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Seriality, Context, and Format
Early American Literature and the Periodical

By
Catherine Becker

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submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Dedication

I dedicate this project to my family: to Ryne, Alex, and Kendall Becker, Jim and Sondra Becker, and Steve and Michelle Kuykendall. Thank you for your unconditional love and support.

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Seriality, Context, and Format

Early American Literature and the Periodical

Dissertation Abstract—Idaho State University (2020)

The periodical was one of the most prominent print forms in the American early national period (1776-1820). Even though some of the era's most famous works were initially published in periodicals, their original formats are rarely considered. This project addresses the problem by tracing four early American texts to their periodical origins to demonstrate how their settings inherently shaped them. In each case, the works were originally published in periodicals and later reproduced in different formats. The first chapter shows how Judith Sargent Murray's narrative, *Story of Margaretta*, never existed outside its embedding within "The Gleaner" column before 1995, when it was re-packaged as a novella. Placing the work back in its original column context exemplifies narrative structures that inextricably link the column and narrative. The second chapter reframes "Edgar Huntly, within its publication in the *Monthly Magazine and American Review*, and exemplifies how paratexts shape a reader's engagement with the fragment. Chapter three traces Isaac Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa* to its original serial format and reveals how the sprawling narrative was a product of its seriality. In chapter four, Washington and William Irving and James Paulding's *Salmagundi* is examined as a multivocal satirical metacommentary rather than a homogenous text. In each of these four cases, the periodical format shapes the structure and order of the text, and tracing the texts back to their origins reveals how deeply their publication realities shaped them. The final chapter of the study takes up the difficulties with teaching periodicals and provides means by which they can be included in course syllabi.

Key Words: embedded narrative, paratexts, seriality, periodical studies, teaching periodicals

Introduction: Reconsidering the Boundaries of Early American Literature

The phrase “early American literature” elicits many ideas in the minds of readers. Most likely, what is recognized as early American literature is a limited grouping of texts that are unrepresentative of the rich diversity and prolific growth of American literature before the nineteenth century. Early American literature as it is generally understood begins with the Spanish colonialists, touches on the Puritans and revolutionaries, includes the glimmers of genius in Phillis Wheatley or Charles Brockden Brown, and finally lands on the literary giants like James Fenimore Cooper, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, and others. However, our haste to get to the literary “greats” often excludes formative works that had considerable impact on the development of American literature. The provocative question that drives this project is, “why?” Why, when literary output before Cooper in the 1820s, was vast, engaging, and formative, do we focus so intently on these exclusive boundaries? Many theories have been formulated to explain the marginalization of early American literature before the 1820s. Winifred Fluck’s “infancy thesis” argues the early American novel, or rather proto-novel, was incubated in the late eighteenth century before emerging fully formed in the nineteenth. Ed White and Michael Drexler argue that an overemphasis on historicism led to the uneven and incomplete canonization of early American works, and William Spengemann critiques the preference for the colonial, white, and Anglocentric. Others argue that the canon as it exists was built by New Critical methods that venerate what can be deemed “artistic,” otherwise defined as texts written by a single, genius author, and which elicit some sort of shared aesthetic experience. These arguments are helpful, but still, the issue begs the question: what do we do with texts written before 1820 that do not fit in the canonical standards? In this introductory material, I examine the

existing scholarship in the field of early American literature, posit answers to these questions, and provide an overview of the ensuing study.

In 1986, Cathy Davidson was the first to make an extensive argument on how to treat and read early American texts, novels particularly, in her groundbreaking *Revolution and the Word*. In the monograph, Davidson employs a variety of critical approaches to argue the incoherencies and perceived failures of the early American novel were “evidence of ideological conflict, whether it be over the relationship between capitalism and democracy, the status of women, or the rights of the working classes” (Pethers et al. 782). In subsequent decades, scholars have been building on Davidson’s foundational arguments with expanded critical approaches, but *Revolution and the Word* set the tone. Most early American texts continue to be mined for their dealings with ideological, post-revolutionary social issues. In a roundtable reflection on *Revolution and the Word* on the thirtieth anniversary of its publication, Siân Silvan Roberts and others attest that one of the reasons Davidson’s work has endured is its “jaw-dropping archival scope” that uncovered numerous works. While this is true, only a few novels discussed by Davidson have become ubiquitous in conversations of early American literature (Pethers et al. 814). Duncan Faherty refers to these as the triumvirate of three books: Susanna Rowson’s *Charlotte Temple* (1784), Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland* (1798), and Hannah Webster Foster’s *The Coquette* (1797), which became the “backbone of the early American canon” (Pethers et al. 784). What is often not discussed is that these three works were *book novels*, or bound works by single, named authors. These traits were unusual in early American literature. The term “novel” was fluid, and novels appeared in the familiar bound book format, but more often were serialized in periodicals. However, for all Davidson’s heroic recovery work, *Revolution and the Word* did not inspire similar archival research or observe the inherent link

between periodicals and early American fiction. Instead, its enduring legacy is the framework it provides for conducting ideological readings of texts and practices for examining book history.

The marginalizing of fiction in other formats is due in no small part to our overemphasis on the book novel's role in early American literature. Arguably, Davidson's extensive work provides a history of the book novel rather than a history of the novel itself in the early republic and does not differentiate between book novels, novels in other formats, and what Karen Weyler refers to as "early American fictions" (Pethers et al. 806). In recent years, however, scholars have begun to shift their focus from the book novel as the most valued product of the early national period that spanned the years between 1776 and 1820. Matthew Pethers, for instance, argues early American scholars too often approach novels in a "rigidly consistent fashion." He continues by suggesting that reading conventions that developed in the romantic era have become so dominant that

even as the rise of book history has sensitised literary scholars to the material contingencies of any text's publication, circulation, and reception, the centrality of the 'book' to this discipline has led to a continued privileging of the novel in its bound form. This often unconscious partiality is to some extent the legacy of a Romantic predilection for wholeness and unity. (63)

The result of this pervasive privileging of the novel as a "bound book" is a limited scholarly ability to fully appreciate the literary offerings of the early national period. Karen Weyler makes a similar argument when she refers to the fetishization of the book at the expense of more popular and meaningful forms at the time, the newspaper and magazine (164). What results from this type of fetishizing is a stunted understanding or, worse, deliberate refusal to examine early American periodicals as a fertile landscape in the development of American literary forms.

Other scholars have challenged entrenched ideas of “literature” by recognizing established definitions are based on several assumptions. William Spengemann recognizes that both the words “American” and “literature” are undefined terms and have more accurately come to mean those “few works of fiction, poetry, and drama which have been written in any place that is now the United States or by anyone who has ever lived in one of these places and which now rank among the acknowledged masterpieces of Western writing” (123). The unfortunate reality of this definition is that it excludes genres, formats, and people groups whose work had a significant influence on the social, cultural, and political makeup of America. It also reinforces exclusive canonical standards. This definition also explains why certain texts are studied in early American literature while others are overlooked. Ed White and Michael Drexler expand on this idea when they refer to the way in which the American literary canon developed by suggesting it was “specifically a weak, late, and partial canonization, resulting in a counter-canonical impulse that diminishes our theorization of textuality” (481). The canon, shaped by the dominant historical events and issues of the republican era, thus includes only the works that most resemble “the American character” or that display recognizable aesthetic principles.

But, as scholars have noted since the 1980s and 90s, the American literary landscape was unfolding long before the mid-nineteenth century in which Irving, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, and others would emerge as the earliest literary “greats” of our nation. These observations elicit the question mentioned above. What do we do about eighteenth-century texts? According to White and Drexler, this is where early Americanists’ reliance on history becomes problematic. It has taught us to default to ideological analysis, which White and Drexler refer to as Foucauldian modes that focus on refining and complicating accounts of republicanism (482). These tendencies cause us to mine early national texts for their ideologies and present readings that

demonstrate a text's relationship with the anxieties of the culture. While historical readings help place eighteenth-century texts within their cultural contexts, they also lead to the exclusion of many texts, even those by authors whose works have become canonical. For instance, Judith Sargent Murray's essays have become widely read and are continually reproduced in modern anthologies because they represent republican womanhood, but her "Gleaner" series was essentially forgotten. Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* became wildly popular as the quintessential American sentimental novel, but her *Sincerity* is not yet canonized. White and Drexler account for this as our resistance to considering the status of "theory" in early American criticism (481). In this project, as White and Drexler and others suggest, I argue that by reconsidering our assumptions of early American literature, we can discover why certain texts are canonized while others are excluded. I also provide means to contend with otherwise marginalized, difficult, or forgotten works.

The Periodical and Mass Culture

One of the shortcomings of early American literature as a field is that traditionally it has undervalued the role of the periodical. Several scholars have begun to shift this paradigm. For instance, Jared Gardner asserts the magazine and novel "rose together in eighteenth-century America," and argues that instead of comparing the two, we should consider their separate contributions (*The Rise and Fall* 3). While the novel eventually rose to preeminence, in the eighteenth-century, the magazine was the dominant means by which literary content was circulated. Several scholars have established the prominence of periodicals. However, magazines are often pushed to the literary margins due to their cacophonous, anonymous, and miscellaneous natures, none of which fit the traditional concept of "art." Because they are disconcerting, periodicals have become a sort of secondary support for the more privileged book. As Gardner

puts it, for many years, he, like most scholars, fell victim to a privileging of the novel because the traditional literary arguments more easily applied to the novel than to the magazine. Unlike the novel, “the magazine by contrast offers few clear or consistent arguments, plots, or conventions” (Gardner, *The Rise and Fall* 4). He continues by suggesting that even when we do look to periodicals, we do so with an eye for familiar novelistic elements. For instance, scholars have turned to serialized novels, published one installment at a time in periodicals, as one of the primary ways in which the magazine impacted eighteenth-century American literary culture. However, when making such arguments, scholars often examine the magazine novel by removing it and repackaging it as a whole, collected unit, or essentially, as a book. As a result, when we look to periodicals, we continue to mine them for the structures we find familiar, a practice Patricia Okker describes as no different than treating periodicals as books (2).

Another scholarly trend is to focus on the role of print culture in nation-building. For decades scholars have challenged the narrative that accompanies the early national period—it was an intense period of nation-building or a “republic of letters” built on a network of intellectual, political, and social ideas disseminated through print media such as letters, newspapers, and magazines. Trish Loughran argues against this idea when she claims there “was no ‘nationalized’ print public sphere” (xix). Instead, a history of material objects demonstrates the reality was “one in which fragmented pieces of texts circulated haphazardly and unevenly in a world still largely dominated by the limits of locale” (xix). Loughran continues by arguing that the republic was a series of fragmented, partial locales that shaped the nation more by disintegration than integration and consolidation. Meredith McGill similarly argues that the eighteenth and nineteenth-century literary marketplace was marked by regionality. She also notes that American print culture was reliant on reprinting. Instead of the traditional cultural narrative,

McGill's interest lies in "recovering the vibrancy and importance of the literature that thrived under conditions of decentralized mass-production," as well as "the legal arguments and political struggles that produced the culture of reprinting" (3). Matthew Garrett focuses on the episode as a significant literary unit in early national culture, arguing that early national literature was shaped by the episodic rather than the cohesive (2). The common thread that runs through all three studies is a theme of fragmentation or disunity. By these arguments, the unit and the locale or region were more meaningful in shaping the early national culture than was the cohesive and centralizing. The strength of these arguments is they take into account the material contingencies of periodical publication in the early national period. However, Graham Thompson points out their weakness when he argues these considerations of materiality are not enough to fully depict how deeply the process of writing and printing consolidated publication processes for both books and periodicals. Thompson instead focuses on the periodical production process and how it shaped the form, content, distribution, and economy of publication in America. In doing so, he finds that the book form that was nascent in the eighteenth century expanded and thrived in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because of the mass production of the periodical (3). While he recognizes, like Gardner, that the book and periodical "rose" to prominence simultaneously, Thompson suggests the periodical did not disappear in the early nineteenth century when the book became an established form, a fact often overlooked.

Instead, magazine publication continued in the nineteenth century, and by no inconsequential measure. As Thompson found, the vast production process for the magazine made book publication look paltry in comparison (8). Creating daily, weekly, and monthly print publications is a massive undertaking, and the temporality of production required a consumption cycle, in which editors "often planned and allocated material several weeks or months in advance

and simultaneously worked on different issues” (Thompson 8). The work of magazine production was constant. Authors were contracted, articles procured, and elements arranged in near-constant polyrhythms. Whereas Thompson speaks primarily of nineteenth-century periodicals, his argument demonstrates that American publication energies from the time of the periodical’s nascence in the eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth century were given to periodicals over books, in part because the production of the periodical was considerably more intensive. Books may have been the more prominent and noteworthy endeavor, but according to Thompson, it was the magazine that dominated. Thompson suggests this is because the magazine followed a different trajectory than the book.

What if the magazine triumphed over the novel—not because its literary qualities were superior, nor because it was more valued, but because its serial format provided the material underpinning that allowed many other forms and institutions, including the novel, to flourish? (13)

If this is the case, Thompson’s argument necessitates scholars of eighteenth-century American literature expand beyond the book and consider the periodical as something distinctly different. Gardner advocates for this when he questions if the book needs to be diminished in scholarly endeavors to demonstrate the cultural value of the periodical.

Another of the reasons periodicals have been long overlooked in American literature is the tensions between what is considered art and what is considered mass culture. If, as Thompson argues, the magazine is a symptom and cause of mass culture, it is logical to conclude that the book represents the higher art form (2). The magazine, with its tendency toward anonymity and miscellany, does not support our predilection for the genius artist. As Pierre Bourdieu observes, though, there are a host of assumptions tied to determining the aesthetic

value of art, the most important of which is a determined field of critics deeming a work valuable, and its related aesthetic experience universal (202). When the field comes to accord on a work, movement, form, or technique, it becomes “art.” However, as Bourdieu argues, the process of assigning aesthetic value, or “artistic consecration” is always anachronistic since accord happens post-production. For this reason, the aesthetic value never represents the social or cultural conditions in which something is created (205). In the case of early American literature, Bourdieu’s argument explains why the book is more often designated “art,” and the periodical less often receives the same designation. The field determined the value of the form after its production.

Umberto Eco observes the common argument that the productions of mass culture are considered pleasurable, but non-artistic, a product of industry, reliant on seriality, and alien to art (84). However, Eco notes the fault in this argument lies in the fact that seriality necessitates repetition, and every artistic movement is dominated by the repetition of forms, features, and types (85). By Eco’s observation, every artistic movement is repetitive, and the idea of the “transcendent genius” is faulty. Eco and Bourdieu’s arguments expose two issues of early American literary scholarship. First, that the odd, uneven canon was established through anachronism, and second, the term “literature” too often means only a select few works that have been deemed higher forms of art. The scrutiny placed on the periodical as one of the nascent manifestations of literary production is due to its being a product of mass culture. That the periodical represented an experimental space in which literary culture thrived, popular forms were developed, and significant authors contributed matters little because the periodical is not and was not an esteemed medium.

Also complicating the field is the issue of availability. As Brigitte Fielder notes, texts must be brought to prominence in the eyes of scholars and remain there long enough for a work to be added to the canon (19). Because of the ephemeral nature of early national periodicals, texts were quickly forgotten and fell out of circulation. Ephemerality is problematic because, as Joan Brown notes, dissemination is a basic necessity of canonization. If a work cannot be widely accessed, it cannot be canonized (540). Fielder builds on this idea when she argues that textual recovery is only valuable if it is conducted by scholars who have the expertise to interpret the recovered texts (19). Such is the goal of this project. Using an interdisciplinary approach, I outline four recovered texts, Judith Sargent Murray's "The Gleaner," Charles Brockden Brown's "Edgar Huntly, A Fragment," Isaac Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa*, and Washington and William Irving and James Paulding's *Salmagundi; or, the Whim - Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq., and Others*, all of which had their beginnings in early national periodicals, and all of which have historically proven difficult texts with which to contend. This project concludes with a pressing requisite for all periodical scholars: bringing periodical texts into the classroom.

Paradoxically, either the works contained in this project or their authors fall squarely in canonical conversations. Judith Sargent Murray's periodical essays are some of the earliest American arguments for female equality. Her 1784 "Desultory Thoughts Upon the Utility of Encouraging a Degree of Self-Complacency, Especially in Female Bosoms" and 1790 "On the Equality of the Sexes" are particularly popular in early American literature anthologies and literary-historical scholarship. However, that both were published within the context of magazines and existed in literal conversation with other dominant narratives of the era is oddly left out of most discussions. *The Story of Margaretta* has been touted as Murray's only novel, but

that it was embedded within the pages of “The Gleaner,” a regularly occurring column in *The Massachusetts Magazine*, is not often mentioned. Charles Brockden Brown has been famed as the first American novelist of note, and his *Edgar Huntly* has been the focus of various studies. Rarely mentioned is the fact that an excerpt from *Edgar Huntly* was first published as a narrative fragment in his short-lived *Monthly Magazine and American Review*. *Alonzo and Melissa*, serialized initially by Isaac Mitchell in his Poughkeepsie-based *Political Barometer* was pirated and published for nearly a century as Daniel Jackson’s work. Recent scholarship has uncovered Mitchell as the original author but has focused on an expanded book version of *Alonzo and Melissa* titled *The Asylum*. Washington Irving is considered by most as the father of the American short story. Still, long before his *Sketch Book* was published, Irving, his brother, and a friend published a satirical magazine that made light of New York culture and the periodical form. In each of these instances, the works fall victim to what White and Drexler refer to as weak theoretical models for examining early American texts resulting in lost works by otherwise canonical authors (487). I would go a step further and suggest that our recovery practices exacerbate the issues outlined by Drexler and White. We do have weak theoretical methods, but we also have to rely on our recovery practices to develop better ones, something for which many early Americanists are not well equipped.

Recovery and Interpretation

While several recovery efforts on book novels, serial novels, fragments, short stories, poems, essays, and other genres and formats have been conducted, few investigate how the periodical production practices influenced the form. Instead, book novels and serial novels are “recovered” in a remarkably similar fashion. For instance, in *Just Teach One*, one of the more prominent open-access early American literature recovery projects, early national texts are

transcribed for classroom and scholarly purposes (Faherty and White). Faherty and White have transcribed and published several texts, both serial and not, on *Just Teach One*'s website, but most are transcribed uniformly. As an example, *The Factory Girl*, a book published in 1814 in Boston and written by Sarah Savage, is reproduced as one document with demarcating chapter breaks. Otherwise, it looks the same as the serial *Amelia, or the Faithless Briton*, which is stripped of its installment breaks and published as a single, continuous document. While *Amelia* was repeatedly reprinted, sometimes in continuous form as it is seen in *Just Teach One*, it was initially a serial text anonymously published in two installments in *The Columbian Magazine*. In the *Just Teach One* project, *Amelia*'s periodical context is entirely removed, and scholars and students interested in the novel must return to the pages of the magazine to understand how deeply serial and periodical structures shape *Amelia*.

This example of *Amelia* demonstrates one of the problems with the current study of early national literature with which the field of early American periodical studies has long grappled—that our understanding of texts is inherently shaped by how we recover them. This is important because, as White and Drexler note, “it is surprisingly rare to find an early Americanist who has not, in her or his scholarship, introduced a new text or prepared a new edition of some sort” (486). Recuperative imperatives as White and Drexler define them, are problematic for early Americanists generally, and are even more so for early American periodical scholars because the field lacks what Robert Scholes and Sean Latham refer to as a “stable set of core objects,” which is “one of the key elements for the creation of periodical studies” (519). Because the formation of early American literary canon was late and remains incomplete, periodical scholars are still in the throes of identifying a set of stable objects that serves as a basis from which the field can grow.

Another contention for early American periodical scholars is how texts are disseminated once they have been recovered. Margaret Beetham addresses this issue by looking at the material objects on which scholars conduct their research. “The physical objects with which we have to deal are likely to be the bound volumes on the library shelves or microfilm versions of them” (97). Beetham was writing in 1989, and while technological advancements since that time have led to digitized copies of entire magazines, many scholars suggest we cannot rely on the digital databases to serve as a surrogate for the physical periodical. This is because the searchable database requires first that readers know what they’re looking for and creates the assumption that all discrete units in the periodical are the same (Cordell et al. 4). On the contrary, the searchable database fundamentally changes the reading experience of the periodical, which is built on “skimming” or interchangeably reading quickly and closely.

In an examination of “recovery” as a metaphor that shapes our approach to American periodicals, Brigitte Fielder defines the term as the seeking out of previously unknown texts to make them more widely available. She also reminds us that periodicals are a rich resource for recovery projects. She states: “recovery involves broader methodologies for archival research” (18). However, she also notes that recovery projects cannot be conducted merely for the sake of identifying lost texts. Instead, “recovered” texts must be admitted to a larger textual body. For Fielder, the goal of recovery is to identify a previously lost text, interpret the text, and then have it established as part of the literary canon. She states recovery efforts are particularly crucial for historically marginalized groups because recovery allows us to break out of the white, male, Anglocentric norms that have defined early American studies for generations (Fielder 18). In an example of this, recovery efforts to date have helped with canonical expansion efforts, the most successful of which has been sentimental literature for, about, and by female authors. Before

Davidson's Early American Women's Writers series reproduction of *Charlotte Temple*, scholarly knowledge of sentimental literature was minimal (xvii). Through her archival efforts, Davidson essentially resurrected *Charlotte Temple*, which had fallen into obscurity despite being one of the most popular books of its era. In another example of recuperative effort, Sharon Harris conducted a periodical recovery project for Judith Sargent Murray's works, with particular focus on her essays. Because of the efforts of scholars like Harris and Davidson, Murray's essays have become squarely canonic, and both they and *Charlotte Temple* are included in several early American anthologies and on course syllabi. Other recovery projects have occurred or are continuously occurring, but as Fielder notes:

The processes of textual recovery are often not hunts for missing treasure, but research practices that must reimagine criteria for textual valuation as preconditions for recovery work ... The archival and editorial work of recovery demands that the center of power in a field shift its attention to archives, authors, genres, formats, locations, and media that previous powers-that-be have deemed it acceptable to ignore. (Fielder 19)

In other words, textual recovery is not simply about reproducing and disseminating previously forgotten works. Rather, it requires a re-calibration of the criteria by which works were first evaluated.

In another examination of early American canonization, White and Drexler observe that "early American scholarship simply does not look 'literary' to other scholars" because it relies so heavily on primary works, the secondary scholarship is sparse, and recovery is part of the process (482). Because of this, early American scholarship often has a mixed relationship with theory. White and Drexler note this as odd, mainly since there are interesting continuities with schools of thought like Postcolonial studies and New Historicism (489). The lack of theory is

particularly apparent in periodical studies, which, as Margaret Beetham notes, is less accommodating to traditional literary taxonomies (98). And yet, as Jeffrey Markovitz notes, theory can help with the interpretation of both early American texts generally and periodical texts specifically. He argues literary theory can underscore important aspects of texts such as minority voices, gender, patriarchal authority, and other issues that are readily evident in early American literature (65). If this is the case, I would argue that early American periodical studies necessitate twofold processes, first, textual recovery. This recovery should trace a text's provenance across formats, media, and editions. As I will demonstrate throughout this project, doing so exemplifies how a text is part of its culture and period, and how not doing so can be detrimental to appropriately and accurately examining a text's place in literary history. This includes a practice of reading texts within the periodical and discontinuing the method of removing texts from their original contexts. Secondly, I argue that a means to read and interpret the text adequately must be provided. These twofold claims outline the goal of this entire project, to "recover" textual origins, and to provide a means to interpret periodical texts.

Research Methods

William Spengemann's pointed deconstruction of traditional assumptions in the field of American literature reminds us to be open-minded about texts. He argues, "American literature" is more than a narrow set of specific texts that adhere to specific aesthetic features. Instead, he contends when "the phrase 'American literature' is stripped of qualifications, the word 'American' signifies everything having to do with civilization in the New World since the European discovery, and 'literature' includes every written document that will respond to literary analysis" (Spengemann 135). If we adopt Spengemann's definition, every aspect of the early American periodical can be considered "American literature," because as I demonstrate,

periodical texts readily respond to literary analysis and the application of literary theories. In fact, as James Mussell notes, one of the reasons periodical studies is so intriguing is because it is somehow lesser without theory (343). The majority of theoretical methods I use to conduct literary analysis in this study are formal. This is because the most robust critical methods for interpreting periodicals have been developed within the field of Victorian British and Modern British periodical studies. In periodical studies, scholars have argued the temporal and material exigencies of the periodical format have significant bearing on the meaning, formation, and reception of periodical texts. For example, Linda Hughes and Michael Lund outline the formal constraints of the periodical, noting methods by which authors keep their readers' attention by using narrative devices (13). They also note differences in character development, adaptations to cultural events, meandering plots, and fragmentation are due to the need for installments to be both self-contained and forward-looking. Because periodical texts are shaped by context, temporality, and materiality, I investigate these elements in the four chosen works. Doing so will clarify the works because, as Mussell notes, periodicals are fundamentally serial, reliant on the larger serial structure that is "invoked through the repetition of certain formal features, issue after issue" (347).

Modern and Victorian texts may not perfectly parallel early American periodicals; on the contrary, several arguments suggest that American literature is unique. I argue, though, that the application of periodical studies concepts can demonstrate important, otherwise overlooked aspects of seriality that shape early American serial texts. Also, American periodical studies, especially those developed for the early national period, are still grappling with issues of canon and hegemony. For this reason, I find British periodical studies illuminating in terms of how these American periodicals function as elements of a developing literary tradition, rather than

using the more prevalent Foucauldian modes of ideological analysis (White and Drexler 481). The primacy of formal analysis to periodical studies demonstrates the control of the format over the form of the text. The tendency to repackage serials and other periodical texts presses further the problem of equating serial texts with our modern understanding of the aesthetically pleasing book novel, written by a single genius author. Instead, what this study shows is that the serial text cannot be equated with the book novel. The more the attempt is made to make them equivalent, the more we risk misreading or positioning the text as something it is not, a book. I contend that when series are placed in their serial contexts, we can find more fruitful means to read them, both historically and as works of literature.

However, there are some barriers to tracing texts to their periodical origins. When recovered or repackaged, periodical markers are often stripped from the texts. In some cases, texts are more manipulated than in others. For instance, the most popular edition of Judith Sargent Murray's work is the aforementioned edition by Sharon Harris. She removed the most popular essays from *The Massachusetts Magazine* and pulled all narrative elements of "The Gleaner" and published them as *The Story of Margaretta*, a novel that never actually existed before the compilation. In this instance, there is more severe stripping of the periodical contexts than in Charles Brockden Brown's "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment," which is a verbatim printing of a portion of the novel. To seek out a text's origins, a part of the research must contain the tracing of a periodical text, which can prove quite challenging. For one, it requires access to the periodicals in which the texts were published. In some cases, technological advancements have made such research possible. For instance, in this project, I used the Proquest-powered *American Periodicals Series Online*, which contains full-text, searchable scans of entire periodical corpora. Through this database, I was able to access full-text scans of *The Massachusetts Magazine*, in

which “The Gleaner” was published. Because Charles Brockden Brown has long been a canonical author, there are a variety of ways to access the original pages of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” The *Charles Brockden Brown Archive and Scholarly Edition* has digitized both copies of the periodical pages and transcribed their texts for ease of reading. The *American Periodicals Series Online* also includes the entire run of Brown’s *Monthly Magazine and American Review*, in which Brown published “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” In other cases, access is more challenging. For instance, because of the complex production history of Isaac Mitchell’s *Alonzo and Melissa*, the only means by which I could access the original periodical pages of the *Political Barometer* was to call the New York Public Library and have them ship their microfilm scans of the original periodical. It was only by luck that they could locate the necessary issues and that they could be sent. *Salmagundi*, too proved troublesome. While the entire text is digitized in *American Periodicals Series Online*, several cataloging errors led to whole issues of another magazine appearing in searches for *Salmagundi*. Because examining *Salmagundi*’s seriality requires knowledge of its temporality, having inconsistent cataloging was unworkable. To solve this problem, I had to purchase software that would allow me to re-create the periodical in individual PDF pages.

In short, this project quickly turned into one of recovery, and what I experienced demonstrates the validity of Graham Thompson’s argument that the “story” of early American literature begins with material production (2). He contends focus often “remains on seriality’s cultural consequences and the cultural conditions seriality manifests” (5). This is problematic because it assumes materiality “begins only from the moment a magazine exists in its published format” (5). Too often, criticism focuses on post-production, which gives an essential but partial view of a text’s cultural impact. Instead, Thompson argues we should be looking at both the

consumption and the production history of periodicals to demonstrate why they were often more significant than books in eighteenth and nineteenth-century publishing. Shifting to a focus on both consumption and production exposes several things. As an example, Charles Brockden Brown, as editor of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, served as both author and editor of many works that appear in the magazine. In the nineteenth-century, periodical publication required enormous scale, with authors working simultaneously on several projects for various magazine issues, and printing presses ran almost constantly to keep up with production demands. This infrastructure was lacking in the eighteenth-century, wherein the editor had to act as the author, and collecting dues was a constant struggle. In this setting, we see Charles Brockden Brown simultaneously publishing five books while also editing a magazine and contributing a significant portion of his periodical's content. This production volume could easily explain the existence of "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment." Mitchell, too, was editor of *Political Barometer*, the newspaper in which *Alonzo and Melissa* was published. At the end of the novel, he admits he wrote the installments weekly, and "more generally put to press without revision" (Mitchell, No. 126, 4). These requirements had a significant bearing on the content that appeared in periodicals. It's no wonder that serial texts do not look like their book counterparts, which are written and published in entirely different environments.

Thompson's argument lays the groundwork for what I have done in this project. In each chapter, I introduce a text before examining its production and publication history, a process that generally outlines both recovery efforts and considers format. In each instance, multiple formats of the text have been published, the original, ephemeral periodical text, and afterward, one or book versions. Because, as I have demonstrated, the form and structure of a periodical text are significantly impacted by the temporal and material exigencies of periodical publication, I point

out the differences between formats that include the reading experience, form, and meaning. I then provide in each chapter a means to read the periodical text using a theoretical framework. The project concludes with the challenges and potential rewards of bringing periodicals into the classroom, the most apparent reward being that they help unseat assumptions and engage students with recovery and primary research, the latter of which is an unusual feature in introductory American literature classrooms.

Chapter Overview

Chapter one investigates Judith Sargent Murray's "The Gleaner," a column published in *The Massachusetts Magazine* between 1792 and 1794. Complicating the publication history of "The Gleaner" is the fact that Judith Sargent Murray compiled and published the column as a multivolume book series after adding a play and several other elements. There are two editions of Murray's work currently in print, the most prominent of which is Sharon Harris's *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray*, an edited collection of Murray's work, which contains the only compiled edition of *The Story of Margaretta*. I contend, however, that Harris's compilation of the novel demonstrates a manipulation, an anachronistic rendition of a text that never truly existed, for even in her reprinting and expansion, Murray did not collate *The Story of Margaretta* into a single book. Instead, the compilation exists only in modern reconstructions. In the edition, Harris uses the collection of the novel to demonstrate how Murray was one of the first female authors to advocate for women's rights in America. While Harris responds to other scholars describing Murray's work as a "novella," her edition exemplifies the problematic tendency to make periodical texts in the image of other forms. This tendency is even more problematic because manipulated reproductions are often the only texts that are accessible for scholarly and classroom purposes. Chapter one also outlines another issue with texts like "The Gleaner," that

they are, in essence, unreadable in their compiled format. I contend with this by arguing that the column is more readable within the context of the periodical and suggesting that formally, “The Gleaner” is not ideal for linear reading because it wasn’t written for a linear reading experience. Instead, it was meant for the broader discursive context of the periodical, the reading practice of which is more scattered and selective.

Chapter one also provides a literary analysis of and means to read “The Gleaner” within its periodical context. Building on an argument by Catherine Delafield, in which she contends the readers of the periodical expected different experiences than those of the book (2), I argue periodical texts should be read from *within* the periodical. To demonstrate this, I examine “The Gleaner” column in *The Massachusetts Magazine*, Sharon Harris’s *The Story of Margaretta*, and Judith Sargent Murray’s compiled *The Gleaner* to illustrate the narrative and structural differences between the texts. Then, by applying narrative theories of Mieke Bal, an analysis is provided that exemplifies “The Gleaner’s” narrative layering, which is present at the beginning of the column and continues throughout its publication. The removal of *The Story of Margaretta*, eliminates the narrative layering, thus constituting a manipulation. When viewed this way, we can see that “The Gleaner” is more cohesive than it seems. The chapter concludes with differentiation between embedded narrative, of which Margaretta’s story is an example and embedded novels. I argue that “The Gleaner” is an experimentation with the former, rather than a demonstration of the latter.

Chapter two traces the origins of *Edgar Huntly*, one of Charles Brockden Brown’s novels. While Brown serialized several novels, either in part or in their entirety, *Edgar Huntly* is of particular interest because we rarely consider its roots in the magazine. Chapter two provides an overview of Brown’s prolific periodical career, one that began before and extended beyond

the flurry of novel writing activity in which he published four novels between 1798 and 1800. Looking beyond Brown's novel writing, chapter two outlines the fact that Brown wrote several short stories and fragments for publication in his various periodical projects. From this vantage, I examine "Edgar Huntly, A Fragment," published in April of 1799 in *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, which Brown edited. The fragment was released several months before the expanded *Edgar Huntly* was published in the summer of 1799. While it is easy to contend Brown's fragment was simply a preview of his later novel, published to garner enthusiasm for its eventual release, I argue otherwise. The fragment was published anonymously and contains an exciting narrative episode, but not one that is central to the expanded novel's plot. Instead, in both the magazine and the book, the excerpt is a self-contained episode. I argue that if Brown were simply trying to garner support for his novel, the fragment would have been central to the plot and not published anonymously with a new preface that claims its purpose is to "interest and amuse" readers (Brown 3). Instead, I argue the fragment's embedding in the magazine places it in dialogue with its surroundings, therefore distinguishing it from the novel.

Chapter two also includes a paratextual reading of "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment," in which Gerard Genette's concepts of paratexts are applied to the fragment to demonstrate how its periodical context shapes the meaning and interpretation of the text. The chapter does this in two fashions. First, it provides an analysis of the fragment as it is framed by a new epigraph, written by Brown specifically for the magazine. I contend that rather than framing an episode of somnambulism, the epigraph frames a story about the dangers of the frontier and raises questions of what it means to be human. Secondly, a paratextual reading is provided that juxtaposes "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment" with other articles published in the April 1799 issue of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*. In this setting, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment" serves as an

example of a distinctly American literary endeavor, for which Brown was a tireless advocate. The chapter concludes with a contention that “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” elicits an entirely different reading experience than its novel counterpart. Instead, it is used for different ends and to reach different audiences. Furthermore, rather than treating “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” as part of the larger novel, we should treat it like a periodical text, published for different goals and different ends.

Chapter three examines Isaac Mitchell’s 1804 serial novel *Alonzo and Melissa*, a meandering tale with several plots, genres, and settings. The chapter provides an explanation of the confusing provenance, including Daniel Jackson’s piracy of the series in 1811 and Mitchell’s expanded and reprinted book novel in 1811. The chapter outlines the differences between the original series and the two reproductions, which contain several variations, including considerable restructuring and completely different reading experiences. I also demonstrate how seriality shapes the novel’s form and outline the problems with digitization and transcription. In the chapter, I argue that by returning to the serial *Alonzo and Melissa*, we can pinpoint how the reproductions shape our understanding of the text. To demonstrate the differences, I apply theories of seriality, tracing those markers in the series that disappear in Jackson’s pirated book and Mitchell’s expansion. Aspects of periodical studies are used to demonstrate the differences in the reading experience between the three versions and to examine what it means to read serially. Finally, I discuss how the structural markers of seriality set the periodical text apart from the books.

To demonstrate further how the periodical context shapes the series, a paratextual reading of *Alonzo and Melissa* is also provided in chapter three. The goals of this reading are to exemplify how the novel is representative of a historical moment, and that temporality

significantly shapes what the text contains. Also included are instances of audience interaction that may have had a bearing on the trajectory of the story. I also argue that a postscript to Mitchell's serial text indicates further the difference between the novel and the series, as it describes the deficiencies of the series due to its publication situation. This is reiterated by a reading of Mitchell's "Short Dissertation on the Novel" at the beginning of *The Asylum*, wherein Mitchell's narrator argues his goal is to "assist in retrieving the reputation of the sentimental story... a reputation tarnished, not by integral defect, or constitutional depravity, but by a deviation" (Mitchell, "Preface" 6). This deviation is from the true essence of the novel form, which the narrator contends has fallen into disrepute. I also argue that the events of the summer of 1804, which include Alexander Hamilton's death, influenced the tone of the series, which shifts from sentimental to gothic during that period. This shift demonstrates how weekly publication and temporality can impact periodical texts. The chapter concludes with an examination of the differences in the reading experience between the series and the reproductions, and by arguing that the best means to understand *Alonzo and Melissa's* meandering structure is to read the text as a periodical series.

Chapter four shifts focus from the novel to the periodical itself. The objective of this chapter is to exemplify how periodicals represent autonomous objects of study rather than containers for discrete units of text. The chapter provides an overview of periodical studies to demonstrate that concepts of seriality are applicable to periodicals generally rather than being unique to specific eras or nationalities. I offer as an exemplar *Salmagundi, or, the Whim Whams of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq.*, the satirical magazine published by Washington and William Irving and James Paulding in 1807-8. *Salmagundi* has been undervalued in literary scholarship, in part because it is notoriously difficult. I argue in this chapter that periodical studies help us view

Salmagundi as a periodical and therefore read its parts in relationship to the whole rather than trying to interpret it as containing a singular identity, message, or moral. Treating *Salmagundi* as a periodical constructed by different personae, I illustrate how the text builds on eighteenth-century periodical structures like miscellany, anonymity, and temporality to adapt the form and turn it on its head to produce something new and innovative.

To demonstrate this, chapter four contains an overview of the juxtaposition between eighteenth-century periodical features and the innovations contained in *Salmagundi*. These include, among other things, closed authorship. Open authorship was one of the traits of the eighteenth-century miscellaneous periodical, and *Salmagundi* differs in that it contains only six named authors, whose writings alternate in each issue. Rather than open authorship with rare serial continuity, *Salmagundi* relies on predetermined authors and genres. I also argue that *Salmagundi* differs because it eschews audience interaction in the traditional sense—where letters to the editor or authors by the audience are included in the periodicals alongside the works to which they are responding. Instead, *Salmagundi*'s audience interacts through their consumption practices, which marks a difference from eighteenth-century forms. Additionally, I argue that *Salmagundi*'s structure reflects the continuity inherent to seriality, such as iteration and repetition. These features demonstrate innovation in that eighteenth-century periodicals were not commonly closed or structured like *Salmagundi*. Yet, several functions often found in eighteenth-century periodicals are reflected in *Salmagundi*. For example, repetition, reiteration, and referral are staples of both eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century series. *Salmagundi* contains all of these elements, illustrating how it builds on traditional forms to enact innovative features. The chapter concludes with an argument that *Salmagundi* is a complex, iterative text that can be elucidated when it is examined as a periodical rather than as a cohesive text.

The concluding chapter takes up a pertinent issue for all periodical scholars: how to incorporate periodicals into classrooms and into syllabi. I do so by outlining significant challenges to teaching periodicals. The first is that broad representation presses against hegemonic conceptions that favor white, Anglocentric, colonial, authors and belletristic forms. I argue that periodical texts help to break down assumptions that have been built on the hegemonic structures that have pervaded early American literature classrooms for decades. The second major challenge to teaching American periodicals is uneven access. While many large universities have access to digital or print databases, many smaller institutions do not. The lack of access challenges the instructor who wants to expand beyond the traditional anthology and include primary research and discovery into their classrooms through the use of periodical texts. Thirdly, chapter five outlines the challenge of teaching students to read periodical texts. Periodicals are traditionally difficult to approach because, as Jared Gardner observes, “the experience of reading through an early American magazine is somewhat disorienting for the modern reader, as contents appear to be gathered at random” (“The Early American Magazine”). Accompanying each of these problems is how instructors have overcome the issues to conduct fruitful courses based on periodical texts.

The latter portion of chapter five outlines two different undergraduate courses in which periodicals can be successfully included: the undergraduate survey course that covers colonial beginnings to 1865, and an upper-division topics course for English majors. For the former, I advocate a few methods for including periodicals in the classroom and outline course objectives that can provide flexibility for textual coverage in early American literature survey courses. The goal of doing so is to demonstrate that coverage need not be the only course goal. Also, I suggest methods for integrating serial texts and entire periodical issues into courses to support the

primary purpose of teaching foundational skills of literary research, theoretical and contextual analysis and literary argumentation. This practice underlines the fact that primary research and discovery can be exciting means for students to engage with texts. The second course design outlines a course with a few possible approaches as well, in which I suggest that serial reading projects can help provide a sense of the original reading experience. Also, I give a few options for teaching a course from either digital or print archives and exemplify how such a course could contribute to larger recovery projects.

These chapters demonstrate some of the pressing issues for early American literature scholars and provide some direction for dealing with periodical texts theoretically and contextually. Throughout this project, the goal is to provide means by which periodicals can be recovered and interpreted. The value of doing so cannot be understated. To understand our American literary history more clearly, we must look beyond the traditional conceptions to include the richly dynamic space in which early American authors experimented with form and content, and which provides the infrastructure and framework for our current literary marketplace. By examining the consumption and production patterns and positing new methods to read periodical texts, this project aims to further the scholarship in the field and provide new approaches for future research.

Chapter I: Narrative Re-Considerations of Judith Sargent Murray's "The Gleaner"

In the early 1990s, the Oxford University Press began a series titled *Women Writers in English, 1350-1850*. The purpose of this series was to address what the editors viewed as a mistake—that the professionalization within the field of English studies and development of a canon led to the exclusion of women writers who produced significant works in their times (Woods and Hageman ix). One project in the series is dedicated to Judith Sargent Murray, an American periodical writer from the late 18th century, who has been described as one of the most influential female voices of the era. Sharon Harris edited and collected Murray's works into a book titled *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray*. Harris's text contains several essays published by Murray, the most famous of which are Murray's first essay, "Desultory Thoughts upon the Utility of Encouraging a Degree of Self-Complacency, Especially in Female Bosoms," and her most famous essay "On the Equality of the Sexes." Also included is what Harris identifies as Murray's only "novel," a text titled *Story of Margaretta*. The collection was successful, essentially reviving Murray's work in scholarship and early American literary anthologies. Currently, aside from digitized magazine collections mainly accessible through university libraries, Harris's edition remains the predominant collection of Murray's works.

In the introduction of *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray*, Harris discusses Murray's primary publication venue, *The Massachusetts Magazine*. Edited by notable Boston printer Isaiah Thomas, *The Massachusetts Magazine* began publication in 1789 and ran a lengthy seven years until 1796, making it the longest-running American magazine in the eighteenth century (Harris xxiii). The stability of *The Massachusetts Magazine* allowed for protracted columns like "The Gleaner," which ran from 1792-1794. In the two years of its publication, "The Gleaner" consisted of themes common to fictional works published at the time, including female

education, equality, and a variety of other cultural topics. “The Gleaner,” also included markers of multiple genres. For example, in addition to moral essays and philosophical musings, an entire narrative tale is embedded. This is what Harris and other scholars refer to as the novel titled *Story of Margaretta*. Harris describes the *Story of Margaretta* and its importance in early American literature in a threefold manner: 1. Murray refuses to follow the pattern of sentimental novels and depict a “fallen” female heroine; 2. Murray’s choice of narrating through a male persona subverts the gender norms of the era, and 3. the novel is unique in its embedding within “The Gleaner” column (Harris xxvi). Harris’s justifications for *The Story of Margaretta* are important in that they help scholars understand how important Murray’s voice was in the establishment of early American literature. However, Harris omits commentary on formal features of the *Story of Margaretta* by mentioning its embedded narrative in “The Gleaner” series as part of its uniqueness without addressing elements that contribute to its uniqueness.

Harris’s only mention of the formal features of the *Story of Margaretta* serves to establish Murray as a sort of literary critic, acting from outside the boundaries of the novel in order to critique it.

The *Story of Margaretta* is an important early American novel because of its unique narrative style. Embedded as it is in a series of non-fiction essays, the *Story of Margaretta* allows Murray not only to write fiction but also take on the role of literary critic. “The Gleaner” is both outside the novel, critiquing it, and a character within the novel, who is instrumental in shaping its action. (Harris, xxx)

While this excerpt helps with interpreting Murray’s narrative choices, it is less enlightening about the narrative text itself. Reasoning for Harris’s formal presentation of Murray’s work does not appear until the end of Harris’s introduction, when she explains that while “The Gleaner” and

many of Murray's essays were first published in magazines, the primary texts used to compile them for her edition were Murray's reproduction, *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production*, which Murray herself bound and published as a multi-volume series in 1798.

While Harris's volume of *Women's Writers in English* served its purpose effectively, it also exemplifies a problem inherent in the study of eighteenth-century American literature. The haphazard reproduction of texts, volatile print market, and lack of copyright laws make it challenging to trace texts accurately. These troubles are exacerbated by the tendency of modern scholars to lift out what can be defined in terms of modern literary aesthetics or that support a particular argument. *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray* is a representative example of the sort of manipulation done to texts in order to compile them and present them as being thematically or historically meaningful. By removing *Story of Margaretta* from its context, Harris is able to contrast it with other sentimental novels from the period, novels that often ended with their heroines disgraced and alone. The *Story of Margaretta's* depiction of a well-educated female heroine who escapes the fate of so many of her sentimental counterparts supports Harris's argument that Murray was a passionate advocate for female rights.

Harris was, in some ways, responding to broader scholarly trends. Cathy Davidson, in her groundbreaking *Revolution and the Word*, categorizes *The Story of Margaretta* as a "novella," and argues that the text and Murray's essays on female equality display Judith Sargent Murray as an advocate for women's education. Davidson also provides a helpful overview of "The Gleaner," and its statements on female education without actually mentioning the fact that *The Story of Margaretta* was embedded within its pages (Davidson 208). Sheila Skemp, in a thorough biographical study on Murray, exclusively examines *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production*. Undoubtedly, these scholars are responding to Murray's reproduction as an

indication that Murray herself privileged the book over the original periodical serialization.

Looking to the original periodical texts as attempts, or exploratory drafts, the assumption is made that periodical publication is somehow less significant, or somehow a byproduct of necessity and that the bound form was Murray's initial intention.

There are a few prevalent issues with viewing the periodical as less significant than compiled volumes. First, the formal features of the collected volumes are unable to shed the influence and bearing of the periodical. When assembled, *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production* shows little resemblance to novels published in the early national period. While eighteenth-century novels were episodic and sometimes lacked cohesion, they were mostly coherent in terms of their overall plot. Periodical texts, on the other hand, often contained winding, inconsistent plots that lacked an organized structure. This was exacerbated by the fact that magazines would cease production unexpectedly, sometimes in the middle of serialized narratives. Stories were often not pre-written, which contributed to expansive and unexpected shifts in tone, genre, theme, and topic. When read linearly, periodical narratives often seem disjointed and fractured. *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production in Three Volumes* is one such text. The moral essay structure does not favor linear reading, mainly because Murray revised and added installments to the compiled version, even inserting an entire play that was not originally in the column. Furthermore, installment breaks in the compiled text are structured like chapters, suggesting they are to be read in continuation. The chapters seem disparate, however, and lend themselves to a confusing reading experience. As Shelia Skemp notes, in its compiled context, "The Gleaner" becomes virtually illegible (266). The lack of cohesion leads scholars to treat each installment separately unless connection can be distinguished by other means. When the texts are placed back within their periodical contexts, it is not expected that themes continue

across installments, which were read as contained texts, influenced by paratextual and intertextual negotiations with other entries in the same magazines, and separated by weeks from successive installments.

Catherine Delafield, in an examination of Victorian serial fiction, suggests periodical narratives should be considered within their original contexts because textual interpretations are influenced by the structure and temporality of periodical publication. When readers were required to wait a month or more for subsequent installments, they were trained to expect different things than they would from a novel. Delafield continues by suggesting periodical texts always bear their periodical shape, regardless of whether or not they are compiled. An example of this would be “The Gleaner’s” tendency to insert summaries, or signposts for upcoming installments (2). For instance, in installment XII, he concludes with a statement suggesting he would “bid adieu to Margaretta, for the present,” but would occasionally “peep in upon her, and thus learn, from time to time, how matters go on” (“The Gleaner, no. XII” April, 1793). This statement both concludes the installment, but also leaves the reader with some expectation that Margaretta would return. The lateral reading of compiled texts removes that suspense and intensifies the reading experience by minimizing the periodical’s dialogic negotiation between editor, author, and reader (Delafield 2). Delafield’s argument, when applied to early American periodical texts, provides a helpful framework for reading periodical narratives without grappling with the problems with cohesion that result from the intensified, lateral reading experiences. Conversely, periodical audiences were more adaptable to meandering storylines, pauses in narrative, and digressive episodes when reading in parts separated by regular intervals. In the case of “The Gleaner,” the interweaving of narrative and non-narrative elements between

installments is designed for audiences accustomed to reading in parts and shifting focus between topics with regularity.

As Delafield suggests, resituating the *Story of Margaretta* within the periodical context of “The Gleaner” allows for new formal readings that were lost in its compilation. For example, the Gleaner is introduced as a character in “The Gleaner no. I,” and remains the consistent, primary narrator throughout the column. In *Story of Margaretta*, the Gleaner as the narrator is almost eradicated from the text. Another example is the playful interaction between Margaretta and the Gleaner in several installments. In these instances, Margaretta is inserted in the primary narrative, blurring its distinction from the embedded story. What occurs in the resituating of the narrative in its periodical context is the delineation between the *Story of Margaretta* as an embedded novel and “The Gleaner” as moral advice column collapses, and it becomes evident that the collation of *Story of Margaretta* impacts the reading and interpretation of the text. Furthermore, when considered structurally, the compiled text is no longer comparable to the original, periodical version.

My principal interest in analyzing “The Gleaner” as a whole is to discover the differences between three versions of Margaretta’s tale, “The Gleaner,” (the original column in *The Massachusetts Magazine*), *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* (Murray’s compilation), and *Story of Margaretta* (Harris’s compilation). I will argue the changes to each text lead to differences that significantly impact readings. Additionally, I will exemplify how reading “The Gleaner” more holistically by utilizing theories of narrative elucidates the differences between the three texts. Finally, I will argue that while Margaretta’s tale may be viewed as an embedded narrative, it should not be considered as an embedded novel, distinct from the overarching structure of “The Gleaner.”

The Story of Margaretta, The Gleaner, and “The Gleaner”

Access to texts from the early national period has changed considerably from 1995 (when *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray* was published) to 2019. As digitization efforts become more prevalent, newly accessible databases of digitized archival documents allow scholars to expand their considerations of authors, texts, and entire genres in ways previous scholars could not. For example, to collect *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray*, Harris used microfilm and print sources from multiple archives (xliv). In contrast, all the issues of *The Massachusetts Magazine* can now be accessed through *The American Periodicals Series Online*, a database containing hundreds of digitized images of magazine pages from the American colonial era to the end of the nineteenth century (“About American Periodicals”). A quick search in the digital copies of *The Massachusetts Magazine* reveals all of the installments of “The Gleaner.” When Harris was researching *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production* she was working with an original, print edition from university and museum archives. Conversely, in 2020, several versions of *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* can be accessed through open-source, public domain digitization projects. One example is the *Evans Early American Imprint Edition*, a digitized and TEI encoded transcription of the three volumes of *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* created through collaborative efforts between the University of Oxford and University of Michigan libraries (“About Evans TCP”).¹ Katherine Bode, after a similar recovery project, suggests “digitization of large numbers of historical documents

¹ Although collaborative, open-source projects are abundant, their authority can be suspect. For example, while *The Evans Early American Imprint Edition* text creation partnership was compiled by Michigan and Oxford universities in partnership with the American Antiquarian Society and other scholarly partners, it has been nominally updated in the years since *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* was published in 2008. This suggests the *American Imprint Edition* is not an active project. The prevalence of such issues in open-access digitization projects tends to lead scholarship away from them and toward print editions like *The Gleaner*, published by Syracuse University Press and edited by Nina Baym in 1993, even though the *American Imprint Edition* version was more recently compiled and draws from the same or more authoritative primary sources.

profoundly transforms the conditions and possibilities of historical research” (285). These advancements allow more scholars to view texts in their original, rather than reproduced formats, therefore leading to more complete understandings of how periodicals informed print and literary culture in the early national period. This is important because as texts and their multiple versions become more widely available to scholars, studies can expand our understanding of how these texts informed and were informed by their historical and literary contexts.

Within the *American Periodicals Series Online*, there is an option to limit a search to particular periodicals. Utilizing this feature, researchers can examine entire magazines or search for specific columns like “The Gleaner.” Such a search exemplifies that “The Gleaner” ran for thirty-two installments between 1792 and 1794. Fifteen installments include some mention of Margaretta, and twelve include what can be identified as the embedded narrative. Within those installments are several groupings. Margaretta appears in installments II and III before the Gleaner publishes two installments from which Margaretta is absent. After purported audience letters are included in installment VI, Margaretta’s narrative returns for six installments. In these groupings, Margaretta is adopted by the Vigillius family, who raise and educate her as their own. She narrowly avoids being seduced by the rake Sinistrus Courtland, but her good sense and filial duty deliver her from an unhappy fate. In the final installments of the second grouping, she is married to Edward Hamilton, the son of a family friend, bears a son, and experiences “eleven months of uninterrupted felicity” (“The Gleaner,” no. XII, March 1793). Margaretta then disappears from “The Gleaner” for several installments until she returns in XVII for two installments, and again in XXVI for two installments. In these later installments, Margaretta experiences marital difficulty and her parents suspect Edward of an affair. It is revealed that instead, he is destitute due to gambling debts. All seems lost, until Margaretta’s long-considered

dead father, Mr. Melworth is led back to her by reading *The Massachusetts Magazine*. He restores their wealth, and they return to their former social standing. Woven throughout a number of the Margaretta installments are comments and critiques by the Gleaner, interjections, alleged audience interactions, and divergences.

An examination of *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* reveals that the three volumes in which Murray published her compiled column include several installments and chapters that were not part of the original column. Instead, the first volume contains the thirty-two installments of “The Gleaner” in their original sequence, and the second and third volumes contain Murray’s additions. Some installments in volume I have been altered from their original “The Gleaner” publication, and the installment sequence has been re-numbered in some places. In the table of contents, chapter II is labeled “Story of Margaretta,” which is likely where the moniker originated (xxii). While there are multiple labels given to the chapters that contain the Margaretta story, like “History of Miss Wellwood,” the majority the chapters that contain pieces of the Margaretta story have mention of Margaretta in their titles. None of these titles refer to the narrative being a novel. Aside from chapter numbers being corrected from the misnumbering of the column, the progression of the installments remains the same. This suggests that Harris compiled the *Story of Margaretta* as a novel because there seemed to be a distinct differentiation between the installments in which Margaretta was the primary character and the others.

The structure of *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray* differs significantly from “The Gleaner” and *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production*. The book is organized by genre in the following order: Selected Essays, Selected Letters, *The Traveler Returned* (a play), and *Story of Margaretta*. While Harris does not document a reason for arranging the texts by genre, the structure is a practical one. In collecting Murray’s most influential works, Harris pulls from a

variety of sources, including letter collections and multiple periodicals. Collecting the texts by genre allows for structural coherence and helps the modern reader navigate the works.

Structuring the text in this manner also allows for the *Margaretta* tale to more clearly adhere to novel conventions, which supports Harris's argument that Murray was an important novelist and the *Story of Margaretta* an important novel. The "novel" comprises twelve chapters, most often with entire installments of "The Gleaner," at least where they include Margaretta's tale. Chapter 1 contains the entire text of installment II of "The Gleaner," installments III-VI are omitted, and chapter 2 resumes with the entire text of installment VII. Several chapters contain hints of an external narrator, but chapter 7 is one of the few places where The Gleaner is named and re-instated in the narrative. Chapter 8 mimics installment XII of "The Gleaner," but omits portions of the original installment. The final few chapters progress after a gap in narrative time and include a new saga about the loss of Edward Hamilton's income and Mr. Melworth's appearance to rectify the Hamiltons' financial woes.

While all three texts bear similarities, their differences make an accurate representation of Margaretta's story difficult. Deciding which is the most authoritative or valuable in reproduction is a question that must be asked and are indicative of larger issues in the study of early American literature. For example, a vast number of texts by influential authors either had their origins in the periodical or at some point were published in periodicals. For this reason, the examination of the periodical contexts in which these texts were found is vital for understanding and interpreting them, as well as accurately tracing their roles in American literary development. Additionally, when examining these texts and their interaction with periodicals, it becomes evident that they were not meant to be "aesthetic," in terms of our understanding nor were they "novels" as they have come to be labeled. In other words, the existence of these texts in the periodical subverts

structural expectations that have been placed on them to date, and necessitate new consideration. Even subtle changes like the ones in Margaretta's story significantly influence structural or formal analyses, which, in part, is why it is important to examine early American works contextually. In the case of *Selected Writings of Judith Sargent Murray*, formal readings of "The Gleaner" and the *Story of Margaretta* would be divergent, suggesting they are entirely different texts. In the next section, I will exemplify how a formal, narratological reading reveals a narrative structure that is present in "The Gleaner," however, due to the omissions in the *Story of Margaretta*, cannot be gained through a similar reading of either the compiled text or the collated novel.

Narrative Reading of "The Gleaner"

Narrative analysis, or narratology, is a branch of literary analysis the origins of which are found in European structuralism. Specifically, narratology helps distinguish "forms of narrative and varieties of narrator" (Baldick). Defined another way, narratology "as a field of study is the ensemble of theories of narratives, narrative texts, images, spectacles, events— cultural artefacts that tell a story" (Bal, *Narratology* 3). Because of its foundation in structuralism, narratology draws focus toward what can be learned from the text itself, and as such moves beyond traditional and definitional boundaries. Rather than looking at "novels," as narratives, in a narratological framework, "text" refers to narratives across media (Bal, *Narratology* 5-6). In narratological terms, "narrative" is defined as a text in which an agent or subject conveys to an addressee ... a story in a medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof" (Bal, *Narratology* 5). Therein, the story, rather than the medium is the salient feature of narrative analysis, and texts need not be defined by generic frameworks. An entire text can be narrative or narrative can be embedded, without fundamentally changing the status as narrative.

Narratology provides a productive framework to analyze “The Gleaner” for two reasons. First, because it naturally resists delineations like “novel,” and instead draws attention to the text as an artifact that tells a story. Secondly, narratology allows for analysis of the formal features of “The Gleaner,” which remain largely unexplored by previous scholarship. Furthermore, by utilizing narratology, the entirety of “The Gleaner” can be considered, rather than by separating it into “novel” installments and “essay” installments. In this section, Mieke Bal’s influential narratological framework will be applied to “The Gleaner” and *Story of Margareta* to distinguish differences between them.

According to Bal, a narrative text is not defined by limitations of genre, but rather by constituent elements that provide a text’s narrative characteristics. These characteristics can be, but are not always, indicators of the genre. For example, while certain texts are identifiable as poems, they can also be narrative poems, and thus be analyzed with narrative concepts. Therefore, narrative characteristics do not, and should not, lead to delimitations like “poem” or “novel.” Defining narrative, Bal suggests there need to be three elements.

1. Speaker: This speaker can either retreat into the story so deeply as to be unnoticeable or instead be inserted in the story frequently.
2. Hierarchical layers: In this layering, three primary elements can be identified;
 - a. the text, or an artifact in which an agent tells a story in a given medium;
 - b. the story, or the organizing principle behind the content;
 - c. and the fabulas, which are material or elements that are worked into a story.
3. The content of a narrative text is conveyed in a specific manner that has bearing on culture. (5, 7-8)

In identifying these three elements, the differences between the *Story of Margaretta* and “The Gleaner” emerge. In the *Story of Margaretta*, Mr. Vigillius is identified as the speaker. In “The Gleaner,” the first installments identify “The Gleaner” as the primary speaker. Inferentially, the two can be identified as the same man, but the Gleaner never names himself as Henry Vigillius outside the boundaries of the installments which include Margaretta, while the Gleaner most prominently appears in the installments where Margaretta is not a major character. In installments where she is the primary character, the Gleaner fades to the background, and Mr. Vigillius interacts with her as his daughter. The stories differ as well. *Story of Margaretta* is a sentimental story of Margaretta’s coming of age and avoidance of various pitfalls. In “The Gleaner,” the pseudonymous narrator observes the world around him “gleaning” meaningful events and ideas to include in his column. Additionally, how elements are conveyed is noticeably different. The fabula sequence of *Story of Margaretta* includes only a sequence of events focused on Margaretta and other supporting characters, while the fabulas in “The Gleaner” are far more complex and contain many additional characters and embedded narratives. The meaning of the two texts differs, as well. *Story of Margaretta* is a commentary on female education, while “The Gleaner” addresses theatre, philosophy, education, religion, and several other topics.

A closer look at the three narrative elements in *Story of Margaretta* and “The Gleaner” further exemplifies the differences between the two. For example, in installment I of “The Gleaner,” the primary narrative is introduced, and the Gleaner is the main character. He is a simple man who wishes to spend his evenings in a comfortable chair by the fire. “But alas, for some time past, I think as near as I can remember, ever since the commencement of your magazine, I have been seized with a violent desire to become a writer” (“The Gleaner, No. I”). In this statement, the Gleaner becomes a character-bound narrator, one in which the “I” is identified

as a character who acts upon the story (Bal, *Narratology* 13). He presents himself as an everyman, a Gleaner, a wandering, observing, quiet person who extracts information from a variety of places and recounts it for his readers. His inspiration comes from personal experience or external observations.

At the beginning of the second installment, the Gleaner's role changes when after a brief introduction, he serves as a narrative witness, or one that "stands apart, observes the events, and relates the story according to its point of view" (Bal, *Narratology* 20). Within a few lines, he introduces Margaretta, and the embedded narrative begins. Margaretta first enters the primary narrative as an adult, not bound by the confines of her role as the main character of the story. She is depicted reading *The Massachusetts Magazine* hoping to encounter her favorite poet, the pseudonymous Philenia (afterward identified as Sarah Wentworth Morton). "Bless me! cried Margaretta while, in hope of meeting something from the pen of Philenia, she threw her fine eyes in a cursory manner ... but pray, who is Margaretta?" ("The Gleaner, no. II"). After a comment on curiosity, the Gleaner introduces an embedded fabula using a retroversion, in a time previous to the primary narrative (Bal, *Narratology* 71). "Pray, who is Margaretta? involves a subject upon which I expiate with infinite satisfaction, and upon which I have never yet lost an opportunity of being loquaciously communicative" ("The Gleaner, no. II"). This line introduces an embedded fabula, in which the narrator explains how Margaretta, his adoptive daughter, comes into his care. The fabula is so complete it leads the reader to forget the primary narrative of the Gleaner's fireside scribblings. As the story continues, the column adopts the structure of a frame narrative, or what is generally considered an embedded story bound in a larger, primary story (*Narratology* 52). In "The Gleaner," as in many frame narratives, the primary narrative and narrator are subsumed by the embedded narrative and at times entirely fade from the focus of the

reader. In the case of “The Gleaner,” the result is an embedded (framed) narrative that features Margaretta, and that serves to exemplify moral lessons that are expounded upon in installments of the primary narrative. In the embedded narrative, Margaretta becomes the focus, and to the reader, the Gleaner becomes Mr. Vigillius, her father.

In the edited *Story of Margaretta*, the first installment characterizing The Gleaner is removed. It begins with chapter 1, which is identical to installment II of “The Gleaner.” An embedded narrative is present in chapter 1; however, the Gleaner’s role as a character-bound narrator is not clearly explained. Instead, readers have the following introduction to the narrator: “To the Editors of the Massachusetts Magazine I make my best congee, and without any further prefatory address, I shall, in future produce my piece-meal commodities, fresh as I may happen to collect them” (*Story of Margaretta* 155). The narrative “I” is not characterized or named, and readers have to infer identity in later chapters. In fact, the Gleaner is never clearly established as the primary narrator in *Story of Margaretta*. Instead, the “I” identifiable as a character doing the narrating” is Mr. Vigillius (Bal, *Narratology* 16). What results from this first chapter is an entirely different narrative structure from that of “The Gleaner.”

In the second chapter of *Story of Margaretta*, the altered narrative structure continues. Installments III-VI that remind the reader of the primary narrative are removed, including Margaretta’s entry in the primary narrative in installment III in which Margaretta serves as a focalizer between primary and secondary frames.

“Bless me, cried Margaretta— as I live here is, in this Magazine, a publication entitled the Gleaner!” — As she spoke, she bent her lovely face toward me, in order the more attentively to observe my accustomed gravity— Margaretta interrogated— “Dear sir, did

I not lately hear you say that if ever you appeared in the world as an author, you would certainly be known by this appellation?" ("The Gleaner, no. III")

This quote further reiterates the Gleaner's role as the primary narrator and character in the story. By introducing Margareta in the second installment as a child within an embedded narrative, and in the third installment as an adult, within the primary narrative, installments I, II, and III show their narrative layering. The initial consciousness of the Gleaner gives the first utterance. When Mr. Vigillius is introduced as the Gleaner's true name, he transforms from his primary role as the pseudonymous Gleaner and into Mr. Vigillius. This naming within a pseudonymous medium serves as a bracket for the embedded narrative. The Gleaner need not be concerned about the Vigillius name being conveyed, because it serves as a generic fictional marker for the readers while the Gleaner's identity remains hidden, and therefore more "real" to the readers (Bal, *Narratology* 14). By introducing the Vigillius name as the marker for the embedded narrative, Mr. Vigillius is established as the secondary narrator. This theory is supported by the fact that Mr. Vigillius does not act as the primary narrator for essays on education or the theatre; that role is reserved for the Gleaner. Rather, Mr. Vigillius' primary consciousness is enacted when he directly narrates as Margareta's father.

The proliferation in installment III exemplifies how almost every installment of "The Gleaner" is replete with narrative layering. The third installment begins with the primary fabula, in which the Gleaner serves as the character-bound narrator (narrative layer 1). When Margareta interjects, with "Bless me" she does so with embedded dialogue as the primary speaker/actor (narrative layer 2) ("The Gleaner No. III"). The narrative hierarchy remains when the Gleaner intervenes with "cried Margareta," and "Margareta interrogated" ("The Gleaner No III"). She proceeds with a monologue that implies a challenge to her father about the identity of the

Gleaner. In this sense, she serves as the focalizer and primary narrator for a time. Bal suggests “all utterances, and hence, all narratives, imply a speaker” (59). As such, each speaker, in the moment, serves as an embedded narrator. When the narrative turns away from Margaretta, a third narrator is introduced because Mr. Vigillius responds to her with his own monologue. “I tell you child, — I tell you Miss Melworth, that the universe containeth not so vile an assassin of our best purposes so detestable a murderer of time, as the hangdog scoundrel *Procrastination*” (“The Gleaner No III”). Because he is speaking to Margaretta, he does so as her father, not the unknown Gleaner (narrative level III). The monologue serves to convince Margaretta that he waited too long to claim the appellation of the Gleaner and that it was not him. An address to the reader brackets the monologue. “The reader will remember that at the time of this confab, the second number of the Gleaner was not written” (“The Gleaner No. III”). With this direct address to the reader, the Gleaner resurfaces as the narrator, and the embedded narratives are subsumed by the primary narrative (Bal, *Narratology* 53).

Also missing from the *Story of Margaretta* is additional embedded fabulas that occur in installments V and VI of “The Gleaner.” These embeddings often include further narrative layering. Both the embedded Margaretta narrative and the additional embedded fabulas relate to the primary narrative and serve to explain its arguments in different ways (Bal, *Narratology* 53). For example, in installment VI, removed from the collated text, The Gleaner employs narrative layering that differs from that of installment III when a new fabula is embedded within the primary narrative. Installment VI begins with the Gleaner as the narrating agent. He assumes his role as “gleaner” or passive listener and observer of his surroundings. “It was one of my late excursions, that I found myself at a table where the guests took their seats with that freedom which is so eligible, and which is always tolerated in a publick house” (“The Gleaner, No. VI”).

In this line, the Gleaner serves as the focalizer from whose perspective the subsequent scene is presented. He overhears their conversation about “The Gleaner” column and debate over whether the author is a man of genius or an uneducated simpleton. One man laments the lack of Margaretta’s continued presence in “The Gleaner.” “O shocking—in his Margaretta indeed I took an interest, but he just popt her upon us, and very soon running himself out of there, whip, in a moment, she was gone” (“The Gleaner, No. VI”). Another suggests Margaretta’s story did not continue to avoid the auspice of a novel. At this suggestion, the Gleaner “could hardly forbear taking my advocate in my arms” (“The Gleaner, No. VI”). In this fabula, The Gleaner can observe ideology and comment on it without serving as the primary instrument through which ideology is conveyed. When the man comments that writing a novel may not have been the Gleaner’s goal, the Gleaner’s positive response indicates to the reader his feelings on the “dangerous” and “subversive” novel. The pairing of the ideological statements through observation and response is important because, as Bal suggests, it helps to discover the naturalized ideology in the narrative (*Narratology* 23). This idea is furthered by the Gleaner’s lengthy response suggesting the novel is not the ideal genre, but narrative can convey important morals and messages.

The narrative pattern in installment VI differs from previous examples when the Gleaner serves as the character-bound narrator (N1), and the men at the public house serve as secondary narrators (N2a). The embedding continues when after the men leave, the Gleaner returns to the primary fabula and walks home, where he finds a series of letters addressed to him. He suggests he is wavering on whether or not to return to the Margaretta story, but the letters served to convince him otherwise. At this moment, the letter authors act as focalizers. The Gleaner yields the narrative act to the authors of the letters when he includes them in the column. The embedded

fabulas indicate a narrative layering in which each is on the same hierarchical plane (N2b-d), but each serves as prompting for the narrative act in the following installment and also as the support for the Gleaner's statement that narrative can convey important morals and concepts.

The first letter (N2b) is from a George Seafort, a sea captain, who writes to the Gleaner asking for Margaretta's return in the following installments so that he and his wife might know how best to raise their daughter. The embedding here naturally conveys the concept that a good education is important for young women, and that the Seaforts look to "The Gleaner" to provide such advice. Monomia Castalio's letter (N2c) follows. In it, she expresses her disappointment with the Gleaner. "I am one of the great many ladies, which is absolutely dying to see something more about Margaretta" ("The Gleaner, No. VI"). She admits her father does not like her reading novels, but as a strong proponent of the magazine, he allows her to "read them from morning till night" ("The Gleaner, No. VI"). Through the frame narrative in "The Gleaner," Monomia can consume the narrative she so avidly seeks in a safer environment than the dangerous pages of the novel. The frame narrative eschews the novel, therefore making "The Gleaner" more acceptable. Monomia continues by asking several questions about Margaretta's dress and comportment. She concludes the letter by begging the Gleaner to "tell us more of Margaretta" ("The Gleaner, No. VI"). Monomia's embedded fabula serves to convey two things. That uneducated women do not have the proper priorities, and Monomia is at a disadvantage. Her regular syntax and spelling errors suggest she is nominally educated. Her mother had recently died, and the majority of Monomia's learning was at the hand of a kindly female neighbor. Monomia's lack of cultivation is contrasted in the next installment of "The Gleaner" when Margaretta returns, and the fabula is largely regarding Mary Vigillius's careful education of Margaretta. The embedding of Monomia's letter allows the fabula to explain and convey a message more powerfully, through a

female who fell victim to a lesser education, than it would have if the Gleaner conveyed the moral.

The final letter (N2d) is from Rebecca Aimwell and also includes comments on education. Like Margaretta, Rebecca is an orphan who was able to secure herself through marriage. By the time the letter is written, Aimwell's husband died, leaving her with a young daughter. Rebecca desires to educate her daughter properly, in "that system which may be the best calculated to make her good and happy" ("The Gleaner, No. VI"). Aimwell looks to Mary and Margaretta for hints at the best means to educate her daughter and expresses disappointment at the lack of information in that regard. This letter prepares the reader for the subsequent installment by drawing attention to the importance of female education in a way that supports the portrayal of Margaretta's education in installment VII (chapter 2). The interplay between installment VI and VII, which includes Margaretta's education further develops her character and endears readers to her by suggesting she can serve as a model by which young women can be educated.

After the third letter, the Gleaner serves as the focalizer again and returns to the primary fabula with an allusion as to what the readers can expect in the following installment.

In answer to my several correspondents, I have only to observe in general, that their expectations abundantly forerun both my plans and my ability, but that I may "in all my best obey them." I will from time to time furnish from my private family such sketches as I think proper, reserving to myself the privilege of discontinuing, and resuming them, as shall suit my convenience. ("The Gleaner, No. VI")

The narrative layering in installment VI, while quite complex, sets the stage for the Gleaner to return to the embedded narrative. I marked it by number and letter because each embedded

fabula is delivered by a new narrative consciousness rather than an additional embedding. As a result, each character serves as a focalizer on the same level as the others. By framing the Margaretta narrative in this way, it becomes inextricably linked to the Gleaner's primary narrative even though the Gleaner essentially disappears as the primary narrative in the next several when Mr. Vigillius returns.

The *Story of Margaretta* does not mimic the narrative layering evident in "The Gleaner." As has been established, in chapter 1 there is evidence of an external frame, but it is not explained or contextualized, so it materializes as narrative interventions, or didactic direct address, both of which are markers of the sentimental genre. When narrative layering does occur, it is as letters between characters in the secondary narrative. For example, chapter 3 (which matches installment VII in "The Gleaner") begins with the narrative from the perspective of Mr. Vigillius (N1) and is directly related to the embedded narrative. "It was a first parting—and it cost a shower of tears on both sides, but avoiding as much as possible scenes which may be better imagined than described, I proceed in my narration" (Murray, *Story of Margaretta* 170). As the installment progresses, an embedded fabula occurs in the form of an epistolary correspondence between Margaretta and Mary. In the first letter, Margaretta serves as the focalizer and becomes the fabula's narrator (N2a) to introduce Courtland as a potential antagonist. She describes his charms, suggesting he "payed me a compliment in a style so new, so elevated, and so strikingly pleasing, that my heart instantaneously acknowledged in an involuntary prepossession in his favour; sensations with which I was till that moment unacquainted, pervaded my bosom" (Murray, *Story of Margaretta* 173).

The importance of the new narrative voice to the meaning of the fabula is twofold. Mr. Vigillius could not adequately introduce the charms of a dangerous young man from his

perspective. Instead, he had to yield to the consciousness of the young woman. Secondly, by introducing Courtland through the eyes of Margaretta, Mr. Vigillius can portray Courtland's real nature to the readers, who see Margaretta as the heroine. When the fabula returns to Mr. Vigillius's narrative voice, he quickly defames the suitor.

This letter, I say, inflicted upon my bosom the most pungent anxiety. Full well I knew Sinistrus Courtland. I knew him much better... than he was apprised of; I knew him to be base, designing, and however incongruous these qualities may seem, improvident also; his father had bred him a gentleman, leaving him only a slender patrimony to support his pretensions. (Murray, *Story of Margaretta* 174)

Mrs. Vigillius, Margaretta's exemplary educator, then becomes the embedded narrator (N2b) when she responds to Margaretta's letter with her own, in which she conveys the danger and discourages the relationship. Mary invokes Margaretta's filial duty, but they do not tell Margaretta the truth about Courtland. Instead, they rely on her good education and sensibilities to allow her to discover Courtland's nature for herself. The narrative layering differs from "The Gleaner" in that the primary narrator would add a narrative layer that is removed from the *Story of Margaretta*.

As with the previous layering, chapter 5 of the *Story of Margaretta* mirrors the embedding in "The Gleaner" with the notable difference when The Gleaner's narrative voice is separated from the narrative. For the first several chapters, which contain Margaretta's introduction, attempted seduction, salvation, and marriage, each component of the embedded narrative is contained within a series of installments. For the first twelve installments of "The Gleaner," the frame, for the most part, is helpfully contained by the installment structure. Except for "The Gleaner, no. III," in which Margaretta intercedes, and "The Gleaner, no. VI," in which

her narrative is mentioned, the removal of the installments that do not exemplify the narrative framing can be removed. In the embedded narrative, few narrator interjections allow for the narrative to progress smoothly with the frame intact. The framing remains mostly delineated through the first grouping of narrative installments; however, it begins to collapse toward the denouement in chapters 7 and 8 of *Story of Margareta*. Chapter 7 begins with narrative embedding in a fashion quite similar to “The Gleaner, no. VI,” in which The Gleaner is abroad in Massachusetts and encounters a series of people who are more interested in The Gleaner’s identity than the content of his column. The Gleaner utilizes the false claims of the interviewees regarding the real identity or occasions put forth in the columns as the opportunity for his moral lesson.

I cannot help but regarding this hunting after names as descriptive of the frivolity of the human mind; no sooner does an anonymous piece make its appearance than curiosity invests itself in the stole of sagacity, conjecture is upon the rack—Who is he? Where does he live? What is his real name, and his occupation? And to the importance of those questions, considerations of real weight give place; as if the being able to ascertain a name was replete with information of the most salutary kind. (*Story of Margareta* 216)

Continuing to listen, The Gleaner draws comfort from the fact that his identity and the identity of his daughter remains untraced, and that regardless of the constant questioning of their identity, they are having good influence on the story’s readers, who admit Margareta “obtained her full share of applause” (Murray, *Story of Margareta* 217). Once appeased, The Gleaner can continue the story of Hamilton.

In installment XII from March of 1793, the structure of the periodical essay permeates the narrative installment. Rather than being entirely focused on the narrative, traditional

periodical essays often contained topical structures with embedded narratives that serve as support or evidence for the overall argument (Joost 148). In chapter 7 (or installment XII from March 1793), *The Gleaner* begins with a topical structure of anonymous authorship and then shifts into the Margaretta narrative. When the two are blended, the frame narrative begins to break down, and the primary narrative pervades the framed narrative. The frame narrative begins to collapse further in the next installment (misnumbered as XII as well) when the Gleaner interrupts the Margaretta narrative to insert “letters of those gentlemen which were designed to make a part of the sixth Gleaner” (“*The Gleaner*, no. XII, April 1793). These were men petitioning Mr. Vigillius for his daughter’s hand in marriage. The letters are introduced in the context of Margaretta’s enduring good character. “Courtlands, Belamours, and Plodders, of every description, crowded about her and assailed on every side by the perniciously enervating and empoisoned airs of adulation, the uniformity of her character was put to the severest test” (“*The Gleaner*, no. XII,” April 1793). The trope of Belamour and Plodder are meant to signify unsavory types of men who might tempt her character’s constancy. To further exemplify the other types of characters that were no better options than Courland, the Gleaner includes letters from both Plodder and Belamour. Belamour addresses the Gleaner (who at this point is indeterminate from Vigillius) for marriage in order to “reform” and live within his financial bounds, while Plodder is “turned of fifty,” with a handsome estate, and in want of “lineal descendants” (“*The Gleaner*, no. XII,” April 1793). After an assurance that the men were turned away, and that Margaretta “received her admirers, of every description, in a manner which did honor to her character” (“*The Gleaner*, no. XII,” April 1793). Like the previous installment, these letters, their introduction, and explanation work to provide a moral which is supported by the main character in the embedded narrative.

Harris does not include the letters from Plodder or Belamour in *Story of Margaretta* chapter 8. This could be because Murray, in the collected *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production*, corrects the mistake and includes the letters from Plodder and Belamour in the sixth chapter. The initial revision by Murray enacts significant changes to the text by re-establishing the narrative frame that begins to break down in chapter 7 (installment XII, March 1793). Harris relies on the re-framing in *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production* by leaving out the letters from Plodder and Belamour. Because *Story of Margaretta* does not include installment VI, where Murray replaced the letters, they are entirely removed from Harris's edition. What occurs, however, is a third version of the Margaretta narrative, each with different narrative structures. In chapter VI of *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production*, narrative layers N2d and N2e are added when Belamour's and Plodder's letters are added to the letters of Monomia Castillio, George Seafort, and Rebecca Aimwell. The moral of chapter VI changes from installment VI of "The Gleaner" as well. As established earlier, installment VI of "The Gleaner" is focused on education. Plodder's and Belamour's letters change the theme by introducing the concept of constancy in the face of temptation. Chapter 8 of *Story of Margaretta*, while mirroring installment XIII of *The Gleaner: A Miscellaneous Production*, differs from the original text by linking the frame narrative pieces and removing the intrusions by The Gleaner, thus removing the primary narrative entirely.

In the third collection of the embedded Margaretta narrative, Mr. Vigillius's and the Gleaner's voices become further conflated in a way that forces the reader to reckon with both simultaneously. This conflation occurs after a break from the Margaretta fabula of several installments. At the end of installment XVI, written in topical essay structure with an embedded narrative in the form of a letter, the Gleaner concludes within the primary narrative with a

comment to the editors. “But the fear that I may again exceed the pages, with which I am indulged by the obliging Editors of the Magazine, forbids my expatiating further” (“The Gleaner, no XVI”). At the beginning of installment XVII, the Gleaner’s voice launches immediately into a conversation about Margaretta in the opening lines. “All is not right at Margaretta’s—said my poor Mary” (“The Gleaner, No. XVII”). The use of “my” without introduction or reference to a distinction between the Gleaner and Mr. Vigillius, particularly at the opening of a fabula that re-introduces her requires readers of *The Gleaner, A Miscellaneous Production* and “The Gleaner” to recognize the larger framework. The reader of *Story of Margaretta* is also impacted, although perhaps less so, by a clear temporal gap when chapter 8 ends with a comment about bidding “adieu to Margaretta for the present” (*Story of Margaretta* 225), which indicates a deviation from the story. However, chapter 9 begins with Mary’s lament, signaling readers to the removal of the primary narrative.

Furthermore, indications of the Gleaner’s conflation occur when the Margaretta narrative returns in installment XXVI. Structurally, it is very similar to installment II. As the character-bound narrator and focalizer, the Gleaner provides the context for the embedded fabula. “The author who leaves nothing to the imagination of his readers, is frequently accused of blameable arrogance, and it is often asserted that, puffed up by an overweening self conceit, he vainly supposes that the germe of fancy can flourish no where but in the soil of his own wonderful pericranium” (“The Gleaner, No. XXVI”). Endeavoring not to be such a writer, the Gleaner shifts to the embedded narrator, Mr. Vigillius, who tells about a stranger that stumbles into the Vigillius home. It is revealed that he is the long-lost Mr. Melworth, Margaretta’s father. Margaretta is not an orphan after all. Because of the wonderful occurrence, Mr. Vigillius recognizes his consciousness is not adequate for the fantastic fabula, and in another focalizing

shift, Mr. Melworth becomes the third embedded narrator. “Mr. Melworth, pressing the hand of Mrs. Hamilton, thus commences his interesting communications” (“The Gleaner No. XXVI”). Mr. Melworth tells a story of how he was shipwrecked and presumed dead. Upon his rescue, he learned his wife has died, and his daughter had been adopted. He searched for Margaretta to no avail, until he was finally taken in by a former neighbor. One evening while he sat awake, Mr. Melworth happened to stumble across a stack of issues of *The Massachusetts Magazine*, in which he learns the Gleaner’s story of Margaretta.

Mr. Melworth’s act of reading “The Gleaner” serves in this case as a textual interference, in which distinctions between narrative layers can no longer be distinguished (Bal, *Narratology* 51). The fabula interferes with the primary narrative when the Gleaner’s act of writing leads a character in the third embedded fabula to the home of the characters in the secondary narrative. The collapsing of the embedding continues when Mr. Melworth uses his vast fortune, won at sea, to restore Margaretta and her family. This interesting conclusion provides a happy ending to Margaretta’s story and further collapses the narrative layering until, in issue XXVII, family unity becomes the theme of the Gleaner’s next moral essay. With the inspiring conclusion in the previous installment, the Gleaner continues to dwell on the happiness achieved in the Vigillius’s and Hamilton’s homes.

“Behold how good, and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity”—
well might the sacred poet summon the aid of a splendid fancy, and in rest the most expressive figures to image the fine effects, and pleasing utility of domestic complacency; the rich perfumes which consecrated the anointed priest of the Hebrew tribes, the fertilizing dew descending upon Hermon’s verdant summit, and resting with the genial influence upon the adjacent eminence; these but shadow forth sublimity of that

union, upon which our God hath commanded a blessing, which originates a dignified and blissful immortality. (“The Gleaner No. XXVII”)

In this quote, we see how the primary fabula is influenced by the secondary, embedded one, and the Gleaner utilizes it to present a moral to the reader. In this way, installment XXVII, like installment II and others in which Margaretta’s fabula encroaches upon the primary fabula, we see that the overarching structure is more unified than it initially seems.

In *Story of Margaretta*, apart from the changes in topic and framework that occur when the primary narrative is removed, the nuance of the primary narrative and its progression is also removed. For example, it is tempting to imagine the embedded narrative is temporally and chronologically linear, however, as we see in chapters 8 and 9 of *Story of Margaretta*, there are unexplained ellipses, where “nothing is indicated in the story about the amount of fabula-time involved” (Bal, *Narratology* 91). The gap between bidding adieu to Margaretta in 8 and then immediately returning to her in 9 is not explained or recognized. What occurs in the primary narrative in between the collections of the embedded narrative is integral to the understanding the structure of the primary narrative, and explains the chronology of the embedded narrative. In installment XXI, the Gleaner provides a bit of invaluable information about the overall structure of the story when he explains he attends theatrical performances while on business in Philadelphia. “I naturally pick up many observations, that may possibly serve for the amusement of my readers” (“The Gleaner, No, XXI”). It is suggested here that the narrative follows the Gleaner, and he writes based on lived experience. In other words, the focalization, or the relationship between the agent that sees and what he sees (Bal *Narratology* 135), temporally follows the Gleaner. The fabulas presented are based on the character-bound Gleaner’s either being at home (indicated by the framed narrative in which we encounter Margaretta and in which

the narrator assumes the Mr. Vigillius persona) or on business (the primary narrative in which we encounter external events presented by the Gleaner). In other words, the narrative changes based on where the Gleaner is at any given time. When the Gleaner is away, the embedded narrative ceases. When he returns home, they continue. This revelation is entirely removed from *Story of Margaretta*.

Between “The Gleaner,” *The Gleaner, A Miscellaneous Production*, and *Story of Margaretta*, the chronology exemplified by “The Gleaner” is also significantly altered between the three versions. The *Story of Margaretta* suggests the embedded narrative continues in a linear structure with intermittent ellipses, while “The Gleaner” follows a different chronology, in which the Gleaner, true to his characterization, gathers and includes sundry stories and considerations that might entertain or inform his readers. Additionally, the genre of the story changes completely between the three texts. “The Gleaner” enacts an experimental column structure that relies on narrative to exemplify rhetorical claims. *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* is true to its name. Additions and significant revisions enact a truly complex miscellany, and *Story of Margaretta* enacts the sentimental genre that was prevalent during the early national period. The numerous differences indicate the need for careful consideration of which texts are utilized, particularly if formal examinations are to be conducted on periodical texts. While Harris’s collation helps establish Murray’s authorship and considerations for canonical inclusion, it so alters the form of the text that it becomes something entirely different and anachronous from “The Gleaner.”

To think of it another way, the main differences between “The Gleaner,” *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production*, and *Story of Margaretta* are largely structural and formal, which has a significant impact on the reader’s experience and interpretation. “The Gleaner” follows the

story of the character-bound narrator as he travels on business or resides at home. The plot is shaped by the experiences of the character-bound narrator and what he “gleans” from the world around him. *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* is very similar, but with a few important differences. One of the chapters is titled “Story of Margaretta,” indicating that particular installment (No. II) sets off, in some way, a new narrative embedding, but not indicating that Murray’s goal was to write a novel. The installment in which audience members are supposedly writing to the Gleaner is also changed when letters from later installments are added to the revised text. In Harris’s *Story of Margaretta*, only the installments in which Margaretta plays a pivotal role are included, and sometimes not in their entirety. The rationale for such a compilation is presumably for the sake of narrative cohesion and to support an argument that Murray was a novelist. In addition, the chronology of each is significantly different, “The Gleaner” presumes a monthly lapse between installments, and, except retroversions, follows a timeline that indicates the character-bound narrator’s function as “gleaner.” The chronology of *The Gleaner, a Miscellaneous Production* is more linear, but also expanded beyond the original installments, and contains less narrative cohesion. The *Story of Margaretta* can be read in a linear, more intensified fashion, with large portions of the story being consumed at once. These are but a few differences between the texts that exemplify the need for separate, contextual consideration of each.

Embedded Novel vs. Embedded Narrative

If collecting the framed narrative is problematic, and thus the *Story of Margaretta* is problematic, the question remains as to how “The Gleaner” should be approached. I would argue that whenever possible, encountering texts in their periodical contexts is preferable, particularly if the goal is to learn from the form and structure of such texts. Such studies can be difficult due

to the volatile and anonymous print culture of early America, but they are important because they call into question perspectives that argue American literary forms essentially materialized in the nineteenth century from British forebears, or that to come to an “American” literary tradition, authors mimicked British literature. Instead, when examining periodical fiction in periodical contexts, we see experimentation with forms and features that have become markers of nineteenth-century literature are occurring in the eighteenth-century as well. Such changes in perspective allow for new considerations of texts like “The Gleaner” in ways that do not require such delineations as “novel” and “non-novel.” Perhaps considering the embedded narrative as such—embedded, and ceasing the attempts at defining “novelists” in an era where novels were not clearly defined as such is a more productive enterprise.

In its original form “The Gleaner” resists generic convention and contains what Jared Gardner calls “the armature of a novel” (96). Instead of re-considering “The Gleaner” by classifying it into predetermined strata, we can diminish the privilege placed on forms that resemble “novels” as we understand them. Doing so would result in less textual manipulation. While the efforts to identify recognizable forms within texts like “The Gleaner” have been helpful and drawn attention to texts that would have otherwise sunk into obscurity, the alteration leads to too great a difference to be justified. Jared Gardner reiterates this point by suggesting the “work of rescuing the ‘novel’ within the periodical dross has been entirely that of early American scholars of the past generation,” and that Margaretta “is always inseparably bound up with the practices and miscellaneous forms of the periodical” (119). By acknowledging that “The Gleaner” and *Story of Margaretta* are inseparably bound, we begin to see texts by important authors like Judith Sargent Murray as more than “attempts” that necessitate “rescuing.”

Chapter II: Fragmentation and “American” Literary Productions

For decades, Charles Brockden Brown has been lauded as the first noteworthy American novelist. What makes his novels noteworthy is the blending of American elements like the conflict with Native Americans and the frontier with European gothic themes like terror and suspense, dark, claustrophobic atmospheres, and psychological uncertainty. Additionally, Brown’s novels explore issues central to American culture like race, religion, and politics. Brown is most famous for his four gothic novels, *Wieland* (1798), *Ormond* (1799), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799, 1800), and *Edgar Huntly* (1799). These four novels continue to dominate the scholarly attention paid to Brown. One of their unique features is the notable influence of European gothic structures. For example, William Godwin’s and Mary Wollstonecraft’s philosophical views and the gothic structures of Anne Radcliffe are discernible in Brown’s works. Brown took the issues raised by these British writers and combined them with American social structures to create what became a national genre. Ultimately, it is because of this blending that Brown’s works so dominate the attention of early American scholars. In any case, his novels have remained in print and at the forefront of scholarly attention while those of his contemporaries have faded from literary memory or been dismissed as amateur works.

What those who focus on Brown’s novel career sometimes overlook is an equally prolific career in periodicals that both preceded and outlived his novel writing. Brown began working in periodicals in 1789 when he wrote “The Rhapsodist,” a column in the *Columbian Magazine*. He continued writing for and participating in periodical publication until his death in 1810 (“Chronology”). For many years, scholars referred to Brown’s periodical work as a “turn” from novel writing. They struggled to understand why a prolific and well-established novelist would shift his focus to the anonymous and unsuccessful magazine. As an answer, Jared Gardner, in a

study of periodical culture in the early national period, suggests the question is based on a misguided privileging of the book form. “Like the majority of my colleagues, I had long used the defining features of periodical culture as an excuse to either ignore it or mine it for useful data to support my arguments about the texts that *really* mattered: the novels, the *books*” (4). As Gardner suggests, this privileging of Brown’s novels has come at the dismissal of his periodical work. While this is often the case, other scholars have begun to focus on Brown’s periodical work rather than his novel writing. Bryan Waterman has written on Brown’s periodical projects and suggests his participation in the New York Friendly Club was a manifestation of his desire for particularly American cultural productions that were largely enacted through periodicals (43). Michael Cody studied Brown’s editing of the *Literary Magazine* (1803-1807), arguing it contributed to cultural cohesion in the nascent American society (9). What these studies have exemplified is that Brown, like many of his contemporaries, wrote across media and that for him, participation in periodical culture was equally as important as novel writing. Furthermore, the scholarly focus on Brown’s periodical work has demonstrated that he shaped both our modern consideration of early American novel writing *and* periodical writing in significant ways.

As with Judith Sargent Murray, the burgeoning re-considerations of Brown’s career are underpinned by newly available digital versions of Brown’s entire periodical corpus through databases like *American Periodicals Series Online* and the University of Central Florida’s *Charles Brockden Brown Electronic Archive and Scholarly Edition*. These digitization projects have allowed scholars to unearth the various facets of Brown’s authorship and exemplify the fact that even Brown’s novel writing career was more complex and broader than his concentrated efforts of 1798-1800. An examination of the corpus demonstrates that in addition to the four most famous gothic novels, Brown also wrote two sentimental stories, *Clara Howard* (1801) and

Jane Talbot (1801), which were serialized in magazines, and began a serial narrative titled *Stephen Calvert* (1799-1800) in *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*. He also published a vast number of fragments, short stories, and serial columns. As an editor, Brown provided large quantities of material for two periodicals, *The Monthly Magazine and American Review* (1799-1800) and *The Literary Magazine* (1803-1807) (“Chronology”). An examination of the digitized corpus exemplifies that several of Brown’s famous novels also had ties to the magazine. For example, the first ten chapters of *Arthur Mervyn* were published serially in a magazine. The novel was only collected and published as a book after the magazine suspended publication due to Philadelphia’s Yellow Fever epidemic (Garvin 737). A prequel to *Wieland* titled “Carwin the Biloquist” was published in *The Literary Magazine*, and of particular interest to this project, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” was published in *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*. That these projects were published in magazines before their release as full-length novels suggest that at least some of Brown’s works may not have been specifically written for novel publication. Regardless, these searches suggest Brown’s prolific periodical career warrants a reconsideration of the prevailing idea that the novel was his ultimate literary objective, or that for Brown, authorship was “the product of the solitary genius” (Gardner 4).

An examination of *The Charles Brockden Brown Archive and Scholarly Edition* demonstrates that Brown is the author or likely author of several short fiction pieces and fragments, all of which were published in magazines. Much like other authors of the early national period, he did not seem to be focused on the goal of being a professional novelist. Instead, he wrote in several genres to reach as many different audiences as possible with the “philosophic conviction” that literature provided (Waterman 105). His short fiction often duplicated themes that were found in both his novels and his periodical works. One example of a

recurrent theme is sleepwalking or somnambulism. Brown wrote three narratives related to somnambulism. The first was “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment,” which appeared in *The Monthly Magazine and American Review* in April of 1799. The second was Brown’s full-length novel *Edgar Huntly*, published in the summer of 1799, and the third, a fragment titled “Somnambulism: A Fragment,” was published in *The Literary Magazine* in May of 1805. The repetition of themes demonstrates Brown’s interest in exploring issues in multiple fashions in order to reach broader audiences.

The majority of the fragments published in *Monthly Magazine and American Review* can be linked to Brown. The magazine ran for two years, and 17 issues were published. Within this publication are four texts labeled “fragment,” all but one of which the editors of the *Charles Brockden Brown Archive and Scholarly Edition* have noted as being possibly or probably written by Brown. Of note are “Portrait of an Emigrant,” and “The Household, a Fragment.” The “Portrait of an Emigrant” details the story of a French couple, a white man, and a mixed-race woman whose unusual lifestyle leaves their intrusive neighbor, Mrs. K—, questioning her uptight and rigid American values. The fragment, like several of Brown’s other writings, raises questions of citizenship, culture, race, and identity by contrasting American identity to that of the “other,” in this case, the French couple. Unlike Brown’s other works, “The Portrait of an Emigrant” questions ethnocentric assumptions and racial superiority, ending with Mrs. K—’s recognition of the humanity of her European neighbors when she states:

Few instances of more unmingled and uninterrupted felicity can be found; and yet these people have endured, and continue to endure, most of the evils which imagination is accustomed to regard with most horror; and which would create ceaseless anguish in

beings fashioned on the model of my character, or yours. Let you and I grow wise by the contemplation of their example. ("Portrait of an Emigrant")

The horror referred to in this quote is the loss of the woman's estate and fortune in the uprisings of St. Domingo. After her loss, she and the Frenchman were forced to move to America, where they settled next door to Mrs. K—. The French couple's ability to find happiness, even after they lost everything, leaves Mrs. K— and the narrator to contemplate from what happiness is derived. Similarly, "The Household, A Fragment" is also about the merit of emigrants. In the story, Mrs. Elgar and attendant girls, all foreigners, are hired as the narrator's housekeepers. The story explores the merits of the women who keep the house and the circumstances by which the various girls have come under the narrator's care. Themes of domesticity, female capability, nationality, and moral citizenship undergird the tale, placing it in dialog with "Portrait of an Emigrant" in its consideration of virtue and American identity.

"Edgar Huntly, a Fragment," also published in *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, draws upon similar themes. It is a 24-page narrative that constitutes a verbatim representation of chapters 17 to 20 and the first two paragraphs of chapter 21 of the full-length novel, *Edgar Huntly*. The fragment begins in medias res with the narrator (the eponymous Edgar) lost in a dark cave. Hemmed in by hostile Native Americans at the mouth of the cave, he escapes, killing the native sentry in the process, saves a girl the band kidnapped, is followed, and systematically kills each remaining member of the band before finally finding his way back to his home in the frontier town of Norwalk. While the excerpt does mirror the novel, its containment and framing within the periodical re-situates it within a new context that has a significant bearing on the interpretation of the story. Additionally, the fragment was published anonymously. Rather than being a preview of the upcoming novel, attributed to the author and

therefore traceable, the anonymous authorship places the fragment within the grander context of the periodical's topics. Like "The Household, a Fragment," and "Portrait of an Emigrant," "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment" draws upon themes of race, nationality, and identity. Because of its situation in the periodical, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment" emphasizes specific themes in relationship with the surrounding texts.

The interaction between text and surrounding texts (or paratexts) is especially important when considering "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment," which has multiple paratextual layers. In addition to the surrounding articles and expected paratextual elements like titles, subtitles, and footnotes, Brown provides an epigraph in which Edgar addresses the magazine reader. The periodical epigraph does not appear in the novel. In fact, the novel has a separate foreword that frames the entire novel. The fragment's epigraph draws attention to the setting and conflict with Native Americans in ways the novel's foreword does not. For instance, the readers of the fragment must first pass through the other articles and essays to encounter the fragment. Next, they are given the epigraph, which frames the story in the context of the American wilderness. Because of this, the paratexts act both outwardly upon the reader and inwardly upon the text by creating liminal spaces through which the reader must pass to engage with the fragment. For "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment," these liminal phases are complex and unique to the fragment, and themes that are present in the fragment, such as race, humanity, and setting are shaped by the placement and focus of the paratexts. In this way, the fragment's context not only influences scholarly understandings of Brown's work, it also provides insights into the fragment. Because the context is different, the fragment is a new text, separate from the novel, but acting in concert with its periodical paratexts.

In this chapter, I will examine fragments and paratexts generally, before providing a dual paratextual reading of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” The dual approach demonstrates how the periodical enacts multiple layers of paratextual meaning. First will be an examination of how the epigraph frames the fragment and emphasizes place, race, humanity, and reality in particular ways. Additionally, an examination of the surrounding articles in the April 1799 issue of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, in which “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” is situated, will exemplify how the surrounding paratexts act upon the fragment and shape the reading experience. Finally, I will argue the fragment, instead of acting as a preview of Brown’s novel, contributes to a discussion of America’s literary landscape. Finally, I will exemplify how the changed meaning of “Edgar Huntly: A Fragment” in the periodical context necessitates a separate reading practice, not as an excerpt of a greater whole, but as a text in its own right.

Fragments

In the 18th century, newspapers and magazines were commonplace in American households. Because they were a popular and affordable medium, periodicals had a wide and diverse audience. Duncan Faherty and Ed White suggest newspapers and magazines “were the source of news but also of much of what we think of today as ‘literature’” (“Introduction”). They also suggest that because “so many readers encountered literary works through the newspaper or magazine format, they often read works in serial installments over a period of time, excerpts rather than complete works, or short fragments rather than longer works” (“Introduction”). The implications of Faherty and White’s description are twofold. First, it depicts a readership trained for encountering literary works as incomplete or partial. Secondly, it recalibrates modern expectations of form and genre. As serial or part fiction became popular, forms coalesced in a very specific manner, and with specific generic conventions. A prime example of a genre shaped

by the periodical medium is the fragment. Fragments were short, often self-contained stories. As such, their form made them ideally suited to explore and comment upon social, political, and artistic issues of the time of their publication. A “recognized and respected staple of the 18th and 19th century,” the fragment was incredibly popular (Faherty and White). As many as 38 short fiction pieces labeled “fragment” were published in the *Massachusetts Magazine*, along with several other works that could also be considered fragments. Other magazines show similar numbers of fragments (Faherty and White). In the *Monthly Magazine and American Review*, there were four works designated as fragments, and several other works contain the auspices of the fragment. In addition, eight installments of *The Memoirs of Stephen Calvert* were published in the magazine, often alongside fragments. In other words, in the 17 months the magazine was published, the literary works included were primarily fragments or serialized narratives, and almost all of them have been attributed to Brown.

Fragments have been defined in several ways. Matthew Pethers suggests the fragment is a “monologue in the sentimental or gothic vein which focuses on an emotionally powerful and morally significant moment in the narrator’s life” (72). This suggests a single character or narrator who tells of rising action, climax, and denouement. Mukhtar Ali Isani goes beyond Pethers’ description, suggests that in early America, fragments existed most often as independent texts.

Although often bordering on the essay, and sometimes slipping into verse, the typical fragment is legitimately fiction. Essentially it is brief writing, seldom over a thousand words in length, so telescoped that the bulk of it is matter that would normally constitute only the climactic part of a larger tale. Occasionally it may be an extract; generally it is a complete composition. (Isani 18)

Faherty and White add to these distinctions, stating that fragments often included manufactured auspices of age, including distressed or torn pages, “making readers wonder about authenticity and origin” (“Introduction”). What these distinctions signify is that the fragment was a short work with specific markers like a single narrative voice, intense emotion, rising climax, and denouement. The framing often included some auspice of a recovered or “salvaged” work, which justified incomplete or partial stories. Despite its partial appearance, the fragment was mostly a periodical genre, which suggests a symbiotic relationship in which the fragment developed and stabilized as a form because of the situational framework of the periodical. Additionally, the periodical’s miscellaneous cultural production relied on literary output and was friendly to fragments.

In her *The Republic in Print*, Trish Loughran suggests the fragmentation of literary works reflected the fragmentation of American culture in the late 18th century. She challenges the popular idea of America as a “republic of letters,” and instead argues that popular texts like *The Federalist* and *Common Sense* did not create a collective American ethos. Instead, it was their fragmentation that led to local discourses, and the local discourses are what made the early republic successful. She uses the publication of *The Federalist* across several periodicals to argue for its influence as a dispersed text whose unification powers were effective because of their separation. She continues by suggesting there was no “national discourse” acting as an impetus toward nation-building. In reality, a national consensus was an illusion due to the scattered population and local printing practices. In other words, it was the fragmentation of culture that led to the success of the early republic. Each community was able to create its own identity, one that was loosely connected to the nation. The periodical echoes this dispersal. Instead of a singular, unified message, the periodical’s cacophonous messages worked in unison to create a

democratic dialogue in which ideas were shared freely and placed alongside one another. Furthermore, the anonymous and pseudonymous nature of magazine publication led to more diffusion of voices. Because identity was obscured, anyone could write for the magazine. Instead of the unified, shaping authority, the authority was dispersed to the people through the periodical. The result was a republic built on fragmented locales, each of which had distinct, however fragmented print voices.

These aspects of fragmentation are important to consider with “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” because of its existence in the periodical. Scholars likely ignore the fragment’s original context because, at first glance, it is easily classified as an excerpt from the novel, and *Edgar Huntly* has been well-mined for its interesting and important literary merits. However, I would argue that it’s important to consider why Brown published the excerpt as a fragment at a time when the fragment form was well developed and had specific conventions separate from the novel. Furthermore, as has been suggested, the fragment form was inextricably linked to the periodical, which means that the conversational model of the periodical acted upon the fragment form. By publishing the excerpt in the magazine, Brown was enacting an entirely different form. Another modern tendency when reading Brown’s fragment would be to consider the fragment a preview of his upcoming novel, which would be published a few months later. However, this reasoning is also problematic. “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” was published anonymously. The only means by which the audience would be able to trace its publication would be through the title. By labeling it as a fragment, Brown writes for a readership who expected fragments as complete compositions. The epigraph reinforces this expectation. While it refers to a larger collection to be “shortly published,” it does not explain that the collection would be published by a particular printer or at a particular time (“Edgar Huntly a Fragment”). Instead, the epigraph

suggests the purpose of the fragment is to amuse readers of the periodical. In other words, the publication of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” in the periodical suggests it was meant to serve as a fragment, a complete composition that worked in concert with the periodical’s diffused voices to contribute to the larger conversation within the April 1799 installment of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*.

Paratexts

Gerard Genette, in an examination of the anatomy of texts, suggests that works rarely, if ever, appear alone. Instead, they are surrounded by a variety of productions like the author’s name, titles, footnotes, prefaces, and illustrations, among other things. He refers to these framing productions as paratexts or “the means by which a text makes a book of itself and proposes itself as such to its readers, and more generally to the public” (261). These paratexts act as thresholds that “control the whole reading” (261). For example, a reader chooses a book based on its title. A preface acts as a preview and frames the text. Footnotes explain perplexing or unfamiliar references within a text. In any case, these threshold elements act as points that draw the reader in or cause him or her to turn back, and thus they control the text. Genette continues, suggesting the paratexts are based on two positional relationships. The first positional relationship is peritexts, which are situated around and within the text, for example, prefaces, epigraphs, and titles, or epitexts, which are messages situated outside the text, but which mediate a reader’s encounter with the text. Examples of epitexts would be an interview, conversation, or other correspondence. Together, epitexts and peritexts make up a composition’s paratexts (264). Genette suggests that paratexts are temporal, often changing between editions. Thus, paratexts are reliant upon the instances and influences of publication, and textual meaning can change with each reproduction. In other words, the very reproduction of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” within

the context of the magazine results in unique mediating paratexts that serve as liminal frameworks through which the reader must pass to enter the text. Because the paratexts of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” are not the same as those in *Edgar Huntly*, the liminal stages through which the texts must be entered and which act upon the text are different and thus create different messages.

Genette’s theories provide a framework for an examination of early national periodical texts in each instance they occur. By suggesting that paratextual practices change “continually, depending on the period, culture, genre, author, work, and edition” (3), Genette emphasizes the importance of viewing reprinted or revised texts individually rather than as amalgamated editions or versions of the same text. This addresses one of the fundamental problems in the study of early national literature, tracing the provenance of texts. Texts were constantly being re-packaged and reprinted in different formats, and the fluidity resulted in undefined or perplexing definitional boundaries. For this reason, paratexts become even more pivotal in understanding and interpreting early American works. Paratextual readings discourage comparisons between editions or versions of texts, instead allowing each instance of publication to be viewed independently. This provides a helpful means to read early American texts, particularly periodical texts because the repackaging of works into collected editions changes the meaning and obscures the original reading practices and formal influences, thus significantly changing the texts.

This is certainly true of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” In the context of the novel, the 24 pages are broken up by four chapter headings and are framed by different titles. The novel contains a foreword that has, for years, been used to interpret the novel while the fragment has an epigraph that draws attention to specific elements that are not overtly emphasized in the novel.

The epigraph is signed by E.H., the character-bound narrator, rather than the author, obscuring the authorship of the fragment. The foreword of the novel is written and signed by Brown. In the fragment, when the narrator's name is signed to the epigraph, he is placed in conversation with the periodical's anonymous or pseudonymous contributors. In a novel setting of *Edgar Huntly*, there is a clearer distinction between the author and narrator. Brown is the author, while Edgar tells the story. In the fragment, this distinction is obscured when Edgar is positioned as both the narrator and the author. These differing frameworks demonstrate the importance of the presentation of each text. Additionally, because of the separate framing, *Edgar Huntly*, and "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment," enact entirely different messages.

Joshua Ratner builds on and clarifies Genette's argument. He argues for the importance of paratextual interpretations of early American texts and their presentations by suggesting that "an author's paratexts are an effort to create a direct relationship with readers" and also that publisher and editorial decisions influence the reader before they even encounter authorial paratexts (733). While this interaction is evident in books, it is even more so in early American periodicals, where authors could control peritexts on their contributions, but editors controlled the epitexts, which I refer to as the surrounding articles, essays, poems, etc. In other words, in early American periodicals, the author contributed peritexts like titles, footnotes, and pseudonyms, while editors determined what was published and where it was placed. Furthermore, Ratner demonstrates a weakness in Genette's argument by recognizing Genette's conception of paratexts relies on hierarchical relationships in which the paratexts are always subordinate to the text. Instead, Ratner argues that in early American literature, paratexts are equal to the text. This argument frames periodical paratexts much more accurately since articles were placed in equal status. To rectify the problem of hierarchy, Ratner suggests a metaphor of

sybiosis is more appropriate for paratextual relationships because paratexts were pivotal to discerning the conveyed message of the text and mitigate the conveyed message in specific ways (735).

I would argue that a helpful way to read “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” is through an application of both Genette’s concept of paratexts as well as Ratner’s symbiosis metaphor. The peritexts of the fragment, particularly the epigraph and signature by E.H., shape the text significantly, drawing attention to specific elements of the story. The epitexts, or surrounding articles frame the fragment as a work of fiction by commenting on the merits of the periodical and American fiction more generally. In the magazine, a thread of conversation comparing America and Britain draws attention to the fact that “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” is about particularly American settings and issues. Ratner’s symbiosis conveys how each component of the April 1799 issue of the magazine works to create collective meaning, thus acting equally upon the interpretation. In the next sections, application of Genette’s conception of paratextual messages will be demonstrated through an interpretation of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment,” as it is framed by its peritexts, while examination of the epitexts demonstrates the symbiotic relationship between different components of the April 1799 issue of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, of which “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” is a part.

Peritexts

It is helpful to contrast the foreword to *Edgar Huntly* and the epigraph to “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” to demonstrate how peritexts can influence the reading of a story. The foreword precedes the novel and is written and attributed to Brown. The epigraph is signed by E.H., and is encountered immediately upon starting “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” It states:

Mr. Editor,

The following narrative is extracted from the memoirs of a young man who resided some years since on the upper branches of the Delaware. These memoirs will shortly be published; but, meanwhile, the incidents here related are of such a kind as may interest and amuse some of your readers. Similar events have frequently happened on the Indian borders; but, perhaps, they never were before described with equal minuteness. As to the truth of these incidents, men acquainted with the perils of an Indian war must be allowed to judge. Those who have ranged along the foot of the Blue-ridge from the Wind-gap to the Water-gap, will see the exactness of the local descriptions. It may also be mentioned that “Old Deb” is a portrait faithfully drawn from nature.

E. H.

This epigraph is central to the interpretation of the fragment in a few ways. The most prominent features are the reference to the “Indian war” and the specifics of geography and setting. In contrast, the foreword of *Edgar Huntly*, addressed “to the public,” begins with a reference to *Arthur Mervyn*, the previous novel published by Brown in which he suggests that since the reception of *Arthur Mervyn* was so flattering, he decided to give a “new performance” (Brown, *Edgar Huntly*, 3). Brown then states that investigation by the “moral painter” or novelist, needs to be focused on America since the vast “sources of fancy and amusement” differ from those found in Europe (Brown, *Edgar Huntly*, 3). He then makes an interesting claim that European castles, chimeras, and superstitions that form the gothic genre in Europe are not fitting in America. Rather, the “incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the western wilderness, are far more suitable” (Brown, *Edgar Huntly* 3). Due to these statements, *Edgar Huntly* is often read as an allegory for American culture and an amendment to the European gothic tradition.

The differences between the preface and the epigraph exemplify the goals of each text. In the novel, Brown's purpose seems to be connecting the genre to the appropriate American settings. As such, one of the novel's central themes is how a "civilized" American identity would look. The foreword of *Edgar Huntly* has long served an important role in scholarship on the novel. Justine Murisen suggests this "iconic passage has allowed scholars to read *Edgar Huntly* as a national allegory in which Edgar's armed conflict with the Lenni Lenape Indians and his seemingly passive sleepwalking participate in the construction of a particularly violent and imperial—yet paradoxically inert—American identity during the early national period" (243). The somnambulism represents a nation unconscious to the dangers of irrational interiority and, according to Murisen, has led to largely psychological and political interpretations of the novel (245). The power of *Edgar Huntly*'s foreword exemplifies how paratexts can shape the attitude of the readers before they enter the text. When the foreword is removed from the text, the allegory dissolves, and the story needs to be re-framed.

The epigraph's references to "Indian War" and "Indian border" are significant in that Brown connects them with the story's truthfulness. "As to the truth of these incidents, men acquainted with the perils of an Indian war must be allowed to judge" (Brown, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment"). The ambiguity of this statement reflects the conflict that occurs within Edgar when he is faced with the choice to kill the natives or be killed by them. Throughout the fragment, Edgar reflects on the idea of self-defense and whether or not acting in self-defense justifies the actions he is required to perform. For example, each time Edgar is forced to kill, he is faced with the choice to ambush the enemy or engage in mutual battle, and each time, he hesitates until he no longer has a choice. Mutual battle has been engaged, and he must kill to survive. One

example is found at the beginning of the narrative when he escapes from the cave and considers whether or not to kill an unaware sentry.

Let it be remembered, however, that I entertained no doubts about the hostile designs of these men. This was sufficiently indicated by their arms, their guise, and the captive who attended them. Let the fate of my parents be, likewise, remembered. I was not certain but that these very men were the assassins of my family, and were those who reduced me and my sisters to the condition of orphans. (Brown, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment")

This justification is Edgar's way of convincing himself to kill the man outright, like his family was killed, with no remorse or hesitation. And yet he does hesitate. He is unable to kill the man until the man attacks him. This hesitation occurs later in the fragment as well when the remaining Native Americans track Edgar down. Again, he has the opportunity to ambush them, but again he hesitates, waiting until they begin the hostilities. "One now approached the door, and came forth, dragging the girl by the hair, after him. What hindered me from shooting at his first appearance, I know not" (Brown, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment"). It is not until the man looks at Edgar that he can shoot.

Edgar has a similar reaction to the third foray with his lone "surviving enemy" (Brown, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment"). Even though he had killed several men, he hesitates again. "My abhorrence of bloodshed was not abated. But I had not foreseen this occurrence" (Brown, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment"). Again, he has to justify his actions, and again, he deliberates until left with no option but to kill the man. Cocking his gun, Edgar draws the attention of the man and the man springs to action. This is the catalyst Edgar needs to shoot. It is as if the man must be aware of his impending death before he meets his fate. Edgar's resolve is tested again when his first shot is ineffectual. The man is maimed, and Edgar is faced with a terrible and grotesque duty. "To kill

him outright was the dictate of compassion and of duty” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). He shoots again, but again, the bullet does not fulfill the task. Finally, after the second unsuccessful attempt, Edgar stabbed the man with the bayonet of the gun, and he is finally dead. At this point, Edgar is overcome by the magnitude of what he had done. “Such are the deeds which perverse nature compels thousands of rational beings to perform and to witness!” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). In these scenes, the internal battles and hesitations indicate the ruthlessness of conflict on the frontier and also hint at considerations of humanity. Edgar is not able to kill until he can do so in a way that suits his conscience, and it is still traumatizing. Ultimately, this is because Edgar recognizes the humanity of the natives, something that both horrifies and confuses him.

Throughout the fragment, it is clear that Edgar faces internal conflict about what it means to be human. In the first description of the natives, they are characterized as “uncouth” and “grotesque” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). Words like these depict “savages,” perhaps human, but lesser than the civilized, enlightened Europeans that Edgar represents. Edgar seems throughout the fragment to fluctuate on his recognition of their humanity. The first instance of this consideration is after he escapes the cave. A native American sentry sits outside the cave with “his back supported by the rock, and his legs hanging over the edge of the precipice, and tranquilly employed in smoking” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). He has the option to kill the man by shooting him while he is in tranquil repose. This is when Edgar hesitates the first time. “My aversion to bloodshed was not to be subdued by the direst necessity” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). It is only when the sentry turns Edgar is forced to kill the man. “The wound was mortal and deep. He had not time to descry the author of his fate; but, sinking on the path, expired without a groan” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). This action, though

necessary, breaks Edgar out of his concept of the uncivilized savage long enough for him to recognize the man was human. “Never before had I taken the life of another human creature” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). After the man is killed, he thinks about the lithe and powerful being that was now dead, and at his hand. Edgar’s caricatures and generalizations regarding the Native Americans dissolve, and he is forced to reckon with the fact that they are people.

This occurs again after the last skirmish. After Edgar’s ineffectual strokes fail to kill the final member of the band, he falls prostrate, and the significance of his actions is apparent. “The task of cruel lenity was at length finished. I dropped the weapon and threw myself on the ground, overpowered by the horrors of this scene” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). Like the other instances, Edgar reflects upon his actions and the humanity of the men.

Thus, by a series of events impossible to be computed or foreseen, was the destruction of a band, selected from their fellows for an arduous enterprize, distinguished by prowess and skill, and equally armed against surprize and force, completed by the hand of a boy, uninured to hostility, unprovided with arms, precipitate and timorous! I have noted men who seemed born for no end but by their achievements to belie experience and baffle foresight and outstrip belief. Would to God that I had not deserved to be numbered among these! (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”)

At this moment, Edgar realizes he is no different from them. His conception of himself as a civilized, rational being is stripped away, and his ideas of humanity are confused.

Another way the epigraph re-frames the fragment is by making nature the antithesis of progress and, therefore one of the primary conflicts of the story. The references to the “Blue-ridge,” the Delaware River, the “Wind-gap” and the “Water-gap,” and the comment regarding

the “exactness of the local description” give the fragment a specific sense of place in Pennsylvania’s Appalachian Mountains (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). In the region mentioned in the epigraph, the Delaware River cuts through mountainous terrain and creates “gaps” or passages through the mountains. In the early settlement of America, the difficult terrain contained the English population to the east coast of Pennsylvania (“Appalachians”). As the European settlers ventured westward, they had to contend with the harsh landscape and its inhabitants. This harshness is reflected in the fragment as the landscape contributes significantly to the plot. The mountains and narrow passages along the river act as a liminal plane between the civilized East and the wild terrain of the West. The wildness of the landscape exemplifies the primary ways in which the fragment enacts the gothic genre as the wild and untamed terrain adds to Edgar’s sense of terror and mistrust throughout the fragment.

I need not tell thee that Norwalk is the termination of a sterile and narrow tract which begins in the Indian country. It forms a rocky vein, and continues upwards of fifty miles. It is crossed in a few places by narrow and intricate paths. ... During the former Indian wars, this rude surface was sometimes traversed by the Red-men, and they made, by means of it, frequent and destructive inroads into the heart of the English settlements.”
(Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”)

As Edgar describes it, the land acts as both salvation with its “narrow and intricate paths” by which inhabitants of English settlements can share information and supplies, and as a source of fear and danger with the possibility of attack always at the forefront of the inhabitant’s minds. What follows provides further insight into how the setting acts upon Edgar. In his youth, his parental home was attacked by Native Americans, and his parents and an infant child were killed. He states, “the fate of my parents, and the sight of the body of one of the savage band ...

should produce lasting and terrific images in my fancy” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). In other words, the terrain and the inhabitants who navigate it lithely and expertly, are to Edgar the phantasms that distort his mind, and the setting acts as an additional source of terror.

This sense of fearsome nature regularly reoccurs throughout the fragment, and the descriptions of the landscape are often coupled with moments of danger. For instance, Edgar’s first battle for freedom takes place on a narrow path above a waterfall, at the mouth of the cave from which he escapes. On the left side is an “inaccessible wall,” and on the right, the path terminates “at the distance of two or three feet from the wall, in a precipice” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, A Fragment”). Here, Edgar is forced to kill the sentry with a “hatchet to the breast” and dispose of him by pushing him over the edge (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). In this scene, the danger of landscape represents both fear and hope. While the terrifying precipice indicates certain death with a single misstep, it also provides Edgar the means to escape unnoticed. On the other hand, the actions required of him to enact the escape are costly. He is reminded of his childhood terrors and is required, for the first time in his life, to kill another human being, which despite his past trauma, he regrets.

Further references to desolation and sterility suggest the continued danger for Edgar until it is juxtaposed with civilization when he and the girl he rescues reach a crude dwelling “suited to the poverty and desolation which surround it” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). Despite the poverty of the dwelling, it nevertheless provides a sort of haven in which Edgar and the girl can repose for a brief time. While resting, Edgar looks at the gun he stole from the native band and realizes, to his dismay, it was his. “Scarcely had I fixed my eyes upon the stock when I perceived marks that were familiar to my apprehension. Shape, ornaments, and cyphers, were evidently the same with those of a piece which I had frequently handled” (Brown, “Edgar

Huntly, a Fragment”). This marker of technological and civilized advancement is Edgar’s salvation, and the dwelling acts as his defense. The piece is “of extraordinary marksmanship. It was the legacy of an English officer ... It was constructed for the purposes not of sport, but of war” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). Not insignificantly, the weapon is of English heritage, suggestive of the Enlightened advancement of white settlers. The fact that it was “made for war” foreshadows the inevitable battle through which Edgar must emerge victoriously or die. When the Native Americans track him to the crude lodge, Edgar utilizes the structure to his advantage, killing them one by one as they survey the dwelling. In this scene, the markers of civilization protect Edgar. The hovel provides food, shelter, and defense. Without the human-made shelter, he and the girl would have surely been killed.

Civilization continues to be a haven for Edgar when, after leaving the crude dwelling, he happens upon a little house, this one more indicative of genteel society. “It was as small as it was low, but its walls consisted of boards. A window of four panes admitted the light, and a chimney of brick well burnt, and neatly arranged, peeped over the roof” (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). Structures like the hut and the small house are symbols of civilization and order in the fragment. Elizabeth Hinds suggests that structures bear significance in the social order of the characters. “Houses and other properties in *Edgar Huntly* literally and symbolically reiterate the social orders they host” (56). In other words, the wilder the dwelling, the less civilized the character who dwells there. The cave represents the dwelling of the murderous band, the hovel is the dwelling of a marginally civilized native Queen Mab or Old Deb, and the cozy cottage, the domicile of a white family, is his salvation. Inside, Edgar meets a woman who feeds him and provides him knowledge of his whereabouts. Suddenly his disorientation is collapsed when he recognizes he is on the southern edge of Norwalk, a town he has known since youth. Civilization

awarded him this clarity, and he can orient himself toward home, though not without further risk of danger.

There were two ways before me. One lay along the interior base of the hill, over a sterile and trackless space, and exposed to the encounter of savages, some of whom might possibly be lurking there. The other was the well frequented road, on the outside and along the river, and which was to be gained by passing over the hill. (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”)

Despite the safety of the latter option, Edgar chooses the more difficult pass, which again places him into the danger from whence he had recently been delivered. The important difference at this point in the tale is that he knows the danger and is prepared to navigate the difficult terrain, whereas, at the beginning of the fragment, he is uncertain of his surroundings and the dangers that he would face.

The separation of this fragment from the novel is curious for a few reasons. The fragment, while containing some of the primary and interesting conflict in *Edgar Huntly*, is only tangentially connected to the novel’s storyline. The main antagonist in the novel, Clithero Edny, is not represented in the episode at all. Another representation of the “other,” Clithero is an Irish immigrant suspected of several violent and evil deeds. Edgar’s exploration into the wilderness is a result of his suspicion of Clithero and curiosity regarding his exploits. The fact that Edgar finds himself in a cave is due to his suspicion of Clithero but is not directly related to the central arc of the plot. By selecting this particular scene to publish in the magazine, and framing it with the new epigraph, Brown demonstrates that it can be a unit extractable from the narrative. Furthermore, by placing it in the magazine as an extract and stating the goal in the epigraph as being to “interest and amuse” the readers, Brown reframes it as a complete story, outside the

boundaries of the novel (Brown, “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment”). Additionally, this scene may entice readers to the tale, but it will not lure them in as a poignant foreshadowing of the larger text. The logical conclusion to this fact is that Brown’s choice to utilize the text in this manner is not as a preview to the novel, but rather as an enacting of the fragment genre within the periodical.

Periodical Epitexts

Such conclusions re-orient the text within the larger framework of the magazine issue and draw attention to the epitexts surrounding the fragment. Of note are three articles that also appear in the April 1799 issue of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*. Two focus on the nature of magazines and literary arts, and one compares the culture, geography, and politics of New England and Great Britain. The conversation about what literary arts should look like within the context of the magazine, frames “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment,” the only instance of fiction in the issue. The fact that it exists in the context of the critiques instructs the readers on the form of ideal fiction before they enter into the reading of the fragment. “Original Communications, On Magazine Publications” provides a warning to the editor regarding the risks of the magazine. An article titled “On the State of American Literature” discusses the literary deficiencies in a country focused on economic progress. These articles work in direct discourse with “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” As fiction, it responds to the literary critique by requiring the reader of both articles to consider what defines good literature. The readers are then prepared to determine whether “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” is an example of adequate or inept American literature. “Parallel Between New-England and Great-Britain” examines similarities and differences between the two countries’ geography, situation, and population before suggesting the different “moral and political condition” of each most instructive (Francisco). In addition to drawing attention to the

American landscape and the fact that Americans, on average, own more land and are more financially secure than many in Great Britain, the author also provides a picture of American readership and the conversation regarding literary merit.

Interestingly, the first thing readers experience in the magazine is a critique of the genre. The April 1799 issue of the *Monthly Magazine and American Review* is the debut issue, and the first article is “Original Communications, On Magazine Publications,” in which the author warns the editor about the pitfalls of magazine publication. By placing a critique on the magazine at the outset, Brown draws attention to the democratic nature of the form. Contributors can provide differing viewpoints on topics, even those related to the magazine itself. At the beginning of the essay, the pseudonymous author Candidus provides a metaphor. “I hope you have well considered the difficulties that lie in your way, and have not forgotten the old fable of the farmer and his ass. In his eagerness to please all, he displeased everybody, and, most of all, himself” (Candidus, 1). Candidus continues by suggesting the shortcomings of magazine fiction will inevitably be the focus of the public.

Your fictions will be condemned as soaring too high or sinking too low; as too general or too minute; as too scanty in dialogue, or too abundant in reflections; as being too familiar with heroes or with chambermaids; as exhibiting impossible events or contradictory characters; as teaching infidelity, superstition or despair. (Candidus 1)

This article primes the reader for a critical examination of the content to be found in the issue. “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” follows several pages later. If the reader follows a linear pattern, he or she finds not only this reprobation but another article directly discussing the nature of literature in the United States before reaching the fragment. Such an approach risks an audience prepared for negative critique of the magazine’s fiction, and yet, Brown placed both “Edgar

Huntly, a Fragment,” and “Original Communications: On Magazine Publications” in the same issue, which suggests either that he thought “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” was a positive representation of American literary output, or that he valued the democratic sharing of ideas more than the critical reception of his fragment.

Continuing the conversation, the author of “On the State of American Literature” writes about the shortcomings of American literary works, suggesting that despite the fact that Americans are widely read and exposed to an incredible number of written works, the “literary character of America is extremely superficial” (“On the State of Literature”). This is, he argues, because of the model of liberal education is “much less accurate and less extensive than that by the same name in almost any other country” (“On the State of Literature”). He also suggests there are four main reasons for the deficiency. Firstly, Americans are focused on monetary gain, and this detracts significantly from the literary or scientific potential of the young man of talent. Those who might achieve cultivation of the mind instead abandon their books for a “large receipt of fees” (“On the State of Literature”). Second, the profusion of colleges presents a problem of quality. Because there are so many, none can be liberally endowed or “very well fitted to accomplish the business of education,” and the majority of colleges have “professors wretchedly unqualified for their station, and who are incapable of making thorough scholars” (“On the State of Literature”). The students, as a result, are poorly qualified for the degrees bestowed upon them. The third reason suggested by the author of this article is the result of the first two issues. Because so few learned men exist in America, they cannot compete with the Europeans, where there are so many men of genius that only the truly talented and erudite might achieve literary acclaim. By contrast, in America anyone can publish a fiction work. The final reason for the superficial state of American literature is because the worthwhile literature “can expect in this

country very little reward” (“On the State of Literature”). Because the education system does not produce strong scholars, too few are educated enough to understand the works that might be considered worthwhile.

That these articles would so scathingly treat attempts at literary merit, especially attempts published in magazines, would at first seem odd epitexts for “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment.” Reason would suggest that Brown, as both the editor of the *Monthly Magazine and American Review* and writer of the fragment, would be more careful. However, Brown’s work with the Friendly Club provides some explanation. His participation in the club was a contemporary activity to the publication of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, and their goal was to promote conversation around widely-ranging topics. The most appropriate means to do this was through the magazine, the miscellaneous structure of which worked to create a society of civic readers (Waterman 33). An additional goal of the Friendly Club was to create “American” cultural productions (Waterman 43). For this reason, the essay about America’s deficient literature seated alongside a piece of Brown’s literary work creates just such a conversation. In fact, this kind of conversation is ideal for the interests of the Friendly Club. The periodical acts as a liminal stage through which the reader must pass. He or she must consider and come to conclusions about what true literary genius must look like before reading the fragment, the goal of which is to contribute to a society hungry for “American” works of literary production. The fragment’s intense focus on American settings and conflict also speaks to this conversation. The fragment cannot be deemed merely a reproduction of European structures. It is distinctly American. This fact explains Brown’s removal of *this* part of his novel. While other scenes depicting Clithero as the antagonist might be more central to the plot, he remains a European.

The fragment, on the other hand, with its American landscape and stereotypical American antagonists, cannot be mistaken for a reproduction of European themes.

Also speaking to distinctly American cultural productions is a third article in the April 1799 issue of *Monthly Magazine and American Review*. “Parallel Between New-England and Great Britain,” written by the pseudonymous Francisco, refers to several important differences between New England and Great Britain. He suggests that the American climate is more agreeable than Britain because it lies closer to the equator. Also, the population of Great Britain is considerably larger than that of New England; however, New England’s population is spread over a larger space. He then suggests the two contributors to happiness in America were “quantity and the equal distribution of knowledge and property” (Francisco). This, he suggests, sets Americans apart from “the savages beyond the Mississippi” who are saddled with “ignorance and hardship” (Francisco). Because of the great disparity between New Englanders and the natives, they cannot be equal in happiness, because that requires enlightened knowledge and a considerable amount of property.

Furthermore, Francisco comments on the vehicles of knowledge, the “cheap and commodious newspapers” that are “fraught with moral and literary, as well as political discussions” (Francisco). These publications convey the intelligence of the civilized world in New England. The amount of newspaper readers is important too, in the contrast between those who are knowledgeable and those who are not. “The number of these is stated to be thirty thousand, which is equal to one fourth of the whole number of families... newspapers are habitually read by every person of a reading age in the country” (Francisco). Therefore, because everyone is literate, and everyone reads newspapers, the New Englanders are considerably more privileged than both the natives and the British. This commentary on knowledge, property, and

civilized society frames “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” by setting the native population in intellectual contrast to the civilized white New Englanders. The natives are also at a disadvantage because they do not have permanent land or dwellings.

Blended Considerations, Individual Texts

What these paratextual readings exemplify is the fact that the reader of “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” would have an entirely different reading experience than the reader of *Edgar Huntly*. While this statement may seem obvious, it bears reiteration because so little critical attention has been paid to the fragment as it exists within *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*. Much attention is paid to Brown’s novels, and some to his periodical writing and editing, however almost none is paid to examining his works that were both fiction and in periodicals. Such focus would necessitate an examination of his magazine fiction, which would then demonstrate that pieces of his novels were regularly published in magazines alongside many independent short narratives. The conclusion to such examinations is that there needs to be recognition of Brown’s vast number of fictional works that existed for the sole purposes of the magazine. Another implication is that Brown’s “novel excerpts” published in magazines were published with separate goals and for separate purposes. It is also important to consider the fact that Brown’s novel excerpts were published in magazines *first*. This supports the argument that for Brown, the magazine acts as a separate space in which separate meaning is created.

By examining Brown’s entire corpus, we can determine that Brown’s works did not have distinct definitions. Instead, he simultaneously wrote novels, published fragments, and contributed other writings to periodicals. Brown’s publishing of works like “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment,” within the periodical necessitates a critical approach that does not distinguish between his writing venues. Brown certainly did not write with separate goals. Instead, he

seemed interested in sharing cultural works in as many media as possible, to influence a greater audience. It would make sense, then, that we should not attempt to separate and categorize his writings. Jared Gardner supports this argument, suggesting Brown's cross-contributions are reflective of his desire to engage with literary production in every way possible (6). It was Brown's commitment to literary production that makes him a pioneering figure. His desire to connect with audiences at each level led him beyond the boundaries of the medium, genre, and theme led to his vast output and shifting forms. Additionally, through this commitment, Brown propelled both the periodical and novel forward toward the nineteenth-century forms with which literary scholars have become so familiar.

Concomitant to this fact is another. By producing fiction for magazines, Brown created new and discrete works. In other words, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment" should not be considered an excerpt from *Edgar Huntly*. As I have demonstrated through paratextual readings of the fragment, even though the fragment is a verbatim representation of part of the novel, the context in which it appears creates a series of new messages and foci. Instead of the novel, the focus of which is Edgar, an unstable narrator plagued by somnambulism, "Edgar Huntly, a Fragment" is an action-driven conflict between natural, native forces and rational civilization. Additionally, the fragment exists as a literary work in the context of contemporary literary criticism. Because of these factors, the fragment deserves to be treated as a text, independent from *Edgar Huntly*, one that creates its own meaning and provides a new reading experience.

Chapter III: A Tale of Three Novels: Origins and Isaac Mitchell

In 1804, Isaac Mitchell, a newspaperman and committed republican, began a serial novel titled *Alonzo and Melissa, a Tale* in the Poughkeepsie-based *Political Barometer*, a newspaper he edited. The story was published in twenty-two weekly installments between June and October of 1804. It tells of two lovers, Alonzo and Melissa, who are separated multiple times, then finally reunited. The story contains several plot twists, controversies, and settings, which together create a complex, varied, and expansive tale. However, for Mitchell, the sprawling tale, written for the periodical, was not sufficient. Unhappy with the restrictions periodical publication placed on the form, characters, and developing plot, Mitchell expanded the story into a two-volume novel, published in 1811 under the title *The Asylum*. Mitchell added several additional characters and storylines, and as a result, fundamental aspects of the story were changed. Moreover, in 1811, Daniel Jackson pirated *Alonzo and Melissa* in its entirety. He published it as a book that became one of the most popular novels of the early nineteenth century (Davidson 281). Due to loose copyright laws at the time, and because Mitchell died shortly after *The Asylum* was published, the piracy was never challenged (Fichtelberg 2). Jackson's version was incredibly popular, going through 32 reprints by 1846 (Fichtelberg 2). Mitchell's novel was quickly forgotten, and until the twentieth century, scholars were unable to determine whether Jackson's or Mitchell's text was the original, a fact complicated by the lack of access to the original periodical version. As a result of the multiple versions and the relative obscurity of Mitchell's texts, *Alonzo and Melissa* has a complicated history, one that disrupts our understanding of its origins and formal qualities.

Set in the "time of the late American Revolution," *Alonzo and Melissa* begins with a sentimental love story (Mitchell, no. 105, 4). The early installments tell of Alonzo and Melissa's meeting and subsequent courtship during which a rival suitor, Beauman, vies for Melissa's hand.

Eventually, Melissa chooses Alonzo, and they are permitted to wed. However, Alonzo learns that upon the outbreak of war, his father's assets were seized in British harbors, leaving the family destitute. Alonzo continues to apply for Melissa's hand, but her father withdraws support, telling Alonzo if he is a "man of honor," he would cease his advances (Mitchell, no. 112 4). Unable to do so, he and Melissa plan to wed in secret. When her family learns of their plan, Melissa is kidnapped and taken to a castle in the rural Connecticut countryside. At this point in the story, the genre enactment shifts from sentimental to gothic, and Melissa begins to discover the horrors contained within the dilapidated structure. Alone in the dreary ruins, one evening, Melissa hears pistol shots and sees a horrible visage, holding a bloody knife over her bed. Unsure if she is dreaming or experiencing supernatural forces, the next evening, she resolves to remain awake. Hearing more noises, she investigates and finds Alonzo, who has accessed the castle by scaling the walls. After Melissa describes her terrifying experience in the castle, they make plans for her escape. Before they can enact their plan, Melissa is again kidnapped, this time to the home of an uncle in Charleston, where she allegedly dies.

After Melissa's death, the genre shifts again when the grief-stricken Alonzo offers himself to the captain of a trading vessel bound for France and Holland (Mitchell, no. 119 4). En route, Alonzo's ship is attacked by a British vessel, and he is taken captive and confined in a British prison. He eventually escapes and finds sanctuary with a kindly stranger who promises to help him get to France. Before he leaves, however, he encounters a severely injured Beauman. Beauman informs Alonzo of Melissa's father's designs to force her to marry him instead of Alonzo, but she died before the plan could be carried out. Beauman expresses regret for their rivalry and dies. Shortly afterward, Alonzo escapes to France, where he intends to stay until he meets Benjamin Franklin, who was serving as the American minister. Franklin applies to

Alonzo's sense of duty, restores Alonzo's familial wealth, and instructs him to return to America. Alonzo obeys, and sails for Charleston, where he is led to Melissa. She had not died; instead, a cousin who bore a striking resemblance to her had died, and her family in Charleston disguised the cousin's death for Melissa's to deter the forced marriage to Beauman. After the reunion, Alonzo and Melissa return to Connecticut, where they undeceive her family and marry. Finally, Melissa and Alonzo are united, and the story ends with an examination of the castle, in which her brother Edgar, Alonzo, and several compatriots find pirates who had been using a series of secret passages into and within the castle to enter and store their contraband. It was their voices Melissa heard. The entryways into the castle are secured, and Alonzo and Melissa retire into connubial bliss.

This summary, paradoxically both overlong and inadequate, demonstrates that *Alonzo and Melissa* is a sprawling, complex narrative that revolves around the fates of the two main characters. Mitchell used *Alonzo and Melissa* as the foundation for his expanded *Asylum*. He added several characters and plotlines, thus making *The Asylum* even more complicated, for, in the expansion, Mitchell changed not only the format but also formal qualities. For instance, the first installment of *Alonzo and Melissa* is approximately 1,000 words and introduces Alonzo within the first two paragraphs. The first chapter of Mitchell's *The Asylum* is about 16 pages long and contains no formal mention of Alonzo. In fact, Alonzo is not introduced until chapter VII of Mitchell's expanded text. Jackson's *Alonzo and Melissa* is almost a verbatim copy of Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa*. In this way, it preserves the story, characters, and plots of the original tale, but there are significant structural adjustments in his version as well. Jackson's novel contains no chapter breaks and proceeds as one extended, unbroken narrative. This reformatting and

stripping of demarcating installments changes the emphasis and flattens the reading experience by removing its serial qualities.

As a result of the variances, the periodical origins of *Alonzo and Melissa* were forgotten, and the text was relegated to the archive, while the subsequent versions persisted. However, they were not popular enough to warrant canonization, and by the mid-twentieth-century, were also forgotten. As with several other early American novels, in 1986, Cathy Davidson essentially resurrected the story when she wrote a chapter on the gothic in the new republic in *Revolution and the Word* and used Mitchell's *The Asylum* as her primary example. Since then, modest scholarly attention has led to reproduction efforts for all three versions. Presently, reproductions of Jackson's novel are maintained in microfilm collections like the Library of American Civilization, and various editions have been digitized. These are available online, and efforts by publishing companies like Forgotten Books have made print editions available for purchase. Early American scholars have transcribed Mitchell's *The Asylum* for classroom use, and Early American Reprints, a non-profit publisher dedicated to recovering early American texts, released an edition with an introduction by Leonard Tennenhouse in 2016. Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa* has been transcribed and digitized only once by the James Fenimore Cooper Society. Issues of the *Political Barometer* have not yet been digitized and are not accessible online or in periodical databases. The complicated provenance of *Alonzo and Melissa* and subsequent installments demonstrates the difficulty scholars face in tracing the origins and also explains why scholarly attention has focused on the surviving, more stable book versions.

The difficulty with serial narratives such as *Alonzo and Melissa* is the ephemeral nature of the periodical. Serial narratives are published over multiple issues across an extended time, a fact that makes them difficult to reproduce without altering them in some way. For this reason,

Alonzo and Melissa's publication in the *Political Barometer* hindered its dissemination as a cohesive narrative text. Paradoxically though, it was not designed as a cohesive narrative. Instead, Mitchell was displeased with the story because the conventions and requisites of the series impeded his ability to write a perfect novel. He asserts his intention to revise the story and publish it as a book to remedy the shortcomings (Mitchell, No. 126, 4). What can be inferred from these statements is that Mitchell intended *Alonzo and Melissa* to be an ephemeral text, one solely extant as a series. Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa* is by nature bound up with the periodical and derives its meaning and structure from its periodical setting. Consequently, Jackson's piracy was the only reason the original story survived beyond the newspaper. By pirating it and reproducing it under his name, Jackson gave life to an edition that was never supposed to exist.

Because of the circumstances surrounding *Alonzo and Melissa*'s publication and piracy, for many years scholars attributed the text's origins to Jackson. Even after Mitchell's *The Asylum* and its precursor *Alonzo and Melissa* were discovered, scholars were reticent to abandon their assumption that Jackson was the original author. For example, in a 1904 article published in *Book Notes*, a literary gossip and criticism magazine, one author argues at length that Jackson was the original author, both of the series and the novel and that Mitchell was the usurper. In the critique, the anonymous author casts aspersions on his colleagues for doubting Jackson's authorship. "The conclusion [I] reached was that Mitchell's book was a remarkable literary swindle, now for the first time disclosed. It is unique in American literature and deserves mention. Mitchell "absorbed" the entire work of Jackson *verbum de verbo* into his fraudulent book. It is, as I say, unique" (Rider 73). The author is not wrong, the "swindle" as he deems it, is indeed unique, especially since we can now trace the full extent to which Jackson plagiarized Mitchell's story. In the century since the *Book Notes* article was published, Mitchell has been

identified as the original author and Jackson the pirate, however little else has been done to establish *Alonzo and Melissa* as a periodical text. Troublesome to discerning the text's origins is the fact that unlike other early American periodicals, the Poughkeepsie-based *Political Barometer* can only be accessed in its entirety on microform held by the New York State Library ("Isaac Mitchell"). The most accessible version of *Alonzo and Melissa* is on the James Fenimore Cooper Society website, where Mitchell's serial novels have been transcribed and posted online. Hugh MacDougall suggests the reason Mitchell's works are of interest to the society is they "are intriguing specimens of early American literature, and are not otherwise available online to the public. They deserve to be available to scholars and others. This seemed as good a place as any" ("Isaac Mitchell"). In other words, were it not for a website dedicated to another author, *Alonzo and Melissa* would not be widely available to modern scholars at all, and the differences between the three versions would be challenging to demonstrate.

Exacerbating the convoluted history of Mitchell's story is the fact that the little scholarship that exists on *Alonzo and Melissa* or *The Asylum* has focused on different versions and often does not delve into how the differences influence interpretation. In an article titled "Gothic Castles in the New Republic," Cathy Davidson argues *The Asylum* is unusual due to its structure as a "sentimental tale grafted onto a gothic one" (288). Davidson suggests the tale is more appropriately gothic because the more "thematically expansive" and "artistically complex" gothic portion dwarfs the sentimental half. The reason for this is the author found the gothic genre a better vehicle to demonstrate the psychology of the characters, a fact further evinced by the fact that most reprints of *The Asylum* only contained the gothic half (Davidson 287). Davidson's claims are valid, primarily because she is examining Mitchell's expanded *The Asylum*. However, the same argument cannot be made as easily for *Alonzo and Melissa*, in

which, depending on how one views genre enactment, only a third is demonstrably gothic. Supporting this claim is the fact that Joseph Fichtelberg writes about the sentimental economy in *Alonzo and Melissa*, and squarely classifies it as a sentimental novel. Fichtelberg describes *Alonzo and Melissa* as “a conventional tale of thwarted sentimental lovers, spiked by a Gothic episode in a Connecticut castle” (3). He argues that Mitchell’s revisions alter the trajectory of the tale significantly, and suggests the success of *Alonzo and Melissa* was due to its use of familiar sentimental themes to address economic and ideological crises in a changing republic (3). Fichtelberg interweaves all three versions in his study, discussing the original serial version, the revision, and Jackson’s piracy, but does so to demonstrate how the stories’ sentimental themes represent economic realities in the years preceding the war of 1812. Fichtelberg’s examination explains the cultural context of the versions; however, at times, his criticisms are applied equally to all three texts. For instance, he suggests, “Mitchell’s text survived because it was able to articulate a new set of ideological problems in comforting and familiar terms” (3). But *Mitchell’s* text did not survive. It quickly sank into obscurity, while Jackson’s representation of Mitchell’s text became quite popular. This is an important distinction because, as we will see later, the differences between versions influence interpretation and reception.

While the efforts like that of the James Fenimore Cooper Society have preserved and made available influential American texts, they are not in the original format. Rather, transcription projects like the one by the society signal what Margaret Beetham defines as “rescue attempts” (97). Often, rescue attempts lead to a discrete element or set of elements, such as a serial narrative, being collected and published in more stable formats. Beetham identifies the problem with these rescue attempts; they too often become the authoritative versions of the text (97). The James Fenimore Cooper society transcription of *Alonzo and Melissa* recognizes the

periodical context, thereby more closely rendering the original format. Still, compiling the installments impacts the reading experience significantly. This altered reading experience is what James Mussell refers to as a “translation,” or a re-imagining of a periodical text (345). As has been demonstrated, *Alonzo and Melissa* has been subject to *both* rescue attempts and translations, both of which fundamentally altered the initial story. Jackson’s novel, which was itself a rescue attempt, became the authoritative version of the text for over a century. Modern technology has allowed us to make evident Jackson’s swindle; however, the scholarly community is still grappling with the extent to which Jackson’s novel displaced Mitchell’s as a cultural artifact. This is supported by the fact that the James Fenimore Cooper Society transcription remains the only version of *Alonzo and Melissa* that is accessible. What has been sacrificed in both Jackson’s rescue attempt and the James Fenimore Cooper Society translation is recognition of the formal features of seriality, the context of the periodical, and the impact of the original reading experience, all of which are inherent to the periodical and its seriality.

In other words, *Alonzo and Melissa* is a prime example of what can occur when a text is “rescued” from its periodical context. It has gone through numerous reproductions, in which the text was altered in some way. Sometimes these alterations were subtle; at other times, they were considerable. While this is true of several early American writings, *Alonzo and Melissa* is interesting because, as the writer in *Book Notes* suggests, it is one of the most blatant and traceable instances of what can occur when texts were pirated in the early national period. Interestingly, Jackson’s piracy, less than a decade after *Alonzo and Melissa*’s initial publication, instituted a different trajectory for the novel, one never intended by Mitchell, and I would suggest Mitchell’s *The Asylum* was not a reproduction as much as an extension. At the same time, Jackson’s version was a plagiarized rescue attempt. In the time since 1811, most of the

subsequent rescue attempts have built on the original extension and piracy, further burying *Alonzo and Melissa*'s origins. Though this is due to the lack of accessibility, it nonetheless fundamentally changes our scholarly approach to *Alonzo and Melissa* and *The Asylum*.

In this chapter, I argue that a return to the original, periodical version of *Alonzo and Melissa* is necessary to identify what is lost in the reproduction and expansion. I will do so by examining elements of *Alonzo and Melissa* that are missing or altered in the subsequent versions. Like all serial texts, seriality shapes *Alonzo and Melissa*. Many of the serial markers that are inherent to *Alonzo and Melissa*'s periodical context were significantly altered in Jackson's version and all but obliterated in Mitchell's expansion. By retracing the structural markers of seriality, I demonstrate how they shape several elements of the story. Also, I demonstrate the importance of the periodical setting and how it influences both the reading experience and the interpretation. Ultimately, I argue the differences between *Alonzo and Melissa* and the subsequent versions need to be distinguished so authoritative criticism and analysis can be developed. I further suggest that returning to the periodical origins is vital to understanding *Alonzo and Melissa*'s influence as a cultural object.

A Novel with Many Identities

In this section, the different structural elements of momentum, referral, and characterization in each of the versions indicate some of the most critical ways in which they differ. For example, as a serial novel, *Alonzo and Melissa* is bound by the inherent constraints of serial authorship and publication. For instance, at times, the plot within each installment has to rise and fall to satisfy readers while at the same time avoiding a conclusion to keep readers' interest piqued for the story's continuation. Sean O'Sullivan describes this as narrative momentum, a feature in which anticipation or suspense builds between installments. The

narrative speed of each installment demarcates the relationship between texts, which is another indicator of O'Sullivan's consideration of momentum (55). These elements are not present in either Jackson's *Alonzo and Melissa* or *The Asylum*. Another aspect that changes significantly between versions is Umberto Eco's concept of the series as that which focuses on a set of fixed characters (85). I concur with Eco's assessment and argue the characters hold *Alonzo and Melissa* together despite its expansive plot and numerous settings. This centrality of characters is present in Jackson's novel but is not as evident in Mitchell's *The Asylum*.

Structurally, each installment of *Alonzo and Melissa* is strikingly consistent. The installments are approximately 1000 words in length, or 2.5 columns, and appeared on the fourth page of the *Political Barometer*. In terms of plot, there were two types of installment, either that which included rising action and short denouement, or that which contains rising action terminating in a cliffhanger. Each of these shaping techniques indicates what Sean O'Sullivan defines as design, or elements of serial construction that can be attributed to a series' "system of habits, preferences and protocols" (60). *Alonzo and Melissa's* design is evident within the first few installments. The typical instance begins with a summary, the introduction of conflict, intensification, often due to some sort of confusion or conjecture, elucidation, and finally, conclusion. Most installments begin with a summary or a lapse of time between the end of the previous installment and the start of the next. For instance, the June 12th installment begins with Alonzo's depressed fears that Melissa had committed to Beauman. The June 19th installment begins after an indeterminate time lapse during which Alonzo broods over the situation. "It was some time before Alonzo renewed his visit" (Mitchell, No. 107 4). The elapsed time indicates the narrative suspension of the serial, in which the readers and characters would go about their lives.

The summary at the beginning of the subsequent installment provides the illusion of the time passage for both readers and characters.

Secondly, the cycling plot provides structural continuity and rhythm for the narrative. The summary allows for the repeated climaxes in each installment to seem more natural, providing the sense that dramatic and meaningful events occur with reasonable lapses of time in between. For example, after a summary, the June 19th installment continues with a letter sent to Alonzo announcing the impending nuptials of Melissa and Beauman. Alonzo, believing the message, is thrown into a state of agitation and melancholy, and resolves to “once see her again before the event takes place” (Mitchell, No. 107 4). Shortly afterward, in a suspenseful and uncertain exchange, Alonzo questions Melissa as to her connection with Beauman. The two engage in a lengthy dialogue in which their confusion grows. Melissa is unsure of which suitor to choose, and after the mounting tension, she reveals she is not engaged to Beauman. The installment concludes with Melissa requesting four weeks during which to consider both men and choose between them. The subsequent installment begins after the four weeks have passed with the tension of the revelation of Melissa’s choice. The story read in continuum heightens the drama and lowers the ability to believe that the story is ‘based on truth’ due to the rapidity of the building drama. Therefore, the summary allows readers to accept the repeated climaxes because there is time in between for the audience to process and analyze the installment’s plot.

Other features of seriality are designed to keep the audience’s interest. While installments must conclude, the story can’t wholly end, or there is little reason for the audience to return. O’Sullivan refers to the serial’s reliance on a returning audience as the “basic economic imperative” of the series and suggests one way to keep audiences returning is by building narrative momentum with features like enjambment and cliffhangers (55). Enjambment is the

ability for one installment to continue where the previous installment ended, and cliffhangers are installments that build to a climax only to stop abruptly and force the readers to wait for the inevitable conclusion (O'Sullivan 55). *Alonzo and Melissa* uses both enjambment and cliffhangers to build narrative momentum. As an example of enjambment, the first installment ends with Alonzo and Melissa's parting. "The next morning they parted; Melissa's cousin, his lady, and Beauman, returned to New-London; Alonzo and Melissa pursued their journey, and at evening arrived at her father's house, which was in the westerly part of the state" (Mitchell, No. 105 4). The subsequent installment picks up the story immediately. "Melissa was received with joyful tenderness by her friends" (Mitchell, No. 106, 4). On the other hand, throughout the series, when the 1000-word installment is not adequate for the building tension, an installment concludes with a cliffhanger. For instance, when Melissa is left in the Connecticut castle, she begins hearing voices and seeing specters. When she investigates, her uncertainty and the installment ends with an unexpected event.

She took the candle, ran hastily down, and fastened the door. As she was returning, she heard footsteps, and imperfectly saw the glance of something coming out of an adjoining room into the hall. Supposing some ghastly object was approaching, she averted her eyes and flew to the stairs. As she was ascending them, a voice behind her exclaimed—"Gracious Heaven! – Melissa!" The voice agitated her frame with a confused, sympathetic sensation. She turned, fixed her eyes upon the person who had spoken; unconnected ideas floated a moment in her imagination – "Eternal Powers! (she cried) it is Alonzo!" (Mitchell, No. 114, 4).

In the subsequent installment, the story begins with enjambment when it commences immediately. "Alonzo and Melissa were equally surprised at so unexpected a meeting" (Mitchell,

No. 115, 4). The story continues with an explanation of how he scaled the castle walls during the storm to find her. Thus, the plot from the previous installment concludes, and another begins, allowing the perpetuation of the series.

Many of these markers of serial structure are missing from Jackson's *The Asylum*. The story is virtually identical; however, the structure is altered considerably. When he collected and printed the novel, Jackson removed all installment breaks and did not reinsert chapters, instead he creating one long strand of narrative. Rather than a sequence of building momentum using suspense and narrative rhythm, one paragraph concludes, and another begins without pause. The only recognition of passing time is the summary, which remains as the single marker of the initial serial structure. As Matthew Levay suggests, structural changes like the collection of serial installments into a volume disrupt the temporal pattern of the series and produce an entirely different reading experience ("Repetition, Recapitulation, Routine" 103). In other words, collections demonstrate that temporality governs the series. This temporality influences both the reading experience and what Margaret Beetham defines as the formal qualities of the series. She suggests the fundamental imperative of the series produces formal qualities like repetition and links between installments (99). That is to say; there are inextricable links between the series' temporal, formal qualities, and reading experience. These are not evident in Jackson's book, in which readers have significantly more control over the pace of their consumption. By merely disrupting *Alonzo and Melissa's* temporal pattern and stripping it of its pauses, Jackson produces an entirely different effect.

Also missing from Jackson's novel are the patterns of rapidly building suspense that conclude in cliffhangers. The story instead flows unceasingly forward, without any pause to emphasize certain occurrences. As a case in point, the most revelatory moment, when Melissa is

revealed to be alive, occurs at the end of a paragraph. The next paragraph begins with a direct address to the audience. “Again will the incidents of our history produce a pause. Our sentimental readers will experience a recurrence of sympathetic sensibilities, and will attend more eagerly to the final scene of our drama” (Jackson 204). Although the direct address indicates a pause in the narrative and draws attention to the importance of the moment, it does not reiterate seriality. It provides the standard sentimental function of didactic moralizing within the context of the unbroken narrative. Conversely, in the serial *Alonzo and Melissa*, the didactic address occurs at the beginning of an installment, intensifying the importance of the moment. The direct address continues *Alonzo and Melissa*’s narrative suspense, and readers must wait for a few more agonizing lines to discern whether it is Melissa. In Jackson’s novel, the hiatus is only a few lines, and the reader can quickly move forward to satisfy the suspenseful anticipation.

In an even more significant departure from the serial nature of *Alonzo and Melissa*, Mitchell’s *The Asylum* contains more obvious structural variances. The first volume includes an added storyline about the Bergher family and Baron Du Ruyter, a German nobleman and Mrs. Bergher’s brother. The mysterious Berghers are tenants of Melissa’s aunt, and their story begins when Melissa is indisposed on a ride through the country and is required to stop at their house. While she is there, Baron Du Ruyter makes a surprise appearance, after which Selina Bergher declares the family saved from their embarrassments. Wishing Melissa’s family to know their history, a safe prospect now that Baron Du Ruyter is present, Selina provides Melissa with a manuscript that contains their story. In it, Selina tells of her affluent youth and engagement to an older nobleman named Count Hubert. Before they can wed, however, her brother introduces her to Bergher, a friend and fellow military man. Selina and Bergher fall in love, and at the encouragement of her brother, who promises to provide financial support, plan to marry secretly.

Her father, the elder Baron Du Ruyter, disapproves, wanting her to marry the Count. It is later revealed that the Baron was in considerable debt to the Count, and upon the Count and Selina's marriage, the financial obligations were to be canceled. Desperate to have his finances restored, Selina's father confines her to their mansion and places a watch on her at all times. At the suggestion of her brother, and to avoid marriage to the detestable Hubert, Selina and Du Ruyter make plans for her escape and elopement; however, she is discovered and attacked by Hubert. Flying to her aid, her brother engages Hubert, and both draw pistols and fire. Selina, insensible after the attack, later learns that her brother is dead, and the Count was superficially wounded in the skirmish. Hearing of his friend's death and the attack on Melissa, Bergher confronts the Count and kills him. Bergher is subsequently arrested. After his eventual release, he and Selina flee Europe and escape to America. When Du Ruyter appears in the Bergher household in Connecticut, Selina learns her brother was severely wounded but not killed. Du Ruyter restores the Berghers' reputation so they can live in comfort. The rest of the novel proceeds with the story of Alonzo and Melissa, with some additions.

The structural differences between *Alonzo and Melissa* and *The Asylum* are too numerous to summarize here and include chapter length and added detail, but of particular interest is the parallelism between the story of the Berghers and that of Alonzo and Melissa. Placed in almost the same position as Melissa's father, Selina's father is unable to prevent her marriage to Bergher. Perhaps learning from the Berghers' story, Melissa's father instead chooses to remove Melissa to the Connecticut castle, where her incarceration echoes that of Selina's. The parallel structure reinforces the moral of the story, that love and marital choice are far better than parental cruelty and control. In both the case of Selina and Melissa, their happiness rests with their ability to choose who they marry. Alonzo and Melissa's separation and the Berghers' flight

from Germany are mere passing hardships that reinforce the happiness both couples experience at the end of the story. Furthermore, these themes serve to reinforce the American value of freedom by suggesting the hardships are worthwhile because they result in the characters' freedom to choose. Moreover, *The Asylum*'s volume structure supports the parallel stories, the first containing the story of the Berghers, and the second the story of Alonzo and Melissa. This separation and parallelism would not work in a serial format. The result of a parallel structure in a series would be separate tales with separate characters and outcomes. Additionally, the story of the Berghers contains long stretches of narrative retroversion. In contrast, the story of Alonzo and Melissa continues linearly, except in brief situations that retroversion is provided within an installment. Serial structures would not support these elements of retroversion and parallelism.

By adding characters and storylines to *The Asylum*, Mitchell disrupts the fundamental identity of the series. According to Umberto Eco, the definition of the series is that which is governed by a set of fixed situations and characters "around whom the changing ones turn" (85). The changing secondary characters and settings provide a sense of newness, while the pivotal characters and settings remain unchanged. The result is an audience comforted by the familiar, excited by the ability to project what will come next (Eco 86). By this logic, the series is structured by a balance between new and familiar, with the familiar providing the central features of the story. *Alonzo and Melissa*'s serial identity is centered, as the title suggests, on Alonzo and Melissa. The secondary figures cyclically appear in the account; however, the narrative revolves around the two. Their narrative roles change periodically, but their story and their desire to return to one another drives each installment. Conversely, in the first volume of *The Asylum*, Melissa serves as a secondary character, and Alonzo does not appear in name at all. Instead, the story revolves around a different set of characters with different circumstances.

These arguments imply that the temporality of the series has a bearing on its form. By changing formats, Mitchell and Jackson disrupt these fundamental serial qualities and replace them with conditions that are inherent to book reading. As a result, I would argue that for Jackson's version of *Alonzo and Melissa*, what is most altered by the new format is the form and the reading experience. The contents remain the same, but the structure is significantly changed. In the reproductions, many structural elements are different from those of Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa*. These changes demonstrate *Alonzo and Melissa* is a text altered by its "rescuing" from the newspaper into a more stable book form. As Margaret Beetham suggests, rescuing is a problem for modern readers because it interferes with the complicated relationship that exists between materiality and meaning (97). Besides, I would argue that Mitchell's *The Asylum* represents a different story due to the significant structural, character, and plot changes. Perhaps this is why the author of the *Book Notes* article was so convinced Jackson was the original author, Mitchell's expanded novel simply contains too many differences. What can be argued is that Mitchell was simply not done with the story, and the original, serial text was a draft of sorts, one never meant to be authoritative and permanent. This argument is further supported by some of the paratexts, which provide contextual markers that both elucidate the texts and provide new and clarified meaning.

Piracy Explained

As I established in chapter two, paratexts provide a liminal stage through which the reader must pass to engage with texts. In this way, they act upon the text by creating new meanings which shape the reader's interpretation and experience. *Alonzo and Melissa* and the subsequent versions are no different. In each case, the author provides a commentary on his work, justifying his endeavors and explaining his motives for writing the story. Jackson's

preface, like his novel, is directly copied from Mitchell's postscript in *Alonzo and Melissa*. It justifies the content, suggesting the story is not indecorous or perverse. Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa* contains a postscript in the final, October 30th installment, in which he recognizes and justifies the shortcomings of the series. Consequently, in the postscript, he acknowledges the constraints of the periodical by noting the narrative has certain conventions that are shaped by seriality. Mitchell seems to think these onerous constraints because, in his postscript, he suggests they are the reason for the novel's deficiencies. In *The Asylum*, he expands on these musings, writing both an introduction and a preface explaining his purpose and condemning the deviation of other authors from the meritorious novel. Each of the paratexts suggests Mitchell's ultimate goal was "retrieving the reputation of the sentimental story" to demonstrate the novel's capability to produce the "most sublime specimens of fine writing" ("Preface" 6). This suggests to readers that Mitchell's publication of *Alonzo and Melissa* was an attempt to produce an exemplary novel, but the periodical format was incapable of being the vehicle for such a project. These paratexts can demonstrate further why returning to the serial origins is vital for understanding how the periodical serial publication acted upon *Alonzo and Melissa's* form and meaning.

The two-page preface of Jackson's *Alonzo and Melissa* is copied verbatim from the final two paragraphs of Mitchell's serial postscript. Contained in the preface is a statement regarding the novel's virtue, in which there is a claim that Providence is not at war with decorum. Instead, the incidences therein copy nature, especially in the virtuous passions of Alonzo and Melissa's love (Jackson, "Preface"). There is only one statement regarding the merits of the novel, wherein the author suggests, "if these scenes are not imperfectly drawn, they will not fail to interest the refined sensibilities of the reader" (Jackson, "Preface"). These claims demonstrate that Jackson is

less interested in the novel's merits and is more interested in showing how the novel enacts sentimental themes such as virtue. What is more elucidating is the fact that Jackson had to read Mitchell's postscript to repurpose it in his preface, for therein Mitchell makes an exasperated comment about the piracy of his previous serial texts. He suggests one "was no sooner completed, than a neighboring printer, with whom we then exchanged papers, whipp'd it into a pamphlet, and had it pedaled through various parts of this state and the state of Connecticut" (Mitchell, No. 126, 4). A few lines later, Mitchell includes what Jackson copies as his preface. This ignoring of Mitchell's complaint and claim that he will publish an expanded version illuminates Jackson's blatant plagiarism.

Alonzo and Melissa's postscript reveals Mitchell's attitude regarding the deficiencies of the work when he blames them on the constraints of serial publication. Mitchell suggests the work was "hurried over with too much rapidity for the *contour* of a perfect Novel," and provides a series of justifications as to why the novel was imperfect, each of which is characteristic of serial publication (Mitchell, No. 126, 4). Mitchell continues by admitting the rapidity of the plot development was compounded by the speed in which he wrote the installments. He admits he wrote "week to week, amidst the hurry of his avocations, and more generally put to press without revision" (Mitchell, No. 126, 4). Also, Mitchell suggests he truncated the installments because writing the story as he intended "would extend the story beyond the limits of a weekly paper, and at least beyond the patience of readers, who anxious for catastrophe, would not willingly consent to so lengthy a detail unfolding itself but once a week" (Mitchell, No. 126, 4). These constraints undermined his intentions for a longer, more developed story with additional characters, scenarios, and dramatic scenes. Mitchell then suggests that in an attempt to address these deficiencies, he would revise the story to match his intentions and publish it as a book at a later

date. This announcement immediately precedes his permission for other papers to publish *Alonzo and Melissa* serially as well as a request that it not be collected and printed as a book to give him time to release the expanded novel. Jackson clearly ignored this request and took the story and part of the note to extract for his preface.

By acknowledging the process by which seriality shaped *Alonzo and Melissa*'s plot, Mitchell confirms scholars' interpretations of serial structures. For example, Matthew Pethers suggests meandering serial plots are a result of the haste and speed in which serial texts were written. This accounts for the "accumulating characters and subplots as the story progresses into a potentially endless future" (Pethers 69). Pethers' argument implies that a predetermined story would not succeed as readily in a serial form, which allows for indefinite and open-ended plots (Pethers 69). By acknowledging that *Alonzo and Melissa* did not follow the intended trajectory due to its progressive development, Mitchell reinforces the differences between serial authorship and book authorship. Furthermore, by acknowledging the need for sensationalism, Mitchell recognizes the role of the audience in the development of the series, reinforcing what Linda Hughes and Michael Lund refer to as the need to keep the readers' attention (13). Slowly developing plots would not appeal to a serial audience; therefore, installments could not proceed without frequent sensational occurrences. The serial reader expected exciting plots, in which stable characters experience suspenseful events that keep the readers returning. Mitchell's recognition of these factors as indispensable to seriality shaped the original form of *Alonzo and Melissa*. Mitchell could not, as he desired, successfully create the inverse, an organized, parallel plot with loosely connected characters, and he recognized this fact as *Alonzo and Melissa* progressed.

Instead, Mitchell revised *Alonzo and Melissa* into *The Asylum* to fulfill his intentions, something he admits in the preface to *The Asylum*, which is segmented into an introduction followed by a “short dissertation on the novel.” In the preface, Mitchell expounds upon the components of the exemplary novel (“Preface” 4). The narrator of the introduction embodies the role of the author and discusses his motive for writing a novel. In doing so, Mitchell’s narrator reinforces his desire for the audience to judge his work rather than allowing critics to interpret for them, for “they must read before they can review” (Mitchell “Introduction” 2). By doing so, the American public can dictate the best literary efforts rather than having a series of established critical hierarchies to determine the value for them (Mitchell “Introduction” 2). In other words, in America, the democratic nature of the novel lay in the ability of the broad reading public to determine a text’s merit, and writing a novel was then worthwhile because it allowed the American readership to craft a national literary identity.

Mitchell’s author-narrator participates in the democratic assessment of literary works when at the beginning of the preface, he comments on the objectionable qualities commonly found in contemporary novels; they are too often immoral, overly intricate, unrealistic, too realistic, or dangerous to virtue. The purported immorality of the novel is due to the singular fixation on seduction (Mitchell “Preface” 5). Seduction stories, he claims, are popular due to a superficial, though passionate desire that once sated leads to abandonment. In short, the sentimental novel glorifies licentiousness and does not castigate poor choices, nor is there adequate reward or glory for those who avoid such ruin (Mitchell “Preface” 5). Furthermore, the fault of seduction is compounded by the novel’s pretenses to reality, which is problematic due to the need to balance characters’ virtues with their weaknesses to make them believable. When novels are presented as “nature,” authors alter the expectation of the reader, who “becomes

interested in the story, loses his aversion to the evil actions and propensities, in the splendor and brilliancy of the meritorious exploits and achievements, and is finally induced to venerate the hero, though, 'black with murder, sacrilege, and crime'" (Mitchell "Preface" 5). By creating relatable but flawed heroes and heroines, the sentimental novel desensitizes the reader and creates a false sense of goodness (Mitchell "Preface" 5). The narrator continues by suggesting that although shortcomings frequently plague the sentimental novel, good novels do exist, and it is the deviance from this pure novel form that leads to defects.

According to the narrator, the novel is of the highest of literary endeavors. A good novel is one that uses natural scenery, is moderate in catastrophe, dazzle, and amazement (Mitchell "Preface" 6). Furthermore, "When properly executed, it tends to purify and elevate the affections; to improve the mind, while it amuses the fancy; to amend, as well as to interest the heart, and thus enlarge the sphere of knowledge, and promote the cause of moral and social virtue" (Mitchell "Preface" 6). In short, an exemplary novel is one that supports virtue rather than detracting from it. Naturally, the narrator then suggests very few novels of merit exist. Instead, most are poorly conceived or so deviant that they caused the genre to fall into disrepute (Mitchell, "Preface" 6). The only American novelist of note is Charles Brockden Brown, or "Mr. Brown from Philadelphia," who writes well but frequently relies on "repetition of style" (Mitchell, "Preface," 6). The narrator closes this castigation of the deviant novel form by finally suggesting his purpose in writing *The Asylum* is to redeem the genre and set it right. "To assist in retrieving the reputation of sentimental story, has been the author's aim in the ensuing work; a reputation tarnished, not by integral defect, or constitutional depravity, but by a deviation" (Mitchell, *The Asylum*, 6). The judges of his ability to accomplish such a feat are the public, by whose censure or laud he can determine if he has created one of the country's few good works.

Whether or not he accomplished this goal can only be guessed, but what can be determined from the reading of this preface and the postscript in *Alonzo and Melissa* is the extent to which they intentionally differ, and ultimately serve different purposes.

As has been established in this section, paratexts act upon the texts by providing frameworks for interpretation. However, for *Alonzo and Melissa*, this is not the only framework that requires consideration. It is also important to remember that it was first published in a periodical and thus was surrounded by several other paratexts (articles, columns, advertisements, etc.), which also acted as liminal entities through which readers had to pass to encounter the story. Christopher Looby refers to the periodical context as essential because the “material circumstances of a text’s publication, circulation, and reception impinge consequentially upon attempts at critical understanding” (“Southworth and Seriality” 181). To fully understand a periodical text, the interaction between the text, the context, and the receivers must be considered. This interaction is demonstrated when *Alonzo and Melissa* is read within the *Political Barometer*. The interplay between units indicates that it is an object embedded in a series of specific cultural moments. For instance, in the July 17th, 1804 issue of *Political Barometer*, the death of General Alexander Hamilton is reported on the third page. Even though *Political Barometer* was an ardently republican publication, the loss of the great Federalist Hamilton is lamented when the author declares, “whether as politicians or Americans, we hesitate not to declare that in our opinion, the loss of such a man as Gen. Hamilton is an irreparable NATIONAL LOSS” (“Death of Gen. Hamilton” 3). On the following page, in the installment of *Alonzo and Melissa*, Alonzo and Melissa’s separation is cemented, and Alonzo’s parents are coping with their loss of fortune at the outbreak of the war. For weeks after, details of

Hamilton's death, funeral, and life are reported on the second and third pages of the newspaper, while on the fourth page, Melissa is confined in the Connecticut castle and allegedly dies.

Unsurprisingly, a period of national mourning, as reported in the *Political Barometer*, coincides with Melissa's experiences in the Connecticut castle. This coincidence reinforces what Linda Hughes and Michael Lund note in their work on serial fiction. As the serial unfolds and is consumed in stages, authors can adapt immediately to cultural occurrences in ways the author of the single book cannot. As a result, series often reflect their cultural context in some way (172). The uncertainty and fear that accompanied the death of a national figure who was instrumental in shaping the identity of the nascent country would certainly induce confusion, anxiety, and a sense of loss, which would, by extension, influence the series as a product of that culture. The death of Alexander Hamilton and the gothic interlude in *Alonzo and Melissa* are complementary because they both echo a sense of national loss, uncertainty, and change. The natural vehicle for the depiction of anxiety and would be the gothic with its fertile means to probe uncertainties.

Reinforcing this concept is the fact that the shift in tone from mourning to progress within the periodical and the narrative coincide as well. The newspaper's final reference to Alexander Hamilton's death on August 28th includes a statement that the subject will be discontinued. "And here, for the present, we rest the subject; at a future time we may, perhaps, attempt to show, that it was ultimately the wayward policy of federalism, that placed the weapons in the hands of Col. Burr which brought Hamilton to the grave" ("Remarks on the Late Duel" 2). Thus, the political tensions return as blame for Hamilton's death is placed on the ideals of federalism upheld by Hamilton and Burr. The article ends, though, with a justification for the months-long coverage of Hamilton's death when the authors respond to criticism with recognition of Hamilton's humanity. "To this we would remark, that with us, political opposition

ceases at the tomb” (“Remarks on the Late Duel” 2). The article concludes with a statement about the writers reporting only that which is strictly true about Hamilton. In the following installment, the *Barometer* reports other political occurrences, and *Alonzo and Melissa*’s gothic interlude ends with one of the few narrative direct addresses, in which the narrator laments the death of an admirable woman such as Melissa, and defends the story against criticism. “Reader of sensibility, stop—Are we not detailing facts? Shall we gloss over them with false colourings?” (Mitchell, No. 118, 4). Here the author again justifies the unpopular with the gloss of truth, echoing the justification in the previous issue for the countless articles lamenting the death of the admirable Hamilton. These justifications reiterate Mitchell’s commitment to the truthfulness in the novel and rationalize the veneer of accuracy.

These are but a very few examples of how paratextual elements influence our understanding of both versions of *Alonzo and Melissa* and *The Asylum*. Practically, what we can see is the extent to which Jackson blatantly plagiarized *Alonzo and Melissa*. Moreover, the paratexts reveal that *Alonzo and Melissa* both structurally and thematically influenced by its appearance in the *Political Barometer*, while those influences are obscured in Jackson’s novel and obliterated in *The Asylum*. The preface of *The Asylum* draws attention to its merits as a novel, suggesting its goal is to amend the genre that had gone so badly astray during the eighteenth century. This sentiment is only briefly mentioned in *Alonzo and Melissa*’s postscript when Mitchell admits the serial falls short of perfection. Put differently, the paratexts elucidate how *Alonzo and Melissa* and *The Asylum* are different texts, and allow us to determine that perhaps we should stop considering them as interchangeable, or even as the same text. At the very least, the differences exemplified here give evidence for why each should be examined separately.

The Readers

Moreover, an integral aspect of seriality is the reading experience. Series are fundamentally participatory because readers can speak to the series' popularity through continued patterns of consumption. Additionally, in many instances, readers participated through commentary, letters to the editor, critiques, and the like. Unlike the book, because temporal publication and consumption patterns bound periodical series, opportunities for audience participation occur during the production process rather than at the end. This opportunity for participation allowed a reciprocal relationship between the writer, who would need to adapt to the expectations of the audience, and readers, who could shape the outcome of the text through commentary and consumption patterns. Furthermore, the experience of reading the series requires extended reading practices. While the audience controls the reading pace of the book, the reading pace of the series is purposefully disjunct.

As Christopher Looby suggests, the extended storytelling inherent in the series requires the reader to fill in gaps in the story as they wait in suspense for the next installment ("Lippard in Parts" 28). This suspended narrative is a reminder to readers that a series is a commodified form sold in weekly instances often to wide-reaching audiences. Additionally, the rate of consumption for the series is dictated by a predetermined pattern of publication. For this reason, materiality, temporality, and audience participation are bound up in the meaning, form, and economics of periodical texts (Beetham 96). Mitchell's recognition of this fact dissuaded him from attempting *The Asylum's* parallel structure. The waiting period between each installment would have made a parallel structure in which two stories are told about two sets of characters disjointed, and would tax the patience of a readership accustomed to the conventions of the series. In short, the parallel structure would have endangered the commodity. Since the success of the periodical and by

extension, the serial narrative relied on the consuming public returning each week or month; the audience had significant influence over the survival and continuance of periodical or serial text. None of these difficulties are present in the book, which, once published, is a fixed object, whose consumption is controlled by the audience. In short, the consumption of *Alonzo and Melissa* was shaped by its seriality in ways the book versions and *The Asylum* were not, which set *Alonzo and Melissa* apart from both Jackson's *Alonzo and Melissa* and *The Asylum*.

Plentiful scholarship regarding the reading experience of the series exists, the goal of which is to attempt to understand what role periodical texts inhabited as cultural objects. Since Frank Luther Mott began examining the history of magazines in America in the early 20th century, scholars have been interested in the mass-consumption practices related to the periodical. As more recovery projects widely disseminate early American periodicals, the role of periodicals as cultural objects becomes more explicit. For instance, Patricia Okker, in an examination of the extended reading practices that developed with the magazine, suggests the reading of serial narratives was a social experience rooted in the culture it represents. Readers experienced the stories together, forming a cycle of watching and waiting (15). Lauren Goodlad refers to this cycle as routinized waiting, in which “the audiences of serial media cultivate the ritual of enjoying new installments followed by interludes of contemplation, discussion, and expectation—they develop a kind of serial habitus” (204). That being so, the reading experiences and the control exerted by readers, national identity, and prevailing culture acted upon the periodical, and by extension, the series, while the series simultaneously acted upon the reading practice of the audience. In other words, the periodical series is shaped by the symbiotic relationship between consumer and producer. In the case of the *Political Barometer*, the cultural upheaval that occurred with the death of Alexander Hamilton dominated the news cycle for

weeks. As Okker suggests, *Alonzo and Melissa* reflected the prevailing tensions because of the inextricable link between periodicals and the culture that produced them (27). The routinized waiting and the fact that *Alonzo and Melissa* was written weekly led to a series of installments in which the gothic was the most appropriate vehicle to convey the cultural tensions. Thus, *Alonzo and Melissa*'s unwieldy generic shifts can be tied to the temporal nature of the periodical and its grounding in the cultural moment in the summer of 1804.

Furthermore, extended reading practices of the periodical are grounded in the series' continued ability to defer closure to keep the reader engaged across installments. Matthew Pethers refers to this delayed gratification. However, as Pethers notes, the audience is not "just a hapless victim of the novelist's titillation, because the form also encouraged a high degree of interaction with the text" (72). In this interaction, audience members exerted a sort of virtual control that kept the writers accountable. The authors' justifications demonstrate this virtual control in the August 28th and September 4th issues of the *Political Barometer* when the authors of the tributes to Hamilton explain themselves. In the explanation, they recognize that their decisions might not be popular with the readers, and the justification can be interpreted as an attempt to keep the readers engaged. Additionally, the participatory nature of the periodical encouraged actual interactions, in which the consuming public debated the textual meaning and asked questions of the author, editor, and other audience members (Pethers 72). One example of interaction in the *Political Barometer* is when an audience member questions *Alonzo and Melissa*'s origins. In response, the writers' pause in the middle of the August 21st "To the Barometer" column to reference an audience member's question about *Alonzo and Melissa* and answer it. "A correspondent enquires whether Alonzo and Melissa is an original production. If he will turn to the beginning of the story (*Barometer No. 105*) he will there find it stated as not only

being original, but founded in fact” (“Alonzo and Melissa” 3). This response demonstrates one of the myriad ways in which the periodical constitutes an interactive space. The existence of a “For the Barometer” column inviting political commentary and audience interaction is an open invitation for audience participation. Carey Snyder and Leif Sorensen refer to these letter pages as “spaces both for debating pressing political and cultural topics and for readers to negotiate their relationship to a magazine and other readers” (124). Columns like “For the Barometer” were another marker of seriality in that they promised audience opportunities for interaction. The embedding of the narrative series within these interactive spaces indicated the audience could engage with the authors and editors in a way that was not possible in the book.

These considerations of the reading experience demonstrate the significant differences between the book and the series. The temporality of the periodical acts upon the reading and writing experiences in ways that other formats cannot duplicate. As a result, it is necessary to develop a practice of examining texts like *Alonzo and Melissa* as serial texts rather than as discrete units independent of the periodical. Not treating the serial as different from the book alters the meaning of the series and sets a different trajectory for the story, as can be exemplified by Jackson’s *Alonzo and Melissa* and Mitchell’s *The Asylum*. The problem with treating *Alonzo and Melissa*, Jackson’s novel, and *The Asylum* as the same story is that the material, cultural object is given an erroneous history, one in which origins are confused. By placing *Alonzo and Melissa* back within the periodical, we can see more clearly how it existed as a cultural object embedded in a specific cultural moment.

Origins

As has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, to understand the shape and impact of a serial periodical novel, stories like *Alonzo and Melissa* must be examined *as series within a*

periodical. By “rescuing” the novel, the meaning created by the cycle of production and consumption as well as the interactivity between the audience and author, text and paratexts are obliterated and the extended reading experience is flattened. Additionally, when the series is collected and published as a separate format, formal qualities inherent in the series publication are overwritten by the aesthetic preferences of the novel, which as Matthew Pethers notes, has led to a privileging of the book, the partiality for which stems from the Romantic era (63). The problem facing all scholars of the eighteenth-century periodical is these texts cannot comply with romantic predilections because they were embedded in their moment of production. By continuing to normalize the privileging of the book, we overlook critical textual and serial features (Pethers 63). In the case of *Alonzo and Melissa*, Daniel Jackson’s reproduction of the story as a book obliterates formal qualities like enjambment, suspense, and paratextual interchange. The result of Jackson’s reframing is a text that has all but disappeared as a series because it is unable to comply with the prevailing preferences.

But it could be argued that Mitchell too privileged the book. As can be seen by his preface to *The Asylum*, his goal was to rescue a form that, by his estimation, had gone astray to produce one of the “sublime specimens of writing,” thus improving America’s literary standing (Mitchell “Preface” 6). His proclivities indicate a turning point in which literary endeavors shifted from democratic ideals toward effect and a focus on the abilities of the writer. We can infer that Mitchell’s preference was that *Alonzo and Melissa* would have remained in obscurity, a draft of the novel Mitchell intended to write. In that case, the ephemeral periodical was an ideal setting in which Mitchell could test the potential of the larger, less restricted tale. However, before Mitchell could do so, Jackson pirated the novel, charting a new history from the one intended, and all but rescuing it from archival obscurity. Thanks to Jackson, *Alonzo and Melissa*

survived, perhaps still obscure, but warranting attention enough for 32 reprints and a rigorous debate over original authorship that lasted into the early twentieth century. By returning to the origins of *Alonzo and Melissa*, scholars can discover its rich complex history that began as something completely different from that which persisted into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Chapter IV: *Salmagundi*: Repetition, Innovation, and the Whim-Wham

In many ways, the goal of this project has been to define how early American serials challenge existing literary paradigms. What previous chapters in this project demonstrate is that the form of the periodical narrative is unique. It bears markers of seriality, paratextual exchange, and contains unclear generic boundaries. These markers create significant challenges for interpretation according to traditional literary structures. To adequately address periodical texts, we must first ask ourselves what it is we are examining, and secondly how to make sense of its complexities and oddities. As I have demonstrated throughout previous chapters, this is undoubtedly true of early American periodical narratives. The tendency to treat them as novels or collect and present them as books has obscured essential elements of their form and context. Periodical narratives bear indelible markers of their periodical publication, which leads to a different reading experience from that of the book novel. In this chapter, I extend these arguments to the periodical as a whole. Thus far, I have grappled with a means to read narrative texts embedded in periodicals, but have not yet addressed a fruitful means by which to investigate the periodical itself. In part, this is because the complexity of the periodical makes interpretation daunting. If serial narratives are complex and unwieldy, the periodical in its entirety duplicates these problems exponentially. However, examining the whole helps demonstrate the uniqueness of periodicals as coherent cultural objects, rather than as containers for strictly literary components (Scholes and Latham 521).

Treating the periodical as a coherent cultural object presents several challenges, the most obvious of which is early American periodicals have only recently become available. Because recent digitization projects have made entire periodical corpora accessible, scholars have only begun to examine them. In other words, early American periodical studies is as yet an emergent

field, and the practice of mining the periodical for its parts is still prevalent. Instead, Robert Scholes and Sean Latham suggest a different method; rather than mining periodicals for their discrete elements; they should be considered as autonomous objects of study (518). Although periodical studies has primarily developed in the study of modern and Victorian periodicals, its concepts also prove useful in elucidating periodicals outside the modern and Victorian eras. Latham and Scholes suggest, “one of the key elements for the creation of periodical studies is ... the assembly and dissemination of a core set of objects” (519). The implication of this quote is that the basis of periodical studies relies on identifiable texts that are available to scholars. This is, in part, why early American periodical studies is a nascent field. Revival attempts have been conducted for decades, but most of them have been focused on discrete elements within periodicals, particularly discernably literary elements. It has been only recently that scholars have begun to examine periodicals as autonomous texts. The result is a field that is only beginning to collect an accessible set of core objects and develop and apply theories that help make sense of them.

Looking to the field of periodical studies more broadly can help facilitate efforts to study early American periodicals as important cultural and historical objects. Many of the theories developed by modern periodical scholars identify inherent structures that can be applied to serially produced artifacts, whether they be enlightenment era periodicals or twenty-first-century television series. Because of these universal applications, concepts developed by scholars of modern periodicals can prove quite helpful for those examining early American periodicals as well. For instance, scholars have noted that seriality is an intrinsic feature of the periodical and that reviewing serial structures exposes various aspects of the periodical’s identity and meaning. Elements of the serial must be both iterative and open-ended, simultaneously familiar and

unknown, coherent through repetition, while always bearing a sense of newness. Serial structures also demonstrate a periodical's identity through the repeated concepts, themes, and structures. Additionally, the iterative structure of serial texts allows a variety of audiences to consume the series, from those who encounter only one instance, to those who avidly consume each issue. By nature, the successful serial must appeal to the range of possible audiences. These are a few ways in which the broader field of periodical studies can augment and enhance our understanding of early American periodicals.

One salient example of what the field of periodical studies has to offer an examination of early American periodicals is Washington and William Irving and James Paulding's *Salmagundi; or, the Whim - Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq., and Others*, which was published between January 24th, 1807 and January 25th, 1808. *Salmagundi* relies on both periodical structures that emerged and existed in the eighteenth century such as peritextual and epitextual repetition of concepts, multiplicity of genres, anonymity, and seriality, while also using these familiar forms to turn the periodical on its head to comment on social, political, and cultural mores and the practice of authorship itself. *Salmagundi*'s distortion of periodical norms begins immediately. In the publisher's note of the first issue, the authors state that *Salmagundi* was not intended to be published with the regularity that marks the periodical form. "As the above work will not come out at stated periods, notice will be given when another number will be published" ("Publisher's Notice," 5). The irregular publication dates belie the traditional periodical, for which the goal is publishing at regular intervals. This regularity was not a universal feature of early national periodicals, whose reliance on a volatile print market often led to irregular publication; however, these interruptions were not by choice. By choosing at the outset to publish at their leisure, the authors of *Salmagundi* disrupt the temporal regularity that

most periodical publishers so diligently attempted to institute. Another means by which *Salmagundi* distorts the traditional early national periodical is through closed authorship. As has been established throughout this project, one of the staple features of the early national periodical was open, accessible authorship. The editors of *Salmagundi* wanted no such thing. Instead, *Salmagundi* was limited almost exclusively to six distinct characters whose voices intermingle throughout the various issues. These were; Launcelot Langstaff, head editor, who wrote from his “elbow chair” about a variety of topics, generally setting the tone for the rest of the issue; Anthony Evergreen, a critic, writing mostly about fashion and social gatherings; Will Wizard, a theatre critic; Mustapha Rub-A-Dub Keli Khan, who reports back to his native Tripoli with letters that provide “orientalist reflections on American customs” (Garrett 116); Pindar Cockloft, Esq., poet; and finally, Jeremy Cockloft the younger, who authors domestic travel pieces (Garrett 116). Several other characters appear throughout *Salmagundi*, but the primary authorial roles are reserved for these few men.

By distorting norms of periodical, the authors of *Salmagundi* experiment with forms established in the eighteenth century. In early national periodicals published roughly between 1776-1820, editors welcomed contributors. In fact, on several occasions, editors would solicit authors, and in their absence, wrote a significant portion of the periodical themselves. For instance, Charles Brockden Brown’s work is a major staple of his *Monthly Magazine and American Review*, even after the original issue invites authorship of all types. In the first issue, Brown indicates it “is scarcely necessary to mention that every communication addressed to the Editor, and left free of postage at the publishers, will be gratefully received and immediately attended to” (“Other- No Title”). Despite similar pleas for contributors, early national periodical editors constantly wanted material, often returning to reprints of European content or material

from other regions to fill their pages. The authors of *Salmagundi* remedied the shortage of material that plagued the eighteenth-century miscellany by closing the periodical from external contributions, acknowledging their difference, and embracing the creator-as-author role the early national periodical often unsuccessfully tried to avoid. Another feature of the early national periodical is its miscellany. Multiple topics and genres were welcome, from scientific musings, poetry, fiction, republication of transatlantic texts, letters, etc. *Salmagundi* instead includes only a limited and controlled set of genres: poetry, elbow-chair musings, theatrical and social critiques, travel musings, and orientalist reflections on American culture. While none of these genres is irregular in the early national periodical, unlike the miscellaneous eighteenth-century magazine, *Salmagundi* is limited to those six genres.

Salmagundi demonstrates innovation and experimentation in other ways, but most often does so by taking recognizable forms and distorting them to parody the familiar periodical. It is important to note, though, that for parody to exist, the parodied entity must be identifiable and stable. Matthew Garrett suggests it is the repetition of personality that provides stability for *Salmagundi* and that the authors deploy experimentation through the disassociation between the act of writing and the referent. Put differently, the extended act of writing, rather than what is being written about becomes the primary means by which *Salmagundi* innovates (Garrett 117). Jared Gardner also argues that *Salmagundi* marks an experimental transition in the history of periodicals. Instead of a free exchange of ideas, the authors created a periodical strictly for nostalgic purposes. Gardner also notes that while *Salmagundi* echoed the past, it did so in an unapologetically contrary way by refusing many of the conventions that governed the periodical form (165). Additionally, Gardner suggests that *Salmagundi* creates parody when traditional magazine forms are “either exaggerated or turned on their heads” (165). The ability to parody or

joke about the periodical relies upon the establishment of the periodical norms established in previous decades. Laurel Hankins suggests *Salmagundi* demonstrates proto-romantic tendencies that were emerging in the early nineteenth century. Like Gardner and Garrett, she argues that *Salmagundi* uses the periodical form as the basis for innovation. This innovation is demonstrated when the editor-writers of *Salmagundi* say that they “care not what the publick think of us; and we suspect, before we reach the tenth number, they will not know what to think of us” (“From the Elbow-Chair” Jan. 24th, 6). Instead of writing to engage the readership, the goal of *Salmagundi* is to “instruct the young, reform the old, correct the town, and castigate the age” (“Article 1” Jan. 24th, 3). Hankins suggests the purpose of setting up this dichotomy between the collaborative reading public and the celebrity author is to enact a reformatory agenda. “Although *Salmagundi* parodies the overtly reformatory function of the eighteenth-century periodical culture, it also fully embraces and experiments with the potential for periodical reading to communicate effectively a reformatory agenda” (Hankins 450).

While these scholars argue that *Salmagundi*’s experimentation makes it unique, their focus on just a few aspects of the periodical is limiting. For instance, Garrett argues *Salmagundi*’s focus on the fictional moment of writing makes it unique. This is true of several of Will Wizard’s critiques and can be argued about Mustapha Rub-A-Dub Keli Khan’s letters. However, the argument is less applicable to Pindar Cockloft’s poetry, which more regularly contains traditional themes of domesticity and the virtues of the fairer sex. Jared Gardner argues that *Salmagundi*’s refusal of external collaborators sets it apart. While it is true that six voices primarily structure the periodical, there are subtle ways in which external collaborators shape the text, either in paratexts or letters to the editor. Laurel Hankins suggests the Irvings and Paulding initiate a dichotomy between the feminized reading public and the bachelor-author in ways that

enact a sort of proto-romanticism. She also recognizes that while editors of *Salmagundi* eschew collaborative reading practices, they do so within a traditionally collaborative genre. While this is helpful, Hankins does not delve into the fundamental structures of the periodical that allow Paulding and the Irvings to enact the dichotomies. Despite this fact, Hankins' argument demonstrates two critical things. First, the authors are exploiting the periodical's contradictions to experiment with the form, and second, the only means to do so successfully is by building the experiment on the well-established structures and conventions normalized in the miscellaneous periodical.

While these arguments begin to identify the interworking of form and content in *Salmagundi*, there are additional means to elucidate the complex and challenging text. In this chapter, I build on the foundation laid by Garrett, Gardner, and Hankins to argue that a more thorough examination of the interworking of structure and content further demonstrates *Salmagundi's* value as an autonomous text that utilizes the structures of the eighteenth-century periodical to reform. To do this, I examine *Salmagundi* through the concepts that have been identified by the broader field of periodical studies to investigate formal features inherent to serial, periodical texts that had crystallized in the eighteenth century. I argue that despite claims that *Salmagundi* departs from the traditional periodical form, through an examination of its structure, we can see that it is more like its eighteenth-century forebears than it seems. I argue that it is only because the early American periodical reached a level of recognizable stability in the eighteenth century that *Salmagundi's* authors were able to predict and direct its conventions to achieve a particular, innovative result. Despite denouncing traditional periodical features, the periodical relies on conventional frameworks like temporality, materiality, and consumption. Therefore, they cannot entirely renounce their audience because their audience spoke through the purchasing and

consumption of the periodical. In this chapter, I demonstrate how standard features of the periodical appear and act upon *Salmagundi* just as they do all periodicals, thus creating a publication that relies on the adaptation of conventional forms to innovate.

Periodical Studies

The broader study of periodicals demonstrates the intrinsic link between seriality and the periodical. The term “serial” applies both to the works published within the periodical but is also applicable to the periodical itself. The OED defines “serial” as cultural objects issued in successive installments to form a series (“Serial”). The very term “periodical” implies consecutive publication of objects, which by nature, create a series. The only means by which something can become a series is through the repetition of regularly occurring features such as characters, themes, structures, etc. One shortcoming of early American periodical studies to date is the attentiveness to *pieces* of periodicals as serial texts rather than the periodical itself as a serial object that acts upon the works within it. The lifting out of serial works, along with their re-branding as books, reiterates this problem. Recognizing serial narratives within their periodical contexts, as has been argued for in other chapters of this study, demonstrates how a serial component is embedded within a more substantial serial work, and therefore is connected to it in ways that shape its identity. At the same time, the identity of the larger serial text (the periodical) is also shaped by its content (the embedded serial text). This creates a symbiosis that a lifting out and re-branding nullifies. That said, the seriality of individual texts within the periodical relies on the seriality of the periodical itself, which is shaped by regular, repetitive features just as an individual, embedded work is shaped by repetitive serial features. Identifying the features and structures that mark a periodical as serial provides a means to understand it more clearly.

Modern periodical scholars have identified patterns that occur across serial media and eras. A foundational study by Robert Scholes and Sean Latham, in which they began to grapple with the boundaries and definitions of periodical studies as a field, begins to define these patterns. Scholes and Latham suggest that periodicals provide both new materials through which to examine Enlightenment, Victorian, and modern cultures, while also recognizing that periodicals are problematic because they challenge traditional taxonomic systems (Scholes and Latham 517). As scholars began to realize these problems, the need for an interdisciplinary new approach became apparent. Scholes' and Latham's goal in "The Rise of Periodical Studies" is to define this emergent, multidisciplinary field. One of the implications of their argument is that most of the theoretical applications posited by periodical studies can elucidate the interchange between the periodical as an autonomous cultural object and the culture from which it came. Furthermore, the conceptual frameworks provided by periodical scholars are not era-specific; instead, what they elucidate is era-specific. Matthew Levay, in an examination of modern periodicals, builds on this idea by suggesting that many of the arguments produced about modern periodicals can be applied across periodical genres and eras ("On the Uses of Seriality" ix). In other words, observations regarding features inherent to seriality can be applied both to comics like *Dick Tracy*, published in the twentieth century, and "The Gleaner," a magazine column published in the eighteenth-century. These features of seriality would demonstrate several things about twentieth-century modern culture and the early national culture, respectively.

Almost twenty years before Scholes and Latham's attempt to define the field of periodical studies, Margaret Beetham made similar observations about periodical texts. One of her most influential arguments is that boundaries of the periodical are ambiguous, at best. As an example, periodical authorship is always troublesome. In the periodical, the author is never the

sole voice or authority on a given text. Instead, in a single periodical issue, “even one number involves several writers, the editor, perhaps the proprietor, perhaps the artist or engraver, and the printer” (Beetham 97). This is even more troublesome when anonymity is a common practice. As modern readers, we can look at *Salmagundi* or “The Gleaner” and identify the authors, but readers in the early nineteenth-century would not have known that Murray or the Irvings and Paulding were the writers. Like early national periodicals, *Salmagundi* thrived on anonymity by obscuring authorship entirely and thus making democratic authorship possible. Although in some cases, modern scholars can deduce the original authors of a periodical series, many works remain anonymous. Complicating this is the fact that editors also exerted control over the publication conditions and installments in ways that are not always easily distinguishable. Beetham defines this as the “heterogeneity of the authorial voice” (97). Like Scholes and Latham, Beetham observes that the periodical is inherently linked to temporality in ways that lead to the reproduction of expected elements. “Since the periodical depends on ensuring that the readers continue to buy each number as it comes out, there is a tendency in the form not only to keep reproducing elements which have been successful, but also to link each number to the next” (97). The result is a regular, consistent structure. For example, the same column reappears weekly; the same serial story picks up where it left off, etc. It is these repetitions that keep the readers returning for more. They know what to expect because they have previous experience and know they are pleased by the result.

Similarly, Frank Kelleter argues that seriality builds on the repetition of forms. In each iteration, forms are revised, changed, and built upon as they occur. Kelleter suggests that because series do not have a pre-described ending, they must enact these revisions as the series progresses (101). Kelleter continues, noting that the challenge to those who produce the serial is

“renewing something by duplicating it” (104). In *Salmagundi*, the duplications are threefold—authorial, thematic, and generic. The same authors appear in each issue, their writing is always the same genre, and they write on consistent themes. While the iteration is necessary to draw the audience, as Kelleter and Levay note, there must also be a sense of newness to keep the audience’s interest. Levay marks the requisite balance between the new and the familiar when he suggests an “installment of a series is a specific, singular entity, but it is clearly affiliated with the series. However, if it aspires to any measure of renown, then an individual installment must produce the impression of novelty through established formal means” (“Repetition, Recapitulation, Routine” 105). Put differently, the progressing story or content is one means by which the serial is continually innovating. Levay continues by suggesting the anticipation of reading practices also influences the recapitulation and repetition of serial forms. For instance, the creator of a serial composition would need to anticipate the fact that the same readers would not be guaranteed in each installment. In early national periodicals, compounding this problem was the fact that periodical issues were often interrupted due to the volatile print market. If the need for repetition is evident in the more stable modern periodical, it is even more necessary in the unstable print culture of early America. Levay expands on this idea by suggesting, like Sean O’Sullivan’s concept of iteration, that recapitulation is “orienting information” for three potential audiences: 1. Those who have never read an installment, 2. Occasional readers who are familiar with the characters and narrative features, and 3. Enthusiastic readers who never miss an installment (“Repetition, Recapitulation, Routine” 113). In addition to the balance between scheme and innovation, the successful serial is one that balances these three potential audiences.

James Mussell presents a similar argument but takes into further account the fact that the periodical is built both on previous, iterative structures *and* the virtual future. Each issue

must repeat and build on structures developed in past issues while projecting the possibility that these structures will be repeated and built upon in future issues. Mussell notes that no periodical issue exists in isolation; instead, it exists in the larger serial structures that govern the periodical, and this structure is invoked through the repetition of formal features (347).

It insists on formal continuity, repeated from the past and projected onwards into the future, providing a mediating framework whose purpose is to reconcile difference by presenting new content in a form already known to readers. This new content, whether the next instalment of story, a one-off essay on a new subject, or a piece of news, is always tempered, regulated within a formal framework that readers have seen before. (347)

What this indicates is the form of the serial is evident in each periodical issue. Mussell describes the framework of a series as the form, or that which stays the same, and the content as that which changes. Because the balance of form and content structures the periodical, series look back upon preceding issues while also hinting at a virtual, or unspecified future in which more issues will be released that contain the same formal features as the present issue as well as the past issues (Mussell 349). In other words, while in publication, the periodical always exists in a kind of middling state. While narrative moves toward an ending, periodicals look to the past by repeating, or recapitulating, while also looking to the future. It is for this reason that the re-opening of a ceased periodical never provides the same reading experience as the original. Because periodicals, while they are being run, are predicated on not ending, we cannot replicate the reading experience after the fact. As scholars, we are always on the outside. That said, Mussell suggests that looking back upon the closed periodical still provides insights into the periodical's cultural influence (352).

These are just a few salient features of periodical studies that can elucidate a text like *Salmagundi*. Application of these concepts to the complex *Salmagundi* can begin to demonstrate how the Irvings and Paulding adapted and built on the features of the eighteenth-century periodical to create new effects. For example, they paired repetition, recapitulation, which were inherent aspects of the eighteenth-century periodical with new content that challenged the norms. However, they did so within a framework that echoed the extant eighteenth-century forms. Examining *Salmagundi* through the theories established in periodical studies allows a demonstration of what it is doing on a more specific level. It also exemplifies how *Salmagundi* is more than just a satirical magazine that “castigates the age,” a proto-romantic text, or a nostalgic attempt to repeat the periodical form of the Irvings’ youth. Instead, like the periodical form itself, *Salmagundi* exists in a middling state, reacting to the present while also pulling from both the past and looking to the virtual future. In the next section, I apply the theories put forward by Kelleter, Levay, Beetham, and Mussell to demonstrate *Salmagundi*’s form and exemplify how it contains the balance between form and content, scheme and innovation to reach potential audiences and build toward future forms.

Salmagundi

Miscellany marked eighteenth-century periodicals. For example, in each issue of *The Massachusetts Magazine*, in which “The Gleaner” was published, numerous authors contributed seemingly random articles. Columns like Judith Sargent Murray’s provided regularity and structure to issues otherwise marked by difference. This was one of the primary innovations of *Salmagundi*. Its structure changes from issue to issue, sometimes there are several articles from the various authors in each issue, while at others, there are as few as two articles. However, *Salmagundi* is ordered entirely by consistent genres and authors. With one exception, the authors

are the six bachelors who appear within the first few issues. Each time they write, they do so with the same style and in the same genre. Not every genre appears in each issue; but despite the irregularity, there is a hierarchy of sorts. For instance, Langstaff's elbow-chair musings always appear first, then either the letter from Mustapha Rub-A-Dub Keli Khan or the travel writing of Jeremy Cockloft. Both Cockloft and Khan provide a similar function; they observe the world around them. The difference lies in perspective. Cockloft provides domestic observations, while Mustapha provides the outsider's point of view. Next is the criticism of Evergreen or Wizard, or both, or neither. These voices, too, offer a sort of overlap of functions, but never from the same perspective. Wizard is the art critic, and Evergreen the fashion critic. Lastly, whenever Pindar Cockloft's poetry appears, it does so at the end of the issue. Periodically, Langstaff reinserts himself to comment on a preceding article, and sometimes his editorial commentary is interspersed throughout the installments. This structure is similar to the early national periodical in that it does not include a consistent structure across issues; however, it is different because only six authors contribute. Traditionally, the early national periodical is open to any contributors and only has consistent columns when writers provide sustained work.

While the framework of *Salmagundi* may not be as iterative as later serials, it is still markedly repetitive. Mussell argues this repetition is what "allows readers to differentiate between the form and content, regarding form as that which stays the same and allowing content, which varies, to flow" (348). As Mussell suggests, *Salmagundi* centers on a repetitive number of features that include persona and genre. The authors, or various personae, are always the six men, Langstaff, Wizard, Cockloft, Cockloft the younger, Mustapha, and Evergreen. The repeating genres of travelogue, orientalist reflections, poetry, editorial commentary, and criticism provide the periodical's structure. This structure becomes familiar enough that divergences from

it are referenced in the text. For instance, in the April 18th issue, Anthony Evergreen provides the first musings, explaining that Launcelot Langstaff was at length indisposed due to the gloomy weather. He explains Langstaff's melancholy as the reason for his absence and takes advantage of the opportunity to comment on his character.

Launcelot has now been above three weeks in this desolate situation, and has therefore had but little to do in our last number. As he could not be prevailed on to give any account of himself in our introduction, I will take the opportunity of his confinement, while his back is turned, to give a slight sketch of his character, —fertile in whim-whams and bachelorisms, but rich in many of the sterling qualities of our nature. (“By Anthony Evergreen” 4)

Evergreen's comment indicates a normalized structure that is so embedded there must be an explanation for Langstaff's absence. When Langstaff returns in the following issue, he refers to his depressed state again, this time indulging it in discussing his dead aunt Charity (“From My Elbow-Chair” April 25th, 2). Langstaff's absence also allows another narrative voice from within the repetitive structure to comment on his character as Langstaff has done for the other five contributors. This lends cohesion by completing the character sketches within the repetitive structures that have become ingrained in the periodical.

Another feature of repetition that lends coherence to the periodical is the act of metacommentary. I refer to metacommentary in this case as an extension of Frederic Jameson's term, distortion of a concept in order to comment upon it (as cited in Buchanan). Much like *Salmagundi's* distortion of early national periodical norms for the sake of satire, metacommentary occurs throughout *Salmagundi* in almost every genre and by every author. Perhaps the most salient instance of metacommentary is found in Mustapha Rub-A-Dub Keli

Kahn's letters to his friend, the "slave-driver to his highness the Bashaw of Tripoli" in which he tries to make sense of American customs and culture from the perspective of an outsider.

Mustapha's letters provide metacommentary in two ways. First, they distort American democracy and political values to satirize them, while also distorting the captivity narrative genre that was popular at the time. The perspective is also inverted. Instead of an American being held captive in an exotic land, Mustapha is a Muslim held captive in America. These reversals are one way in which *Salmagundi* is innovative. And yet, they are also traditional in that Mustapha's letters maintain the structure of epistolary, serial narratives. Furthermore, the early national periodical was the primary disseminator and place for the debate of ideas regarding democracy, virtue, and freedom. By using the medium to discuss the strangeness and impracticality of the new American governance, *Salmagundi*'s authors allow the audience to step outside the system and view it more objectively.

Secondly, the metacommentary present in Mustapha's letters allows him to satirize the role language plays in American society. Because the eighteenth-century periodical was open and democratic, it represented the discordant voices that Mustapha finds so abhorrent. At one point, he calls America a "logocracy, or government of words" in which business, democracy, and economy is governed by profuse loquacity ("Letter" April 4th, 4). He continues by describing the American logocracy's reliance on loquacity.

The whole nation does everything *viva voce*, or by word of mouth, and in this manner is one of the most military nations in existence. Every man who has, what here is called the *gift of the gab*, that is a plentiful stock of verbosity, becomes a soldier outright and is forever in a militant state. ("Letter," April 4th, 4)

If the American logocracy is militant, then the periodical is the chief mobilizer for the militant nation with its free speech and support of discordant perspectives. In subsequent issues, Mustapha continues to comment on this logocracy, suggesting this “gift of gab” permeates the entire economy and culture. He exemplifies this observation when he requests a pair of pants from his captors, but because he is a captive of the state, no money can be spent on him without approval from Congress. When he asks why Congress would be interested in talking about such a trifle, he is told it is for economy. He responds with exasperation when he writes “[i]f the government did not spend ten times as much money in debating whether it was proper to supply you with breeches, as the breeches themselves would cost, the people who govern the bashaw and his divan would straightaway begin to complain of their liberties being infringed” (“Letter,” April 25, 16). This metacommentary demonstrates how deeply words and freedom of speech permeate American culture and allows the reader to see clear links between democracy and language. By distorting the democratic periodical that was traditionally open to ideas and diverse contributors, and instead satirizing the American “logocracy,” *Salmagundi* signals a shift toward the more insular, topical, and author-centric nineteenth-century literary forms.

The turn from the reading public is another repetitive feature in *Salmagundi* and appears primarily from the pens of Pindar Cockloft and Launcelot Langstaff. Laurel Hankins refers to *Salmagundi* as the retreat of the “alienated artist” from the “feminized reading public.” She accomplishes this by argues that the Irvings and Paulding use the bachelor persona to reclaim domesticity by contrasting it with the feminine termagant (Hankins 2-3). This argument describes Langstaff quite well. In the issue where Evergreen adopts the elbow-chair persona, Langstaff is described as having spent his youth being “forever in love,” but also forever disappointed in love (“By Anthony Evergreen, Gent” 5). His disappointment leads to a tendency

to move through life as a spectator rather than an active participant, thus creating what Hankins describes as the “alienated author” persona. Evergreen reiterates this sense of Langstaff versus the domestic female, who often wrote for and consumed the early national periodical when he discusses Langstaff’s attitude toward housewives.

Nor is there any living animal in the world that he [Langstaff] holds in more utter abhorrence than what is usually termed a *notable housewife*, a pestilent being, who, he protests, is the bane of good fellowship, and has a heavy charge to answer for the many offences committed against the ease, comfort, and social enjoyments of sovereign man. (“By Anthony Evergreen, Gent” 10)

That Langstaff considers the man sovereign and the woman as pestering and miserable fellowship reinforces his characterization as the alienated bachelor and also provides a sense of why the interference of the reading public might be so abhorrent to the bachelors’ periodical project. In other words, the people, when allowed free access to the periodical as was common in the eighteenth-century, commit sins against the ease, comfort, and social enjoyments of the editors and authors, who, in the case of *Salmagundi*, would rather comment on society and castigate the age in peace.

Langstaff reiterates the alienated bachelor persona throughout the periodical. Another example is in the April 25th issue when Langstaff comments on his aunt Charity, who died because of her unwomanly tendency toward curiosity. “But the truth must be told; with all her good qualities my aunt Charity was afflicted with one fault, extremely rare among her gentle sex—it was curiosity. How she came by it, I am at a loss to imagine, but it played the very vengeance with her and destroyed the comfort of her life” (“From My Elbow-Chair,” April 25th, 6). This curiosity becomes Charity’s bane when a French “boarding house” opens across the

street, which Charity does not recognize as a brothel due to her long-standing virginity and tendencies toward naivety. She is confused about why the owner of the house would have such a large family consisting only of male visitors. Charity stares out the window for extended periods but is unable to satiate her curiosity, because she does not know French and cannot ask the visitors about the house, and because she has no context to understand what is occurring. She fixates on a particular Frenchman who visits and because she is unable to discern his identity becomes more and more morose and eventually dies of her whim-wham of curiosity, becoming “the seventh Cockloft that has died of a whim-wham” (“From My Elbow-Chair,” April 25th, 9).

This depiction of the naïve, meddling American virgin who does not fully grasp the dangers surrounding her is a common metaphor Langstaff uses for the eighteenth-century reading public. In the article mentioned above, Langstaff comments on the eighteenth-century feminized reading public through the personification of Aunt Charity. The reading public is too caught up in talking and reading about its own affairs to notice the degradation brought by foreign values or traditions. Even Charity’s name indicates the Christian concept of Christlike love, a reference to her Methodist leanings, which also supports the idea that goodwill to all is a naïve, pervasive American attitude. As Hankins would argue, these depictions are a means by which *Salmagundi* distances itself from traditional eighteenth-century society as demonstrated in the periodical and embodies the masculine, proto-romantic brooding bachelor. By painting the reading public as naïve and vulnerable, the knowing bachelor can control and influence it, therefore positioning himself as the genius.

I would argue that while Langstaff’s persona does indeed position the bachelor-author in opposition to the eighteenth-century feminized reading public, Hankins’ argument does not account for the other characters that appear in *Salmagundi*. For instance, Pindar Cockloft is the

opposite. Instead of venerating the alienated bachelor and depicting the feminized reading public as naïve and easily influenced, Pindar repeats common eighteenth-century periodical topics such as novel reading and temperance. For example, in one issue, he suggests he desires his poetry will help the fair sex maintain their virtue.

Still I do love the gentle sex,
To keep the fair ones of the age
Unsullied as the spotless page;
All pure, all simple, all refined,
The sweetest solace of mankind. (“To the Ladies” 19)

In these lines, Cockloft reiterates a pervasive theme in early national periodicals and novels—female virtue. Pindar continues these concerns about female virtue throughout his poetry. For example, he takes up another topic that had been frequently linked to female virtue in the eighteenth-century periodical, novel reading. He laments that instead of reading Grandison and Bunyan like their mothers, modern young ladies are reading “novels of a new and *rakish* race” (“From the Mill” 16). The rash of rakish novel reading, coupled with other dangerous cultural phenomena like theatre-going and fashion trends, concerns Pindar greatly because they could warp the minds of the fairer sex. The fact that Pindar reiterates common eighteenth-century topics suggests that the satirical periodical does not entirely venerate the bachelor-author. Instead, numerous issues are being discussed, some of which are forward-looking, and some of which repeat and comment on traditional topics from the era.

Each persona in *Salmagundi* takes up one aspect of eighteenth-century American culture to comment on it, reinforcing Matthew Levay’s argument that repetition and reiteration are staples of seriality (“Introduction” v). Because audiences weren’t always reliable, repetition

within Cockloft's poetry ensures they would receive the message no matter when it was encountered. For regular readers, there is enough difference in each commentary that interest is maintained, without the poetry becoming not overly repetitive. Also, the reiteration helps to build Pindar's characterization as someone who, despite his status as a bachelor, loves and wants to protect the fairer sex. Similarly, the occasional reader of Pindar Cockloft's poetry would be able to determine that female virtue is one of Pindar's favorite topics on which to wax eloquently. The single-issue reader would know by the end of one poem that Pindar is discussing issues that permeated society, such as novel reading, without the need to refer to previous installments. What distinguishes *Salmagundi* from other eighteenth-century periodicals is its structure is constant, while many other eighteenth-century periodicals demonstrated less structural stability.

While the repetitive features identified so far have addressed the individual personae, there are also repetitive and iterative concepts that arise between personae and genre. For instance, scholars have noted *Salmagundi* is ordered by the whim-wham. As the title *Salmagundi, or the Whim-Whams of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq. and Others* suggests, each writer is led by his whim-whams, or "fantastic notion, or odd fancy" ("Whim-Wham"). However, I would argue that the repetition of the whim-wham is another instance of *Salmagundi*'s metacommentary. While each writer purports to be led by their whims, which are collected and published periodically at a whim, the repetition belies the randomness that defines the term. Rather than writing about anything the fanciful mind can imagine, the six contributors are remarkably consistent. The result is, contrary to its name; *Salmagundi* seems to be a warning about the danger of the whim-wham. Instead of being governed by it, the writers distort the concept and write within a very intentional framework.

The word whim-wham is mentioned nine times in nineteen issues by four contributors, Pindar Cockloft, William Wizard, Anthony Evergreen, and Launcelot Langstaff. Primarily, references to the whim-wham are embedded in more extended commentaries about the folly of the authors' fellow townspeople. For example, in one issue, Langstaff writes about his uncle John, who had a great antipathy to doing things in a hurry, including marriage. "I am a young fellow with the world before me, (he was but about forty!) and am resolved to look sharp, weigh matters well, and know what's what before I marry:— in short Launce, I don't intend to do the thing in a hurry, depend upon it" ("Mine Uncle John" 19). This whim-wham causes John to die a bachelor, Langstaff argues. The women he courted either waited until they became old maids or married someone else in fear of becoming old maids, but loathe to do anything in a hurry, John resists and dies a lonely bachelor at sixty-three. This is one reference to the whim-wham, in which the writer speaks of its adverse effects rather than glorifying its good qualities. In each other instance, the term whim-wham is used as a similar metacommentary on its dangers. By repeating the concept across writers and issues, the whim-wham, like genre, becomes an organizing feature of seriality in the periodical.

Referral between issues is also a reiterative feature of *Salmagundi*, which is indicative of its temporal status as a serial, periodical text. According to James Mussell, the referral of one serial text to another

emphasises the qualitative difference between the current issue, which stands for a moment that has not yet passed, and those that have come before. The temporality of these back issues means that they have all been displaced, made part of the past; they belong to a different temporal order than the one being read. Yet the repetition of formal

components in the current issue means that these past issues, nevertheless, continue to have a foot in the present. (349)

In other words, the structural elements of the periodical look forward, providing a template that future issues will follow. In contrast, the referral to previous installments provides a backward glance at what came before. Because this is the ordering structure of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century periodicals, they are inherently serial. As Matthew Levay suggests, “signaling in its name a temporal pattern of production and consumption, the periodical is a material object born from the logic of seriality” (“On the Uses of Seriality” v). *Salmagundi* is no exception. Despite its pretenses toward innovation, *Salmagundi* is ordered by the repetition of themes, characters, concepts, words, and structure, like other periodicals. Its constant referral further solidifies its status as a text that is perpetually in progress, always looking both forward and backward while existing in the present.

Referral in *Salmagundi* occurs both between and within columns when individual personae refer to their previous work and that of fellow writers. Instances of self-referral, in which a person relates to something he wrote before, are often as simple as a passing phrase. For example, in the March 20th issue, Launcelot Langstaff opens by referencing his previous writing. “The Cockloft family, of which I have made such frequent mention, is of great antiquity, if there be any truth in the genealogical tree which hangs up in my cousin’s library (“From My Elbow-Chair” March 20th, 2). This quick reference indicates seriality in two ways. First, it not only refers to one past issue but several issues, suggesting that the Cockloft family is a topic of repetition throughout Langstaff’s writing. Secondly, it suggests that the Cockloft family will be the topic of Langstaff’s current writing. Since the pattern has been established, readers would be unsurprised that the Cockloft family would appear again. There are also specific self-referential

allusions to past issues. For instance, in the November 11 issue, Langstaff eloquently waxes about the beauties of the country in autumn. He writes about his ability to predict the weather and how he meanders through the countryside outside the Cockloft manor (“Autumnal Reflections” 4). In the December 31st issue, he directly addresses his rural musings. “Having returned to town and once more formally taken possession of my elbow-chair, it behoves me to discard the rural feelings, and the rural sentiments in which I have for some time past indulged, and devote myself more exclusively to the edification of the town” (“From My Elbow Chair” Dec. 31st, 2). *Salmagundi*’s temporality is marked by this self-referral. In the two preceding issues, Langstaff muses on his autumnal surroundings, but the reference to his travels from the country back to his elbow-chair in the city acknowledges that time has passed both for the reader and writer.

Referral between columns, a common dialogic feature of the eighteenth-century periodical, serves a similar purpose. In *Salmagundi*, the six writers regularly refer to each other’s roles and columns throughout the issues, further reinforcing the periodical’s seriality. One example of this is when Anthony Evergreen takes Launcelot Langstaff’s fit of ill humor (and resulting absence) to comment on his character. When Langstaff returns in the subsequent issue, he is quick to denounce his colleagues’ escapades. “I find, by perusal of our last number, that Will Wizard and Evergreen, taking advantage of my confinement, have been playing some of their confounded gambols” (“From My Elbow-Chair” April 25th, 10). Furious, he responds in kind with an article depicting them as conniving jokesters. He takes the opportunity to continue and comments on the character of Pindar Cockloft and Mustapha Rub-A-Dub Keli Khan as well. Langstaff then admits that he has suspended Will Wizard and Anthony Evergreen “from all interference in *Salmagundi*, until they show a proper degree of repentance, or I get tired of

supporting the burthen of the work myself” (“From My Elbow-Chair” April 25th, 11). The banishment lasts for several months, until the August issue, in which William Wizard finally reappears. These cross-issue references work to reinforce the serial structure, explaining why Evergreen and Wizard are absent, much like Evergreen’s explanation of Langstaff’s absence from the previous issue. These references also evince *Salmagundi*’s temporality by suggesting a passage of time since the last article while also alluding to future issues with the open-ended hint that Wizard and Evergreen will be allowed to return, if not immediately, at some point. When Will Wizard does return, the implication is that he showed adequate remorse. At the same time, readers can presume Evergreen was more reticent to apologize, for he does not return for several more months. Like the eighteenth-century periodical, in which contributors often refer to or preview their work, or comment on or criticize the works of others, this referral in *Salmagundi* reinforces its similarity to previous forms, and the playful adaptation of the eighteenth-century construct reiterates *Salmagundi*’s nature as a satirical text.

In Wizard and Evergreen’s absence, *Salmagundi*’s single external letter is included. It is written by a Demy Semiquaver, who responds to Evergreen’s “terrible phillipick against modern music, in No. II of your work” (“To Launcelot Langstaff” 5). In the letter, Semiquaver defends modern music. He also makes a note of *Salmagundi*’s influence on the town, suggesting ladies are reading Bunyan and *Pamela*, after Pindar Cockloft’s admonishment regarding the “modern” novel. He desires to re-order the thinking of Mr. Evergreen through his defense. He concludes by suggesting music and science could usurp written and spoken communication and serve as some sort of universal language (“To Launcelot Langstaff, Esq” 11). This instance in which a purported external voice is included stands on its own, Langstaff does not respond to it or introduce it, and an example like it does not reoccur in the periodical. Its lone presence as a sort

of democratic challenge to the written language that orders *Salmagundi* provides the auspice of the eighteenth-century periodical that *Salmagundi* so often echoes, in which reader interaction in the form of letters was common. It is unusual in the overall framework of *Salmagundi*; however, I would argue that its placement serves a particular purpose. It appears in the issue succeeding the banishment of Wizard and Evergreen. Because two of the most familiar voices are removed, it becomes necessary for Langstaff, as the general editor, to include something to fill the pages of the issue. Because the structural framework changed, Langstaff has no choice but to turn to the audience. This alludes to a common problem in the early national periodical; editors would regularly solicit writers to have enough material to publish. By banishing two of his most adept and prodigious writers, Langstaff is forced to break the pattern. In this way, Semiquaver's letter demonstrates how *Salmagundi*, like other early national periodicals, is reliant upon its structure and regularity. Any disruption has implications on the serial structure of the periodical, which demonstrates the symbiotic relationship between the structure, temporality, and readership of the periodical.

Additionally, the inclusion of Semiquaver's letter is alluded to in a prior installment, in which the editors, presumably Langstaff, Wizard, and Evergreen, discuss the correspondence they have received from the audience members. "We have been considerably edified of late by several letters of advice from a number of sage correspondents, who really seem to know more about our work than we do ourselves" ("Article 1" April 18, 19). These letters denounce what the authors of *Salmagundi* have published. Undeterred, the editors suggest they abhor apologies and refuse to change their ways. They also express a desire to be left alone. "We wish to heaven these good people would attend to their own affairs, if they have any to attend to, and let us alone. It is one of the most provoking things in the world that we cannot tickle the public a little,

merely for our own private amusement” (“Article 1” April 18, 19). In other words, the editors wish to take a form that in the eighteenth century has been inherently social, traditionally democratic, and open to public input and close it. They purport to write only for themselves; however, they do so in an inherently public medium. By refusing the democratic nature that traditionally governed the miscellaneous periodical of the eighteenth-century, they distort the form to provide their metacommentary. However, in order to distort the form, they must first engage with structures their audiences would recognize. By writing about these editorial comments, *Salmagundi*’s authors allow them to influence the periodical’s structure.

There are other ways in which *Salmagundi* mimics traditional periodical structures that also reflect external participation. For example, there are several references to the sage Linkum Fidelius, both within the individual pieces and several epigraphs. References to Linkum Fidelius also appear in footnotes written by William Wizard on various issues. From what can be gathered from the references, Linkum Fidelius is a learned sage who was once a beloved mayor of Gotham (New York). According to *Salmagundi*’s personae, Linkum Fidelius wrote extensively on theatre, Chinese culture, slave trade, and the nomenclature of American towns. He published a treatise on man, and regularly, his Latin translations are included with article epigraphs. These cross-issue references serve as what Sorensen and Snyder refer to as “linking elements.” (125). According to Sorensen and Snyder, these linking elements can be found in serial narratives as well as other genres or aspects of the periodical. In the case of *Salmagundi*, the references to Linkum Fidelius bind paratexts within and across issues, lending the periodical a certain coherence. The name Linkum Fidelius, or “faithful link,” also suggests the binding nature of the scholar’s work across issues. The use of Linkum Fidelius echoes the eighteenth-century miscellaneous publication, in which epigraphs and explanatory footnotes were pervasive.

In addition, the use of the Latin pseudonym is a common feature of the early national periodical, reflecting the conventional borrowing of names from democratic Greek and Roman traditions. Like many eighteenth-century periodical depictions of preeminent republican figures, Linkum Fidelius is always referred to with an air of the legendary and seems to provide a sort of regular philosophical and scholarly presence throughout *Salmagundi*.

As these interpretations of *Salmagundi* demonstrate, examining the elements of repetition, recapitulation, and referral can help us to understand how the periodical looks both forward, toward the insular, genius-author that becomes the staple of romanticism, but only does so by first looking at the structures that pervaded previous decades. In this way, *Salmagundi* does what James Mussell suggests, links to the past, and projects possible futures (345). By relying on structural consistencies that are familiar to the audience, the authors of *Salmagundi* can establish new norms by distorting the old ones. However, their rhetorical purpose can only be achieved if their audience can recognize the features. *Salmagundi* contains a consistent structure governed by familiar, regular elements. Because of this familiarity, the content can use satire to upend and distort the norms of periodical structure and provide metacommentary for the city, the culture, the periodical, and themselves.

Elucidating the Form

As has been demonstrated through this chapter, it is the careful balance of form and content that allows *Salmagundi* to accomplish the authors' reformatory agenda. *Salmagundi* reforms by embedding its biting satire and metacommentary within the well-established periodical structure. As scholars like Matthew Garrett, Jared Gardner, and Laurel Hankins have noted, *Salmagundi* purports a reformatory identity to comment on and elucidate the age through its commentary on social norms. All three scholars note *Salmagundi*'s complexity. Matthew

Garrett suggests *Salmagundi* commodifies the act of writing and demonstrates his argument through the disassociation of specific articles from the actual town events. Jared Gardner recognizes the shifting from the open miscellany of the periodical that invited and encouraged audience engagement to the closed form of *Salmagundi*, in which the audience is not invited to contribute. He also recognizes that the authors of *Salmagundi* drew on contradictions to convey their message to comment on the periodical form by throwing it on its head. Laurel Hankins argues that the periodical displays proto-romantic conventions by reclaiming the domestic sphere for the masculine bachelor-author. What Garrett, Gardner, and Hankins demonstrate is that *Salmagundi* is forward-looking and reflects a shift in the periodical culture. All three also suggest that it is within the structure of the periodical that this occurs. However, none spend significant energy in determining what that structure is, and how *Salmagundi's* form as a *periodical* contributes to these changes. Instead, by building on the work of these three scholars and applying the theories developed by scholars of periodical studies, we can see how periodical studies is a fruitful means through which to demonstrate *Salmagundi's* existence as a cultural artifact that relies on the miscellaneous periodical structures while directing them to achieve a particular result.

Applying concepts of periodical studies demonstrates how *Salmagundi* is a complex, iterative text that relies not only on early American periodical structures, but also, through its structure and commentary, helps us to reimagine the broader periodical culture in the early national period. Resituating *Salmagundi* within the framework of the periodical rather than other literary genres reveals the intricacies of its nature as a periodical. Additionally, periodical studies provides a fruitful framework by which we can understand periodicals as complicated, difficult, but important texts. Margaret Beetham demonstrates how formal and material characteristics

fundamentally impact the meaning of periodical texts, making them difficult to understand. She notes, “it is not surprising that it has been very difficult to accommodate the periodical within the traditional taxonomy of literary genres” (98). By accepting the periodical as disruptive of traditional taxonomies of literature, we can begin to understand how the periodical should be addressed more broadly. Theories put forth by Beetham and others demonstrate why *Salmagundi* is underrepresented in early national literary scholarship. It turns on its head an already tricky, complex form that has only recently become available thanks to the advancement of digitization and dissemination projects.

Chapter V: Teaching the Early American Periodical in the Undergraduate Classroom

Several inherent difficulties face the teacher of early American literature. Students come to class unfamiliar with and unequipped to read early American texts and struggle to see their value to modern culture. If this is true of early American literature generally, the prospect of adding periodicals into an already challenging classroom environment seems daunting. This sentiment is not limited to early American literature. As Elaine Showalter suggests in her work on teaching literature, all teachers of literature feel anxiety in the classroom because teaching literature is difficult. This difficulty is because, unlike the mathematician or physicist, mastery and conveyance of literary material require an “externalization of our personality and psyche” (3). Combining this psyche externalization with a lack of student preparation gives the early Americanist every excuse to avoid bringing periodicals into the classroom. However, failing to do so causes a problem. If, as I have demonstrated throughout this project, it is valuable and necessary to study periodical texts to learn about early American culture, we cannot stop with intellectual, isolated research on discrete texts. The same principles that make periodicals important objects of study for the researcher make them important objects of study in the classroom. The question early Americanists face then is whether the value of the periodical as a cultural object makes it worth tackling the numerous difficulties of bringing it into the classroom? I argue yes because, as many scholars who have already approached this subject have demonstrated, the very act of doing so helps students overcome their resistance to or unfamiliarity with seemingly alienating Early American texts. By studying periodicals, students can begin to question hegemonies and assumptions commonly reinforced in the Early American literary classroom. In addition, periodicals allow us to demonstrate connections between early American and modern cultures.

One challenge in the early American literature classroom is the linear chronology that often shapes syllabi. Chronology is inherently problematic because exclusivity too often shapes the coverage approach of early American literature. As Jeffrey Hole suggests, the chronologies studied in the early American literature align with the victors, which results in implicit support of the master narrative (3). If the instructor is not careful, chronological, or linear readings that focus on breadth rather than depth result in the continued marginalization of authentic, diverse voices that abound in early America. These voices continue to be marginalized because they do not fit the mold of “exemplary” or exceptional American literature as it has been defined. Students in such literature classrooms become passive consumers of the hegemonic structures that continue marginalization of diverse literary voices. Thomas Hallock suggests these structures stem from the assumption that “American Literature” implies stable national or generic boundaries that lead teachers of early American literature to “skip to the good stuff,” citing Puritans and perhaps founders on their way to Thoreau, Emerson, and Poe (288). Hallock reminds us that this is a mistake if we want truthful depictions of early America. “Recovering a realistic image of the time and place of early America demands that we spend as much time with Mary Rowlandson as with the Virgin of Guadalupe” (288). By favoring holistic representations, instructors can provide students a picture of what American literature was like as it was produced rather than depicting an idealized, modern re-telling of what’s been deemed necessary.

But resisting the hegemonic inertia as Hallock advocates is difficult. As instructors, how do we implement representative texts when access to them is difficult? How do we do so within the framework provided by anthologies published by companies like W.W. Norton and others? Such questions undergird the teaching of early American literature and provide compelling reasons for the coverage of non-traditional texts like periodicals. Since periodicals represent

democratic ideals and open access to cultural mores, they naturally provide more clear depictions and representations of the early American experience. However, the periodical has been largely forgotten in the history of early American literature. This is because, as Karen Weyler argues, delayed access to periodical texts led to a skewed view of sentimental literature and a fetishization of the single book, “elevating the novel in importance over other genres, particularly poetry and shorter and serialized fictions” (“Seriality and Susanna Rowson’s *Sincerity*” 164). In other words, the boundaries of early American literary genres are also not stable or fixed, and the continued fetishization of the book, which is a more stable form, at the exclusion of other genres precludes the representative approach Hallock advocates.

Representation requires the preference for stability to be set aside. Once this is accomplished, students can engage in what Duncan Faherty and Ed White describe as the integral work of early American studies— the recovery of forgotten or neglected texts (“Welcome to Just Teach One”). However, embracing what Faherty and White describe as “the strange blend of opportunities and obstacles” in such work does not necessarily ease the challenge of including recovered periodical texts in the classroom (“Welcome to Just Teach One”). These difficulties include spotty or uneven access to texts, lack of access to print editions, and a lack of institutional reward for the recovery work, the lack of secondary scholarship, anonymity, and the preference for familiar genres and authors (Faherty and White).

Another difficulty for the student and instructor of early American literature is the students’ lack of familiarity with reading early American texts. Robert Scholes has postulated that a problematic deficiency for incoming students is their lack of close reading skills that result in the inability or failure to focus closely on a text’s language and to recognize the otherness of a text’s author (166). Instead, students either assimilate the perspective of a text or detect a

difference of perspective and don't thoughtfully acknowledge it (Scholes 169). Scholes argues these deficiencies stem from a broader cultural problem, that reading and interpretation are an individual's prerogative, and therefore texts can be made to say what individual readers desire. The problem with modern culture is an inability to read a text that seems alienating or different, as most early American texts are. Several early American literature teachers echo Scholes' observation. For instance, Joseph Fichtelberg suggests Early American fiction, in general, requires new reading practices (200). This is certainly true of the periodical, for which there are several factors that influence the reading experience, such as extension, delayed gratification, form shaped by seriality, and paratextual exchanges.

For many instructors, the first instinct would be to grapple with the reading problem at the level of canonical, anthologized texts. Many would avoid complicating the students' reading experience with multivocal periodicals, for which the reading practice is entirely different. But as many scholar-teachers have discovered, the students' reading experience and abilities can be enhanced significantly with periodical, serial readings. For instance, when Patricia Okker introduced periodicals as primary texts in her classroom, her students immediately recognized the need for different reading practices. The sheer volume of information required what she describes as "the art of skimming" (3). The periodical invites selective reading, in which the reader skims for topics of interest before conducting selective close readings. In other chapters, I referred to the "liminality" of paratexts. The cursory skimming leads the reader through the liminal stages to deeper selective engagement. But teaching new reading practices has proven fruitful because, as Susan Belasco notes, serendipitous browsing, or what Okker refers to as "skimming," allows for the periodical readers to discover things they didn't intend to learn, therefore fostering a unique sense of discovery (Belasco 94). Bringing the periodical into the

early American literature classroom allows students to become active participants, discovering and questioning for themselves how periodicals challenge contemporary conceptions of context, aesthetics, canonization, and construction of identity (Okker 2). The benefit of teaching periodicals is that they help students understand how to read other early American texts that often address similar themes or ideologies.

The goal of this chapter is to advocate for the teaching of periodicals in the classroom. Understandably, the evidence presented thus far about the challenges of teaching early American periodicals, the inertia of a hegemonic master narrative, a lack of access to primary texts, and the necessity of developing new reading practices may seem to undermine the goal of this chapter. However, for each of these daunting challenges, there are threefold reasons to teach periodicals. Periodicals are dialogic, and their heteroglossic nature requires readers to reconsider the idea of dominant literary forms. For example, after introducing periodicals into her classroom, Patricia Okker recognized they are a fruitful means for students to interrogate issues of race, class, and gender that were prevalent in early America, but can be concealed by the established literary canon (4). Periodicals also help diffuse the assumption that great literary works are produced in a vacuum. Instead, a study of periodicals demonstrates that from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries, a vast number of America's most famous "literary" authors maintained a symbiotic relationship with periodicals. Once exposed, this fact reminds teachers and students that "belles lettres" hardly dictated the definition of "literature" in the moment of production (Spengemann 122). Instead, William Spengemann argues a belletristic approach appeared "early in the twentieth century, when American literature ceased to be a predominately journalistic issue and became an academic enterprise; when magazine editors stopped saying what American literature ought to be and the professors started explaining what it is" (127). Suggested here is a

fundamental relationship between literature and its cultural moment. By returning to the magazines and newspapers that shaped literary communication for centuries, we can remind ourselves and our students that literature is not alienating. It is instead is an act of cultural and human expression, and therefore reinvigorates the relevance of the literature to their own lives. Terri Amlong concurs in a teaching reflection when she emphasizes that texts are innately cultural artifacts and that bringing them into the classroom can help students experience the reading more like the original audience did (2).

Another reason to teach periodicals is they give political, social, and cultural context that broad anthological coverage cannot. Ellery Sedgewick reminds teachers of literature that “presentism,” or application of present-day values to past eras, tends to result in the substitution of a post-modern canon as representative of literary values at the time of a text’s production (26). Sedgewick argues that anthological collections or selections of individual works are filtered through not only the twenty-first-century instructor but also the twenty-first-century editor and collector of those works, who are working within the attitudes and values of the present (26). Eliminating the periodical context of works reinforces presentism and provides an anachronistic set of values to a work that did not exist at the time of its production. An example of this tendency is Judith Sargent Murray. She is known and venerated today for being one of the first outspoken American advocates for women’s rights and capabilities, but that each of her essays appeared in a magazine, and therefore existed in conversation with other, broader social issues is rarely discussed. Current audiences read her novella *The Story of Margareta*, even though it did not exist as a novella until 1995. Returning to magazines and periodicals in which several what we now consider “influential literary works” were published allows students to recreate the excitement and anticipation of the initial reading experience, demonstrating the fact that most

literary work is the result of its culture (Gangnes 114). In other words, it is more advantageous for students to examine the “Federalist” series from the magazines and news sources in which the essays were initially published. Doing so allows readers to grasp *The Federalist’s* cultural influence and context, rather than mining it in a twenty-first-century vacuum to understand how it shaped America. By returning to the periodicals, students can learn that the “unified nation of letters” never existed and that instead, early political conversations more closely resembled those we are familiar with in modern culture.

Elaine Showalter argues that one of our primary objectives as instructors of literature is to help students uncover assumptions about the past and present, and as a result, examine our own assumptions (25). As several early American literature scholars also point out, as teachers, we cannot overlook our assumptions when constructing our courses. In an early American literary tradition riddled with such assumptions, one effective means to foster students’ interrogation of their assumptions is for them to experience cultural issues through the periodical. Doing so allows them to see that America was more diverse and boundaries more fluid than coverage-based courses portray. Furthermore, periodicals enable students to become active agents in the learning process and teach them about primary source research in ways they might not learn otherwise. Because of these many important factors, I argue that teaching periodicals in the early American literature classroom is necessary, despite the aforementioned challenges. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I delve into some of the problems of teaching early American periodicals and provide suggestions for overcoming the challenges. I conclude by suggesting a schema for two undergraduate classes in which periodicals can be successfully introduced, the undergraduate literature survey, and an upper-division topics course, to dispel reticence and encourage the use of periodicals in the classroom setting.

Representation

A representative approach to early American literature requires a commitment to the idea of canon expansion. As Jeffery Markovitz notes, “early American literature’s perceived value is problematized as a stalwart of a hegemonic master narrative” that is “patriarchal, colonial, Eurocentric, and hierarchal” (64). For this reason, students often find it difficult to connect to or find the works relevant. Scholars have begun to consider if this is due to the construction of the canon, and as a result, have started to question how classroom materials like anthologies often propagate canonical constructs. William Spengemann argues these issues stem from the assumption that there is a clearly defined “American literature” that begins with Columbus and is mainly represented by colonialism. However, when he begins to parse what the words “American” and “literature” mean, he demonstrates that they are little more than constructs, and what they mean is anglophile, and plays, poems, and fiction (122). These definitions leave out many texts, for instance, those written in colonies that did not become part of the United States. Also left out are “unliterary” genres that circulated widely and had a significant cultural impact despite their lack of adherence to belletristic categorization (122). Instead, Spengemann advocates an alternate definition for “American literature.” He argues it should be “everything having to do with civilization in the New World since the European discovery,” and that ‘literature’ should include “every written document that will respond to literary analysis” (Spengemann 135). When this occurs, we can examine early American works for what they are and what they tell us rather than what they lack in comparison with European forms. Unseating the qualifications placed on the phrase “American literature” allows us to read Royall Tyler and Phillip Freneau without attempting to measure them against Daniel Defoe or Walt Whitman (Spengemann 135).

Spengmann's argument demonstrates how early American periodical texts can contribute to a re-defining of "American literature" to explain what it looked like, and who it represents. The miscellany of the early American magazine demonstrates the diversity of the culture and provides perspective from a wide range of people. Simply through exposure to broader perspectives, students will begin to learn that canon and anthology are constructs, just like the phrase "American literature" is a construct. They will then be able to interrogate issues of colonialism, patriarchy, and race that are difficult to expose when using anthologies built upon canonical understandings. Melissa Dennihy follows a similar line of inquiry when she cites Laura Aull's argument that anthologies as classroom texts suggest to students a field with stable boundaries, and do not convey the messy process of canon construction (29). To teach her students otherwise, the final assignment in her American literature classes asks students to construct their own anthologies. The results included "an incredible range of racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, class, and geographic backgrounds, reflecting students' thoughtful considerations of the many ways we might define 'American'" (Dennihy 30). Michelle Burnham started her class by having students read Spengemann's "What is American Literature," which allowed them to interrogate the politics of anthologies. She then had students read *Amelia, or The Faithless Briton*, one of the first American serial novels ("Amelia and Attachment Disorders"). What Dennihy and Burnham's teaching reflections demonstrate is that adopting a curious stance as researchers, teachers, and students of early American literature exposes the shortcomings of the canon and helps students question assumptions that have long plagued the field.

In their intro to *Just Teach One*, an open-access project dedicated to recreating early American texts for classroom use, Duncan Faherty and Ed White also suggest that part of the

difficulty with teaching early American literature is “fitting unusual works into course rubrics geared for the canonical” (“Welcome to Just Teach One”). They continue by suggesting the risk of teaching non-canonical texts is to the reduction of new texts to an auxiliary of standard canonical works (“Welcome to *Just Teach One*”). Such statements expose two assumptions generally made about the early American literature classroom. First that the canonical *should* be central, and secondly that “new texts” such as periodical series like “The Gleaner” or *Alonzo and Melissa* shouldn’t be taught as fundamental parts of the syllabus. Such problems would depend on the structure of the early American literary course. For instance, in a class that either interspersed periodical works or that was designed to question assumptions of canonicity, periodicals could easily be used as primary texts that unseat long-standing hegemonic constructs. As Michelle Burnham and other scholars note, archival research of primary texts rather than a reliance on secondary research allows students to become agents of literary recovery (“Amelia and Attachment Disorders”). Such approaches demonstrate to students that the boundaries of “early American literature” are not only fluid, but still under construction, and only through recovery projects will it be broadened. Courses built with the goal of recovery allow new periodical texts to become central to the curriculum and are prime examples of texts that can unseat long-standing assumptions. At the very least, periodical texts can be taught alongside canonical works to demonstrate that they are “a rich source of cultural and literary history” (Amlong 2).

Furthermore, as several scholars have noted, periodicals are indicative of mass culture insofar as the public has long defined what is popular. As Spengemann suggests, before the twentieth century, “American literature” was established by magazine editors, who, in turn, responded to the demands of the consuming public (127). Following this logic, the very presence

of the periodical in the American literature classroom unseats the canon as it has been defined by literary experts and helps students understand that literary boundaries are mostly nonexistent in the moment of textual production. Another assumption that can be dispelled is that canonical authors only participated in traditional literary genres. For instance, studying periodicals can demonstrate authors like Charles Brockden Brown, the “first American novelist,” also wrote in and edited periodicals, and didn’t necessarily differentiate between the two genres.

Substantiating this idea would be as simple as teaching the in April 1799 issue of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*, in which “Edgar Huntly, a Fragment” first appeared as a precursor to covering *Edgar Huntly*, which has long been a staple of early American literature courses. This could be done by using the open-access *Charles Brockden Brown Archive and Scholarly Edition* or by using a digital library database like *American Periodicals Series Online*. Another option would be to construct an entire course by pairing works by authors who wrote both stand-alone novels or plays with their periodical works. Doing so allows students to see that authors like Melville wrote both *Moby Dick* and *Benito Cereno*, a serial novel published first in *Putnam’s Monthly*, or that Edgar Allan Poe was editor and a regular contributor to *Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine and American Monthly Review*. By teaching Hamilton, Jay, and Madison’s “Federalist” series as individual texts alongside the collected *Federalist Papers*, students learn that the early republic was less monolithic than assumed and more accurately was several hard-won, diversely-minded regions. By teaching early American periodicals, we start to unseat the master narrative that has been held in place by what Joan Brown describes as “tradition and inertia” (538), and begin to demonstrate that early American literature was primarily shaped by the people and democracy that produced it.

Access and the Archive

The extent to which periodicals can be integrated into syllabi and classroom practice is dictated by access to archival objects. Whether digital or print, the ability to disseminate the objects to students undergirds the success of periodical integration projects. And as many scholars have noted, these questions of access are complex. For instance, Susan Belasco observes the challenge scholars and teachers of literature often face when integrating periodicals into their classrooms. “For the teacher who wishes to capture the importance of periodical literature for students, there are some significant problems of access and availability” (90). Recent digitization projects have somewhat alleviated these problems. Even so, the most well-considered and constructed databases are powered by entities like Proquest and the American Antiquarian Society and are available to institutional libraries at a cost. These projects exclude small institutions without the necessary budget for additional database access, and independent scholars, who often lack necessary affiliations with universities (Cordell et al. 2). The result of such problems is that at many smaller institutions, either instructors are required to rely on anthologies, or scrape together issues of magazines to present them in classes. In part, these issues lead to the support of the established canon, for, as Joan Brown notes, works that are not disseminated can, of course, not be read, and therefore canonized (541). Often, it is easier for instructors to rely on the canonized, anthologized texts because they are easily accessible, instead of going to the trouble of integrating periodicals into their syllabi.

For the instructor committed to more comprehensive examinations of early American literature, there are several options, but none are without risks. For the instructor at a larger institution, several digital databases provide materials for classroom study. The well-funded institutions or institutions that have the luxury of convenient geography near large public

libraries, special records rooms, and well-maintained institutional archives allow students the opportunity to handle and view the material objects they study. However, not all institutions have such luxuries. Many institutions have to rely on digital access to archival materials like the pay-for-access databases, and many institutions cannot afford even those databases. Recognizing that expansion of our understanding of literature as a cultural entity is vital to depicting American literature as it existed, many scholars and organizations have undertaken open-access collective projects. For instance, in her early American literature classrooms, Karen Weyler uses both pay-for-service databases and “free databases, such as Cornell University Library’s *Making of America* site and Colonial Williamsburg’s *Virginia Gazette* site” and *Just Teach One* (“Early American Literature”). Other projects like HathiTrust or Google Books contain vast numbers of digitized texts. However, such projects can be as problematic as they are helpful because of their lack of adequate cataloging (Cordell et al. 23). Such digitization projects do not contain the necessary metadata for adequate searching or research. Mitchell’s *Alonzo and Melissa* is an example of the trouble with open digitization practices. Several editions of Daniel Jackson’s text are digitized across various open-access projects. Still, some attribute the text to Mitchell while others attribute it to Jackson, and many instances do not differentiate between the thirty-two editions. Such inconsistencies complicate discovery projects or examinations of textual provenance.

Despite these problems, digital databases are often the only option for instructors who want to teach periodicals. One of the complications with using digitized periodicals in the classroom is the need for instructors to be intentional with their choice of materials. Evelyn Tribble argues badly digitized editions of older texts are not uncommon. As a result, teachers are tasked with mitigating the potential misinterpretation of texts when they are converted from page

to pixel (41). Instead of treating digitized texts as equal to original, physical copies, Tribble suggests instructors can orient students to digitized texts by acquainting them with the methods used to create the texts. These methods include knowledge of copyright, familiarity with optical character recognition (OCR) or text encoding initiative (TEI) processes that make texts searchable and accessible, basic knowledge of HTML, and viewing and handling older texts (when possible) (42). Familiarizing students with the back-end procedures used to digitize texts helps them understand the difference between transcriptions and original copies, and demonstrates the limitations of digitized texts, or at the very least, helps students know that they cannot equate the digitized version with the originals. In one example of the benefits of pairing of digital and physical objects to acquaint students with print culture and reconstruction of neglected texts, Siân Silvan Roberts used the *Just Teach One* digitization of an issue of the *Columbian Magazine* to prepare students for a two-part assignment. In part one, they went to the New York Public Library to view magazines and newspapers in early American archives. In the second, she asked them to edit and footnote a copy of *Glencarn*, an early American novel (“Exploring Editorial Work”). The project was fruitful; students gained a concrete understanding of the difference between the reading experience of the book and the far more haphazard and varied array of information found in the magazine and newspaper (Roberts). This sort of project also allows students to understand relationships between discrete units of a serial novel and the periodical as a larger whole. Digitizations, like those on *Just Teach One*, often do not demonstrate these relationships due to the removal of the periodical paratexts.

Roberts’ assignment demonstrates a vital issue with some of the recovery projects so far conducted on early American periodical texts. The majority of the projects have taken discrete units in a series and compiled them. Even the *Just Teach One* projects, except for one in which

an issue of the *Columbian Magazine* was digitized, select serial novels or texts and compiles them. The *Charles Brockden Brown Archive and Scholarly Edition* similarly removes Brown's periodical writings from their contexts and collects them or treats them as discrete units. While such projects helpfully allow for open access to early American periodical texts, they nonetheless remove those texts from their context and, therefore, significantly change their meaning and reception. The problem with teaching serial, periodical texts as discrete units or excerpts of texts without their periodical context is, as Patricia Okker affirms, doing so is no different than teaching from anthologies or books (2). Throughout this project, I have demonstrated the myriad ways in which early American texts can be misconstrued when removed from periodicals. Here I argue that teaching transcribed serial novels, even those transcribed faithfully from the originals, is equally problematic. It is essential, therefore, to bring periodicals into the classroom, whether they be digital or print, to demonstrate to students the "confusing vitality" of American periodicals and to exemplify them as the seat of developing literary trends (Okker 2). By turning our students to these media, they can experience for themselves the depth and breadth of American culture as it was represented by wider swaths of the population, rather than a few of "literary genius."

The instructors at institutions with rare book rooms or access to early American periodicals can more easily enrich their courses with print editions of early American periodicals. If an institution has digital access to early American periodicals through databases like *American Periodicals Series Online* or the *American Antiquarian Society Historical Periodicals Series*, instructors can focus on digital periodicals. Courses that teach from databases can include instruction on how the digitization process works, including which periodicals get digitized and why, how TEI and OCR impact the reading experience, and gaps or limitations that may be

present even in the digital archive. For smaller institutions without access to either archival print materials or digital databases, free, open-access sources can be used, or materials can be borrowed from other libraries. For instance, for this project, Isaac Mitchell's *Political Barometer* was requested via interlibrary loan from the New York Public Library on microfilm. Also, funds to access such materials would be an excellent proposition for institutional grants. Such projects require instructors to be aware of which magazines are necessary objects of study and to be able to discern which digitizations are preferable over others. Nonetheless, there are several methods by which instructors of early American literature can either augment or focus their classes on early American periodicals.

New Reading Practices

Once instructors have decided which periodicals to integrate into their classrooms and how to integrate them, they must consider how to teach students to read said works. Robert Scholes suggests one means by which students can be prepared to read difficult literary texts is to “include more overtly persuasive or argumentative texts in our curricula” (170). Therefore, an expansion of genres taught in the literary classroom can help provide students the training they need to read well. Periodicals are a prime means to expose students to the variety of fiction, persuasive essays, poetry, and other genres for which Scholes advocates. However, students cannot be expected to read these miscellaneous works easily. Patricia Okker suggests that teaching students to “skim” or read selectively trains them for reading periodicals (3). Okker found two interesting things when she integrated periodicals into her class. First, that selective reading and full exposure to various texts fundamentally changed her students’ conceptions of literary history, and second that traditional analysis and interpretation tools yielded the least successful assignment results. (3). Okker’s teaching of periodicals echoes Margaret Beetham’s

argument that conventional literary approaches do not transfer well to periodical texts as a whole. Instead, more interdisciplinary strategies are required (98). By this logic, frequently exposing students to more than the traditionally literary and canonical texts allows them to develop successful classroom reading practices that benefit them beyond the Early American literature course.

Several scholars who write teaching reflections for *Just Teach One* echo what Okker notes in her article. Toni Wall Jaudon's students struggled to read early American texts because they "possessed strategies that would let them read *Moby-Dick*, but not [*Charlotte Temple*] or other texts like it" ("Amelia and Charlotte in the Liberal Arts Classroom"). In his introduction to *Just Teach One*'s transcription of the November 1786 issue of the *Columbian Magazine*, Jared Gardner explains "the experience of reading through an early American magazine is somewhat disorienting for the modern reader, as contents appear to be gathered at random" ("The Early American Magazine"). However, within the periodical's seeming randomness, there always exists a subtle, intentional, editorial hand that, upon study, demonstrates both the logic of the magazine and the heterogeneous model for early governance represented within it (Gardner). Unlike books, periodicals always have a series of influences, whether those be overt or subtle, and readers of periodicals can be made aware of how these influences shape the reading and interpretive experience. In another *Just Teach One* reflection, Michelle Burnham also noted her students' difficulty with reading magazines. After having her students study the JTO issue of *The Columbian Magazine*, Burnham suggested her students struggled due to unfamiliarity with the form. She found her students read the issue of *The Columbian* "straight through, beginning on the first page and moving forward page by page as if it were a novel or a poem or a blog post or an autobiography" ("The Columbian Magazine and Genre"). Burnham then had to explain to her

students that magazines are episodic and less linear, and consumers generally skip around, reading what they find most interesting, and leaving out the rest. Burnham recognized, through her teaching of *The Columbian Magazine*, that she had to prepare her students for reading and discovering a variety of unfamiliar genres. Providing students with the tools to navigate and explore genre was for Burnham, an essential aspect of fruitful research and study of the Nov. 17th, 1786 issue of *The Columbian Magazine* (“The Columbian Magazine and Genre”).

Another way instructors have taught students to read periodicals is through comparison and juxtaposition with more familiar forms. For instance, David Lawrimore asked students to read two popular sentimental book novels, Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Vicar of Wakefield* and Susanna Rowson’s *Charlotte Temple*. The purpose was to introduce themes and issues in sentimental literature before entering into more difficult serial texts like Susanna Rowson’s *Sincerity*. He asked his students to consider how *Sincerity*, Susanna Rowson’s 1803-4 sentimental serial novel, “might fit within the miscellany of the other [periodical] texts as well as how reading it in installments might change the way we view the work” (“Format, Genre, and Nosebleeds, Reconsidered”). To fully expose students to the nuance of serial texts, Lawrimore included pages of *The Boston Weekly Magazine*, in which an installment of *Sincerity* was published and asked students to think about its context. By comparing book novels and serial novels in this way, Lawrimore’s students recognized audience, rather than genre or theme as an organizing feature of the periodical, and were able to attribute this to an editorial function of the periodical format (“Format, Genre, and Nosebleeds, Reconsidered”). Susan Belasco similarly notes that juxtaposition, or “the way in which items are placed in close proximity—is among the most engaging characteristics of periodicals and can often reveal unexpected insights about works and writers under study” (91). Unlike the book, Belasco suggests, serendipitous browsing

of the periodical is essential, but browsing needs new context, as our students most frequently think of “browsing” as web surfing, which strips articles of context and disassociates them from a larger whole (91). Belasco’s argument implies that to teach periodicals successfully, we need to explain the difference between the linear reading of print book novels, web browsing of digitized periodicals, and browsing of print periodicals in context. By doing so, we can orient students to the ways in which the periodical reflects cultural contexts differently from book novels. Like Lawrimore, Belasco brings in transcriptions, original magazine issues, and bound novels into her classrooms to provide the necessary framework for analyzing the periodical. When teaching *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Belasco uses “mock-ups of issues of *The National Era* to allow students a sense of how *The National Era* appeared to the original readers” before having them read the book novel (91-92). By doing so, Belasco teaches students the wide-reaching persuasive and rhetorical role of the novel as it appeared in the antislavery magazine, therefore demonstrating how Stowe’s voice was one component of the publication.

J. Stephen Murphy addresses the disorienting nature of reading seriality in a related, but somewhat different fashion. In his classrooms, he has students read serial stories weekly, as installments within the pages of magazines. Students are given one magazine issue weekly (if possible) and asked to read one installment at a time throughout the term. He does so to exemplify the “heteroglossic, intertextual, and indeterminate” nature of the magazine, which “embodies these characteristics in even its most ordinary instances” (183). The goal of this activity is to help students understand the development of a novel from series into a book, and demonstrates the differences between the magazine, serial, and novel formats (Murphy 183). By framing the reading this way, Murphy brings his students’ attention to the fact that the serial novel is simultaneously interrelated with the periodical and autonomous book. After teaching the

serial, Murphy has his students read the text as a volume (186). By teaching the text serially, then discussing how it is shaped into the book format, Murphy can exemplify to students how the periodical format existed as an experimental space. Mitchell's *Alonzo and Melissa* is an example of the benefits of such a practice. By teaching it serially, then following with *The Asylum*, students would be able to see how it shifted and grew, impacting different audiences and creating different meanings as it transitioned from the pages of the periodical to the pages of the book.

In summation, what instructors of periodicals have noted is that magazines are difficult to read, particularly for our students who have been trained in more traditional genres. Students must first be taught how to navigate the miscellany and heterogeneity before they can hone in and focus on particular units. Once they do, we can demonstrate that periodical texts respond to literary analysis, but the means to enter into the analysis is different. We can teach students new reading methods such as the art of skimming to help them navigate the liminal spaces, to apply more familiar literary concepts like narrative analysis to demonstrate how to read individual periodical elements. By returning to a more contextualized, less rigid reading, students can discover the richness of cultural reading practices the periodical encouraged. By establishing this sort of reading in the early American literature classroom, instructors can reinforce the democratic principles that were shaping the political and social landscape of the late eighteenth-century. Furthermore, by reading early American magazines, students can more fully grasp how the periodical acted as a means for both circulating and participating in the discussions that shaped early American culture.

Periodicals in the Survey Course

The approaches outlined in the chapter thus far help determine methods by which periodicals can be integrated into classrooms, but have not addressed in which types of classes

periodicals best appear. In these next sections, I outline two undergraduate courses in which periodicals can be integrated into the curriculum; the general education literature survey course, and an upper-division topics course for English majors. In the following sections, I outline methods for teaching periodicals successfully in each of the classes and consider some of the ways re-imagining the curriculum can help students understand the variety of genres and formats that shaped the early American literary tradition.

While the parameters of the literature survey course differ by instructor and institution, in this instance, I define it as the chronologically structured American literature course that covers works from colonial beginnings to the Civil War, a massive span of approximately 400 years. Jennifer Page notes one of the difficulties of such a course is that trying to cover multiple centuries in a single semester takes herculean efforts to engage students. “As a result, many of us take the classic coverage approach to conquer this beast: We get through as many texts and authors as possible in the time we have, providing quantity sometimes at the expense of quality” (133). As I mentioned earlier, this approach tends to support the better-known colonial and Anglocentric works, as well as the traditional literary forms of drama, poetry, and fiction. As a result, the literature survey is one place the canonical master narrative is most frequently upheld. Within the traditional, sweeping chronological design, it can be difficult to prioritize what some consider “non-literary” genres in favor of better-known works. The textbook staple, the literary anthology, is problematic as well. While several anthology publishers have specifically sought to broaden their inclusions, they still mainly follow the canon and continue to marginalize many groups. By including periodicals alongside or instead of anthologies as classroom texts, particularly in an introductory course like the literature survey course, instructors can help

students see past the traditional literary approaches and instead see the various ways in which ephemeral periodicals shaped early American literature.

Some scholars have begun to question the traditional design of the literature survey course, which tends to be shaped more by texts than outcomes. This, coupled with the rise in outcomes-based learning mandates in American universities, has led instructors to prioritize course goals over textual coverage. Outcomes-based course construction is one means by which the literature survey can be re-considered. Kristen Lucas and Sarah Fiona Winters turn the idea of coverage and breadth as moral imperative on its head when they advocate for the literature survey course built around themes rather than movements or chronological developments. By doing so, they were able to jettison the rigid features of the traditional survey course. At the outset of the course design, their department thought carefully about the desired outcomes associated with the survey course, which were, in essence, to introduce students to disciplinary practices such as close reading, analysis, critical terms, and defining features of literary forms (155). By using backward design, or a pedagogical approach that favors results over specific content, Lucas and Winters were able to shed the chronological breadth format and focus instead on getting their students to think like developing literary scholars. The benefit was that the approach allowed Lucas and Winters to meet students where they are. It “tacitly underscores the relevance of English studies ... and invites them into the discipline” (Lucas and Winters 155). While such a departure from chronology and canon in a survey course may seem extreme, what Lucas and Winters suggest does demonstrate one thing that helps considerably in a survey course; thinking through desired outcomes before shaping the curriculum. Doing so allows instructors to reason through the tension between breadth and depth, and perhaps make decisions that allow for more flexibility of content and genre on their syllabi.

Through their backward-design approach, Lucas and Winters recognized that chronological coverage is not necessary for teaching essential course outcomes, and so freed themselves and their students from canonical imperatives. By instead focusing on skills students need, they designed a course that allowed for any number of texts to be taught. The problem with Lucas and Winter's design is that while the idea of the themed survey course is interesting, in American universities, such a course design would be problematic if widely implemented. For instance, a complete jettison of the chronological coverage would likely be problematic for education departments needing students prepared for Praxis licensing exams. Lucas and Winters' idea does have merit in that by focusing on outcomes, we can begin to question whether the rigid, coverage-based course is the best approach, and perhaps start to relax the coverage imperative. By shaping courses based on outcomes, we can begin to think more strategically about what it is our students should know after completing our courses. This strategic thinking can help literature instructors, who, as Elaine Showalter notes, often define their classes based on texts rather than competencies, or acts students are expected to perform (24).

In my survey course, I modify the coverage approach by filtering each of the chosen texts through the course goals and outcomes. To begin, I identified the following objectives:

By the end of the course, students should be able to

1. read and respond critically to a variety of texts by considering their historical, philosophical, social, rhetorical, or cultural contexts;
2. demonstrate knowledge of the representative forms, genres, and styles from different historical eras;
3. Apply theoretical and critical approaches to of a wide variety of texts;
4. Analyze literary works as expressions of cultural and social values;

5. Create compelling research-based arguments about literature utilizing disciplinary procedures.

Readers will note that these objectives are not content-specific. In fact, I would likely craft both a survey course and an upper-division topics course based on the listed objectives. The ability to apply the objectives to multiple classes speaks to the benefit of an objectives-based approach, it allows for the flexibility of content without sacrificing the goals of the course.

In my survey courses, I follow a more traditional chronological approach, but make a point to include more diversity of genre by supplementing the assigned anthological readings with periodicals and other works. While I would like to avoid reliance on the canon, it is crucial that education majors, who make up a sizeable representation of students in my survey courses, have the necessary exposure to canonical works to pass their licensing exams. Additionally, I teach at a small liberal arts institution where we do not have ready access to periodical databases. Integrating periodicals in my classroom requires interlibrary loans or open-access digitization projects like *Just Teach One* and the University of Michigan's *Making of America*. These constraints make regular periodical instruction throughout the course challenging. By selecting specific units to compare the canonical with the periodical allows for the demonstration of a broader American culture. For instance, when teaching Charles Brockden Brown, I integrate the April 1799 issue of *The Monthly Magazine and American Review* into the unit on *Edgar Huntly* to help students think more broadly about Brown as an author. Similarly, I pair Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with issues of *The National Era* in which it was first published to demonstrate to students how it was participatory in a more significant discursive cultural movement. Like David Lawrimore states in his course reflection on *Just Teach One*, I find this sort of pairing allows students to explore how reading the text in installments "might change the

way we view the work” (“Format, Genre, and Nosebleeds, Reconsidered”). Such lessons can be conducted with a single issue from *The National Era* or other periodicals, rather than entire issues, to which I may not have access.

In another teaching reflection on *Just Teach One*, Keri Holt outlines how she integrated the *Just Teach One* issue of *The Columbian Magazine* into her early American literature survey course. She began by explaining the *Just Teach One* project and its effort to “reconsider the existing literary canon” (“A Literary Lab”). She then presented the issue of *The Columbian Magazine* as a “literary lab” in which her students could experiment with the knowledge and skills they had developed throughout the course. Holt found the issue of *The Columbian Magazine* made it possible to have fruitful discussions about “the value of studying works that aren’t often studied or taught” (“A Literary Lab”). Students were assigned articles by Benjamin Rush and the anonymous “Contemplant” before being allowed to explore the magazine on their own to select an item for summary and presentation to the class. Holt found this approach helpful because it allowed students to be participatory in the discovery of unknown elements, authors, and cultural conversations reflected in the magazine. Melissa Dennyhy requires a similar assignment in her literature survey course. Instead of asking her students to discover a single article in a periodical, the course instead concludes with students reconstructing anthologies and writing justifications for why they would include or leave out specific works. She found this project, much like Holt’s, required students to “make choices about literature, rather than passively consuming a set of teacher-required texts” (23). Students were then able to grapple with definitions and tangibly demonstrated the limitations of the early American literary canon (30). While I have not yet included a project like Dennyhy’s or Holt’s in my early American literature course, I appreciate how both provide open invitations for students to critically analyze

the construction of syllabi and anthologies, which is one of my overall course aims. Both Dennihy's and Holt's assignments would be a viable means to conclude a course by allowing students to be active in the recovery process, while also permitting them to question what they are reading and why.

As Holt and others note, another benefit of teaching periodicals in the survey course is they allow students a unique opportunity to experience textual discovery and primary research. Rather than the course consisting entirely of instructor-curated texts to which students must respond, in courses that integrate periodicals, students can discover texts and topics that interest them. Karen Weyler suggests this is one of the most exciting aspects of teaching periodicals when she discusses her approach to teaching Susanna Rowson's serial novel *Sincerity* in parts. She argues serial reading "encourages students to engage in metacognitive thinking about their reading experiences" ("Seriality and Susanna Rowson's *Sincerity*" 162). Weyler advocates for having students read serial texts to teach them reading methods different from those in the traditional literature classroom. She also allows students to focus on the reading process rather than the reading experience. Through teaching serially, Weyler recognized students were more quickly able to move beyond author-based studies and challenge the definition of national boundaries ("Seriality and Susanna Rowson's *Sincerity*" 165). In a survey course, it might be challenging to tackle a sizeable serial novel like *Sincerity*. However, many smaller novels could as easily be taught weekly. For instance, *Amelia, or the Faithless Briton*, is only a few installments, and the anonymous *Journey to Philadelphia* is short as well. Both novels are published on *Just Teach One* and would allow for the same objectives to be met. Their brevity is appealing because they permit the pairing with canonical works like *Edgar Huntly* and *Charlotte Temple*. An additional benefit to the short works is that the instructor who does not have access

to digital archives needs to cobble together fewer issues of a magazine for the students to engage in contextual discovery beyond the novel installment.

While I have not implemented many of these ideas, I plan to do so in the next iteration of my early American literature survey course. I will begin the course with William Spengemann's article "What is American Literature?" which unseats many of the standard practices of canonicity and requires readers to question what defines "American" and "Literature." I will draw students' attention to Spengemann's conclusion that "'American' signifies everything having to do with civilization in the New World since the European discovery, and 'literature' includes every written document that will respond to literary analysis" (135). Using Spengemann's text as a springboard, I will then ask students to read canonical (anthologized) works and, as often as possible, bring in works that demonstrate a broader approach. Of course, since periodicals began circulating in the eighteenth century, the format cannot be used to illustrate breadth before 1704 when the first newspapers were published, and 1741, when Andrew Bradford's *American Magazine* was released. Post-1741, however, I will integrate several periodicals into classroom readings to demonstrate both that periodicals were influential in the developing American culture, and that very few of the most famous canonical authors frequently participated in periodical culture. I will end my survey course by assigning a project similar to Holt's, where students explore a magazine issue and chose an element to read and present to the class. As part of the presentation, students would be required to discuss what the magazine issue demonstrates about the canon and how we should define "American literature" after the completion of the course.

The Upper-Level Topics Course

While some institutions have limited access to digitized or physical archives, many do have access to both or either, and database access can be gained for small institutions through additional funding avenues. In this section, I assume access to periodical databases and archives and outline an upper-level topics course for English majors that focuses on the periodical. Again, I advocate beginning with Lucas and Winters' suggestion to start with the desired results, and then progress to thinking about how using periodicals as primary texts can facilitate the core disciplinary skills such as critical thinking and reading, literary analysis, and argumentation (155). In an upper-level course, it will be easier to follow Lucas and Winters' thematic design more carefully, since chronology and coverage are not fundamental aspects of a topics course, which by nature is designed to be more open-ended. In short, a theme-based framework like the one Lucas and Winters discuss as a survey will, in my mind, be more appropriate in the upper-level course. In crafting the themes for the course, I will identify specific popular topics in early American literature such as gender, race, liberty, or virtue. These themes are representative of the majority of early national texts and would allow for comparison between baseline canonical texts and periodicals that convey similar ideas.

In such a course, instructors can implement serial reading projects, much like Karen Weyler and J. Stephen Murphy suggest. A single, serial work or multiple serial works could be read across successive weeks, and time could be devoted to each class meeting for discussion, both about the reading experience and the context of the installment. I will choose shorter works like *Amelia* or *Journey to Philadelphia*. Doing so avoids the daunting challenge of teaching an extensive work like *Sincerity*, or *Alonzo and Melissa*, which would require the entire semester, and lead to students reading multiple installments per week, thus degrading the serial experience

to some degree. For each installment, students will be asked to peruse or “skim” the entire magazine issue before focusing in on the single installment. While print sources are, of course, ideal in recovery projects, I argue the same outcomes can be met with digital sources, particularly if students have access to well-digitized copies like those curated for the *American Periodicals Series Online*. In such a course, I will also pair periodical study with that of book novels, which were regularly published in the early national period but were not as popular or as widely read as periodicals. I will include the books to compare their address of the thematic issues and to inform students on how early American scholars often frame their research. Periodicals could then be integrated as comparisons to help students understand how they challenge traditional concepts of authorship, literary history, and genre.

Sarah Werner suggests another approach is to focus on the history of the book to teach the value of primary research and enhance students’ interpretive capabilities (15). In her seminars for the Folger Undergraduate Program, Werner focuses on three things, books as physical objects, books as exerting cultural concerns, and books as vehicles for texts (16). While Werner focuses on early modern English literature and the book, her foci can easily be extrapolated and adapted for a course on periodicals. While I do not teach at an institution with easy access to archived print periodicals, for the sake of this section, I will assume I do. My course will be conducted from the archive, and the goals adapted to periodicals as physical objects, periodicals as exerting cultural concerns, and periodicals as vehicles for texts. To prepare students for archival work in periodicals, I will have students read excerpts from Ian Watt’s *The Rise of the Novel*, one of the seminal works in the history of the novel. Students will be asked to consider how the “rise” narrative became embedded in literary history, and begin to think about how the book novel became a privileged genre in literature. Cathy Davidson’s

Revolution and the Word will be used to complement Watt's, as it provides an excellent basis for print culture and history in America. I will also include excerpts from Jared Gardner's *The Rise and Fall of Early American Magazine Culture* to provide a basis for considering periodicals in American culture. Students will then be taken to the archive and asked to analyze physical texts, including observations about the placement of the text on the page and the paratextual exchange. The course introduction will demonstrate how the periodical exerts the cultural concerns helpfully discussed in detail in Davidson's and Gardner's books. Students will also be asked to consider pivotal texts like *The Federalist Papers* as they appeared in periodicals and compare the periodical texts to how they are usually consumed in a collected book. In terms of considering how periodicals are vehicles for texts, students will be asked to consider reading practices for periodicals as opposed to books. Students will juxtapose the privilege of the book format over the periodical, even though a significant portion of the fiction produced in the early national era was published in periodicals, including some of the most famous canonical texts. While a course like the one Werner conducts is quite specialized and could only be undertaken at certain institutions, and perhaps would be better suited for graduate programs, many of the course goals and objectives would enrich a more limited course as well.

One final approach to an upper-level course on periodicals for upper-level English majors would be to have students participate in the process of recovery. As an example of such a course, in one of my graduate courses at Idaho State University we transcribed and digitized a series of periodical texts and published them on a website for classroom and research purposes. The project was titled *Early American Serialized Novels*. As part of the culmination project for an upper-level course, students could digitize novels and post them to a university-hosted site. Siân Silvan Roberts discusses a similar assignment in her teaching reflection on the *Columbian*

Magazine on Just Teach One. In asked her students in one upper-division elective course to edit and footnote George Watterston's 1810 novel *Glencarn*, to give them a sense for the editorial work that goes into preparing a recovered text ("Exploring Editorial Work"). Another benefit to a course-wide digitization project is it would provide hands-on opportunities for students to understand the differences between the physical object and the digital reproduction and the process by which a text is digitized and made searchable. Also, students could consider how digital texts require adapted reading practices. Digitization projects allow students to be taught, as is suggested by Cordell et al., Belasco, and myriad others, that the best means to use digital databases for primary research showing students to recognize the differences between the print and digital formats, including the processes by which texts are digitized. In such a course, I will assign an entire magazine issue to each iteration, like the issue of the *Columbian Magazine* on the *Just Teach One* website. The benefit of digitizing full issues rather than discrete units within issues is that the practice would preserve the paratextual and contextual setting in which texts were initially published, and therefore maintain the valuable cultural context of the magazine in a way that is more accessible to students.

As I mentioned, I have not yet taught such a class. However, by hypothetically constructing an upper-level course and examining the existing pedagogical approaches for such establishes a foundation for future teaching. Ultimately, what has been found throughout this chapter specifically and the entire project more broadly is that the periodical is not only a worthwhile object of scholarly examination, but for the same reasons, it is worth incorporating into course syllabi at all levels. I go further and argue that it is *because* of the richness that periodical studies bring to a scholarly understanding of literary history periodicals that need to be examined in more depth in critical and academic spheres as well as in classrooms. Doing so

allows students to recognize the complexity of periodical texts, and demonstrates the flaws with some recovery projects to date. The early American periodical lays bare the assumptions that are embedded in the teaching and study of early American literature. By studying these nuances, students and scholars can begin to re-think the rich literary history of the early national period and understand how deeply periodical influences have become embedded in American culture.

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Intro

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