family is reunited and Rebecca may be changed through her experience of captivity, the re-location of the family back to America is essentially a return, rather than a transformation. So although sympathy flows both ways only within the Anglo-American slave community in Algiers, sympathy between the Anglo-Americans and the other women enslaved simply trickles down, universalising freedom and seemingly enforcing both racial and gendered hierarchies. What is most intriguing about the play are moments when the secondary female characters push at the very lines of liberty Rebecca had taught them, effectively arguing for equal say to form the community through dialogue. Notably, the play opens with Fetnah, describing her 'prison of golden wire' (13). Fetnah, a Jew born in England, upon her move to Algiers was then educated in the 'Moorish religion' (16); her guide to liberty was none other than the American Rebecca, from a nation according to Fetnah 'where virtue in either sex is the only mark of superiority' (17). Fetnah's

[25] See Frank Christianson's Introduction to his *Philanthropy in British and American Fiction: Dickens, Hawthorne, Eliot, and Howells* (Edinburgh: EUP, 2008).

understanding of freedom resident in America is ‘where women do just what they please’ (39). Perhaps missing the irony that although ‘All men were created equal’ there was Abigail Adams’ reminder to ‘Remember the Ladies’ because they were not, in fact, equal in role or authority[26]. Fetnah takes the ideals of freedom and liberty and extends them equally to men and women. Later in the play, Fetnah denies the American Henry’s treatment of her purely as a woman, when he wants to protect her, saying, ‘but in the cause of love or friendship, a woman can face danger with as much spirit, and as little fear, as the bravest man amongst you’ (52). As Dillon notes, ‘Freedom, for Fetnah, is thus both identified with an American political ideal and with an escape from gendered forms of oppression’ (414). Through reading the captivity motif in *Charlotte*, Charlotte emerges as a passive victim; the characters in *Slaves* serve as a middle point between the passivity of Charlotte and the reversing of power structures we shall see in *Reuben and Rachel*. The extension of the ideals of liberty travelling from the American Rebecca to the racially ‘other’ women in the play is an example of sympathy moving one-way. The gap of sympathy is thus momentarily closed through the transmission of freedom; but because it is not finally reciprocal, it is a very precarious crossing. While in *Slaves* there is the hope of gender equality amidst captivity, for Fetnah and Zoriana to leave Algiers and marry persons whom/if they choose, this ultimately fails. The learning flows only one-way, from the captive Rebecca to Fetnah. When her strictures are removed Rebecca is no longer compelled to engage in the feminine community, so Fetnah and Zoriana must work out for themselves the consequences of American liberty within an Algerian context – work the play has no interest in portraying.

If freedom means escape from gendered oppression, it is ultimately ineffectual for Fetnah (who stays to care for her father) and Zoriana (who is rebuffed by Henry). Ben Hassan suddenly becomes a sympathetic object for his daughter; Fetnah states, ‘but now he is poor and forsaken, I know [my duty] too well to leave him alone in his affliction’ (74). Fetnah returns to her father to work out the implications of liberty she had been taught. Zoriana, like other ‘native’ characters we shall see in *Reuben and Rachel*, expects her love to be reciprocated and finally disappears. Whereas people from various races and religions marry in *Reuben and Rachel*, in *Slaves* they do not. Even though both Henry and Zoriana are Christians, a marriage between them is elided. Henry says to his companion, ‘It would be barbarous to impose on her generous nature – What? —avail myself of her liberality to

[26] Abigail Adams, Letter to John Adams, March 17, 1776, Ed. L. H. Butterfield, *Adams Family Correspondence,* Vol.1, 369-371 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1963-1993). http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/adams/filmmore/ps_ladies.html.

obtain my own freedom; take her from her country and friends, and then sacrifice her a victim to ingratitude and disappointed love' (31). When Olivia and Henry are reunited, Zoriana calls her 'love so pure that to see him happy, will gratify my utmost wish', though aside calls herself 'wretched' (35). Zoriana appears only briefly after this, alone, intimating that she thought she could be happy for the reuniting of Olivia and Henry, but 'why does this selfish heart beat with transport, at the thought of their separation?' She sees Henry, tells him of Olivia, and helps him free his father from prison and seemingly then her narrative function fulfilled, we no longer hear from Zoriana. She has 'tho' [her] heart breaks, perform[ed] a Christian's duty' (34) and it is liberty rather than love, which is the reigning passion of the play as it is a sentiment or 'rights' (in Jeffersonian language) which can be translated between individuals and nations.

At the end of the play, in a flourish of conservative rhetoric, Rebecca argues for the preservation of the Anglo-American family in the face of oppression. She stands up to Muley: 'Then let your vengeance fall – we will die together; for never shall Olivia, a daughter of Columbia, and a Christian, tarnish her name by apostasy, or live the slave of a despotic tyrant' (72). It is not her chastity or even her religion primarily, but her identity as an American, which is in danger of being lost if Olivia becomes the Dey's wife. Here at the end of the play, the secondary characters are effectively silenced (whereas they'd begun the dialogue in Act I) and lose the powerful force of critique with which they started. Constant and Rebecca's family as well as the lovers Olivia and Henry are reunited, they pronounce the blessings of American liberty and then leave the rest of the characters to figure out the implications in their own context. By placing her drama in a country other than the one which it carefully critiques, and placing statements about what American freedom *should* look like in the mouths of foreign women, Rowson distances her attack on the universality and accessibility of American liberty and gender equality. The transatlantic passage (both to and from Algiers) simply re-establishes the Anglo-Americans into their original family unit, while it leaves the North African women longing for freedom without the means to actuate it. Olivia ends the play wishing for the continued 'prosperity' 'of the Eagle' and says, in a wish for an American imperialism of values: 'may Freedom spread her benign influence thro' every nation, till the bright Eagle, united with the dove and olive-branch, waves high, acknowledged standard of the world' (74-5). In the end, there is a 'there-and-back' quality as the Anglo-Americans return to America, the women who had learned of liberty stay and are unable to intermarry with the Christian Anglo-Americans. Thus while it promulgates a sympathetic sharing of liberty across national borders, the play substantiates a culturally

imperialistic view that only hints at a promise of transatlantic sympathy. And when there is sympathy, such as we see essentially in the female slave community, it is sadly circumstantially dependent; when order is righted (and families re-aligned), it ceases to provide a necessary foil and critique of the standard hierarchical order. The play's transnational location does uphold a 'national imaginary [that] depends upon peoples beyond the enclosure [here, the North Africans] it seeks to make immanent' (Dillon, 207).

Reuben and Rachel: The Hope of Transnational Sympathy

It is the circuit of travel throughout generations in *Reuben and Rachel* that makes it Rowson's most capacious sympathetic novel. For as Bartolomeo describes, it 'inscribes a transatlantic "history" of America in which national identity is both fluid and hybrid.'[27] Rowson does this through a much more ambitious two-volume novel: the first volume is a 'history' of Columbus and his ancestors, sweeping several centuries and continents, while the second comes much closer to the narrative present with characters largely concerned not with the fate of nations or religion but with their own families. The novel complicates a pure racial and religious lineage in exploring what constitutes 'Americanness'; men and women from Peru, Spain, England, and America are involved and united. Much more than Rowson's other works considered here, as Bannet notes, there is racial, religious and national border-crossing in the novel: 'Each English or American person, and each family, is thus […] already such a mixture of different nations as to preclude any possible "purity" of national character anywhere. This discovery and founding of America links each person and family to Europe by intermarriages, family connections, and immigration-emigrations going back hundreds of years' (258). This interracial family available to Rowson's novel just a few decades later is doomed in Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). Place is vital in the novel; following the logic of 'westward the course of empire' (Berkeley, 'On Planting') the characters move from mainland Europe, to England, and finally declare themselves 'true-born Americans' settling in New England, and renounce their titles of the Old World (368). Indeed as Paul Giles notes of the connection between Rowson's travel and her characters:

> As a transatlantic novelist, a writer herself displaced from England to America who grounds her vision of patriotic virtue upon acts of traversal, the texts of Rowson necessarily involve double perspectives whose subjects find themselves moving mentally as well as physically back and forth across the Atlantic.[28]

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[27] Joseph Bartolomeo, ed. 'Introduction,' *Reuben and Rachel: Or, Tales of Old Times* [1798] by Susanna Rowson (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2009) 12. Subsequent quotations will be within the body of the text from this edition.

[28] Paul Giles, *Atlantic Republic*: *The American Tradition in English Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 2007) 29.

Rather than use others as a foil to a static notion of American liberty as *Slaves* finally does, '*Reuben and Rachel* is a chronicle of those most typically excluded from the "official story" of the nation' (Castiglia, 140). The first volume, focusing on the lineage of Columbus – and thereby distancing America from its British roots – is primarily a female history. Again, as an anti-*Charlotte Temple*, these new 'American' woman in *Reuben and Rachel* fight, save men, cross oceans, reason with those in power over them, and raise families without playing the part of the weak, recumbent female. Critically, *Reuben and Rachel* has tended to be discussed within a discourse of captivity initiated with Christopher Castiglia's book on the American captivity narrative, which contains one of the earliest, most extensive critical considerations of Rowson's novel. Castiglia argues that 'captivity becomes the defining trope of America itself' (141) and that Rowson uses the captivity narrative to create a utopian form of equality: the novel 'imagine[s] for both [women and people of colour] […] liberties often denied by more traditional stories of America's past' (140). In Castiglia's study, then, Rowson's proto-feminist novel is primarily a story of freedom versus restraint. Castiglia argues that Rowson advocates for women's rights and racial equality through the novel. What is particularly frustrating about such studies is the critical tidiness with which a novel like *Reuben and Rachel* fits a particular reading, from feminism to captivity narratives. That is, Castiglia's analysis seems to overstate things (for example, to say that captivity defines America itself, let alone a particular work of fiction), although it is true that the motif is very present within the works here discussed. Captivity, particularly in this novel, is reversed so that captivity actually opens doors for reciprocal cultural interpenetration where white men become Native American chiefs, a white woman can fall in love with an Indian warrior, and an Indian warrior can defend a white home against Indian attacks.

While I think Rowson gestures towards a hopeful interracial and intercultural sympathy at least in the first volume, it seems too idealistic to note that as 'white women are permitted access to the wilderness' interracial relationships based on 'love and friendship form' (149). Placement in the novel is important, but reading the places as indicators of genre is mistaken. In other words, reading the wilderness as the utopian space of a sentimental novel misreads *Reuben and Rachel*; indeed, wilderness spaces do play a part – as the Atlantic crossing does in *Charlotte Temple* or the Algerian captivity and reunion do in *Slaves in Algiers* – but romanticising the wilderness as a harmonic female space negates the very real fears, and actual dangers of settlement in the early republic. (The sorts of fears that were detailed in the documentary emigrant writing of Chapters Two and Three). Simply seeing

Rowson's novel in terms of the captivity narrative is ultimately reductionist as in the course of the novel many non-white women die or kill themselves due both to exploitation and faults of their own, even without the threat of captivity looming. Although it is true, as Bartolomeo has noted, that as the narrative nears the historical present both women and people of colour lose much of the historical agency with which the novel opens, the novel still perpetuates a narrative of improvement and cross-cultural mixing, where Native Americans become civilised through education and white men and women raise families based on merit. This 'civilising' force moves from transplanting Native Americans into Anglo-American community (native women return with their European husbands to Europe in the first volume) to using 'military force to repel them [the 'savages']' (298). The titular Reuben is captured by Indians late in the novel, and converses with the sachem's wife (a white European, though long resident with the tribe) who asks Reuben to educate her daughter, Eumea. As in *Slaves*, it is education which changes the appellation of Native Americans from 'savages'; in the second volume, the gap of sympathy widens as it increasingly disallows for cross-cultural marriage. Thus interracial relationships only seem to thrive (not only for Rowson's novel but also for later writers like Cooper) in an idealised past, quite distant from the present cultural realities. The novel moves towards an understanding of Anglo-American sympathy – that was once capacious in its crossings – to increasingly require separation and distance. For as Reuben allies himself as a 'new man' of America and states at the close of the novel, he renounces titles as 'distinctions nothing worth' and instead posits 'the only distinction between man and man should be made by virtue, genius and education' (368).

What makes *Reuben and Rachel* such a fascinating transatlantic novel is its generic mixing: the combination of the first volume which thoroughly explores what sympathy might look like generationally and interracially, with embedded letters, confessional tales, and the second volume, which focuses on the fates of one Anglo-American family unit within a narrative tradition more closely aligned to the more stable form of the sentimental novel. It is this 'generic hybridity' that Paul Giles notes 'is perhaps, why, *Reuben and Rachel* does not fit into Davidson's scheme of early American fiction' since Rowson 'creat[es] a text which is peculiarly transatlantic in form and style as well as content' (*Atlantic Republic*, 29). As Reuben and Rachel's families move more decisively toward a national American identity, the form also shifts away from epistolarity, from any voices that could crowd out the single narrative of 'true born Americans'. Generic mixing, like we see in *Reuben and Rachel*, is a formal metonym for the gap of sympathy. It is through Rowson's generic juxtaposition of

both volumes together that she tests out what might be the limits of sympathy in the new American nation between nations, races and genders.[29] If the answer to such an inquiry in *Charlotte* is incipient worrying about the possibilities of transatlantic sympathy,[30] and in *Slaves in Algiers* it is only Anglo-American and familial sympathy which is ultimately successful, in *Reuben and Rachel*, sympathy at its best moments is active rather than passive – and although it remains both Anglo and familial finally in Volume Two – it is predicated upon a shared and intertwined racial, religious, and national intermixing.

Rowson acknowledges the apparent disjunction between the novel's two volumes in her Preface: 'The first volume of the present work was written before I had entered on the arduous (though inexpressibly delightful) task of cultivating the minds and expanding the ideas of the female part of the rising generation' (38). If the first volume belongs to an earlier Rowson than the second volume, influenced of course by the politics of educating elite young women into republican mothers, the volumes nevertheless operate together. For as much as critics are wont to discuss the two volumes separately or argue that the second invalidates the first, both were published together as one novel. We therefore cannot easily dismiss either volume or haphazardly characterise Rowson within an either/or framework: as either a feminist or conservative or as a Briton or American. And like the story of William Dudley that straddles the two volumes, Rowson's allegiances, too, are uneasily divided. Sympathetic divisions and confusions between where one's allegiances actually lie are not simply emotional states to traverse, but actual crossings help to define the ways in which characters must negotiate their identities and sympathetic alliances as they cross actual and metaphorical borders. Notably, the novel moves away from travel as a linear experience and from even a Britain to US Eastern seaboard migration; characters hale from and make their homes all over Western Europe, Britain, South America, North America and inland across countries; and such movement happens repeatedly through ten generations.

In the first volume, sympathy extends between genders, races, and cultures to create a proto-typical American – but one, it seems, is too far in the past and perhaps too racially

[29] Following this line of thought, a recent paper given on the novel argues for Rowson's generic combination where Vol. 1 is a captivity narrative and Vol. 2 an English sentimental fiction; Workman also draws attention to the interim story line but neglects to see its transatlantic reverberations; see Jessica Workman, 'Forming a National Identity: Reconciling Genres in Susanna Rowson's *Reuben and Rachel*', *Journal of Research on Women and Gender*, 1 (March 2010): 116-26.
http://jrwg.mcgs.txstate.edu/submissions/copyright/untitled4/contentParagraph/0/content_files/file1/Article%207%20final%20edited%20version.pdf

[30] John Mullan, 'Sentimental Novels,' *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: CUP, 1996) 236-254.

typed to offer a model of reconciliation to Rowson's present (given the loss of agency by racial 'others' as we move towards the novel's conclusion). The same strength of character we saw in the Algerian women who had been taught American ideals in Rowson's play, we see here as a precursor to the creation of the promulgation of American liberty. Jennifer Desiderio finds the key to Rowson's novel to lie in women telling their histories to one another: 'women strengthen their affectionate bonds to one another and survive the often unfair and unjust actions of men when they exchange history' (Desiderio, 78). But this feminine exchange is really more broadly about sympathy than history, more than simply swapping past information. The basis for sympathy according to Smith is imagining what one might feel in the position of the other; this momentary connection between the actor and spectator requires the self-tempering of both parties as one 'divide[s] [one]self as it were into two persons' (*Theory*, 113). For there is something in sharing personal histories that draws others in and opens up each to change; as the women share histories together and marriage forms the basis of both national and sympathetic exchange in the first volume, women learn to moderate their sensibilities to be understood and enter into relationships.

A key to this transmission of womanly sympathy occurs importantly through the medium of the letter. In Volume 1, Columbia, the granddaughter of Columbus and the daughter of the Spanish Isabelle and English Thomas Arundel, reads her generational legacy through letters. These embedded letters have the effect of making voices of the past more present to the immediate reader (Columbia) and by extension, the novel's reader. It also increases sympathy. The narrator comments:

> Columbia had read, and paused, and wept, and read again, till, in her anxiety for the fate of Orrabella, she had forgot what she so earnestly had wished to know, concerning the marriage of her mother. The conclusion of the manuscript, however, brought it fresh to her memory. She turned the paper on all sides; no farther intelligence was to be gleaned from that. But Cora [her servant], Cora had been particularly mentioned, as strongly attached to the lady Isabelle. No doubt she could inform her of all she wished to know. (96).

The letters, preserved as a generational familial story in packet form, move Columbia from her immediate concern to becoming moved by characters who are a part of her history. But letters can only do so much – in their endless re-readings where Columbia 'read' and 'read again' – they only are able to move Columbia's imagination and sentiments by pictures of the past. It is not until they instigate dialogue – here, with Cora – that the letter form (even when embedded in a fictional text) can actually help establish sympathy. As letters move again towards the voice 'return[ing] to the speech from which they had issued' (Bannet, *Empire*, 89), there is hope that this generic form can help cross the gap of sympathy.

Sympathy is indeed tempered in those female characters that are successful at both staying alive and raising subsequent generations of 'true-born Americans' (most female characters who, like Charlotte, succumb to excessive sentiment, end up dying in both volumes). Isabelle (Columbia's mother mentioned above), the granddaughter of Columbus and a Spanish Catholic, converted when she married her English Protestant husband, Thomas Arundel. She shares several circumstantial similarities with Charlotte Temple: letters for several weeks pass between the Isabelle and Thomas, but they only allow an initial interview between the two, where from the letters Isabelle grows 'pensive, languid and avoided company' (102); the heightened exclusivity of letters passing both between Isabelle and Arundel and between Charlotte and Montraville serve to initially isolate the women further. But rather than succumbing to the extreme isolation like Charlotte – who dies perhaps because she loses a reciprocal sympathetic community – Isabelle, becomes a heroine. Not immune to sentimental markers made so famous in *Charlotte*, Isabelle stays in command of herself. When she is informed that to retain her fortune she cannot marry a Protestant, she tries to persuade her parents, but cannot, and then she is resigned and decides to 'share the fate of Arundel' (103). She, like Charlotte's daughter, commands herself, for, 'only by the indulgence of tears she could save herself from fainting' (108). It is not race or even gender which makes one unfit for the sort of sociability required in the new American nation, it is rather the inability to divide oneself and temper one's reactions accordingly to enter into community. Importantly Isabelle's self-boundaries don't dissolve upon meeting Arundel; since she is not consumed she is able both to mediate her own feelings while entering into others'.

Later in the novel, when under house arrest under the reign of Mary, and in the grip of Sir James Howard, Isabelle advises her daughter, Columbia:

> we must summon all our fortitude to brave even hardship and danger without shrinking. We are women, it is true, and ought never to forget the delicacy of our sex; but real delicacy consists in purity of thought, and chastity of words and actions; not in shuddering at an accidental blast of wind, or increasing the unavoidable evils of life by affected weakness and timidity […]. (143)

She also encourages worldly commerce that will expose her daughter to more people and customs than her first dalliance with love (117). The word 'commerce' hangs heavy with meaning: for all of its definitions (trade, social interchange, sexual relations, intellectual or spiritual interchange) not only apply to this novel's plot but also to transatlantic literary studies. Commerce, like sympathy, must maintain a fine line between proper and over-extension. For, in Crèvecoeur's *Letters* it is commerce which both positively allows for the

wealth of small communities such as Nantucket, but which when extended too far in Charles-Town, manifests itself in physical and moral degeneration where James sees 'West-Indians […] at thirty, loaded with the infirmities of old age' (151). Commerce, in all its meanings, takes one outside oneself and into relationship with others vastly different from oneself, so much so that it tests the limits of human sympathy. Here in the novel, commerce specifically allows Columbia to expand and moderate her feelings as out of sociability romantic attachment may grow; therefore Isabelle encourages Columbia to 'Mix first with the world. The heart is apt to be deceived in its first emotions, when little knowledge of the world, and seclusion from society prevents a free election […]' (117). Reversing the always-recumbent Charlotte, Columbia – as instantiation of the American nation – moves and acts in ways that reinforce feminine delicacy while requiring her as a woman to act rather than passively accept from men. These are the sorts of generational traits passed down between men and women and between native and European cultures, a plurality beyond a two-way transatlantic interchange.

A few generations later, the family that sprung from Peruvian nobles and European explorers has moved westward to America with Edward Dudley in the seventeenth century. The passing down of generational characteristics is a careful result of mutual sympathy (both products of society) and education between Edward and his grandfather as 'Edward almost imperceptibly imbibed the enterprizing spirit that had characterized his ancestors' (166). When Native Americans ravage Edward's family's home, Edward's children are separated from their parents; William (the eldest) and Rachel (the youngest) are nearly killed:

> One of the foremost of the savage troop had raised his tomahawk to dispatch the boy; but the child, with one arm clinging to her brother's neck, extended the other little innocent hand as if to ward off the blow, and screaming, cried, "Don'tee, don'tee." At that moment a squaw, who held a papouse [*sic*] at her breast, threw herself before the suppliant children, and said in their own language, "You shall not kill the infant. (171)

Rowson's Native American figure is both noble and base, both violent due to white provocation and sympathetic to their victims. It is the women, both the two-year-old white Rachel and the motherly squaw who act to bridge a gap between cultures, to remind the warrior of their shared humanity. This action, grounded in the momentary connection of sympathy, 'appeared to be an impulse of the moment' (171). We see Rowson continually advocating a type of sympathy that leads to action; the narrator mentions, 'Extreme sensibility is often not only painful to the possessor, but prejudicial to those whom we may wish to serve' (179). Sympathetic action here saves two lives as the squaw takes both her own experience as a mother and also being moved by Rachel's childlike protection, and

applies it to these white children. The placement of this episode is important – it comes just pages before the end of the first volume of the novel. And it is this moment that sets up William to become the most interesting character in the second volume, precisely because he crosses so many cultural borders and takes on roles and a wife from a foreign culture. As the children grow up with the native peoples, they educate the Native Americans, particularly the sachem's daughter, into a type of European (181), so that William 'adored the statue his art had animated' and marries Oberea (183). Here William's marriage reverses the captivity motif that structures White and Indian relations since Mrs Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being the Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs Mary Rowlandson* (1682); he willingly steps into marriage with Oberea, seeing her as beautiful, capable, and equal as a marriage partner.

The key to reconciling the two volumes is in reading the stories surrounding William Dudley and his sister Rachel, both in their Indian captivity examined above and in William's accession to the role of sachem of the tribe. It is here that the height of the novel's cross-cultural adaptation happens and that Rowson is most hopeful about racial and intercultural exchange in the new America. By the second volume, Native Americans have become simply savages impinging on the progress of civilisation in America. This inevitable failure to maintain the tenuous bands of cross-cultural sympathy signals the ways that the gap of sympathy must increasingly incorporate not only racial and religious difference, but also must acknowledge separation and difference to assimilate new prospects. Here, however, both Oberea and William inhabit a sort of limbo between cultures that makes them unfit to re-enter their culture of origin in the same way. The chief tells William 'your counsels and instructions have rendered her unfit to match with any of her own countrymen; you are almost now become one of us; take her, then, to wife' (183). The narrator describes William, though more Indian than Anglo-American in terms of culture at this point, agreeing to succeed Otooganoo based on a position of cultural superiority:

> William, weaned from his natural friends, tenderly attached to Oberea, perhaps not altogether insensible to the charms of power, and harbouring a fond hope, that by this union with the family of a sachem, he might promote the interests of his own countrymen in general, and be the cement to bind them in bonds of lasting amity […] plighted his vows of love and constancy to Otooganoo. (183)

And it is the movement of sympathy – so that William's sympathy grows with the Indians rather than his 'natural friends – which allows for a white European to inhabit a Native American role. Otooganoo also feeds into this hierarchical ordering of William over the Indians; he asks William to 'lead them by [his] example and forbearance, to cultivate a social

and commercial intercourse, and to preserve peace with [his] countrymen, who are become their neighbours, as long as they can preserve it with honour' (183). But it is important to note that the hierarchy here implied is not based upon racial superiority, but rather as a harbinger of culture William is to lead the tribe after Otooganoo's death. Desiderio notes that 'It is in the wilderness of New England that Rowson creates the largest community based in a shared history of Otooganoo, William, Oberea, Rachel, and Arabella Dudley' (93). That mutual sympathy, even between races and cultures, can happen is intimately tied to spatial location. Sympathy, especially that is stretched across the Atlantic where sympathy with one's fellow human beings becomes more difficult based on affective and actual distance, tends to occur in frontier-like spaces, spaces that are not claimed by either party. The combination of the Native American space, the wilderness, with the culture of the Europeans, makes for the only moment in the novel where cultural intermixing happens horizontally, rather than hierarchically. Otooganoo, too, notes that William's hybrid experience is their best hope to ensure sympathetic exchange between the whites and Indians, who were uneasy neighbours at best. But sympathetic exchange, particularly between cultures as vastly different from one another as the Native Americans and Anglo-Americans, seems only viable between already-hybrid individuals, and then, it varies according to the moment. So it is here, at the crux of the two volumes, that Rowson explores her most complex dynamic and cultural border crossing. Although both men and women had crossed oceans, cultures, religious lines and national affiliation earlier in the novel, it is here where the tension is at its height; here, it is also the first time a white Anglo-American man has stepped into a native position; much more normal had been foreign women who changed religions or continents based on love.

William Dudley, as both white Anglo-American and Indian sachem, embodies this pull of sympathy. Differing from Rowson's earlier exploration of cultural border crossing in *Slaves*, in *Reuben and Rachel* roles reverse so that whites inhabit Native American positions without simply exploiting them. Rather than embody the 'savagery' that Crèvecoeur fears in his final letter when he determines to live amongst the Indians, William's crossing over into the role of sachem enlarges sympathy. Although in both Rowson's play and this novel, whites are captured by racial 'others', in the play this meant that whites simply needed to escape their religious, sexual, and national infiltration and return to their originating culture. But in the novel, whites adapt and accept such roles. The uncle of the titular characters, William Dudley, though a European was:

> Ruler over a nation of savages, who by their attachment and fidelity had conciliated his affection, his principles would by no means suffer him to desert their cause in the

> hour of danger; yet remembering that his natural parents were Europeans, and the tenderness he once experienced for them not being extinct in his bosom, he felt his heart divided between two separate interests; and if at any time a skirmish took place, he would think that, perhaps, amongst the killed or wounded of the enemy he might have to lament a father or a brother. (186)

This 'heart divided' echoes Rowson's words in the 'Preface' quoted earlier. The problem of what action to take, for Dudley and for Rowson, centres on sympathy – with whom do we sympathise and what is the cost for such sympathy? In matters of war – like what we see between the Indians and the colonists – a side eventually needs to be chosen and when it comes down to that decisive moment, whichever side conquers it still feels like death and loss. Although the gap of sympathy then must allow for distance and division, the hope is that the gap of sympathy is left open, so that moments of connection can open up each 'side' to the other, which allows for future collaboration.

This internal division is not relegated to roles of power either. The narrator likewise comments concerning William's sister, Rachel:

> Alas! Who can describe the feelings of a heart thus divided? She dared not pray, for to which party could she wish success? "Oh! Save, protect and support my father," she would cry; then in a moment recollecting, she would wring her hands and cry, "Oh! Poor Yankoo." It is anguish only to be felt, it is impossible to convey the smallest idea of its excruciating tortures, to any who have not experienced the agonizing effects of divided affection. (187)

But divided affection leads to action (rather than to the frenzied indecisiveness that we shall see both in Brown's gothic novels in the following chapter and in Crèvecoeur's final letter, considered in the Afterword). In battle, William jumps in front of Yankoo's blade to protect his father and dies. The resulting reunion of the European family and the divided anguish experienced by Rebecca and Yankoo illustrate the power and pain of mutual sympathy, especially as it stretches beyond homogenous groups. Something is always lost in the process; the more tenuous the connection, the more devastating the rupture. When hopeful moments of cross-cultural sympathy fail, the loss (and increasingly widening gap of sympathy) seems much more acute.

Like the earlier scene where the squaw's maternal instinct kept Reuben and Rachel alive, it is mutuality of sorrow over William's death that repairs the rupture between warring factions. That is, the gap of sympathy may contract even after it seemed to have widened irrevocably with the death of William by the hand of Yankoo. William's tribe he governed vow to avenge his death and chase down Yankoo to kill him. But their rage is stopped when they come up against the warrior mourning (190). Yankoo's remorse, like the remorse with which the Smithean lawbreaker returns to society, is not met with social condemnation (as it

is in Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*), but is transformed into repentant action as he vows to defend William's body (and his Anglo-American family). Hybrid characters like William, Oberea and Rachel seem to upset the normal hierarchy between Indians and Europeans in America. In a reversal, the Indians plan to inter William's body in a funeral rite 'with every mark of respect and honour' (191), but before they are able to complete this, it is the Europeans who act as savages and 'routed the main body, killed many, and took the remainder prisoners' – a reversal, which, as we shall see with *Edgar Huntly* becomes the focus. This act of savagery included the victim Yankoo, who died 'defending the house where lay the body of William' (191, 192). Because of honour, friendship and mutual sympathy – and ultimately, acute loss – the Indian warrior dies defending a family of Europeans he swore to Rachel he would not spare. It is loss of William that redefines not only Yankoo's allegiance but also redefines the concept of 'home'[31] – the golden moment of hybridity where William could effectively lead a tribe of Indians and Rachel could marry one, is over. Everyone deserts the scene. Arabella (Rachel and William's mother) decides to return to England and Rachel, Oberea and her son, Reuben, accompany her. Seemingly enacting the biblical story of Ruth, Oberea follows her mother-in-law, 'The mother and the son of my William, […] I will follow to the furthermost part of the earth' (192). However, while Ruth becomes foremost in that story (and indeed in the lineage of Jesus), we find Oberea dead by the next page through 'autumnal fever'. Rowson is clearly moving from racially other, culturally hybrid characters to the second volume which considers well-to-do white Anglo-Americans in the creation of 'true born Americans', following Reuben and Rachel and their eventual families as they settle at Mount Pleasant, so that Europe affectively moves farther away, becomes the 'Other' to a newly American family. Bartolomeo notes that even though, in the second volume, 'while the conception of transatlantic exchange may be narrowed, the process of exchange remains essential to the novel's vision of what it means to be American' (32). William and Rachel straddle cultures until there is the final rupture of war, forcing them to choose with which side to align themselves, like Crèvecoeur's Farmer James finally must choose a side at the conclusion of *Letters from an American Farmer*. But one rupture allows for further border crossings, between Britain and America. For although the second volume focuses on Rachel's and Reuben's social misunderstandings, because they move from America to England and back to America, while inheriting property and money,

[31] Indeed, it is loss which occasions Smith's first explication of his theory of sympathy. The brother on the rack that Smith uses as his prime example for how one can experience and communicate sympathy is based upon the suffering individual.

sympathy is again extended practically, not in a top-down *noblesse oblige* but a measure of reciprocity that moves across the Atlantic. For at the conclusion of the novel as Reuben and Rachel renounce titles and fortune, their inheritance is used to relieve the English orphan, poor debtor, and to relieve suffering virtue (369) – thereby saving the English 'Charlotte Temples' and turning American ideals of freedom into its practical transatlantic outworking. The local, circumscribed reality of the final four who declare themselves 'true born Americans' sits alongside a larger utopian aspiration of sympathy. The final ending to the novel, with its perhaps inevitable failure to live up to the ideal intermixed sympathetic community, appears at first a failure. But it is at this point that the gap of sympathy must also enlarge to encompass difference and alienation – allowing the four to self-identify as 'Americans' – while also remembering that they are party to a lineage of interracial and interreligious border crossings, that (as they have before) will continue to assert itself.

This example of William Dudley's 'heart divided' is one way the novel explores the potentials and limits of transatlantic sympathy, but there is also something here that speaks to a larger concern of transatlantic stylistics. Structurally the placement of the William and Rachel episode not only moves the narrative in a direction from hybrid cross-cultural identities to more static national ones, but also moves the novel into an increasingly sentimental register. Focusing on transatlantic syntheses, Lise Sorensen suggests in an essay that both Rowson's play and this novel have in 'view [a] reconciling [of] Americans and Britons […]. Captivity […] enables estranged Americans and Britons to discover their shared national and racial genealogy, thus offering reconciliatory narrative possibilities'.[32] These 'reconciliatory narrative possibilities' are I would argue, what Rowson does with *Reuben and Rachel*. Rowson begins to imagine a transatlantic dialogue in which sympathy between genders, nationalities and ethnicities form the basis of relation. This is by no means realised but simply gestured towards; this is where too many critical studies break down, trying to make the novel do too much. Indeed, it is the very structure of the novel which enacts this juxtaposition of gender roles, racial relations and the multiplication of sympathy as characters cross cultural and national borders. Castiglia notes that 'captivity narratives persistently explore generic and cultural changes, divisions, and differences occasioned by the captive's crossings' (4) but it is not only captivity which offers the chance for genres and characters to travel; what Castiglia is getting at here is present in a larger sense in

[32] Lise Sorensen, 'Susanna Rowson and the Transatlantic Captivity Narrative,' *Transatlantic Literary Studies*, Eds. Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning (Cambridge: CUP, 2011) 169-185.

transatlantic novels of the period – and is perhaps the reason why so many critics focus on the disparities between the two volumes of Rowson's novel, trying to separate the volumes out from one another in order to clearly frame Rowson's politics[33]. But differing generic registers, within this text and more broadly as we consider Rowson's own use of various genres throughout her career, move and shift and cross borders similarly to Rowson's characters.

According to Mark Phillips, genres are '[c]onsidered as frameworks of communication, [and therefore] genres can neither be fixed nor autonomous.' Phillips continues, emphasising the fluidity of generic categories: 'Rather, their identities are always interrelated to those of other genres, so that contrast and combination are a key feature of the ways genres develop and change'.[34] The textual compoundedness of Rowson's novel particularly is a generic enactment of transatlantic sympathy. If self-division is needed to imaginatively enter into another's experience and is tempered by an external impartial spectator, the generic analogue to the sympathetic process would be genres which intermingle with one another. As genres travel 'the story of how British models were transformed, transmuted, or regenerated by American conditions' is what causes documentary tales and fiction to invade one another[35]. Genre reckoned transatlantically, *across* planes of meaning rather than constituting and solidifying them, calls attention to genre as both a stable and malleable category. Specifically in *Reuben and Rachel*, when we take both volumes together, we get a layering of epistolary novel, history, sentimental tale, captivity narrative, and origin narrative. Because we cannot finally label the novel simply a captivity narrative, or a sentimental novel, this indicates that as readers we cannot easily dismiss past influences (as the characters Reuben and Rachel, and their spouses, do at the novel's conclusion). Even though they renounce their European legacies and no longer have interchanges with the Native Americans, Reuben and Rachel have come from the noble bloodlines of the Peruvian royalty, Spanish and English gentry, and white and Native American interracial marriages. Even if they choose to ignore the racial, national and religious mixing of their heritage, it is still ever-present with them; if the previous nearly 400-pages of the novel are to serve as an example, where Reuben and Rachel have come from speaks to a legacy of cross-cultural adaptation that will resurface through their

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[33] Besides Castiglia and Workman, see Jennifer Desiderio's 'Cultivating Cultural Cohesion in *Reuben and Rachel*,' *Studies in American Fiction* 38.1-2 (2011): 77-97.

[34] Mark Salber Phillips, 'Micro- and Literary: Problems of Genre and Distance,' *New Literary History*, 34.2 Theorizing Genres I (Spring 2003): 211-229, 212.

[35] Michael Davitt Bell, *The Development of the American Romance: the Sacrifice of Relation*.(Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 4.

historical lineage. The transatlantic historical saga then, moves meaning from resting solely within the individual's ability to create a specific identity (opposed to 'this new man of America'), but spreads it through time and space painting a grander meta-history than the one of the individual bildungsroman.

By way of conclusion, let us return to Rowson herself. She had begun her Preface to *Trials to the Human Heart* thus:

> As a person of sensibility, whom business or necessity, forces into the house of an entire stranger, (especially if that stranger is his superior in genius, education or rank,) experiences a sensation undescribably painful, in being necessitated to announce himself, and explain the intent of his visit: so I feel myself inexpressibly embarrassed and timid, whilst performing the unavoidable task of writing a Preface. It is addressing myself to, and calling up the attention of a multiplicity of strangers; it is introducing not myself indeed, but what is nearly the same thing, the offspring of my imagination, to their notice […]. (xi)

Marion Rust reminds us that 'female authors tended to phrase value primarily in domestic terms, even as they filled their texts with interruptions that could in no way be encompassed by such [domestic] terminology'.[36] Indeed, though she uses the language of home and of women's attachments as they relate to men, Rowson's focus is not on the home itself, but rather on travelling away from one's home and then uncomfortably entering a different domestic space. As a product of an emigrant consciousness, Rowson's concept of 'home' is vexed – not only nationalistically – but also on account of her gender and unease with domesticity, as she chooses to see comparatively rather than in terms of fixed national or gendered positions, a characteristic of a transatlantic viewpoint. As a woman who was always in the public eye on stage, as a writer and as a famous instructor, she not only established herself as an independent professional but also provided financially for her husband, his younger sister, his illegitimate child and an adopted daughter. And as her works move beyond the one-way travel from Britain to America, and instead as her characters criss-cross the Atlantic over generations and multiple locations (stretching sympathy across time and space), there seems to be the hope in Rowson's works for an 'activist sentimentalism'.[37] An activist sentimentalism is transatlantic sympathy at its best and most practical, a sort of sympathy that because it is more religious and moral than racial, could not only have rescued Charlotte Temple, but have, like Freedom, 'spread its benign influence thro' every nation'

[36] Marion Rust, '"Into the House of an Entire Stranger": Why Sentimental doesn't Equal Domestic in Early American Fiction,' *Early American Literature* 37.2 (2002): 281-309. 285.
[37] Eve Tavor Bannet, 'Immigrant Fictions: Carey, Rowson, and *Charlotte Temple* in Philadelphia' *Age of Johnson*, 19 (2009): 239-272. 253.

(*Slaves*, 75). There is, of course, another answer (besides the capaciousness that Rowson's works gestures towards) to the actual Atlantic crossings which opens one up to a dual emigrant consciousness; that is, a turn inward, characterised by the inability to finally choose a side, as the 'true born Americans' finally do – that we shall see in the next chapter worked out as a failure of sympathy in the gothic works of Charles Brockden Brown.

Chapter Five:
Fractured Identities and the Frontier in Charles Brockden Brown's Gothic Fiction

Both Rowson and Brown, in different generic forms, write 'narrative[s] of transformation wherein identity is seen as mobile and so always remains potentially fractured' (Giles, *Atlantic Republic*, 29). The hybrid identity and cultural crossings we saw in Rowson's William Dudley (as both a white Anglo-American and Indian sachem) move later in the novel to a version of sympathy that must acknowledge distance and separation as increasingly a part of its structure; the 'true born Americans' renounce English titles and fortune and distance their transatlantic ties. This choice has, of course, an attending stylistics. The novel neglects the proto-gothic narration so famous in Crèvecoeur's Letter 12 (and in Brown's *Edgar Huntly*) precisely because the characters renegotiate an Anglo-American version of sympathy that views the Atlantic as more of a separator than connector. In the William Dudley section, the frontier remained a hopeful location akin to Crèvecoeur's Letter 11, where successful adaptation to and civilisation on the edges of the frontier were united with a free intercourse between the naturalist John Bertram and his Negroes (whom he pays rather than enslaves). The turn from confident cross-cultural adaptation in Rowson hinges (as it does in Crèvecoeur's final letter) on the reality of the rupture of war. In *Reuben and Rachel* the Anglo-Indian wars require finally that 'sides' are chosen; here William Dudley sides with his family, and Yankoo kills him as William defends his father. Yankoo, led by his remorse for killing his friend, pledges to defend Dudley's white family. The second volume of the novel then turns to the Anglo-American family as it moves increasingly away from cross-cultural adaptations and uses the form of the sentimental domestic novel to explore the creation of an American family. It would seem then that a larger consideration of Charles Brockden Brown's later epistolary fiction, *Jane Talbot* (1801) and *Clara Howard* (1801), would make a fitting final chapter, given the Rowsonian final move away from the obvious cross-cultural role-changing that we see in Dudley towards sentimental epistolary conventions. Instead, this chapter's focuses on Brown's gothic fiction, particularly *Wieland* (1798) and *Edgar Huntly* (1799); by foregrounding the novel's epistolary elements, this chapter argues that Brown's gothic mode presents a stylistics of sympathetic distance that wrestles (more so than his epistolary novels) with the moral ambiguities of becoming

Crèvecoeur's 'new man' of America. 'The genuine dictates of my mind' of Farmer James are turned frighteningly inward in Brown's gothic version (22). We shall thus see the ways in which the gap of sympathy expands and, in the tumultuous 1790s, increasingly tends to reject a transatlantic crossing.

Charles Brockden Brown's gothic fiction, like Rowson's works, is also very much concerned with the genesis of a family (particularly in *Wieland*). But in describing this family, Brown follows not in line with the sentimental novel, but follows Crèvecoeur's trajectory of alienation on the frontier and uses the form of frenzied gothic narration. Farmer James' breakdown in the final letter of *Letters from an American Farmer* is predicated upon the initial turn that happens in Letter 9, where the reality of slavery evidences the disintegration, not only of society, but also of a human moral fabric that leads James to question the goodness of humanity and of God. The impending war simply hastens that breakdown in Letter 12. Stylistics depict this gap of sympathy: for without a centring morality for James or Brown's characters, the gap of sympathy seems to be widened irrevocably and the narrating voice registers breakdown. The frontier moves from being a place of transformation and cross-cultural adaptation in Rowson, to being a terrifying no-man's land, housing all the anxieties inherent in sympathy, especially in Brown's *Edgar Huntly*. The reason for the stylistics of breakdown is a rupture of sociability, where the gap of sympathy finally cannot hold up. Because the Wielands elide their personal history (which is shaped by emigration) and form a community that is both physically isolated and without a view of God who keeps their reality stable, sympathy fails. *Wieland* is thus about the failure of sympathy to bridge the gap of the Atlantic and the more general tenuousness of transatlantic sympathy. In Brown's *Edgar Huntly*, the emigrant as a stranger figure dislocates the narrator until finally personal certitude unravels, and Edgar finds himself on the frontier having 'degenerated' into Indian savagery (the fear of Farmer James). Edgar's return to civilisation is his final effort at obtaining sympathy, coming back to society no matter how censorious the arrival, like Smith's lawbreaker. But because the gap of sympathy has a style – that is, a way of thinking that is expressed literarily – it is significant that Edgar's narrating voice is silenced and Sarsefield (his tutor) has the final letter of the novel. The breakdown that both of Brown's gothic novels give literary expression to at their close, points to either complete alienation or may be understood more hopefully as an inevitable death before transformation can occur.

With the upheaval of the American Revolution that concluded in 1783, the French Revolution in 1789, and the xenophobic orientation of the new United States in the decade,

the period of Brown's gothic novels was fraught with an increase of restrictions surrounding emigration and who had access to American freedom. The Naturalization Law of 1790 allowed foreigners to become American citizens but only if they were 'free white persons' and of 'good moral character'; this was replaced five years later by moving the amount of time one was resident in the States to five years. Three years later, this was again repealed in the Naturalization Law of 1798 (one of the Alien and Sedition Acts passed by Congress that year), requiring a five-year notice before declaring one's intent of becoming a citizen and a 14-year waiting period. These new laws heavily constricted what it meant to be (and whom it included in the moniker) American – allowing President Adams to imprison his critics or deport immigrants. Peter Kafer describes that added to 'the cultural anxiety and hysteria and the fear of French and Irish immigrants', was a threat of conspiracy theories, particularly the Illuminati[1]. This culture of fear and fracture found a fitting outlet in Brown's version of the gothic.

The gothic is particularly important to this chapter, because as a literary form, it draws philosophical empiricism to its logical conclusion[2]; that is, it gives literary form to the question: if the self is only knowable through the senses, then what happens to the self if the senses do not work properly? This is a question Clara also ruminates on in *Wieland*: 'If the sense be depraved, it is impossible to calculate the evils that may flow from the consequent deductions of the understanding'.[3] If the self is at all knowable – and Brown's gothic works put pressure on this idea – this has implications for the extension of sympathy, not simply transatlantically, but even between two persons proximately close to one another. *Wieland* uses ventriloquism as that which confuses the senses of the hearers, so that characters no longer know who is speaking and from where. *Edgar Huntly* uses sleepwalking to ascertain if one is the same person if devoid of the consciousness of one's actions. Tennenhouse puts it thus: 'In putting flesh on the exceptions to this rule [having your own feelings before sharing them with another], Brockden Brown produces what might be called a sequence of Lockean jokes. […] If one's brother (*Wieland*) or even oneself (*Edgar Huntly*) is fundamentally

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[1]Peter Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution and the Birth of American Gothic*, (Philadelphia: U Penn P, 2004) 142.
[2] Besides the David Punter books, on the gothic see: Jerrold E. Hogle, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For a particular transatlantic take on the gothic mode, see: Robert Miles, 'Transatlantic Gothic,' *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830*, Eds. Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning (Cambridge: CUP, 2011) 202-218; Bridget M. Marshall, *The Transatlantic Gothic Novel and the Law, 1790-1860* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).
[3] Charles Brockden Brown, *Three Gothic Novels: Wieland*, *Arthur Mervyn*, *Edgar Huntly* (New York: Library of America, 1998). 33. Further references will be cited in the text using this pagination.

unknowable and thus a stranger, then with whom and on what basis can one form an affective community?' (109). Thus, according to Tennenhouse, 'Gothic fiction […] undermines the fantasy of an expansive community based on feeling alone by throwing into doubt the possibility that one individual can ever truly know another' (107). Brown's works then are intimately concerned with the instability of sympathy, no matter how tight or how far the circle of relation is drawn.

The gothic mode gives literary form to the increasing collapse of the sympathetic gap. In particular, Brown's two novels under discussion here articulate the context of the early American republic as it describes a world that is imbued with strangers, in the form of emigrants without pasts. The emigrant figures, and the sublime American wilderness, together create the backdrop for the unhinging of personal certitude in one's identity and confidence in the ability to move the self past him/herself to connect with others. If being 'American' means forgetting the past and starting new (as the rhetoric of the 'new man' seems to imply – remember even Faux requiring the emigrant to 'learn therefore […] to forget' one's British origin [485]), the narrative form of these attending epistemological anxieties is Brown's version of the gothic.

The types of 'gothic' writing have profoundly proliferated, moving from the haunted European castles of Walpole to modern reincarnations of the genre which foreground its diasporic dispersals[4]. When describing 'gothic', David Punter writes in his 'Introduction' to *A New Companion to the Gothic*: 'Gothic speaks of phantoms […]; Gothic takes place – very frequently – in crypts; The Gothic speaks of – indeed we might say it attempts to invoke – specters […]. And Gothic speaks, incessantly, of bodily harm and the wound […]' (2); he continues, noting that literary criticism is 'haunted, like Gothic, by the weight of a history' (3). If Brown was 'deeply concerned with an American literary tradition', this does not mean that his themes or characters are exceptional (in the way, perhaps, that Franklin wants us to read him in his *Autobiography*). Brown's gothic fiction concerns itself with the shadow side of a triumphant American exceptionalism, haunted by the 'specters' and 'history' of Europe[5]. But the ghosts in Brown's fiction are not just a re-surfacing of European forms or mores but also a generational legacy: as emigrant characters feature prominently within Brown's fiction. Much more terrifyingly, the shadow side is not something that can be easily divorced from a discourse of exceptionalism, for, that which haunts is within. Therefore, Charles

[4] See David Punter's helpful Introduction (as well as the book's chapters on the gothic in diaspora): *A New Companion to the Gothic* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012) 1-10.
[5] Jack G. Voller, *Supernatural Sublime: The Metaphysics of Terror in Anglo-American Romanticism* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois UP, 1994) 75.

Brockden Brown's version of the gothic is one that, along with Godwin's, focuses on interior constriction: as a recent critic has put it, 'Godwin and Brown belonged to that school of Gothic in which the "haunted castle" had a metaphoric, rather than literal, presence – no less confining for being immaterial'.[6] But this internal stricture does not imply a self divorced from context for gothic is 'a form that related very closely to issues of national assertion and social organization' (Punter, 4). As such, the sort of interior constriction we see in Brown's characters in the gothic mode develops from the context of the 1790s, specifically the rupture with Britain and subsequent reckoning with Crèvecoeur's famous question, 'What then is this American, this new man?' (44). If one cannot forget one's emigrant past and must maintain some sort of relationship to one's originating homeland, while at the same time espousing a rhetoric of breaking free (and starting anew) in the 1780s and 90s, then the ways that Brown seeks to capture that conundrum is often through the gothic mode, as it uneasily deals with the pitfalls of that double identity. As the stranger moves from outside the self to the self (what Julia Kristeva writes as the 'foreigner liv[ing] within us'[7]) it is from here that Brown derives his gothic terror. In Brown's gothic works, the holes in the transatlantic sympathetic fabric are gaping. Smith's sympathetic paradigm in which an external spectator is a useful tool for one to compare one's reactions, seem to unravel amidst the revolutionary moments of the late 1790s; for, as Tennenhouse points out, 'such a commonality of experience [that the impartial spectator is based upon] is precisely what could not be taken for granted in the early republic' (106). In the same way that Farmer James in *Letters from an American Farmer* cannot easily reconcile himself to an impending Revolution, so, too, are the characters in both *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly* unable to reconcile themselves to both themselves and others, as the circles of relation widen from oneself, to family, and to emigrant strangers.

Brown's version of the gothic is still American; the 'Preface' to *Edgar Huntly* declares that:

> America has opened new views to the naturalist and politician, but has seldome furnished themes to the moral painter. That new springs of action, and new motives to curiosity should operate; that the field of investigation, opened to us by our own country, should differ essentially from those which exist in Europe, may be readily conceived'. He thus aims to 'exhibit a series of adventures, growing out to the

[6] Godwin's influence on Brown has been explored thoroughly; however, Robert Miles' chapter, 'Transatlantic Gothic,' is particularly helpful in the similarities and shared borrowings between the two authors. See *Transatlantic Literary Studies, 1660-1830*, Eds. Eve Tavor Bannet and Susan Manning (Cambridge: CUP, 2011) 202-218. 208.

[7] Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, Trans. Leon S Roudiez (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988 (French), 1991 (Columbia UP, English) 1.

> condition of our country' that differs from 'Puerile superstition and exploded manners; Gothic castles and chimeras, [which] are the materials usually employed for this end […]. The incidents of Indian hostility and the perils of the western wilderness, are […] more suitable. (641)

But even though Brown moves away from 'Gothic castles and chimeras', Europe maintains a looming, lurking presence, like Wieland's own Bavarian ancestry, and the interloper, Carwin. Because one may never escape one's past (personal or national), one cannot really become 'this new man' (Crèvecoeur, 44) if that means sloughing off one's generational, racial, and political past. Brown's novels, then, exhibit the anxiety and underlying moral ambiguities attendant upon becoming such a 'new man', in breaking with the past. Eric Savoy evaluates the idea that 'the Gothic […] gives voice to the dark nightmare that is the underside of "the American dream."' However, Savoy discusses that this 'simple opposition between the convenient figures of dream and nightmare is overly reductive. These clichés, and the impulses in American life they represent, are not in mere opposition; they actually interfuse and interact with each other'[8]. This interfusion and interaction of both the 'American dream' and its 'underside' find expression in the hybrid style of Brown's version of American gothic. In both novels considered here 'progress generates an almost unbearable anxiety about its costs' that leaves the narrator unable to finally cross the gap of sympathy (167). In these novels, characters are lost in America and rather than championing social intercourse, justify themselves and withdraw from society to often inhabit wildernesses alone. *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly* articulate the fear of nothing on the other side of rupture (be it religious, political, personal, sympathetic, stylistic). In this liminal anticipatory threshold of transformation there is the nagging question: if, (in the words of a poet writing after another paradigm-shifting war) after the 'centre cannot hold', is there something which can be 'born' and transformed from rupture?[9]

Wieland

The secondary literature on Brown's gothic novels has grown significantly, especially within the last two decades. Studies have foregrounded either Brown's works' nationalism or transnationalism, Radicalism or 'Enlightened conservatism', focus on the family (or nation as family) or his male friendships and homoeroticism, and on his early Quaker faith, to list just a few examples[10]. Although the studies mentioned are extremely helpful for furthering work

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[8] Eric Savoy, 'The Rise of American Gothic,' *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, Ed. Jerrold E. Hogle (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 167-188. 167.
[9] William Butler Yeats, 'The Second Coming' [1919] http://www.potw.org/archive/potw351.html.
[10] The upcoming Scholarly Edition has also increased critical traffic on Brown. For example, see: Luke

on Charles Brockden Brown, my argument, though founded on previous critics' nuances, differs. What the gothic mode makes prominent in Brown's work is how it foregrounds the shadow side of sympathy that, as we have seen, always lurks underneath a narrative of seamless continuity – in this sense it is continuous with the disjunctive presence of the opium-taking women in Crèvecoeur's Nantucketers whom James simply notes without censure. This thesis has foregrounded genre, space and emigration as categories that allow us to investigate the ability of transatlantic sympathy to cross the gap of the Atlantic. Because Brown's gothic works expose the shadow side of harmonious sympathetic relations, where the gap of sympathy threatens to widen irrevocably, focus here will be on *how* this happens through the triad of space, emigration and genre. In the two novels, characters' relationships with their environment (particularly the temple at the edge of the wilderness in *Wieland* and the frontier in *Edgar Huntly*) signal the breakdown of sociability, which in turn is reflected in the narrative style of the fictional epistolary mode. Within these two novels, it is the combination of the alienating stranger and alienating place leads to an alienated self; this is, in turn, evidenced in narration, and signals the rupture of sympathy.

A short explication of *Wieland*'s plot is necessary: *Wieland* concerns the European migration of the elder Wieland to America, his own version of an 'errand into the wilderness,' to convert the Indians. After years of neglecting to fulfil what he believes to be his God-given duty, he resumes his religious fanaticism, building a temple on the edge of the wilderness and one night, perhaps by the power of his Deity, he spontaneously combusts (the reader is not given a definitive answer to Wieland's death). The younger Wielands, Theodore and Clara, along with Pleyel (Theodore's friend) and his sister Catherine, form an ideal, rational society, turning the temple from its religious beginnings to a tribute to Cicero, until their society is interrupted by the ventriloquism of Carwin. Through Carwin's talent, and their own predilections, everything falls disastrously apart: Clara eludes potential rape and death only to deal with the horrifying consequences of her brother's mad killing of his wife and children. Clara eventually reunites with Pleyel and moves to Europe. The characters'

Gibbons, 'Ireland, America, and Gothic Memory: Transatlantic Terror in the Early Republic' *boundary 2,* 31.1 (2004): 25-47; Peter Kafer, *Charles Brockden Brown's Revolution and the Birth of American Gothic* (Philadelphia: U of Penn P, 2004). Caleb Crain, *American Sympathy: Men, Friendship, and Literature in the New Nation* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2001). Philip Barnard, Mark L. Kamrath, and Stephen Shapiro, eds., *Revising Charles Brockden Brown: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality in the Early Republic* (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 2004). Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, *The Gender of Freedom: Fictions of Liberalism and the Literary Public Sphere* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004). Elizabeth Barnes, 'Loving with a Vengeance: *Wieland*, Familicide and the Crisis of Masculinity in the Early Nation,' *Boys Don't Cry: Rethinking Narratives of Masculinity and Emotion in the U.S.*, Eds. Millette Shamir and Jennifer Travis (New York: Columbia UP, 2002) 44-63; and the issue on Charles Brockden Brown in *Early American Literature* 44.2 (2009).

movements within the confined world of Mettingen and Clara's dominating narrative voice feature prominently in the novel. Because of the residual epistolary form of the novel, the reader only has access to Clara's voice, which as the novel progresses, becomes increasingly suspect in presenting an 'objective' account. In *Wieland*, the emigrant movements of the Wieland family, their location on the frontier, and the younger Wielands' isolation in their 'temple', portends the psychic isolation we see in Clara's pseudo-epistolary narration and her final remove to Europe.

The opening pages of *Wieland* helpfully introduce the focus of this section: that Clara's increasing narrative breakdown occurs due to the breakdown of sociability. The novel begins with Clara Wieland, narrating her story to an unknown recipient: 'I feel little reluctance in complying with your request. You know not fully the cause of my sorrows. You are a stranger to the depth of my distresses. Hence your efforts at consolation must necessarily fail. Yet the tale that I am going to tell is not intended as a claim upon your sympathy' (5). Whereas in Chapter Three I discussed the letter form as the only thing that provided real connection between actual family members across the distance of the Atlantic, here, in the novel, the narrator's use of a pseudo-epistolary format borrows the conventions of connection and repudiates them. Instead, the letter reader has a 'right to be informed of the events' rather than being drawn to it by sympathy (5). The focus then becomes less on letters providing a bridge of sentiments and re-establishing familiarity between persons, but instead, on legal testimony, a form that coalesces with the rationalist, empirical focus of the younger Wielands. It also distances writer and reader through a vocabulary of defence. Despite this, Clara continues to invoke a language of sentiment a few paragraphs later:

> How will your wonder, and that of your companions, be excited by my story! Every sentiment will yield to your amazement. If my testimony were without corroborations, you would reject it as incredible. […] Listen to my narrative and then say what it is that has made me deserve to be placed on this dreadful eminence, if, indeed every faculty be not suspended in wonder that I am still alive, and am able to relate it. (5-6)

This refusal of sympathy in favour of corroborated testimony seems oddly juxtaposed to an assurance of the readers' sentimental involvement. Clara seems to desire the self-constructed individualism that a legal turn can offer her, yet also feels the need for community; as such, her narrative voice oscillates between the two. Clara's request that the reader 'listen' also foreshadows the importance of the voice to the novel, especially notable in relation to Carwin's ventriloquism. It also recalls the ways in which the letter form is meant to simply be 'talking on paper' (*Letters from an American Farmer*). But, as we shall see below (and this is how it differs from texts discussed in previous chapters), the surety of this narrating

voice falls apart as she stands on 'this dreadful eminence', a world without the safety net of a sympathetic community.

An Alienating Place

Clara begins her narration where all American stories at the cusp of American nationhood tend to begin: in Europe. Clara's grandfather becomes the novel's first exile: by the Saxon noble marrying a merchant's daughter 'he mortally offended his relations. […] All intercourse ceased, and he received from them merely that treatment to which an absolute stranger, or detested enemy, would be entitled' (6). The child of this union, the elder Wieland, upon being orphaned, moved to London as a mercantile apprentice. He then became influenced by a mysterious book lying in his garret (note the physical isolation) written 'by one of the teachers of the Albigenses, or French Protestants' (7). He then picked up a Bible and interpreted it in light of the first book. Clara narrates (though this is simply her conjecture), 'His constructions of the text were hasty and formed on a narrow scale. Every thing was viewed in a disconnected position' (8). Given his small inheritance, the ending of his apprenticeship, and his odd religious principles, the elder Wieland removed to Philadelphia where, 'The cheapness of the land, and service of African slaves, which were then in general use, gave him who was poor in Europe all the advantages of wealth' (9-10). *Wieland* is a thus shaped transatlantically. With its opening European gothic conventions (clandestine marriages, secret religious fanaticism, personal isolation in medieval-type dwellings, secret books) and European beginnings, the narrative migrates to the American frontier and Wieland settles down, like Farmer James, on the edge of Pennsylvanian wilderness. As Elliott notes in his 'Introduction' to the novel, 'The America of *Wieland* is a nation of recently uprooted, insecure families held together by the fragile ties of their former European connection' (xviii). Rather than emphasising the 'silken bands' that connect the new American enterprise, the tenuousness of emigrant connection is given physical form in the Wielands' placement on the edge of the American wilderness (Crèvecoeur, 41). In the midst of this wilderness the elder Wieland constructs his temple to his Deity:

> At a distance of three hundred yards from this house, on the top of a rock whose sides were steep, rugged, and encumbered with dwarf cedars and stony asperities, he built what to a common eye would have seems a summer-house. The eastern verge of this precipice was sixty feet above the river which flowed at its foot. The view before it consisted of a transparent current, fluctuating and rippling in a rocky channel, and bounded by a rising scene of cornfields and orchards. (10-11)

The construction of a temple at the edge of a wilderness is a civilising move. David Lowenthall remarks specifically on classical forms on the frontier: 'To them [Americans] the

classical form denoted high culture, proof that they were properly taming and domesticating the wilderness. They were less concerned with the iconographic implications of Greek temples than with stamping "civilization" on their piece of wilderness with a standard temple façade and precut columns' ('Place of the Past', 105). The temple as domesticated, civilised space was also a solitary religious space. It was here that the elder Wieland 'rigidly interpreted that precept which enjoins us, when we worship to retire into solitude, and shut out every species of society. According to him devotion was not only a silent office, but must be performed alone' (10). The removal of Wieland from ancestral localities and even from the commercial centre of London moves him towards placement beyond the bounds of society, at the edge of American wilderness; here his temple – which is meant to be a corporate place of worship – serves the function of alienating him further from larger forms of corporate community, where both others and speech or prayer seem absent. The fear that some emigrant guides' authors had about the backwoods symbolising a moral retrograding infuses the elder Wieland's reality. Additionally, the gap of sympathy between Wieland and any other person becomes increasingly unbridgeable as he creates habitations for utter solitude, which, rather than providing a Romantic exultation in primitivism, leads to his death. The space of the temple perched on the craggy wilderness gives, within the world of the novel, physical form to the alienation experienced by the Wielands, and signals the failure of sympathy.

The temple first becomes known for the enigmatic death of the elder Wieland; this death, resulting either through the hand of his Deity or spontaneous combustion, is narrated by so many removes that we are unable to understand precisely what happened. Even here, death in the odd amalgam of the temple atop the wilderness leads to a loosening of Clara's narrative voice. A reader's trust in a so-called objective narrator begins to unravel as the reader is moved into increasingly further removes from the event. For instance, Clara was only six years old at the time of her father's death; she narrates the death of her father with remarkable exactitude and ease (without, one would think, accompanying distress at the death of her father), and from the vantage point of her house (from both her mother's and uncle's remembrances). She notes the rationalist impulse that makes her uncle a helpful witness in recounting her father's death: 'My uncle's testimony is peculiarly worthy of credit, because no man's temper is more skeptical, and his belief is unalterably attached to natural causes' (17). In opposition to her father's religious fervour, Clara places her uncle's testimony, transferring faith from an all-seeing Deity to rationalist deduction. But what she neglects to see are the very holes in this line of thinking, too. As Lisa West Norwood notes

concerning this passage, 'the facts mentioned are less facts than comments on what the witnesses saw and heard where'.[11] As such, Clara's exchange of religious for rational certitude makes the 'grounds of her belief'[12] not nearly as sure as she imagines, for 'each remove considerably weakens the relation' (Hume, 59).

After their father's death, the younger Wielands are joined by Pleyel and Catherine (siblings) and the circle of friendship becomes claustrophobic, rather than leading out into wider circles of sociability: 'We gradually withdrew ourselves from the society of others, and found every moment irksome that was not devoted to each other' (19-20). David Punter comments that the death of Wieland is meant as a 'burn-out case', where Brown highlights the frailty of humanity; as such, the younger Wielands continue in this trajectory even though they exchange religion for rationality. Punter writes:

> […]central to his [Wieland Sr.'s] burn-out is his habit of private worship, his reversion into Calvinistic high-anxiety, and his detachment from […] civic spaces […]. The younger generation fails to learn […]. The asocial nature of American individualism, and the atomistic tendency of the errand in the wilderness shorn of its congregational context, are surely in Brown's sights here, as much as the Enlightenment alterative, with its stress […] on private judgment and strict avoidance of hand-me-down judgments of the kind that Burke was apt to eulogize. The unmoored mind, falling back on its own combustible resources, quickly flames out. (Punter, 212)

Thus the sociability enjoyed by the four becomes increasingly self-referential and divorced from actual civic spaces, be these religious or political. Even the American Revolution, which had fractured the surety of Farmer James's narration, for the Wielands, is only an impetus towards sublime feelings enjoyed in the company of one another:

> The sound of war had been heard, but it was at such a distance as to enhance our enjoyment by affording objects of comparison. The Indians were repulsed on the one side, and Canada was conquered on the other. Revolutions and battles, however calamitous to those who occupied the scene, contributed in some sort to our happiness, by agitating our minds with curiosity, and furnishing causes of patriotic exultation. (25)

This inward-turned society congregates within the temple, and it becomes a metonym for them. As a monument to reason, the temple is a theatrical performance of placing a teleological vision of rational perfection on top of untameable American wilderness. Additionally, the Wielands' placement of objects within the temple supposedly closes the gap of sympathy between the Old World and the New, as classical forms pervade their outlook on the edge of the wilderness. Added to the elder Wieland's stark temple is a bust of

[11] Lisa West Norwood, 'I may be a stranger to the grounds of your belief": Constructing sense of place in *Wieland*,' *Early American Literature* 38.1 (2003): 89-122. 101.
[12] The title of Norwood's essay above and a frequent phrase Clara uses in the novel.

Cicero, bought from 'an Italian adventurer, who erroneously imagined that he could find employment for his skill' in America (22); unsure of its authenticity as a genuine antique the friends 'were contented to admire the performance' (22). Clara's narration draws attention to the trope of American lack (where America has no place for the arts) where performance trumps authenticity. It is the confusion of these two terms, performance and authenticity, that cause the gothic turn with the introduction of Carwin, whose vocal performance is confused with the authenticity of their senses. Carwin (as we shall see later) calls into question the surety with which the four had built their epistemology. The temple is exemplary as a solitary place of devotion in its odd architectural juxtaposition. As such it becomes the meeting place of Wieland's emigrant identity and American *topos*, of fear and religious devotion, and later Enlightenment rationality and (short-lived) sociability. But paving over the rugged American landscape, thinking that an Old World edifice can sit atop the American landscape proves disastrous: more is needed, a transformation and incorporation of old and new forms, rather than this uneasy juxtaposition. Because this transformation appears impossible for the younger Wielands (since form seems to trump substance) – both Theodore Wieland's brooding religiosity and Clara's rationality ultimately fail – retreat becomes the answer, either in death for Wieland, or back to Europe for Clara.

Although the temple was the location where 'the tear of delicious sympathy was to be shed' (22), this show of sympathy becomes more concerned with performance – with theatrical sentimentality than an exchange of persons and characters that Smith advocates. As such, Smith would regard the community's view of sympathy as erroneous, for theirs is without the necessary gap of sympathy that it must have to prevent total identification between persons (where one '*almost identifies* himself with, he *almost becomes* himself that impartial spectator' [*Theory,* 146-7, emphasis added]). If the temple's artefacts were chosen more for their harkening back to a Classical past rather than for their authenticity, this choice is indicative that the temple for the younger Wielands serves the larger purpose of a performance of sentiment (as well as the space for actual performances). Instead of attending to the real war, actual landscape or themselves, the four focus on debate and performance. The temple's associations with Theodore and Clara's own troubled personal history, as well as the original use as a space for devotion, are buried. And in the gothic, things do not tend to stay buried. In this transatlantic novel, the past is intimately connected to specific places in the novel. The gap of sympathy continues to gape underneath the pressure that the new generation places on it. It is as if this narrative takes up the 'true born Americans' at the ending of Rowson's *Reuben and Rachel*. Here the past crops up in the lives of Pleyel and the

Wielands, challenging the idea that 'true born Americans' means that one can literally create oneself anew and become 'this new man' of America. In *Wieland*, the moral complexities that accompany this 'new man' are ignored in favour of replacing religion with rationalism, and the frontier with pseudo-Classical structures. But this is not a form of profitable synthesis where objects from all over the world meet and combine in new ways; nor is it similar to the boundary crossing that we saw with William Dudley in *Reuben and Rachel*, who was characterised by a 'divided heart' because of his hybrid identity. Instead, here, without acknowledging the ways in which such replacements strain against the realities of what it means to be 'American' in the post-Revolutionary era, these suppressions continually resurface throughout the novel until they cause the edifice to metaphorically break. By making sympathy not a discourse whose essential feature is a gap that must be crossed, but instead defining it in an aesthetic performance of sentiment ('the delicious tear'), the Wielands set themselves up for inevitable rupture.

This rupture ultimately stems from trying to enact the fiction of being history-less. Both father and son forget their history. This 'sin', in turn, is passed down from father to son (which echoes through gothic modes in American literature, notably in Hawthorne and Faulkner). In fact, Miles notes that this generational quality where sins pass from fathers to sons (not just a result of individual evil) is what Godwin got from Brown in *Mandeville*; Brown's 'processes of history worked through the generations' influences Godwin and thus, extends gothic conventions transatlantically ('Transatlantic Gothic', 211). *Wieland* participates in a transatlantic narrative of the effects of history. As an '"Experimental" work […] in the Gothic, then, [it] used the narrative language of the Gothic to think through, and advance, a theory of historical causation, […] or how past violence reproduces itself in the present. In this gloomy area of human experience, there are no solutions, just arrested contradictions, caught in the quick of narrative' (207). It is the characters' failure to work through 'arrested contradictions' based on their own emigrant heritage and patrimony that finally produces the eruption of 'past violence' into the present. If this generational passing-down concerns the 'processes of history […] worked through the generations', then that which haunts Theodore Wieland is the history that he has suppressed, from his own European heritage, from a more full understanding of his religious sentiments that extends beyond the mysterious book of his father, and from the actual war on his doorstep (211). Trying to become the 'new man' of America, or an American Adam, and forgetting where he had come from (nationally, paternally, religiously), Wieland's neglect of history finally severs sympathy. As such, he has 'replac[ed] European external threats with internal

American ones' (Elliott, xviii). A severing of oneself from history – imaged in the novel perhaps most clearly in the landscape and in the odd amalgam that is the temple – has the effect of simply repeating that history: the real fears of transatlantic dislocation, the puzzling and abrupt death of Wieland Sr., and the real horrors of war, now resurface within the family. By failing to interrogate their history – personal, national and transatlantic – or naively thinking that they could create an alternate history based upon their own synthesising of elements, the Wieland family loses even the claustrophobic sympathetic bond they had. For the emigrant to successfully cross over from one nation to another, it appears a double-consciousness is necessary, without glibly ascribing to models of American plenty or American lack; but, instead, like the Kerrs in Chapter Three, 'giv[ing] the country a fair trial' and realising the ways that identity is fashioned both by past national affiliation as well as the present reality of needing to financially provide for one's family (which was often much easier in America). The Wielands neglect this emigrant double consciousness in favour of a hierarchical sense of their religious 'errand', which, when neglected, simply becomes a channel for self-imposed guilt. This guilt becomes all consuming given that it does not have an outlet within a sympathetic community (Wieland Sr. seems to not have a reciprocal relationship with his Deity and he and his wife have separate religious forms and practices). The eventual eruption completely annihilates sympathetic bonds.

An Alienating Stranger

The rupture of sympathy comes not only from within, but is also occasioned with the stranger, Carwin. Here, again, it is the emigrant figure that acts as a 'stranger to disrupt a settled community' (Lawson-Peebles, *Landscape*, 234). In 1790s America it was thought that the eastern seaboard was full and emigrants needed to move west in order to obtain land. This meant the tenuousness of connection on the frontier increased, where emigrants had only 'fragile ties of their former European connection' holding them together (Elliott, xviii). Furthermore, this physical isolation slowed the natural process of earning a reputation. In a similar manner to Toni Morrison seeing Carwin as a an African presence (though he is white), Carwin, even though he is not an emigrant, still serves the function of emigrant figure; he seems to be alternately Spanish or English to Clara and is imbued with all the suspicions of a racial or national other[13].

[13] Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1992).

The moment of his entrance is important in its combination of elements: the family first hears what they find out is Carwin's voice while they are discussing the sublime, debating the particulars concerning a sublime cataract in Monongahela, Virginia versus one Pleyel has visited in the Alps. A letter occasions this debate. One of Theodore Wieland's children is his ward, Louisa Conway; she is reunited later with her birth father, Major Stuart (who is British), though she continues to live with the Wielands given her father's military career. The letter in the temple has come from Major Stuart and believing it will solve the debate, Wieland goes to retrieve it, but hears 'stop, go no further' which sounds like his wife's voice (33). The family's rationalist debate is both a transatlantic and aesthetic one, which concerns itself not with the actual sublime landscape beyond their window but with landscape abstracted across distance and memory. It is also the embedded fictional letter from Major Stuart that starts off the debate: that is, the letter form rather than providing connection, provides the basis for argumentation and the possibility of division, as its import lay not in creating an imagined community across distance (the hope of the Kerr letters in this thesis) but as a disembodied voice, abstracted from community and co-opted to serve the purpose of argument. Its placement is also vital, as it is in the temple, adding another layer to the space that overlays the American landscape: as religious relic, site of Enlightened empiricism and dialogue, and the space which houses the letter, that form which, like sympathy, 'dreams of making distance disappear' (Marshall, 180). But in this confluence of aesthetics, the past, and generic forms, Carwin's mimicry upsets the Wielands' stable worldview. Rather than seeing Carwin as the 'double-tonged deceiver' as Clara does, the breakdown of the Wieland family was always already a part of it[14]. Carwin's mimicry simply exposes it. Of course, Carwin will move from mimicry to ventriloquism, beyond imitation to seemingly moving the voice into aberrant places. In transatlantic sympathy's gothic underside, the voice has moved from the hopeful recreation of conversation and intimacy – from images of the fire-side and 'talking on paper' – to disembodied voices that seem familiar but are also eerily foreign. This de-stabilisation of the senses, whether the voice or vision (as we saw particularly in Chapter Two) – pushes empiricism to its logical conclusion; this inability to accurately trust one's senses, founded here upon the travelling of the voice, is the final straw that undoes the family. As Clara puts it, 'The will is the tool of the understanding, which must fashion its conclusions on the notices of sense. If the sense be

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[14] The phrase comes from Clara and is borrowed in Michael Davitt Bell's article, '"The Double-Tongued Deceiver": Sincerity and Duplicity in the Novels of Charles Brockden Brown' *Early American Literature* 9.2 (1974): 143-163.

depraved, it is impossible to calculate the evils that may flow from the consequent deductions of the understanding' (33). This unmooring of sense sets Wieland loose, as his father before him.

Whereas the Wieland family tends to stifle their compound emigrant and religious history and ignore the political ferment of their present, Carwin goes to the other extreme by creating identities as he sees fit. This is part of the final fear of Crèvecoeur's Farmer James: if his children 'go native' and they are unable to distinguish between themselves as Anglo-Americans from their Indian neighbours, the fear is that all boundaries will be eroded. A world without boundaries signals the annihilation of sympathy. Carwin introduces this loosening of boundaries into the world of the novel. Without the sort of certificates of character that came with emigrants and provided a tangible link from one sympathetic community to another that we saw in Chapter Two, Carwin is able to create and discard identities just he can literally create and discard voices. Pleyel meets Carwin in a coffee house in the city and recalls meeting him three years previously in Spain. When Pleyel relates Carwin's character to Clara, he relates that 'His garb, aspect, and deportment, were wholly Spanish' and that several years and study, 'had made him indistinguishable from a native, when he chose to assume that character'. Additionally, 'He had embraced the catholic religion, and adopted a Spanish name instead of his own' (63). He becomes antithetical to the American farmer connected to the land, as 'He pursued no profession, but subsisted on remittances form England'; he also neglects to share personal information: 'On topics of religion and of his own history, previous to his *transformation* into a Spaniard, he was invariably silent. You could merely gather from his discourse that he was English, and that he was well acquainted with the neighbouring countries' (63). Carwin is like Jean Baudrillard's notion of simulacra, that we never arrive at the 'real', but only images of images. Carwin's identities created and discarded at will point not to authentic interaction with history, religious forms or Spanish culture (a 'crossing over' that integrates one set of cultural values with another), but instead an expedient disguise whose end is self-promotion and divorces the forms of cultural or religious identity from their original meanings. Carwin's ability to change his identity is the shadow side to Smith's spectatorship. David Marshall, in an article about the spectator, argues that 'Identity is itself undermined by the theatrical model which pictures the self as an actor who stands beside himself and represents

the characters of both spectator and spectacle'.[15] The need to both maintain a critical distance from oneself (division between actor and spectator, or as Marshall's theatrical metaphor implies, as spectator and spectacle) and then to reunite these parts of oneself into a coherent whole has been discussed more fully in Chapter One. But the case of Carwin illustrates the peril for identity when the spectacle is without the unifying, underlying whole, and is, instead simply an amalgam of various spectacles that may be exchanged according to contextual benefits. Marshall goes on to describe the movements of sympathy: 'Sympathy, according to Smith's formulation, involves a loss of self, a transfer, and a metamorphosis' (600). This sympathetic movement allows for connection outside of the self into increasingly wider, and less-known circles (from self to others, to family, to community, to nation, to larger transatlantic and emigrant identities). But built into this movement of sympathy, what I have been calling its shadow side, is the always present possibility that the self may become so lost through loss and movement, that it is irrecoverable, where the attendant transformation takes one so off course that identity becomes ungrounded in any foundation. Carwin acts as an emigrant figure in the novel, upsetting the homogeneity of the Wielands; through his extensive travel and his ventriloquism, Carwin creates fictional selves in various cultural or religious guises. Never able to understand him by national, ethnic or religious terms, Carwin is an enigmatic puzzle for Clara. The emigrant figure thus upsets the rational narration of the novel, as he turns on its head an Enlightenment view of rational deduction so dear to the Wieland family. Carwin's Catholic faith, deviating as it does from Clara's Protestant heritage, is incomprehensible except for its potential political expediency. Clara writes: 'A suspicion was, sometimes, admitted, that his belief was counterfeited for some political purpose. The most careful observation, however, produced no discovery' (63). He continues to elide the truth of Clara's focus on empirical, rational inquiry as that which produces truth. Carwin then shows up in Pennsylvania, adopting another mode of dress and another persona: 'Why had he assumed the garb of a rustic [in Pennsylvania], Pleyel was unable to conjecture' (64). Rational deduction is stumped when faced with the ability to shift identity, nationality and religious affiliation at will. As such, the unmoored character of Carwin (and his accompanying talent of seemingly moving voices) unhinges Clara's certitude in the ability of her senses to root her in the present and portray a sense of the world known through an objective lens.

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[15] David Marshall, 'Adam Smith and the Theatricality of Moral Sentiments,' *Critical Inquiry* 10.4 (1984): 592-613. 599.

Although critics have often seen Clara's extended meditation on Carwin as an awakening of her sexuality (perhaps also an awakening of incestuous desires), I think it is more than simply that[16]. She communicates in her pseudo-epistolary mode:

> Hours were consumed in revolving these ideas [about Carwin and why he had exchanged countries and religions]. […] From the death of my parents, till the commencement of this year, my life had been serene and blissful […]; but, now, my bosom was corroded by anxiety. I was visited by dread of unknown dangers, and the future was a scene over which clouds rolled, and thunders muttered. (64)

It is here that reflection – rather than providing solutions – presents a conundrum for Clara and correspondingly, her narrative coherence begins to unravel. Carwin's character also bookends her life, so that it brings up the early 'death of her parents', unpleasant memories of whom she has apparently laid aside. Her language of sensation turns to metaphor, in an effort to get at the confusion: specifically her turn to sublime landscapes with attendant thunder and clouds seems to be her use of a common trope for sentimental experience; but at the same time, it is also the narrating self trying to make sense of the confusion Carwin brings through literary parameters. Thus the 'transatlantic circulation of criminally and sensationally irresponsible acts' in the novel unravels Clara's certitude[17]. She concludes, 'I had no power to explain, I was pushed from my immoveable and lofty station, and cast upon a sea of troubles' (65). Her flight from 'dreadful eminence' into a 'sea of troubles' is her own 'shipwreck of the soul' and signals not only the breakdown of her rational certitude and the setting adrift of her sympathetic community, but also correspondingly, to her narration (5).

An Alienating Narrating Self

Carwin combined forms of personal history into theatrical spectacle while Wieland suppresses his past. The problems of forgetting one's history extend beyond Theodore Wieland, to his sister, Clara. As equal inheritor of the elder Wieland's neuroses, Clara does not follow a deity in killing anyone but she does participate in what I am calling a stylistics of breakdown. These breakdowns syntactically give form to the gap of sympathy that, in Brown's novel, is finally uncrossable. The stylistics of the breakdown of sympathy, then, proceeds from physical dislocation (on the edge of American wilderness and within the odd amalgam of the temple) and is furthered by the disorienting effects of the emigrant stranger.

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[16] See for instance, Bill Christopherson, *The Apparition in the Glass: Charles Brockden Brown's American Gothic* (Athens: U Georgia P, 1993); Bill Christopherson, 'Picking up the Knife: A Psycho-Historical Reading of *Wieland*,' *American Studies* 27.1 (Spring 1986): 115-126; Allan Lloyd Smith, 'Nineteenth-Century American Gothic,' *A New Companion to the Gothic*, Ed. David Punter (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012): 163-175.
[17] Christopher Apap, 'Irresponsible Acts: the Transatlantic Dialogue of William Godwin and Charles Brockden Brown,' *Transatlantic Sensations*, Eds. Jennifer Phegley, John Cyril Barton and Kristin Huston, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) 30.

Initially, these breakdowns move laterally from Clara's more rational empirical narration to a different narrative register: the sentimental. If the sentimental is the narrative mode that seeks to create familial bonds then Clara's switch from one to the other illustrates her attempt to save her version of the sentimental community at Mettingen[18]. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, her desire for rational justification, written in a language of rights, and outright disregard for sympathy, all illustrate her apparent desired alienation from larger forms of community beyond the original four persons. When she gets to the narrative moment when Carwin must be introduced, she walks the letter reader through her violent sensations:

> I now come to the mention of a person with whose name the most turbulent sensations are connected. It is with a shuddering reluctance that I enter on the province of describing him. […] My blood is congealed: and my fingers are palsied when I call up his image. Shame upon my cowardly and infirm heart! Hitherto I have proceeded with some degree of composure, but now I must pause'. '[…] in what terms shall I describe thee? What words are adequate to the just delineation of thy character? […] Let me recover, if possible, a sober strain. […] Let me stifle the agonies that are awakened by thy name' (46).

Such passions seem rather violent for a person whom she later exonerates (who, she imagines that through doing penance as an American farmer 'may, in some degree, atone for the miseries so rashly or so thoughtlessly inflicted' [222-3]). However, when Clara is able to command some degree of composure, what is chiefly upsetting is her inability to describe him. That is, her attempts at categorisation fail; this has applications to the novel's residual epistolarity. For if one is unable to adequately describe – the only method of connection within the genre of the letter – not only is her sense of empirical control shaken but it also simultaneously cuts off any sympathy that the letter form may afford. She finally regains composure after walking around her room and in order to narrate, decides to 'limit [her] view to those harmless appearances which attended thy entrance on the stage' (46). Her theatrical language distances her life to a 'stage' and her use of the personal 'thy' makes it seem as if Clara is actually writing to Carwin, rather than to her original recipient. Further reflections on the person of Carwin continue to undo her certitude so that 'time, instead of facilitating a solution, only accumulated […] doubts' (57). For Clara, Carwin is deeply connected to her father's death, as both bring up loss and confusion and upset her rational mode of ordering her life. When lost in reflection about Carwin she, like her father before her, sees bright light:

> The first visitings of this light called up a train of horrors in my mind; destruction impeded over this spot; the voice which I had lately heard had warned me to retire, and had menaced me with the fate of my father if I refused. I was desirous, but unable,

[18] Leonard Tennenhouse argues for the sentimental as an 'infinitely expandable community of individuals who understand themselves as similarly human' (119) in *The Importance of Feeling English*.

> to obey; these gleams were such as precluded the stroke by which he fell; the hour, perhaps, was the same – I shuddered as if I had beheld, suspended over me, the exterminating sword. (59)

As much as the episode portends disaster and the sentences appear to ramble only connected by semicolons, intimating a distress so that Clara cannot pause, the sentences remain, nevertheless, ordered. If her more legalistic forms no longer hold sway under Carwin's influence, Clara makes sense of him (and the events he sets in action) through a language of sensation and sentiment. Clara elides moments of total narrative breakdown in favour of very tenuous sympathetic bonds; she is most beside herself when she ruminates on her brother's depravity killing his wife and children and at her own potential killing of her brother; and it is only by suppressing this gothic underside that she can move on towards any semblance of sympathetic community.

Where we do see the severing of sympathy though is in the larger project of the novel itself. With 'letters' that proceed for several chapters without any formal recognition that this is in fact a letter (what Rick Wallach names as the 'massive monologue that parodies the epistolary conceit'[19]), we can easily become subsumed into Clara's first-person narration, without remembering the background letter. Here, the letter serves a different function than in previous chapters in this thesis. In a manner similar to the letters subsumed in the emigrant guides (perhaps real, perhaps not) that were meant to give an air of authenticity to the emigration discourse, here, too the letter form (rather than just first-person narration) appears to lend credibility to the experiences. The transatlantic letters between the Kerr Family across the Atlantic aim to provide virtual presence, hoping to connect and imagine a community beyond the nation and the confines of the local. The letters we see in Rowson's fiction – both the failed letters in *Charlotte Temple* and the correspondence Columbia reads in *Reuben and Rachel* – of course borrow the conceit of actual letters and are aimed at creating authenticity either of feeling (in *Charlotte*) or historical fact (*Reuben and Rachel*). Here, though, because the reader not only does not know to whom the letters are addressed and because there are no return letters, Clara's voice dominates. The 'talking on paper' that happens in *Wieland* then is never meant for actual consumption and dialogue, but is the dominating 'I' turned in on itself, talking to herself.

The tension of this turn inward comes at the end of the novel. Clara clearly links her death with the conclusion of her narrative:

[19] Rick Wallach, 'The manner in which appearances are solved: narrative semiotics in *Wieland, or the transformation*,' *South Atlantic Review* 64.4 (1999): 1-15. 8.

> A few words more and I lay aside the pen forever. Yet why should I not relinquish it now? All that I have said is preparatory to this scene, and my fingers, tremulous and cold as my heart, refuse any further exertion. This must not be. Let my last energies support me in the finishing of this task. Then will I lay down my head in the lap of death. […] Every sentiment has perished in my bosom. Even friendship is extinct. Your love for me has prompted me to this task; but I would not have complied if it had not been a luxury thus to feast upon my woes. I have justly calculated upon my remnant of strength. When I lay down the pen the taper of life will expire: my existence will terminate with my tale. (205)

Clara here combines rhetoric of sentiment – 'tremulous', 'luxury to feast upon my woes' – with her characteristic exactitude ('I have justly calculated upon my remnant of strength'). She intimates, 'I will die, but then only when my tale is at an end' (212). If her story equals death it is not her actual death (for there remains another chapter that critics tend to dismiss as both hasty and even an 'extraneous afterthought'[20]), but instead a transformation: she begins to see herself in a language of spectatorship, as self-divided. But this moves away from Smith's spectator-actor division, where 'I divide myself, as it were, into two persons' (113) and is, instead, more akin to Smith's lawbreaker. When she re-remembers and narrates her thoughts of potentially stabbing her 'virtuous' brother when he has intents on her own life, she writes:

> Methinks it is too much. *I stand aside, as it were, from myself*; I estimate my own deservings; a hatred, immortal and inexorable, is my due. I listen to my own pleas, and find them empty and false: yes, I acknowledge that my guilt surpasses that of all mankind […]. Is there a thing in the world worthy of infinite abhorrence? It is I. (206, emphasis added)

The feeling of utter isolation for her (supposed) sin of self-defence calls to mind the self-exile to the polar regions of Frankenstein's monster (the Shelleys were fans of Brown). As in a conversion narrative, Clara's own monstrosity she sees internally causes a radical re-evaluation of herself, so that she splits in two and even 'stand[s] aside' from herself. But here there is not a reversal of redemption; instead, it is her realisation of the lengths to which she also could go – to kill another – that causes her to finally flee, not only Mettingen, but also her country.

Rather than sinking quietly into death, unable to reconcile her previous sense of self with the side which seems capable of murdering her brother, this is not the end of the narrative; there is the final chapter of the novel that portrays Clara 'a thousand leagues from

[20] Donald Ringe, *American Gothic: Imagination and Reason in Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, (Lexington: Kentucky UP, 1982). 44. See the following for similar points of view on the last chapter: Elizabeth Barnes, 'Loving with a Vengeance: *Wieland*, Familicide and the Crisis of Masculinity in the Early Nation,' *Boys Don't Cry: Rethinking Narratives of Masculinity and Emotion in the U.S.*, Eds. Millette Shamir and Jennifer Travis (New York: Columbia UP, 2002) 44-63; Philip Barnard and Steven Shapiro, eds., 'Introduction,' *Wieland: or, the transformation, with related texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009) ix-xlvi. xliii

[her] native soil, in full possession of life and of health and not destitute of happiness' (218). She has moved to Europe and married Pleyel. Although the past has cast a shadow over their present happiness (this is not after all, Brown's domestic novels of 1801), it is the change of location that has enabled Clara to move past the terrifying events of Mettingen. Rather than fleeing further westward on the frontier like Crèvecoeur's Farmer James, who believes he's going backward into a more primitive state, Clara's return to Europe signals both a moving forward (with her life) and a moving backward (coming to terms with her history). She writes, 'we set our feet on the shore of the ancient world. The memory of the past did not forsake me; but the melancholy which it generated, and the tears with which it filled my eyes, were not unprofitable. My curiosity was revived, and I contemplated, with ardour, the spectacle of living manners and the monuments of past ages' (221). Clara has become a traveller in Europe, turning the Old World (instead of the oft-spectacled New World) into sociological display. Opposed to those early critics previously mentioned who view the chapter as distracting and extraneous, Norman Grabo sees the final chapter as a sentimental way for Clara to both make sense of her personal history and to re-enter society based upon her marriage[21]. But *Wieland* is much more than simply a novel about a family, or about how a family might stand in for the nation; it is at heart a transatlantic novel deeply concerned with the underside of sympathy as it crosses and re-crosses the Atlantic. It is of course a transatlantic novel in its portrayal of Atlantic commerce, for, as Emory Elliott writes: 'Brown suggests the ways in which elements of the declining aristocracies of Europe and of the rising movement of Romantic art and literature are becoming intermeshed through economic needs and geographic opportunities and have thereby participated in the formation of the American republic' (xvii). But this is only part of the story; for the movement of the Wielands is not simply one-way, but is a there-and-back transatlantic journey through two generations, as the elder Wieland emigrates and Clara and Pleyel remove to Europe at the end of the novel. And although 'what occurs on the level of the individual and the family will have national and cultural consequences', this is also perhaps more true as we note the transatlantic crosscurrents of the novel (Elliott, xviii). That is, the reverberations of history and the moral anxiety attendant on this 'new man' of America are not confined to America, to the temple at Mettingen, or to the American frontier. The hope of rebirth (whether that is cultural, national, spiritual or personal) is not isolated to one *topos*. It is, perhaps in a similar manner to Clara's 'position[ing] people along these paths, or lines between places, rather

[21] Norman Grabo, *The Coincidental Life of Charles Brockden Brown* (Chapel Hill: UNCP, 1981) 29.

than within the places themselves'[22], that the space *between* is actually that which is most vital to understanding the novel. For as much as *Wieland* is an American novel, it is also a transatlantic one, where the sins of the father are visited upon the son in quasi-religious combinations that combine forms of the Old World within the vistas of the New. The Atlantic as this space between Europe and America, because it is so quickly crossed over metaphorically in *Wieland*, continually crops up in gothic ways within the 'landscapes of the mind'[23]; thus, the focus on 'settings which are distorted by the pressure of the principal character's psychological obsessions' for Clara is both America and Europe – America as the seat of both her greatest terror and fear (death at the hand of her brother) and Europe as a repository of that generational cycle of sin (Punter, *Terror*, 2). Europe and America are inextricably linked. Having physical and temporal distance from the earlier scenes of death is healing for Clara, but ultimately she blames the stranger. But this stranger is of course not only Carwin (or the story of Maxwell in the final chapter of *Wieland*): most unnervingly, we find that the disruptive 'stranger' is, in fact, within. Clara glimpses this when she recoils at her intent to kill Wieland. However, because Clara returns to confident narration and easily categorises who are 'deceivers' and who are 'victims' she neglects to really see the effects of her own maxim that 'no human virtue is secure from degeneracy' (224). But as Morrison's Sethe remarks in a much-later novel that has inherited some of the gothic ghosts of Brown (and also has its own burning house): 'Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place – the picture of it – stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there, in the world'.[24] The multiple lives of places continue to haunt or (in a less-menacing way) to live on, even if one has, like Clara, exchanged America for Europe, where 'The colony has become the main text, the mother nation the footnote'.[25] There seems to be the sense that if Clara just keeps on writing, her past and the evil she is capable of will continue to remain suppressed. The novel's residual epistolarity without any answering letters, then, props up the fiction of a composed, coherent self while the stylistics of breakdown within the narrative simultaneously illustrate the impossibility of fully knowing the self. Clara's dominating narrative voice attempts to patch the gap of sympathy, where a change of country is supposed to enable her to stave off the melancholy from the events at Mettingen. Clara's final sure

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[22] Lisa West Norwood, 'I may be a stranger to the grounds of your belief": Constructing sense of place in *Wieland*', *Early American Literature* 38.1 (2003): 89-122. 94-5.
[23] David Punter, 'Introduction,' *The Literature of Terror*: *A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day, Vol. 2: The Modern Gothic (*Harlow: Longman, 1996) 1-19. 2.
[24] Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: Random House, 1987) 46.
[25] Ann Douglas, ed., 'Introduction,' *Charlotte Temple* and *Lucy Temple*, by Susanna Rowson (New York: Penguin Classics, 1991) Vii-xliii. xli.

categorisation and confident narrative voice seem to attempt to close off the power of places' subsequent lives, and to make the stranger within more of a truism than something which has the power to deeply divide her. This differs markedly from Brown's later novel, *Edgar Huntly*.

Edgar Huntly

Leon and Rebeca Grinberg discuss the psychoanalytic implications of emigration:

> A person in this predicament [early disorientation associated with emigration] asks himself, "Where am I?" and "What am I doing here?" as occurs when one awakens and still feels half asleep. In extreme cases the person feels alienated from himself, as if he cannot meld the different pieces of his identity. In these disturbances it is the spatial integration link, which corresponds to the feeling of individuation, that is most affected.[26]

It is this disorientation, where a 'person feels alienated from himself' that we see worked out within the context of emigration in *Edgar Huntly*. This breakdown of the 'relation with different parts of the self'[27] 'which permit[s] comparison and contrast with other objects' (what is meant by 'spatial link' above) signals the failure of sympathy in the novel (107). To briefly summarise the novel: *Edgar Huntly* is the story of Edgar's obsession with the emigrant Clithero Edny. Seeing Clithero digging, Edgar interrogates the emigrant only to find that Clithero was sleepwalking and that he is fleeing his Irish past. Through Edgar's increasing sympathy for and emulation of Clithero, Edgar finds himself sleepwalking and awakens in the wilderness; his trek back to 'civilisation' includes incidents which recall conventional captivity narratives: slaughtering Indians and a panther, rescuing a young girl, and attempting to save Clithero from madness, starvation and later a wound from a marauding band of Indians. In an odd turn of events, those who haunted Clithero's past turn up in America and while Edgar attempts to right Clithero's past with these newcomers, Clithero descends further into madness, is arrested and upon being pursued, in the words of Edgar's tutor, Sarsefield, (who has the last word, and letter, of the novel): 'he forced himself beneath the surface [of the waves], and was seen no more' (898). *Edgar Huntly* is also very much concerned with space. His conflation with the emigrant Clithero turns Edgar, in the wilderness, into the Indianised man that Farmer James fears; and, as we have seen, the dislocation in space and unmooring of the sympathetic community at the impetus of the stranger is also expressed in the stylistics of breakdown. In this novel, the letter form finally

[26] Leon and Rebeca Grinberg, *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile*, New Haven, DE and London: Yale University Press, 1984 (Spanish), 1989 (English). 132-3.
[27] Leon Grinberg, *The Goals of Psychoanalysis: Identification, Identity and Supervision* (London: Karnac, 1990) 106.

silences the narrating Edgar as his is not the final letter, a death of a different sort from Clithero's. Whereas actual transatlantic letters that were the subject in Chapter Three of this thesis are meant as physical mediators to imagine the family community across the Atlantic but can falter under the pressure of transatlantic distance, we see in Brown's fiction that 'the centre cannot hold' any longer and the imagined presence of the 'other' at the other end of the letter (like God), is absent (Yeats, 'Second Coming'). As such the writer seemingly writing to her- or himself, and divorced from an actual sympathetic community, turns terrifyingly inward, and the internal vistas of the self hovering between being in- and being out-of-relation become the subjects in Brown's final gothic novel. Brown follows a similar triad in *Edgar Huntly* that we saw in *Wieland* to create gothic terror: firstly, Edgar becomes increasingly conflated with the emigrant stranger rather than maintaining appropriate sympathetic distance. This leads him into his descent into the wilderness and finally is imaged syntactically in the failure of both Edgar's narrative coherence and the inability of his letters to effectively communicate. The resulting ending is much more terrifying than *Wieland* (which has a convenient concluding chapter and final sure narrative voice) and presents a total rupture of transatlantic sympathy. *Edgar Huntly* is ultimately a more satisfying text than *Wieland* for a reading based on the gap of sympathy: because in its failure to connect sympathetically through epistolary exchange it presents a definitive generic answer to the unbridgeability of sympathy. If sympathy 'depends on distance and yet dreams of making that distance disappear', if it is stretched too far, it is the gap (rather than sympathy) which dominates (Marshall, 180). In *Edgar Huntly* we are left with the effects of this isolation and gaping sympathy in both sentiment and style.

The Emigrant Stranger

Edgar Huntly also, like *Wieland*, benefits from a sympathetic critical reading as the novel emphasises spectatorship – a word which cannot fail to conjure up ideas of Smithean sympathy 'as each of us judges as a spectator and finds himself judged by spectators' as Raphael and Macfie point out (*Theory*, Intro, 15). But whereas Clara's spectatorship discussed above finally requires she suppress the self-dividing effects of her past in order to form a new community with Pleyel, in *Edgar Huntly* spectatorship ultimately signals the rupture of all forms of sympathetic community. Edgar's 'fall' into increasing forms of racial degradation occurs because he does not attend to the gap of sympathy: the necessary distance required where one remains oneself and simultaneously enters into the sentiments of another. Instead, conflation with the stranger turns Edgar into a racialised 'other', where sympathy

has lost its boundaries. When the gap of sympathy is not held open to allow for difference, or is traversed when it should not be (Smith after all does not advocate sympathy extends to lawbreakers), its bridging capacity between persons is lost.

Edgar begins with a healthy suspicion of the stranger: he first suspects Clithero of his friend's murder because as an immigrant he is the only man without a known past. Because Clithero is 'the only foreigner amongst us', and there is a measure of 'obscurity that hung over his origin and past life', these 'almost […] decide the question of his guilt' as Waldegrave's murderer (651). Edgar's initial hesitation towards an emigrant stranger appears to display a necessary sympathetic distance, withholding sympathy until more is known. Vision and watching become increasingly important in the novel. This is not the purifying vision of communion with nature, or the categorising gaze of the emigrant-pioneer that often characterise the guides. Edgar increases his watching of Clithero to deduce his guilt, but this watching utterly turns Edgar's motives on their head where deduction is exchanged for sympathetic spectatorship and final conflation with Clithero – Edgar begins to sleepwalk like Clithero and finds the night and wilderness the space-time most to his liking. Importantly, Edgar then asks a pertinent question: 'Was it proper to watch him at a distance, unobserved and in silence […]?' (648). Smith's opening discussion of sympathy with 'our brother on the rack' uses the spectator's vision of the suffering other to begin to sympathise with him. Here, Edgar's question of the appropriateness of his spectatorship ('was it proper') deviates from a Smithean version, where the actor's grief or joy 'create[s] [in the spectator] rather a curiosity to inquire into his situation', so that the spectator asks, 'What has befallen you?' Smith continues on this point, 'Till this be answered, though we are uneasy both from the vague idea of his misfortune, and still more from torturing ourselves with conjectures about what it may be, yet our fellow-feeling is not very considerable' (*Theory*, 11-12). Smith advocates maintaining a gap of sympathy between persons, even in the context of joy and grief – emotions that others are more apt to sympathise with (than with anger, for example) – until we know if another is worthy of sympathy. Here, however, and without knowing any details, Edgar immediately finds himself sympathising with Clithero: The sudden sobbing of the emigrant results in Edgar describing that 'Every sentiment, at length, yielded to my sympathy' and 'tears found their way spontaneously to my eyes' (648). Edgar's transgressing upon the privacy of Clithero's emotions sets up a false sense of intimacy, where Edgar acutely feels Clithero's distresses without the necessary reciprocity since Clithero is asleep. Brown's novel collapses the imaginative space required by sympathy into empathetic emulation.

It matters that Clithero is an Irish emigrant. In the 1780s and 90s 'more than half' of all the European emigrants to Philadelphia were Irish; and these emigrants were notably both poor and Catholic, much different from earlier British Protestants emigrants[28]. As Brown's novel gives fictional form to the movement both westward and eastward of these emigrants, communities were increasingly composed of strangers, with the poor Irish as the most detested of the group. Thus the emigrant as disruptor to a community draws to the fore the more general point that Brown's novel puts forth: that everyone is a stranger. The problem for Edgar is specifically with whom he is sympathising. As Jared Gardner and Luke Gibbons note in their respective articles, both *Edgar Huntly* and *Arthur Mervyn* to the extent that they mirror early republican fears, feature 'destructive Irish interlopers on American soil, [which] coincided with the moral panic over foreign subversion by French and Irish revolutionaries'.[29]

More disruptive to sympathy than his emigrant status is the fact that Clithero is a murderer (though not of Edgar's friend, Waldegrave). Edgar, rather than distancing himself from a Smithean lawbreaker whose 'crimes [have] shut out all fellow-feeling with him from the hearts of his fellow-creatures', Edgar instead continually seeks to sympathise with Clithero even when he is rebuffed (84). At first, Edgar is determined to hear Clithero's account of his murdering Waldegrave (*EH* 659), but when he finds out that Clithero has not killed Waldegrave, he becomes consumed with grief at his tale: 'I felt nothing but the tenderness of compassion' (666). This initial outpouring of compassion moves further as Edgar seeks out Clithero in the wilderness figuring that he is trying to kill himself through starvation. Trying to rescue him, Edgar desires 'to moisten his hand with tears, to sigh in unison, to offer him the spectacle of sympathy, the solace of believing that his demerits were not estimated by so rigid a standard by others as by himself, that one at least among his fellow men regarded him with love and pity […]' (732). These sentimental moments Edgar imagines are meant to save Clithero from self-destruction; if Clithero is akin to Smith's lawbreaker, who 'fl[ies] to some inhospitable desert, where he might never more behold the face of a human creature', according to Smith, he also should painfully re-enter society filled with remorse since 'the horror of solitude' is greater than the condemnation of society (*Theory*, 84). But in the novel Clithero does not re-enter society: it is Edgar who searches for

[28] Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, eds., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675-1815* (Oxford: OUP, 2003) 287.
[29] Luke Gibbons, 'Ireland, America, and Gothic Memory: Transatlantic Terror in the Early Republic', *boundary2* (2004): 25-47. 30. Jared Gardner. 'Alien Nation: Edgar Huntly's Savage Awakening,' *American Literature*. 66.3 (September 1994): 429-461.

Clithero, who provides him with bread, and continues to follow him, even though Clithero flees. The larger point for the gap of sympathy is that sympathy cannot happen without reciprocity. Sympathy also needs to be bounded in order to work, and there are certain people with whom sympathetic identification is dangerous. Smith himself never asserts that one is to sympathise with the lawbreaker. Edgar's naiveté proceeds from inappropriately extending the circle of intimacy (and therefore of sympathy) to the emigrant stranger who is also a murderer. Without wider contextual circles that can verify or nullify Clithero's actions and motivations, Edgar presupposes Clithero's innocence. Edgar becomes so wedded to Clithero's story that he enacts parts of it himself and, doing away with the necessary space required to reflect upon the appropriateness of his actions, Edgar models complete conjunction (with either Clithero or Sarsefield, his tutor, at different points in the novel) rather than an awareness of the distance that sympathy requires and secure identity predicates. If Clara blamed Carwin for her family's tragedy, here Edgar believes too readily. Edgar's constant watching of Clithero – prying, even – signals a collapse of sympathy and a corresponding 'degeneration' from rational American, to emigrant identity, to Indian. The implication is that social bonds keep the self from this degeneration; when one moves outside the bounds of proper forms of sympathy the self can, like Edgar Huntly, commit atrocities one would not think possible within the realm of 'civilised' society. This moving backward has a placement: it corresponds to a movement deeper into the wilderness as description changes from an aesthetic of the sublime and the picturesque, which please because of their 'imitated distresses', to actual horrors where Edgar eats a panther and butchers Indians (Burke, *Enquiry*, I.15).

The Alienated Self in the Wilderness

Most of *Edgar Huntly* is taken up with his foray into the wilderness, where he follows Clithero firstly in order to save him. Later, he finds himself having walked in his sleep and is responsible for killing a panther, eating it, saving a girl, and butchering Indians. Landscape in the novel, rather than offering a picturesque prospect that extends sociability in the sharing of aesthetic experience with others, cuts off sympathy. Nature here is menacing, and is the scene of death, disorientation and frightening solitude. The Norwalk wilderness scenes are the most memorable in *Edgar Huntly* precisely as the placement of 'the incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the western wilderness' ('Preface', 641). Indeed Brown notes that 'for a native of America to overlook these, would admit of no apology' (641). Edgar's descent into the wilderness provides the location for an American version of gothic terror.

The landscape descriptions throughout the novel may be alternately read according to aesthetic categories, such as the sublime, or as a gothic space of constriction. In both cases, there is the sense that Edgar (like the Wielands before him) fails to interrogate the landscape and instead feels at home in it. By failing to register the ways in which the wilderness could disorient them (something that the emigrant guides' authors continued to reckon with, feeling a stranger within the landscape), they are in turn disoriented by it. For instance, geographically Edgar thinks he knows where he is but finds out that he is actually 30 miles further than he thought (825); it is more than just losing one's way in the wilderness, more than just actual distance that is disorienting. The wilderness represents the antithesis to social forms of knowledge. When divorced from sociability, proper boundaries of relation erode to the point that Edgar no longer knows himself.

The wilderness starts out as a space that can be understood through sublime terminology. The sublime becomes one ordering strategy in the novel to contain and 'know' the wilderness, and correspondingly, the self. Because Edgar seems to know the wilderness – he comments, for example, about the two ways out of the wilderness: a 'trackless space' or a 'well frequented road' (824) – he therefore seems to know his place within and in relation to it. Thus his descriptions of sublime landscape or his knowledge of the distances between markers in the landscape such as Queen Mab's hut, provide an illusion of control. The sublime is pleasurable in that it allows one to feel out of control but this quickly moves from aesthetics of controlled terror (which ultimately allows the characters to read the places in which they are situated within European categories) to actual disorientation. Brown's novels push against the sense that sublime feeling is ultimately controllable, because one can always step away from dizzying height or immense vistas. Instead, in *Edgar Huntly* the self is completely lost in the wilderness and entirely disoriented. The actual American *topos* finally invalidates European aesthetic categories for Edgar, so that he loses all track of time and space: 'I was supposed to have been bewildered in the mountains, and three days were said to have passed since my disappearance. Twelve hours had scarcely elapsed since I emerged from the cavern. Had two days and a half been consumed in my subterranean prison?' (824).

The placement then of Edgar within the wilderness is not just to acknowledge the ways in which the novel interacts with categories on both sides of the ocean, but to also illustrate that where characters are placed illustrates a fundamental breakdown of sympathetic relations. The wilderness episodes make Edgar not only a stranger to Clithero and Sarsefield, but also to himself. The frontier becomes the space in which the novel primarily moves and Edgar becomes increasingly degenerated when he moves outside of

social ‘civilised’ spaces. Edgar’s descent into the Norwalk wilderness is the space of transformation whereby he moves beyond emulation of Clithero to become Indianised, what Farmer James fears for his own children when he determines to cohabit with them. Many studies have focused on the psychological implications of the frontier episodes in *Edgar Huntly*, as it moves from being understood in terms of the sublime to becoming the place where Edgar turns savage[30]. Robert Lawson-Peebles notes that until his descent into wilderness, that Edgar is on the edge of the frontier (*Landscape* 248). Firstly, Norwalk is described as ‘in the highest degree, rugged, picturesque and wild’ (655). Deviating from a containable natural space, the wilderness is ‘uncultivated’ and a ‘desert tract’; this is the same language that Smith uses to describe the appropriate spatial location of a lawbreaker whose thoughts are ‘black’ who would fly to an ‘inhospitable desert, where he might never behold the face of a human creature’ (84). According to Smith there are appropriate places for sympathy and its failure. As sympathy is a spatial theory of moral sentiment, where the connection between individuals happens in the space between, in the imaginative crossing over each must do, there is also a wider placement that is important. It is important that Edgar’s ‘transformation’ from rational narrator to vengeful murderer moves back and forth across the line of civilisation, travelling between the town of Solebury, the edge of the wilderness and into its heart in his three-day disappearance. Gaston Bachelard in his *Poetics of Space*, speaks of the dialectic of this threshold space, ‘If there exists a border-line surface between such an inside and outside, this surface is painful on both sides…’[31] Bachelard also observes how such a position excites fear and confusion: ‘[…] we absorb a mixture of being and nothingness […]. The center of ‘being-there’ [that is, being central] wavers and trembles’ (215). The threshold re-orients boundaries so that ‘Intimate space loses its clarity, while exterior space loses its void […]’ (215). For Edgar’s movement back and forth across the threshold of the wilderness, into the wilderness, and then emerging from it, is of course a passage of initiation[32]; but more than that, this movement has direct implications for my argument regarding the gap of sympathy Throughout, this thesis has argued that one facet of the gap of sympathy is placement. For Smith’s spectator to sympathise with his brother on the rack, the spectator must be proximately close and see him, in order for sympathy to

[30] For example, see Paul Witherton, ‘Image and idea in *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly,*’ *The Serif* 3.4 (December 1966): 19-26; Alan Axelrod, *Charles Brockden Brown: An American Tale*, (Austin: U Texas P, 1983).
[31] Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of* Space, Trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, [1958] 1994) 215.
[32] On the wilderness as part of Edgar’s initiation rite, see: Dieter Schulz, ‘*Edgar Huntly* as Quest Romance’, *American Literature* 43.3 (Nov 1971): 323-335; Gardner’s, ‘Alien Nation’ already cited; Michele Bottalico, ‘The American Frontier and the Initiation Rite to a National Literature: the Example of *Edgar Huntly* by Charles Brockden Brown,’ *RSA Journal* 4 (1993): 3-16.

occur. However '[our senses] never did and never can carry us beyond our own persons' (9); it is, instead, the imagination that bridges the gap through sensory information. It is the space that is between which indicates relationship. The gap of sympathy articulates this threshold space where intimate and exterior space are re-oriented based upon one's position relative to this threshold. As Edgar moves in and around this threshold, which marks the dividing line between the town and Indian wilderness, he is undone.

Edgar's placement in the wilderness is much more than simply transposing the gothic to the 'more suitable' locations of 'Indian hostility' and 'western wilderness' (641). Placement in the novel (and specifically characters' relationship to the landscape) indicates, as illustrated above, a wider relationship of sociability. Thus, the landscape was observable and tameable within Edgar's Old World aesthetics (and from his location within a town outside of the actual wilderness), which allowed him a 'proper' venting of sentiment. However, this quickly changes as it is within the Norwalk wilderness that Edgar finds himself embroiled in a wilderness much bigger than he knew; the maze-like wilderness indicates a directionless that is more than simply losing one's way, but points to a breakdown of self when outside of the parameters of sociability. Norwalk is the setting for Edgar's 'Indianising' where, he eventually kills several Indians in acts of savage vengeance, of a variety much more heinous than any he attributes to the Indians (whom we do not actually see kill anyone) – quite a different 'Indianising' than we saw with Rowson's William Dudley. The actual events of Edgar's wilderness transformation do not concern me as much as the question: What was it that changes Edgar Huntly? Was it the terrain itself? Was it his dangerous spectatorship of Clithero that allowed him to sympathetically vent his feelings without reciprocation that sets him up for savagery? Was it simply his lack of sleep that had rendered him insane? Was it his own past (he considers the Indians he sees to be the same who killed his family [786]); or, was it simply some 'hideous dream' that as Edgar deduces it to be, was simply 'some freak of insanity' (786)? To begin to answer this question, Lawson-Peebles notes that Edgar Huntly,

> represents an absolute rejection of the sentimental savagism occasionally indulged by Revolutionary writers. At the mercy of a mutable terrain and reduced to an animal condition, Edgar provides the antipode of the republican ideology. With this character, in this setting, Brown has brought into focus the deepest fears of the political founders of the New World – fears that America would not be the Old World renewed, but rather turned upside down. (*Landscape* 251)

Politically then, Edgar imbibes the fears of the Revolutionary period, and just as the violence his parents incurred during the Revolution re-surfaces in Edgar's own savagery, these continue to have gothic afterlives. Theodore and Clara Wieland become subsumed into

violence because they had not interrogated and embraced their past (with all its contradictions, emigrant wanderings, and aberrant religious fanaticism); here Edgar, too, has suppressed his past. This past is imaged onto the landscape so that he 'is traveling into a place where the past hangs heavy, where its energies, its angers, its terrors […] still haunt' (Kafer, 176). Effectively then, nothing *changes* Edgar Huntly. The savagery he metes upon the Indians, his cannibalistic desires (he 'felt a strong propensity to bite the flesh from [his] arm' [783]), his insane appearance, his continued dislocation in space – all have been lurking within. And, given the frontier wilderness as the space where he believes laws hold no sway, he enacts them. His sleep-walking turns into a living dream, where reality is both unaltered and radically changed as he, in a Rip Van Winkle turn, awakens to see, like Rip, that George Washington has replaced George III, where the forms are the same but that the substance has radically altered. The Revolutionary terror has indeed 'orphaned' Edgar, and not simply regarding his biological parents, but more importantly, political independence from Britain has set him adrift. Seemingly conforming to theories of Scottish stadial historiography which 'transform[s] spatial distance into developmental time', here, the frontier wilderness becomes the place of re-memory where the past looms large[33]. Edgar's personal history, revolutionary history, and even a primitive space where he becomes animalised combine, so that 'space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history'.[34] If Clara had to go back to Europe in order to come to terms with her own varied transatlantic past (if only to continue to elide it finally in her sure-voiced narration), it is Edgar's descent into the wilderness which finally answers the question: '…what is old […] and what is new?' (Punter, *New Companion*, 6). Moving beyond Old versus New World dichotomies, the wilderness sections in *Edgar Huntly* finally reply that old and new (whether this is the medieval of the classic gothic or new forms; or Europe and America), are no longer the defining categories for understanding experience. Edgar's descent into savagery indicates a trajectory of shared humanity that, in this sympathetic underside to an Enlightened progressive vision of the human race, moves beyond national identification to a bleak realisation of the degeneracy of which every one is capable. This degeneration, besides

[33] This four-stage theory, developed from Lord Kames's speculations about natural jurisprudence and Adam Smith's inquiries into the origin of property rights, classifies civilisation's progression from hunter/gatherers, to shepherds, to agriculturalists, and ends in the commercial stage. Scottish stadial historiography extended to America in the work of William Robertson. The basic premise was that certain landscapes indicated a going back in time to more primitive periods, effectively a cross mapping of time onto physical space. Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997) 72.

[34] Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel,' *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin: Texas UP, 1981) 84-258. 84.

having a particular placement moving across the threshold of the wilderness, also has a particular narrative style. This style is one that beginning in Chapter 16, continues to fragment (Lawson-Peebles, 249) where letters are opened by the wrong people and go unanswered.

Letters gone Awry: Failure of Sympathetic Community

As placement indicates relationship, so does literary style. If the wilderness in the novel illustrates Edgar's inability to maintain sympathetic relationships as he travels in and out of the wilderness, the ways in which these experiences are written (a matter of style) as well their form (residual epistles) also indicate the gap of sympathy. Certain stylistic sympathetic markers may increase or decrease a reader's sympathy. In this thesis, we have seen these stylistic gaps, imaged as a narrative slip or disjunction, a loss for words or a grasp at naming the ineffable, are kept open (or continually impinge upon an apparently seamless coherence) in the emigration guides, the Kerr correspondence and Brown's gothic pseudo-epistolary fiction. In the guides, the trope of ineffability extends the genre's rhetorical purpose where the would-be emigrant must empirically be present in America – must emigrate – in order to understand America. In the Kerr correspondence, ineffability (the inability to adequately, empirically portray the new) presents a barrier to the letter effectively enabling a crossing between family members on either side of the Atlantic. This inability to adequately describe is most painful for those back 'home' since 'home' is known but the unknown country takes on more menacing possibilities as the loved one is reckoned to have become sick or died if letters do not continually pass back and forth. Again, like the guides, ineffability is used in Brown's novels for rhetorical effect, but the breaking apart in *Edgar Huntly* of a sure narrating voice is different from the breakage in Clara's narration. In *Wieland*, the narrative breakdown appears to be more a shift in registers from Enlightenment certitude in one's sense observations to a more sentimental form, as both (depending on the reader's point of view and actions of the narrative) can create a community. Perhaps because *Edgar Huntly* is the only one of Brown's novels that is narrated by the 'mad' character, the breakdown of narration as well as the breakdown of epistolary connection, signals deeper disjunction than in *Wieland*. *Edgar Huntly* more so than *Wieland*, benefits from a reading based on the gap of sympathy because the novel's gaps: between characters, in the space of the wilderness, and finally, in the failure of letters to enact sympathy, acknowledges the precariousness of human connection that sympathetic discourse articulates.

The novel, in its epistolary form – primarily in the form of letters from Edgar to Mary Waldegrave – threatens to never quite cohere: Edgar's narrating voice loses his own focus and becomes consumed with other stories. The novel opens with Edgar writing to his fiancée, expressing his concerns that 'In proportion as I gain power over words, shall I lose dominion over sentiments. In proportion that my tale is deliberate and slow, the incidents and motives which it is designed to exhibit will be imperfectly revived and obscurely pourtrayed [*sic*]' (643). He continues his appeal to her, 'O! Why art thou away at a time like this? Wert thou present, the office to which my pen is so inadequate would easily be executed by my tongue' (643). Edgar's fear is that writing will sever fragile bonds of transatlantic sympathy, and yet it is the only method whereby transatlantic sympathy can be maintained. Like the writers from the Kerr family of Chapter Three, here Edgar also yearns for presence and conversation as opposed to what feels like an imitation of such animated feelings through the letter. Although Edgar's opening injunction regarding the loss of actual presence and resignation that writing provides only an inferior virtual presence is often used as epistolary convention, later signs in the narrative point to increasing narrative gaps, rather than a progressive, seamless narrative.

After the self-alienating effects of sleepwalking, the fragmentation of Edgar's narrative voice increases in Chapter 16. Edgar worries about his capacity to communicate; he is concerned about his inability to present images that 'run […] into another, [the] sensations that succeed in so rapid a train, that [he] fear[s], [he] shall be unable to distribute and express them with sufficient perspicuity' (778). The disorientation experienced in the wilderness begets stylistic breakdown. Edgar has lost both the inability to understand and order his bizarre experience in Norwalk as well as the corresponding ability to order his thoughts into epistolary discourse. The unboundedness of the landscape, and of himself (as he moves beyond his previous moral conventions) become articulated in a train of association, which moves from being able to positively hold in tension 'multiple contradictory views' to becoming overwhelmed and 'susceptible to the excess of imagination' (Holbo, 36).

Beyond this stylistic breakdown, there is a larger novel-wide breakdown of epistolarity. Regarding the vocal qualities of narration, Michel de Certeau discusses the gap between language and writing and their connection to travel. He writes, 'It is this death of speech that authorizes the writing that arises' and continues by discussing a '[…] a pre-existing reader who is missing in the text, but authorizes it. The text is produced in relation to this missed present, this speaking, hearing other. Writing arises from the separation that

makes this presence the inaccessible other of the text […]'.[35] This authorising and 'speaking, hearing other' is most obviously the letter's recipient who occasions connection: the sort of distance and connection we see attempted in the Kerr correspondence where the gap of Atlantic sympathy must be crossed through the letter form to re-imagine the community. Here, in *Edgar Huntly*, as in *Wieland*, the letter's recipient remains imagined and largely absent. Edgar writes that he is surprised at the length of his tale and will intimate his 'other immediate concerns' when he meets his fiancée in person (887) – concerns to which the narrative never returns. Narration saves Clithero initially and reinstates sympathy as Edgar relates his tale of woe to Sarsefield (in the form of letters), who is moved to pity and compassion for the emigrant. Then Clithero murders Wiatte, and sympathy is instantly severed and in a letter to Sarsefield, Edgar calls Clithero 'a maniac, whose disease was irremediable, and whose existence could not be protracted, but to his own misery and the misery of others' (884). It may appear that Edgar's return to civilisation has restored his capacity to sympathise with appropriate people (Sarsefield rather than Clithero) since Clithero is now viewed as a 'maniac.' However, the multiplicity of letters at the novel's conclusion and the final silencing of Edgar's narrating voice leave such a view questionable. This increase in letters makes the breakdown of sociable forms all the more obvious and gaping as letters are not answered, or are opened by the wrong people.

Embedded epistolarity, rather than extending sentiments beyond the self as in Rowson, cuts off sympathetic connection in *Edgar Huntly*. There is an initial hope that letters will disconnect inappropriate forms of sympathy and reinstate proper connection. For although Edgar is prone to sympathetic conflation with Clithero, it is at the point of realising Clithero's madness that sympathetic emulation with the emigrant is severed and the gap of understanding with Clithero becomes unbridgeable. Writing to Sarsefield, Edgar repents of thinking Clithero 'a victim' and concurs that he is 'utterly subverted' (894); as if holding out an olive branch, Edgar appeals to Sarsefield's compassion as Edgar's own errors were a result of benevolence rather than 'sinister or malignant intentions' (895). One bond of sympathy is severed in favour of another and Clithero is relegated to the Smithean outcast whom no one believes. While Edgar thinks Clithero wants to see Sarsefield out of remorse, Sarsefield correctly understands Clithero's re-entrance into society is to cause more destruction (as he aims to kill Sarsefield's wife). As Edgar realises that he has told Clithero of Sarsefield's wife's location, and wanting to prevent her murder, Edgar sends two letters to

[35] Michel de Montaigne, '"Of Cannibals": The Savage "I",' *Heterologies: Discourse of the Other*, Trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis and London; University of Minnesota Press, 1986) 67-79. 78-79.

Sarsefield. Edgar then travels to meet Sarsefield, composing letters meant to intercede for him as he travels. These letters fail to bridge the gap of sympathy, and connection (both literal and imaginative) is severed. One letter Sarsefield opens and the other, tragically, is intercepted by his wife. As a result of the information contained in the letter, Sarsefield's wife miscarries their child and Sarsefield rebukes Edgar's haste and thoughtlessness. The gap of sympathy remains disconnected, as we never hear of Edgar's arrival or reconciliation with Sarsefield. Rather, the narrative ends as abruptly as it began, without a convenient ending chapter that we get in *Wieland*. The letter form, here, dislodges sympathy so that although Edgar hoped he could 'gain [Sarsefield's] compassion' even though '[he] shall not escape [his] censure', the letters, because of their very public travelling (always able to be opened at the wrong time by the wrong person), finally disallow the bridging of the gap of sympathy (895). The embedded fictional letter becomes the site where sympathy has the potential to be enacted and exchanged, to provide the virtual presence of the absent other. But as a potential place of negotiation, the form instead becomes dominated by the near-sightedness of the narrator; that is, because of what Edgar imagines to be true about Clithero and his own emulation of the emigrant in the wilderness scenes, Edgar's letters can only contain his imagining, rather than a dialogue with Sarsefield. Because the aliens – emigrants, Americans or Britons depending on one's point of view – the narrator encounters do not speak but are subsumed into his story, the vocal surety of narration potentially becomes dubious.[36]

Brown is not promulgating that transatlantic sympathy or sympathy for emigrants is impossible, though; for Sarsefield had earlier, like Clithero, emerged without origins and is described as arriving in America 'without fortune or friend', following which, Edgar's uncle 'proposed to him to become a teacher' (720), from whence he grew in prestige and fortune. There is no reason to assume that Sarsefield is other than Irish with his connections to Clithero, his marriage and furthermore (according to Luke Gibbons), his name is an allusion to Irish Jacobite Patrick Sarsfield[37]. Thus Edgar's severance from Clithero and Clithero's madness and subsequent death cannot be understood purely in regard to the triangle between Ireland, Britain and America during the period. The political situation and the Anglo-American stigmas against Irish immigrants do in fact play a key factor in Brown's novel, but I would suggest Edgar's broken bonds of sympathy with Clithero and his discontinuous

[36] Susan Manning, *The Puritan-Provincial vision: Scottish and American Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 77.
[37] See n. 14 p. 31 of Gibbons' article, 'Ireland, America and Gothic Memory'. Patrick Sarsfield was a migratory figure; he was born in Herefordshire (on the border between England and Wales), moved to Ireland, educated in France and fought for the king in France and later died in that country.

connection with Sarsefield have more to do with the *tenuousness* of transatlantic connection than with Irish immigration in particular. Although Edgar often believes him to be a pinnacle of rationalism, Sarsefield's origins are in fact rather ambiguous; he is, like Clithero, an emigrant figure but unlike Clithero, he has not sought to deliberately obscure his past in favour of becoming 'this new man' of America. Although Clithero never attains sympathetic identification across the Atlantic, Sarsefield is able to successfully mediate between European and American identities perhaps because he negotiates between these two static national identities. Never acknowledging himself as being in-between, his texts – in the form of letters to Edgar – become (from the point of view of the narrating Edgar) authoritative precisely in their assuredness. For example, Clithero, in Sarsefield's words is 'a madman whose liberty is dangerous, and who [is] require[d] to be fettered and imprisoned' and 'the method for [Sarsefield] to pursue was extremely obvious' (896). He, acting as the law to the lawbreaker, therefore detains him and sets off to conduct him to an asylum. In the final letter of the novel, Sarsefield tells Edgar of Clithero's death, where he threw himself overboard. His final remarks to Edgar are: 'With the life of this wretch, let our regrets and our foreboding terminate. […] I persuade myself that my wife's indisposition will be temporary. […] May this be the last arrow in the quiver of adversity! Farewell' (898). Sarsefield seems to forgive Edgar for his indiscretion ('be more circumspect and more obsequious for the future' [897]) and yet abruptly closes the letter with a 'farewell'. There is no answering letter from Edgar and the reader has no sense if Sarsefield and Edgar have any sort of relationship after this final letter. Sarsefield's abrupt 'farewell' effectively cuts off sympathy; the gap is simply too wide – Edgar is responsible for putting Sarsefield's wife's life in danger and indirectly for her miscarriage. Edgar himself may take Clithero's place as Smith's murdering lawbreaker, given that, according to Sarsefield, he is responsible for the death (not only of the Indians but also) of 'her infant, with whose future existence so many pleasures were entwined' (897). Letters, at the end of the novel, bring death. Because letters are physically intercepted and read by the wrong people, they also metaphorically hasten the breakdown of sympathetic exchange.

Brown's characters point to a collapse of a transatlantic exchange of sympathy, ultimately because Wieland and Clithero are too deluded, depraved or insane to elicit sympathy from their societies, be they familial, national or transatlantic. Going beyond the limits of appropriate behaviour such characters are no longer able to enter into a sympathetic transaction, for there are penalties for sympathising with the insane or the murderer as we see in the disastrous consequences of *Edgar Huntly*. As both Wieland and Carwin are cut off

(according to Clara the one a deluded victim, the other a 'double-tongued deceiver'), Clara may only stay within the purview of society and maintain sociability based on re-instating boundaries and categories in order to understand the terror of Wieland's murders. At the same time, she distances her ability to see herself as inheritor to the elder Wieland's madness and history, believing 'ordinary equanimity [and] foresight' as something which might have saved their family (227). Edgar, on the other hand, descends dramatically into the wilderness both literally and metaphorically, seeing himself as alien and turning into a savage version of himself. The return to society, to Sarsefield particularly, precipitates a return to his senses. But his sympathetic emulation of Clithero finally signals the death of that same stable community that had been Edgar's salvation, when he tells Clithero where Sarsefield's wife is. Generically, the ultimate failure of the fictional letter form is analogous to the breakdown of social bonds between Edgar and Sarsefield; the letters thus enact social breakdown, moving from fear of being watched, to terror and death. The final silencing of Edgar's letters seems to be a death of a different sort than Clithero's but one that points to the breakdown of sociability. This differs markedly from Clara's confident tone at the end of her narrative. We may wonder if this silencing is simply a part of the American gothic. Peter Kafer draws the distinction between European and American gothic modes. He writes, 'the point of difference between European Gothic and American Gothic is that in the latter, the ancestral portrait on the wall is a figure whose deeds have a direct and inevitably tragic connection to the foregrounded action. In American Gothic, history still haunts the present *in reality*' (200-1). This, however, is a false dichotomy in its implication that European and American forms of gothic (especially those written around the Revolution) can be seen as entirely distinct from one another. For as we have seen, both *Wieland* and *Edgar Huntly* though American novels, are also deeply transatlantic fictions. Although *Edgar Huntly* seems to be Brown's gothic novel 'American style' focusing on 'the instances of Indian hostility', its American location and events do not automatically make it a story of the nation – at least not a nationalistically exceptionalist one. What it harkens back to is transatlantic rupture, particularly in the events of the War for Independence, and the anxieties which underlie an emigrant discourse that believes becoming 'this new man' of America (and thereby breaking totally with a European past) is possible. Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* explicates and *Edgar Huntly* illustrates (in the figure of Edgar) that the stranger is also within, that although one's misdeeds be great, one always finds a way back into society, even if met with condemnation. Is Brown's picture of sociability so bleak though as to suggest that one may only be allowed back into the boundary of sociability if one is silenced, effectively like Edgar (perhaps afraid of

degenerating further like Clithero)? Is the only option after one has descended into the wilderness to either cut off that part of oneself (as Clara does) or to be cut off? Is lighting out for the territory the only option? Brown's literary output did not end with *Edgar Huntly* and his last novels attend to these questions.

Coda: Brown's epistolary novels

If Charles Brockden Brown is best known for his four gothic novels as innovations that leave a legacy in American literature (Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, Flannery O'Conner, Toni Morrison, Stephen King, to name just a few), most critics have seen his epistolary novels of 1800 and 1801 as a critical failure. Stephen Watts even asserts that this narrative 'failure' is a result of Brown moving from Radical to Federalist sympathies, making a clean break in 1800 and thus penning domestic novels.[38] But even if *Clara Howard* and *Jane Talbot* are less formally innovative, to call them critical failures seems to miss the point. For Brown's turn from the gothic to the domestic epistolary novel is a reversal of Crèvecoeur's trajectory, moving instead from gothic to the epistolary mode. What can we make of this? Has Brown simply opted out of narrative innovation and taken on novel-writing to earn money and provide for his family? Was it 'an attempt to capitalise on […] [the] popularity' of the domestic novel (Lawson-Peebles, *American Literature*, 155)? I think we can begin to answer these questions by looking at Brown's 'Portrait of an Emigrant, Extracted from a Letter' published in the *Monthly Magazine* in June 1799, and advertised in the same issue as Brown's *Edgar Huntly* (published later that year). The 'Portrait' contains in microcosm many of the themes we see in his gothic and domestic novels. It, importantly, is a portrait (recalling all the allusions to European aesthetic categories), as well as information removed several degrees through the medium of a letter. It is written by an anonymous narrator who has gleaned information from a local woman (Mrs K), who, although she does not concern herself with outside affairs, is a keen observer of those around her in Philadelphia. The figure of Mrs K is vital to understanding Brown's shift from gothic to domestic writing. Like Clara and Edgar, she focuses on empirical observation to ascertain information, specifically about an emigrant couple. However, her placement is key: she lives next door to the couple in urban Philadelphia, a civic space where sympathy extends outwards beyond the household (which was particularly claustrophobic in *Wieland*). She writes to the narrator, who in turn

[38] See Steven Watts, *The Romance of Real Life: Charles Brockden Brown and the Origins of American Culture*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1994).

frames the information for his/her purposes. The emigrants are, according to Mrs K, '"A Frenchman and his wife. His wife, I suppose her to be, though he is a man of fair complexion, well formed, and of genteel appearance; and the woman is half negro. I suppose they would call her a mestee. They came last winter from the West-Indies, and miserably poor I believe"'.[39] Of mixed race and nationality, the couple is remarkable both in their cosmopolitan consumerism as the woman spends so much of her time beautifying herself (so different from the American farmer) and in Mrs K's positive reaction to the couple ('The French are the only people who know how to live' [244]). Mrs K continues:

> I find that the lady was the heiress of a large estate in St. Domingo, that she spent her youth in France, where she received a polished education, and where she married her present companion, who was then in possession of rank and fortune, but whom the revolution has reduced to indigence. The insurrection in St. Domingo destroyed their property in that island. They escaped with difficulty to these shores in 1793, and have since subsisted in various modes and places, frequently pinched by extreme poverty, and sometimes obliged to solicit public charity; but retaining, in every fortune, and undiminished, their propensity to talk, laugh and sing - their flute and their guitar. (245)

The immediate political context is based upon the masses of French and white French Creoles immigrating to America, especially to Brown's Philadelphia in 1793. The couple also takes in a black girl orphaned by the yellow fever epidemic that same year (the subject for Brown's *Arthur Mervyn*). Mrs K's rehearsal of the couple details transatlantic traffic from France to St. Domingo and back again, and their final landing in the streets of Philadelphia, then the nation's capital. Rather than the poor 'huddled masses' popularised as the image of the emigrant, these emigrants, though poor, have a certain *joie de vivre* where community is enacted in their 'propensity to talk, laugh and sing'.[40] Mrs K surmises that, 'Instead of humiliation and contempt, adversity has probably given birth to sympathy and mutual respect' (245). The sort of sympathy enacted by the emigrant couple is one where it seems their transatlantic travel and combination of national identities has made them more flexible rather than divisive. It is key, too, that what keeps the family intact is their ability to flex with the transatlantic changes and to rehearse back to themselves stories and songs imbued with spatial memory. The editors note it is important that this is narrated by Mrs K, whom Brown notes 'never reads, not even a newspaper' (242):

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[39] 'Portrait of an Emigrant, Extracted from a Letter,' *The Monthly Magazine and American Review* 1:3 (June 1799), In *Ormond: or the Secret Witness with Related Texts*, Eds. Philip Barnard and Stephen Shapiro (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009) 240-245. 243.
[40] The words on the Statue of Liberty from Emma Lazarus' 1883 poem, 'The New Colossus.' http://xroads.virginia.edu/~cap/liberty/lazaruspoem.html

> that, while the undereducated might not know history and political debates, their familiarity with the world around them nevertheless makes them insightful commentators on the shifts in everyday social history […]. While the woman's tales of her urban neighborhood might seem trivial, the narrator suggests that, as an example of the opinions and attitudes of a newly urbanized population, her thinking ought to be viewed as a more important index to historical transformation and model for virtuous activity than the writings and legislation of political elites. (240-1)

By 'highlighting the narrator's newly acquired cosmopolitanism' as an urban dweller, the editors call attention to Mrs K's focus on the domestic scene as an indicator of 'historical transformation' (241). That is, the city becomes a space where the nations meet and it is the everyday events (which Mrs K narrates), which have a more widespread effect than political legislation. More broadly, Brown's turn from the gothic *Edgar Huntly* to his domestic epistolary novels (a form that was beginning to seem passé by the close of the eighteenth century – especially in Britain), may not in fact be an opting out of sustained commentary; in a similar manner to Clara's switch of registers from empirically rational to stylistic breakdown, and to the sentimental, Brown's generic switch moves the attention from Edgar-Huntly-like conflation with the emigrant figure (and accompanying madness) to the domestic scene as a way to foreground the growing urban cosmopolitanism of America, where the city becomes a place of transatlantic interaction. His use of older forms gestures to a reinvigoration of them, as they point to a transatlantic union between European, Caribbean and American characters and sentiments.

Peter Kafer argues that Brown's two domestic epistolary novels are 'Not burdened like their novelistic predecessors with personal demons' and therefore the characters 'are free to make the conventional, sentimental choices. And, unlike those predecessors, who tend in the end to flee to Europe, they make those choices, significantly, in America' (185). But this sort of statement neglects to interrogate the very transatlantic nature not only of Brown's earlier gothic fiction, but also how his domestic epistolary novels point towards a new version of society (that tends towards being Anglo-American) based both on equality, contractualism, and an appropriate sensibility. They are more than merely 'American' books. Indeed as Leonard Tennenhouse reminds us, 'if we understand the gothic and sentimentalism as two sides of one discursive coin, then we can say that the gothic supplies the emotion over which sentimentalism gains authority in a process of domestication […]' (Tennenhouse, *Importance*, 97). Seeing the gothic and sentimental modes as part of a larger project of how a person connects with others and forms the basis of a stable society (or its negative corollaries in the gothic), allows us to see Brown's epistolary output as part of the same project as his earlier fiction. Brown's reversal of Crèvecoeur's trajectory in his novelistic oeuvre seems to

present another way in which to think about the transatlantic gap of sympathy – moving instead from personal disintegration to community; if Brown's gothic fiction engages with the rupture of war with Britain and its afterlives on the edges of the frontier, then his epistolary fiction takes up the question of relation and how communities form – both within the American nation and in its transatlantic extensions. In both of Brown's domestic novels, travel is a space of transformation, so that the men come back to women and create new families. The basis for this travel is commercial, thus Brown seems to be (perhaps like Crèvecoeur in his Nantucket explorations which picture both local and sea-based global commercial interchange) advocating a cosmopolitanism inherent in American identity that has the potential to provide a larger touchstone of sociability than a family turned inward (like in *Wieland*) or on itself (*Edgar Huntly*). Tennenhouse also helpfully draws the connection between sentimentalism and cosmopolitanism: 'Sentimentalism can appear at times to resemble an earlier model of cosmopolitanism in that [...] it asks us to tolerate all manner of differences among those it designates as human' (120). Given the scope of this thesis, I cannot go into the discourse of cosmopolitanism; however, it is worthwhile to note that in both Brown's version of the domestic sentimental novel and in cosmopolitanism, that travel extends the sentimental community beyond the household, to the nation, and across the ocean[41]. There is a delicate balance to the travelling and extension of the self, however; as opposed to the Romantic universalising tendencies of Emerson to be everywhere in a 'transparent eyeball', Brown (especially in Clara's critique of the shape-shifting character of Carwin) seems to require a rootedness of the self within a wider context of transatlantic sympathy – a rootedness that American Romantic versions of the self do not.

The story of *Jane Talbot* involves Jane and Henry Colden, 'an atheist, rationalist, and apparent opponent of marriage' (Lawson-Peebles, *Landscape*, 253). Henry decides to travel, sailing to Japan and then to Hamburg, where he is converted. As in *Clara Howard*, the fear for those back home is that as the traveller moves outside of civilisation, this is movement outside the bounds of sympathy. The fear is that extensive travel is another way where the self may become unmoored like in *Edgar Huntly*. Jane acknowledges that Henry 'has gone where I cannot follow him; to the end of the world; where even a letter cannot find him'.[42]

[41] Some particularly relevant works of cosmopolitanism in literary and cultural studies are: Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, Trans. M. B. Debevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007); Eds. Carol A. Breckenridge, Sheldon Pollock, Homi K. Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Cosmopolitanism* (Durham: Duke UP, 2002); Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006).
[42] Letter LX, *Jane Talbot*, http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8404

Henry plays the part of the emigrant, but not like the Irish emigrants in *Edgar Huntly*, but on the shores of Japan. Henry describes himself as ‘a stranger, naked, forlorn, cast upon a sandy beach frequented but at rare intervals and by savage fishermen’ and that he ‘should find [his] way into the heart of this wonderful empire, and finally explore [his] way back to [his] native shore, are surely most strange and incredible achievements’ (Letter LXIX). Like the couple of Brown’s earlier ‘Portrait of an Emigrant’ Henry has followed commercial ventures, where he moves finally to Europe and intends to sail for India; but at his receipt of a letter from Jane ‘every foreign object vanished’ and the letter enacts virtual presence so that he sails instead for America. Here, the letter recalls Henry to himself. For both Henry and Jane it is not only the promise of pleasure based on mutual affection and sympathy which signals their eventual union at the end of the novel, but also their religious union which cements their happiness. This journey was both outward and inward as Henry writes:

> The incidents of a long voyage, the vicissitudes through which I have passed, have given strength to my frame, while the opportunities and occasions for wisdom which these have afforded me have made *my mind whole*. I have awakened from my dreams of doubt and misery, not to the cold and vague belief, but to the living and delightful consciousness, of every tie that can bind man to his Divine Parent and Judge. (Letter XIX)

Travel, rather than alienating Henry from his native land and love interest or plunging him into maze-like wilderness, brings him full circle back to America and changed. Travel here is a conversion experience – both in that it occasions religious conversion but also in its movement: which moves away from an originating point, subsequent transformation and finally, to a re-entry and return[43]. Brown’s novel then creates marital ties that require both the contraction and expansion of space to work well – where actual travel is necessary for growth and yet has a purpose beyond alienation, as its endpoint is ‘home’. This ‘home’ is founded in the sociable forms of religious community and family. Henry and Jane’s shared religious faith both confirms their union and also extends it beyond the two of them, to God and to a wider community of faith, that is unbounded by nationality or time.

In *Clara Howard*, the American Edward Hartley (renamed Philip Stanley in the British Minerva Press edition) has dreams of finding the Northwest Passage but the British Clara Howard responds with anxiety to his adventures through sublime landscape and worries about the evils that may befall him as he is apart from civilisation. The novel thus provides a transatlantic answer to the perils of the wilderness and the isolation of the solitary

[43] On the conversation narrative pattern, see: Peter Toon, *About Turn: The Decisive Event of Conversion* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1987).

individual that Brown displayed in *Edgar Huntly*. And, 'Clara's remarks are effective; [Edward] gets no further than Wilmington, Delaware' (Lawson-Peebles, 253). Because Edward does not 'light out for the territory' but instead learns self-regulation, the message the novel puts forth, according to Tennenhouse in *The Importance of Feeling English*, is that 'moral feeling and contractualism [are] two sides of the same coin of masculinity' (83). Neither prey to ultimate conflation where sympathy utterly fails as it does in *Edgar Huntly*, in *Clara Howard*, Hartley regulates his sentiments to properly enter into a union with the British Clara. Brown's 'creat[ion] [of] a feminine embodiment of British values free of the taint of British prejudices,' such as marrying for rank or fortune, means that the society formed is 'not only equal but [that everyone is also] *equally well cared for*' (Tennenhouse, 82, 83, emphasis added). The Anglo-American domestic partnership here is founded on sympathy where they are 'equally well cared for' – rather than on solitary or antagonistic relationships. If the sort of 'American' themes and wilderness isolation of *Edgar Huntly* ultimately means that sympathetic extension beyond the self travels into increasingly aberrant forms from 'despised Irish to detested savage' (Lawson-Peebles, *American Literature*, 153), Brown here provides a hopeful narrative based upon the best of British and American themes, where letters are returned and sociability is enacted. Brown's reversal of the narrative trajectory of *Letters from an American Farmer* then is about the hopefulness of transatlantic sympathy, where Britons and Americans intermarry, where travel opens up one to change, where letters are exchanged, and where sentiment is monitored to effectively mirror the sentiments in another. But it is not a facile hopefulness, believing (as in Letter 3) that emigrants can leave behind their pasts and melt into a new race of Americans. Having explored the terrors of sympathetic breakdown in his gothic novels, Brown's epistolary novels temper the experience of the Anglo-American household as the primary site where sympathy can be enacted. The family is too close a unit for Brown. In his epistolary fiction, before the family unit can be constructed characters travel outside of America and across the continent, and explore the capaciousness of personal sentiments within the letter form. All of Brown's novels – gothic and sentimental – interact with the individual in relation to wider relational social networks[44]. Brown's last two novels then focus on 'intersubjective dependencies of selves represented through the exchange of letters over time'[45] that resist

[44] Paul Witherington, 'Charles Brockden Brown's other novels: *Jane Talbot* and *Clara Howard*,' *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 29.2 (1973): 257-272. 259.
[45] Michelle.Burnham, 'Epistolarity, Anticipation and Revolution in *Clara Howard*,' *Revising Charles Brockden Brown: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality in the Early Republic* (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 2004): 260-280. 264.

‘the linearity and closure of both novelistic and nationalistic narrative’ (263). They are novels of connection that imagine, through the letter form, an American identity that is locally and socially rooted; but this connection finally also requires separation and travel (both actual and metaphoric) to make room for difference and eventual return, and that can cross the gap of sympathy.

Afterword

The final letter of Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* helpfully articulates the connection between place, emigration and genre in relation to the gap of sympathy. Therefore a short reading of the text will help to articulate where this thesis has come and gesture to further implications for reading the gap of sympathy in transatlantic literature.

In Letter 12, Farmer James feels unable to side with either the American revolutionaries or British Loyalists as the War for Independence reaches him. He plans to abandon his farm and join the Indians to the west, feeling both 'inclosed' by the frontier and lost amidst its expansiveness (187). Placement (here, on the frontier) indicates a particular psychic state, as it does throughout this thesis. For example, in the emigrants' documents examined in Chapters Two and Three, America must be detailed empirically in order to communicate some sense of its foreign qualities to an audience totally unfamiliar with it. In Rowson's works, the frontier becomes a space of cross-cultural transformation, while the characters' multiple spatial and generational crossings of the Atlantic Ocean evidences a relational complexity that promises to crop up even though the final pair settles down on the American eastern seaboard as 'true born Americans'. In Charles Brockden Brown's gothic works, the frontier moves from a space of transformation to a space in which the characters feel at home. Because they neglect to interrogate the alienating effects of the wilderness, they become psychically disoriented so much so that Edgar Huntly's descent into the wilderness signals the terror of the solitary self – set apart from any sympathetic community and from himself. Farmer James's feelings of enclosure also borrow a language of the landscape to indicate his mental state; he writes: 'Which ever way I look, nothing but the most frightful precipices present themselves to my view […]' (187). The sublime landscape as analogue for his mental disorientation moves into increasingly wider spheres of relation, so that instead of concerning himself with 'What is an American?' as he did in Letter 3, he instead ponders 'mankind': 'what is man when no longer connected to society: or when he finds himself surrounded by a convulsed and half-dissolved one?' (187) (Introduction, xxxvi).

As James moves outside the nation, from the confident, nationalist impulses of Letter 3, to wider spheres of relation, the question about how one maintains sociability across distance becomes more pressing. The sort of sociability that Hume comes back to in order to move him away from his existential crises in his *Treatise*, where '[he] dines, [he] play[s] a

game backgammon', is ultimately missing in James's final letter (316). The terror that Farmer James feels stems from his disconnection from previous forms of sociability, and is due to the rupture of war. Specifically, the problem of distance is critical for James; he writes,

> If I attach myself to the mother-country, which is 3000 miles from me, I become what is called an enemy to my own region; if I follow the rest of my countrymen I become opposed to our ancient masters: both extremes appear equally dangerous to a person of so little weight and consequence as I am. (191)

The frantic quality of the letter where '[he flies] from one erratic thought to another', stylistically mimics his growing sense of movement and unboundedness, concerning both the physical space he inhabits as well as the increasing concentric circles of relation of which he is a part (197). The ability to hold together the dual consciousness of an emigrant fractures, so that here, what predominates is a sense of being out-of-relation, where the gap of sympathy is left gaping. What is terrifying for James is that he cannot ultimately reconcile these spheres of relation given political rupture and his particular placement in the landscape. He thus enacts the existential reality that 'Really, universally, relations stop nowhere'.[1] The answer to this unboundedness of the self is to create boundaries, so that as Henry James recommends famously, one must: 'draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which [relations] shall happily appear to do so [i.e., to stop]' (James, vii). Farmer James attempts to recreate the bounds of society several times throughout this last letter, between Britain, America, the confines of his family and finally, he plans to do re-draw lines of familiarity to include an Indian tribe, perhaps a prelude to Cooper's Leatherstocking tales which integrate Indians into the Anglo-American family. The ever-increasing circles of relation of which James is a part, finally cannot be interrelated and 'James's imaginative attempt to understand himself in all his connections and relations results in a failure of intersubjectivity, a hypochondriac focus on his own state, and inevitably, madness' (Holbo, 54). James echoes Smith in the importance both place on sociability for identity, when James writes that 'mankind' 'cannot live in solitude, he must belong to some community' (187). Smith emphasised that a lawbreaker must return to a society, even one which condemns him, because 'the horror of solitude drives him back into society' (*Theory*, 84). Here it is not Farmer James who has transgressed social laws, as is the case in *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. But the rupture of war requires James to choose a side, where prior to the War, he did not

[1] Henry James, 'Preface,' *Roderick Hudson*, In *The Novels and Tales of Henry James*, *vol. 1* (New York: Scribner's, 1907-1917), vii.

need to make the distinction between loyalty to 'the mother-country, which is 3000 miles' away and being an American (191). The impending War for Independence introduces increasing fracture between Britain and her colonies and thus requires, not a discarding of relationship, but a renegotiation of sympathy based upon acknowledged separation.

However, the problem of the gap of sympathy is not limited to being an American. In Letter 9, for James it was the fact of slavery that meant he lost faith in both the benevolence and humane treatment of mankind and consequently, appears to lose faith in a good God. Here in the final letter, James continues: 'Why has the Master of the world permitted so much indiscriminate evil throughout every part of his poor planet, at all times, and among all kinds of people?' (197). The pervasiveness of evil makes whichever nation or 'side' James chooses inconsequential – all are equally party to it. This pervasiveness means that James no longer can categorise or order his spheres of relation according to nation or standards of morality, and thus causes James (something we also see in Brown) to question how or if sympathetic connection outside the self is even possible. The gap of sympathy becomes unbridgeable, as circles of relation also break apart. The collapse of sympathy and the inability for the gap to be bridged through likeness or benevolence finds expression in literary forms of breakdown. Farmer James thus writes, 'Thus impiously I roam, I fly from one erratic thought to another' (197). Sympathetic connection in space is based not only upon physical placement but also worked out in generic and stylistic placement. For, as we've seen throughout this thesis, dislocation in space, signals ideological dislocation and has an attending style. According to Holbo, 'one must […] read the *Letters* as both as immediate and intensely personal communications *and* as public documents' (38, emphasis added). The loss of society or social disintegration produces the proto-gothic and frantic style of this final letter. As the self becomes unhinged so does James's narrative.

Style articulates the breakdown of the gap of sympathy so that, for example, 'James's psychological instability, a product of social and political instability, manifests itself in the peculiar narrative style of the *Letters*' (Holbo, 35). Like the whole of *Letters from an American Farmer* (and this final letter in particular), this thesis has argued that the pressures of placement and emigration have a literary expression. The gap of sympathy, whether the space between is small or large, is articulated in a continuum that moves from documentary empiricism, to the sentimental, and finally to the gothic mode. This stylistic trajectory illustrates how sympathy between America and Britain moved from rhetoric of seamless traversal from one to another, to a relationship that must incorporate and acknowledge distance and alienation as a part of sympathy. This stylistic movement mirrors the political

reality between Britain and America, moving from hierarchical incorporation to political independence and finally must acknowledge separation and difference to re-negotiate relationship as peers (akin to the marriages of equality we see in Brown's later sentimental fiction). After the gap of sympathy is left unbridgeable, it either must be re-negotiated in new terms or, must be discarded for another sphere of relation.

The answer for Farmer James to the alienating effects of war, to the moral looseness where human dignity is ignored, and an absent God, is to create a virtual sympathetic community. This community is unbounded by national ties and as Tennenhouse argues as a form of sentimental community, it is an 'infinitely expandable community of individuals who understand themselves as similarly human' (*Importance*, 119). James seeks after sympathy, but rather than a 'distant spectator' who provides no relief from the pain of rupture, he turns to the 'sphere of letters' for sympathy (Holbo, 57). The letter form for James finally creates a hopeful sympathy, that though physically distant, is based upon 'ties of affection and old acquaintance' (*Letters* 217). James moves beyond his self-obsession to address the recipient of his letters in a language of sentimental feeling: 'the unreserved manner in which I have written must give you a convincing proof of that friendship and esteem, of which I am sure you never doubted' (216-7).[2] James and the recipient to this letter are also 'mutually bound by the ties of affection and old acquaintance' and the recipient is a co-mourner 'with [James] over that load of physical and moral evil with which we are all oppressed' (217). Contemplating 'all that hath befallen our native country,' James writes that his own fears begin to wane in comparison, as an imagined sympathy with a caring reader moves him beyond his own self-focus and madness in the letter's final paragraph (217). James's specific correspondence then helps to reinstate boundaries of his self and re-define the boundaries of community. Sympathy within a community of letters moves the sympathetic community from one defined by political borders or even the bounds of the household to one that is both based upon sympathetic fellow feeling and which takes place within a written epistolary discourse.

This final shift towards community in the final paragraph of Letter 12 applies to this thesis. We have seen the alienating effects of emigration and the importance of placement on literary expression alternately through the documentary, empirical, sentimental, and gothic modes. This trajectory gives literary form to the gap of sympathy – to the specific problem concerning how America and Britain may relate to one another as America moved towards

[2] Given James writes '*our* native country', referencing America, it is unlikely that this recipient is Mr. F. B.

independence, a relationship that needed re-negotiation into the nineteenth century. But the gap of sympathy, as it widens, also asks more general questions about how humans can profitably interact and know one another. When boundaries are loosened or dissolved (whether these are personal, national, religious, or philosophical) the self must continue to find relationship within social categories, by finding another social network or re-drawing the boundaries of the community. The gap of sympathy has moved from expression in confident, documentary forms to expression in forms of self-focused gothic terror; the final turn towards sociability marks an inevitability concerning our need for others. But even so, the gap of sympathy always exists, even as the boundary of the self in relation to others shifts. The emigrant writer in Chapter Two did not personally lose anything if an anonymous Briton chose not to emigrate, given the relational distance between writer and unknown reader. As the familiarity increases – take for instance the Kerr family correspondence or the families explored in Rowson and Brown – the pain of sympathetic rupture as the gap of sympathy increases is more likely to destabilise the individual.

The response to this destabilisation takes many forms: it may be like Farmer James to move westward, to 'light out for the territory', a pattern we see most obviously in Twain's Huck Finn, but is anticipated by both Thoreau's project at Walden and Emerson's articulation of personal expansiveness in *Nature* – both works which move the self from conventional boundaries (through expansion and/or retreat).[3] This westward retreat can of course be seen as heralding progress; perhaps most famously, Cooper's Leatherstocking in *The Pioneers* is described as a forerunner of progress: 'Leatherstocking, whose rapid movements preceded the pursuit which Judge Temple both ordered and conducted. He had gone far towards the setting sun—the foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent'[4]. But this march of progress westward also continually foregrounds race; where the nearly unproblematic nature of Indian-white relations in *Reuben and Rachel* seemed to provide a sympathetic rendering of racial relations in America, by the 1826 publication of Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, the desire for interracial union (between Cora [who is both a white and black figure] and Uncas [an Indian]) is impossible as both Cora and Uncas are killed. The idea of an interracial family as one way in which to picture sympathy, then, becomes increasingly complicated for later eighteenth century writers.

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[3] Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (New York: Harper, 1884) 375. See Stephen Fender's *Sea Changes* as he charts this reaction in American literature.
[4] James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pioneers* (Chicago: Signet, 1964) 435-6.

Of course, the westward movement is only one reaction to destabilisation; many characters in later American fiction, like those in *Lucy Temple* and Clara in *Wieland*, is to move eastward back to Europe. This sort of 'return' that we see for instance in some of Washington Irving's tales in his *Sketchbook*, and later in Melville's *Israel Potter* (though it's not voluntary here), Hawthorne's *Marble Faun*, and even in the lives of several nineteenth century American authors (Cooper, Irving, Twain, Hawthorne, James), is to often attempt to analyse one's origins from the perspective of one's Americanness, having become increasingly distinct from an earlier sense of Britishness that we get in the emigrant chapters in this thesis. Additionally, there were travel narratives popular from a British perspective: Tocqueville's is one example, while Fanny Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832) and Charles Dicken's *American Notes* (1842) were popular vituperative attacks on what was perceived as the culturally backwoods nature of America. Later American authors in returning to Europe, then, respond to the break in sympathy such works like Trollope's perpetuates – to attempt to turn on its head Sydney Smith's famous attack, 'Who reads an American book?'[5]

Another response to destabilisation may be to suppress the gap of sympathy into a sentimental narrative that often privileges community over its destabilising undercurrents (what we get in the ending of *Reuben and Rachel*). Or, as it acknowledges difference and separation, rather than a gothic inward turn, may exult in the boundlessness of the self, as we see in Emerson's 'I am nothing, I see all'.[6] Or, it may, like Brown, take up gothic forms and continue to uneasily interrogate the gap of sympathy as it is stretched across the Atlantic – for example, the sort of complex national two-footedness that we see in Hawthorne's *Marble Faun* (1860) (writing on the verge of national fracture in the Civil War) where 'between two countries, we have none at all, or only that little space of either'.[7] Reading the gap of sympathy in British and American literature not only is a form of literary criticism that reads works transatlantically (privileging networks of relation over nationalist constructs), but also gives spatial and philosophical form to sociability and its literary expression. The gap of sympathy is always with us. Like the narrator in Hawthorne's *Marble Faun*, we must 'insert our own conjectural amendments' to the gap of sympathy through the vehicle of the imagination. For '[…] unless we attempt something in this way, there must remain an

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[5] Sydney Smith, Rev. of Statistical Annals of the United States, by Adam Seybert. *The Edinburgh Review* 33 (1820): 69-80.
[6] Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Nature 1836,' *Nature and Selected Essays*, Ed. Larzer Ziff (New York: Penguin, 2003) 39.
[7] Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002) 358.

unsightly gap […]' (*Marble Faun*, 72). Works which wrestle with the 'unsightly gap' of sympathy, feeling the uneasy pull of distance upon fellow-feeling, produces literature that is both complex in its transatlantic crossings and (like the subtitles of both Brown's and Hawthorne's novels) evidences generic and sympathetic *transformation*.

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