

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PRISONERS OF LOSS: AN ATLANTIC HISTORY OF NOSTALGIA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

BY

JONATHAN DAVID SHELLY SCHROEDER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AUGUST 2016

© 2016
Jonathan D.S. Schroeder
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

To the ideal of the most high-spirited, vital, world-affirming individual, who has learned not just to accept and go along with what was and what is, but who wants it again *just as it was and is* through all eternity, insatiably shouting *da capo* not just to himself but to the whole play and performance, and not just to a performance, but rather, fundamentally, to the one who needs precisely this performance.

– Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, 2002

I want the world and I want it as is (*tel quel*), I want it still, I want it eternally, and I cry out, insatiably: *encore!*, and not only for myself but for the whole play and for the whole spectacle and not only for the whole spectacle itself but at bottom for me, because the spectacle has become necessary – because it makes me necessary – because I am necessary to it and I make it necessary.

– Epigraph to the first issue of *Tel Quel*, 1960

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	v
List of Tables	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Abstract	xiii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Genealogy, History, Method	6
2 The Circulation of Nostalgia	22
2.1 Bodies of Knowledge	33
2.2 Geographies of Emotion	44
2.3 Bonds of Empire	58
2.4 Conclusion	66
3 The Confinement of Nostalgia	69
3.1 The Future of Nostalgia	73
3.2 Medical Jurisprudence	92
3.3 Asylums	97
3.4 Conclusion	104
4 The Shock of History	107
4.1 Compulsive Nostalgia	113
4.2 Compulsive Shyness	127
4.3 Historical Feeling	138
4.4 The Shock of History	145
4.5 Conclusion	153
5 The Therapy of the Senses	160
5.1 Indirect Immediacy	161
5.2 The Arctic Mirage	173
5.3 The Education of the Senses	191
5.4 The Non-Strenuous Life	204
6 After the Romance is Over (Nostalgia and Love)	214
Bibliography	226

LIST OF FIGURES

- 1.1 | Pillbox (Edward W.H. Hopley), “Nostalgia,” *Comico-Chirurgico*, 1837 | 4

- 2.1 | Jesse Torrey, Image of a slave committing suicide from nostalgia in 1815 | 32
- 2.2 | Robert Hooke, *Head of a Blue Fly*, 1665 | 42
- 2.3 | Sigmund Freudenberger, *Departure of the Swiss Soldier*, 1773-1800 | 50
- 2.4 | Sigmund Freudenberger, *Return of the Swiss Soldier*, 1773-1800 | 50
- 2.5 | *The Tyrolese Carrier*, 1859 | 56

- 4.1 | “Grand Jubilee Concert” Program, January 1, 1863 | 110
- 4.2 | “Memorial Hall Proper,” 1875 | 117
- 4.3 | “Memorial Hall,” 1875 | 118
- 4.4 | “The Harvard Union,” 1902 | 119
- 4.5 | John Singer Sargent, *Henry Lee Higginson*, 1903 | 122
- 4.6 | John Singer Sargent, *Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth*, 1889 | 152

- 5.1 | Audubon Society, *The White Badge of Cruelty*, 1906 | 170
- 5.2 | William Scoresby, “Optical Phenomena of Unequal Refraction,” 1823 | 183
- 5.3 | “The Mirage as seen in the Arctic Region,” 1893 | 185
- 5.4 | “Mirage at Behring’s Strait,” 1877 | 188
- 5.5 | “Carytide,” from *Delsarte System of Expression*, 1902 | 208
- 5.6 | Barbara Morgan, Martha Graham, *American Provincials*, 1935 | 213

LIST OF TABLES

- 2.1 | General Occasions for Diseases of the Passions | 37
- 2.2 | General Occasions for Nostalgia | 38
- 2.3 | New Account of the Pathological Causation of Nostalgia | 52
- 2.4 | Comparison of the Two Models of Pathological Causation for Nostalgia | 54

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Opportunities for exuberant, impulsive gratitude are rare. This is special because it's been such a long time coming. Dartmouth introduced me to grown-ups who were animated by their vocation in a way that revealed to me the potential of a full-fledged scholarly life. Donald Pease and James Tatum stand out for their attention, care, and direction. Don's lectures on modern American drama first spoke to me in a strange, dazzling tongue that made me want to learn how to participate in his language game; later, as I grew more accustomed, I came to value above all else the cadence of his speech, the infallibility of his memory, and the precision of his attention to argumentation. In Jim and Bill Cook's course on African-American Literature and the Classical Tradition, I learned what teaching could be. Jim could bring the text of *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* to life by showing what it meant to play a Chopin nocturne without the black keys. Breathlessly erudite, utterly unselfish, he taught me to admire the classicist's attention to language, translation, comparison, interpretation, and writing. At Brown, Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse immersed me in Foucault, exploded my preconceptions about genre and the novel, and burned their talking points in my memory. From Stuart Burrows, I learned about realism, photography, and Henry James, from Timothy Bewes, affect, form, and world. Corey McEleney, Michelle Malonzo, Christopher Holmes, and Raymond Sultan transformed me through their friendships, not only making Providence into a magical period in my life, but also impressing me with an image of what an academic community might be like.

The intellectual atmosphere of the University of Chicago is a thick fog that works on you from all sides. To avoid getting lost, I sought out venues that helped me become self-sufficient. In reading Foucault's late seminars with Arnold Davidson, I arrived at a new understanding of the purpose of Foucault's project and a new belief in the potential of (and need for) broader

periodized studies and improved historical methodologies. Equally important in this regard, James Chandler set me on the course of discovering why the French connection between structuralist formalism and radical politics was obliterated in the course of the reception of this work in American humanities departments in the 1970s and after. I don't know how many hours I've spent outside the Regenstein talking to a precocious second-year about Ambrose Bierce and Tolstoy, at the Pub with Andres Milan and Marty Rayburn, discussing philosophy over the noise of another trivia night, or at Jimmy's with Suzanne Taylor and Darrel Chia, trying to regain our composure through snark and complaint. There are not many times in this strange atmosphere, however, when you do not feel called upon to "talk about your work," or, rather, about your latest research deep dive. I suspect that it was to escape from the constant pressure of having to prove one's intellectual worth that so many of us moved to other neighborhoods after coursework was over and began to develop island communities around the city. I feel lucky to count Chris Dingwall, Rachel Kyne, and Megan Tusler as interlocutors, friends, and guides to Logan Square. Chris Bench, Will Clarke, and Alyse Mason-Herr gave me a household in Hyde Park, but when I needed greater detachment Chris was there once again to welcome me to Pilsen. There I learned some survival skills, in no small part due to Mia Khimm, James Duesterberg, Jen Cohen, and Andy Alper. Pilsen will always be my Chicago: diverse, vibrant, dirty, occasionally violent, always spontaneous. The friendships of Oscar Chavez Cardona and Jose Moctezuma have crossed different neighborhoods, from Cole's to La Chaparrita, places that will always occupy a special place in my heart.

Life after Pilsen over the past few years has often felt diasporic. In prioritizing my work ahead of social life, I've come to form relationships differently, either seeking out friendships with scholars with shared affinities or stumbling upon accidental sparks of kinship during

reprieves from the bustle of academic conferences. Home is no longer an apartment, but a series of outward-bound paths from libraries to archives, campus to conferences, meetings to coffeeshops. Eric Slauter helped launch me on one of the most rhizomatic of these paths into the digital humanities. Through his encouragement, I met Peter Leonard, who welcomed me with open arms and introduced me to digital humanists and computational social scientists at the Computation Institute, the Research Computing Center, and at the HathiTrust. With the assistance of an Arts & Science & Culture grant, I began collaborating with a semanticist and Africanist, Rebekah Baglini, on building a computational application for large-scale historical analysis. The project eventually came to include a physicist, Sam Meehan, and a sociologist, Monica Lee, and proved to be an invaluable experience, as it forced me to translate my knowledge and research goals into terms scientists could understand. I can only hope to aspire to Rebekah's brilliance and determination. Along the way, Patrick Jagoda talked with me about the challenges of working in alternative research environments. Julie Orlemanski made me think about disciplinarity and the roles for interpretation today. JulieMarie Lemon served as an unwavering source of support and encouragement, both on this collaboration and on a multidisciplinary conference, which compared how diverse research methodologies fabricate knowledges about a common object of study, color. I'm excited to be moving closer to my co-organizer, Nick Gaskill, and to other conference participants whom I admire deeply, like Zed Adams and Carolyn Kane. In turn, I'll miss the rigor and clarity of Michael Rossi, whose ideas about the history of scientific and medical racism have only begun to inform my work.

As this project has narrowed in focus and expanded in scale, I found myself concerned by the prospect of intellectual isolation and in need of new kinds of conversations that weren't possible in Chicago. Jennifer Fleissner has given me more camaraderie, more support, more

confidence than I would have ever believed possible when we first met each other at Dirt Cowboy Café on the first day of the Futures of American Studies Institute. I also never imagined that longform epistolary correspondences would become a favorite mode for trying out ideas and plans. It's always such a pleasure to see Kevis Goodman in person after months of comparing notes on nostalgia and mobility and related topics. Her receptivity to language and affect is only matched by her responsibility to and care for others. I find myself writing Jonathan Lamb in a completely different voice that is equally liberating; it is this voice that I think has led me to attend to narratives where possessive individualism disintegrates. I owe an immense debt to both Kevis and Jonathan for reading portions of this project and for supercharging my understanding of the epochal transformation of medicine in the late-eighteenth century. Without their assistance, I would hardly be able to think about nostalgia in relation to imprisonment, a connection I'm eager to talk about with Caleb Smith next year. Finally, over the past year, Sarah Kunjummen has been a source of repose and reason as we put together and ran the Macroanalysis and the Humanities working group.

Beyond Chicagoland is Conferenceland, a place where I've met friends I know I can't thank adequately in this space. Jonathan Armoza, Joshua Bennett, Alex Corey, Nan Da, Anne Diebel, James Dobson, Merve Emre, Bradley King, Julian Henneberg, Jessica Hurley, Lisa Mendelman, Kevin Modestino, Jennifer Nelson, Victoria Papa, Sarah Salter, Michael Snediker, Dan Shore have all become friends I look forward to seeing. At home, Imran Ahmad has taught me the meaning of consideration and loyalty. While finishing this project, Tigris Altaica Li has kept me alive with food packages, drawings of whales. She is unruffled, brave, endlessly thoughtful. Finally, both home and away, Meredith Farmer has been an anchor, a source of

consolation, of kvetching and laughing throughout the trying process of professionalization. She is a comrade, friend, and sister.

I owe a special thanks to Lauren Berlant, Bill Brown, and Richard Jean So, whose thought has catalyzed this project in ways both visible and invisible. Not only did they collectively stand by my work as a committee, but they also helped it assume better and better shape. Lauren is not just an incandescent critic who has taught me how to think about affect, the case, the example, and the anecdote, to name only easily nameable things. She is also a role model of heart and guts. Her courage in confronting a wild array of publics with the possibilities for non-identitarian living is an inspiration for me. Likewise, Bill is not just a tireless, inventive historian whose critical prose style is singularly receptive to the complex interplay and overlay of words and things. Ten years from now, I will remember Bill's unabashed enthusiasm for wordplay – of the pagoda scene of *The Golden Bowl*, for example – as an injunction to attend to the games novels play and the responsibility of critical writing to hold onto this complex of strategies and tactics. If Bill has taught me to think about the economy and aesthetics of academic writing, Richard has enjoined me to think about alternative ways of using literary and historical evidence to make knowledge.

I dedicate this project to my parents. My father may be the most nostalgic person I know, my mother the least. Dad, in many ways you set me on this path when I was in fifth grade when you gave me a box full of birth records and a Geneva family bible and encouraged me to reconstruct the entire genealogy of the Huguenot side of our family for a minor family history project in geography class. Ironically, many of my Swiss-French relatives now live in Neuchâtel, not two hours from Hofer's hometown of Mulhouse. Your recent discovery that our German ancestor erased his Jewish identity when he emigrated to the United States has left strange

ripples in my work. And Mom, when you ran away from your home and the nuns and poverty of Ireland at sixteen, you've often said you survived by willpower and the "gift of the gab." Your life is a testimony to the fact that the extreme willpower of the emigrant cannot depend on something so easily arrived at as "reason plus the feeling of effort," but requires something much more intense – the life-affirming love that I think came to you when you were forced to move because the odds were against you wherever you turned. You taught me the virtue of work as well as the masochism of never being satisfied with the work one has accomplished. You and Dad gave me the care, space, and love that has helped me get by.

Finally, to Whaley: terrier love.

ABSTRACT

Today, nostalgia is inescapable, permeating YouTube comment sections and Instagram filters, the exile's lament and the homebody's wistfulness, the rhetoric of the right and the left, popular culture and the Museum of Modern Art. In an extraordinary film, *Nostalgia de la Luz* (2010), director Patricio Guzmán travels to the driest place on earth, the Atacama desert, where the clarity of the atmosphere allows astronomers to gaze skywards in search of the most distant and oldest traces of the universe. Simultaneously, the mummifying desert heat keeps alive the slenderest hopes of groups of Chilean women who gather daily to comb the earth for any traces of their family members, political prisoners who were murdered and buried in mass graves after 1973 by Pinochet's regime. In nostalgia, the cosmopolitan's desire to leave the earth and the provincial's desire to remain attached to it cross like two ships in the night.

Prisoners of Loss: An Atlantic History of Nostalgia is a genealogy of the cosmopolitan construction of the provincial's nostalgia. This history is virtually unknown. Yet by 1800, nostalgia held an exemplary status in late-Enlightenment medicine as the disease of forced migration and was overwhelmingly diagnosed in the ethnic and racial minority populations whose compulsory migrant labor – as slaves, servants, sailors, and soldiers – helped build the empires of the Atlantic world. Over the course of the nineteenth century, military surgeons like Benjamin Rush designed new domains of hygiene and sanitation to prevent soldiers from developing “camp diseases” like nostalgia. The American Civil War saw 5,266 hospitalizations and 74 deaths of white Union soldiers from the disease, and another 334 hospitalizations and 16 deaths of African-American soldiers. In Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti, plantation physicians listed nostalgia as the primary cause in the suicides of newly imported slaves, who were said to kill themselves out of the “insane” belief that their souls would fly home to Africa. In contrast,

transatlantic humanitarians like Jesse Torrey and James Montgomery, as well as Romantics like William Wordsworth, called for the protection of minorities in their homes, whom they deemed were unfitted by their emotions to survive the motions of the global economy.

The elasticity of nostalgia in nineteenth- and twentieth-century epistemologies of migration only became possible when it became narrateable. My first chapter reconstructs how nostalgia became a “biopolitical narrative form,” a concept that I define as a temporal, but illogical ordering of a series of formally identical causal explanations of disease. Far from eliminating the circularity of older accounts of pathological causation, biopolitical narrative form is organized by it. When medical geographers introduced the concept of environmental “scarcity” to explain why certain native populations were more nostalgia-prone than others, they merely relocated an earlier equivocation over the primary cause of nostalgia – the home or exile – in the relationship between diagnosis and prognosis. In narrativizing nostalgia, they also preserved the Christian morality that patterned earlier explanations like Johannes Hofer’s initial 1688 dissertation, as well as the analogies of resemblance that held these causes together, in particular the analogy of circulation, which connected excessive motion to excessive emotion and an attendant loss of agency. The consequences would be enormous: in this mutually reinforcing vicious cycle, the nostalgic body is read historically as the product of the minority home, which in turn serves to predict the probability of nostalgia in the minority population. What makes nostalgic form so malleable is the fact that it can be rearranged and remoralized in numerous ways without calling into question this fundamental, organizing tautology.

Three subsequent chapters and a coda are organized around the translation of nostalgic form into new sites. My second chapter focuses on “confinement.” I argue that the insertion of nostalgia into new institutional sites like the camp, plantation, and ship produced a major shift

away from compulsory mobility, which had underwritten the construction of pathological emotion for centuries. What emerged out of these utilitarian sites was a new poetics of compulsory confinement and the new figure of the compulsive subject. The emergence of medical jurisprudence in 1820s America helped ratify a new definition of nostalgia as a disease that henceforth could only be diagnosed in extreme cases where subjects were unable to articulate the object of their body's desire. The nostalgic is redefined as someone who is triply confined (by home, by exile, and by the body) and cannot say why.

My third and fourth chapters consider two opposing aesthetic cures for the compulsive subject of nostalgia. In Henry James's *The Bostonians* (1885), characters lack the ability to give voice to the object of their compulsive desires. In a revision of biopolitical form, what makes these characters nostalgic is not the minority's exposure to the impoverished home's pathological motions, as in medicine, or to the ethically impoverished global economy's pathological motions, as in Romanticism and humanitarianism. Rather, James argues that aesthetic impoverishment is responsible for making Americans into nostalgic bodies, buffeted by the motions of history. We witness here the emergence of the familiar opposition between history and nostalgia, as it is only through the narrative staging of a catastrophic historical event of loss that James can imagine a cure for nostalgia. Sarah Orne Jewett's *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896), by contrast, anticipates the modernist transvaluation of nostalgia, as it does not seek to negate nostalgic desire through failure, but to use it for therapeutic ends. In remoralizing the ethnic home as a space of refuge, nostalgic narrative does not hinge on a rational solution for the compulsive refusal of loss that sets nostalgia in motion, as in James, but rather on an unlearning of acquisitive desire through an education of the senses, one that is now based on the emulation of the ethnic's motions and emotions.

Prisoners of Loss is a genealogy in the strong sense in which Michel Foucault practiced this method, as it unites the genealogy of causality with the genealogy of morality. The case of nostalgia demonstrates the full power of this method. What this study is not is another arch-critical exhortation to avoid nostalgia by seeing it for what it is – a naïve, myopic, self-centered, self-deluding, affective attachment to a lost home. The problem with these critiques is that they implicitly endorse the historian as the ideal embodiment of the Enlightenment human, as the universal figure whose capacities for reason and action are predicated on calming the passions and maintaining a measure of distance from worldly attachments. This is the figure that has historically been used to determine who gets into that exclusive club called cosmopolitanism, that highly regarded travel agency that tells the privileged that they and they alone possess the freedom to move, to leave the world by leaving their emotional baggage behind. When we endorse the historian over the nostalgic, we perpetuate the same medical framework that was used to invent minority populations as people who were uniquely imperiled by travel because their love for home was too great. We perpetuate a framework where the historian is someone who is unmoved by loss, the nostalgic someone who is moved too much. While one detaches and flourishes, the other attaches and withers. This study ultimately calls for a reconsideration of the potential of the moving attachment that we call nostalgia. Most of all, it seeks to know what would happen if nostalgics were allowed to travel lightly.

I

INTRODUCTION

Emotions have histories. The names of emotions change in meaning, just as the things they put under description change. This is a history of nostalgia.

Nostalgia was not always an emotion, but once named the disease of forced migration. In the eighteenth century, following the introduction of the concept in a 1688 Swiss medical dissertation, nostalgia did not designate a bittersweet longing to recover lost times and places. In fact, the word was almost exclusively known to physicians and medical writers and referred to a train of pathological consequences that attended the transformation of an individual's love of home into an uncontrollable desire to return home. When an exiled individual was observed retreating from the world and society, talking disconnectedly about home and only home when questioned, visibly losing weight and sleep; when his body became immobilized, bed-ridden, his imagination agitated by the ceaseless circulation of memories of home – then, and only

then, was he diagnosed with nostalgia. The medical concept signalled that an individual had crossed a point of no return, that his desire for home had become so intense that he no longer possessed the agency necessary to avoid a slow but nearly inevitable disintegration leading from madness and anorexia to death. It was on this basis that the concept entered the medical lexicon as a pathological variety of what philosophers since Aristotle have called *akrasia* or the weakness of the will: the nostalgic not only does not get what he wants, but dies because of his desire. Specifically, his desire to return home was said to thwart his ability to get home by imprisoning him within his memories of home, within a vicious cycle that only ended in death or the near-miraculous recovery brought about by carrying his body, paralyzed by desire, home. In eighteenth-century Europe, soldiers, sailors, and other boys and men whose occupations deprived them of the ability to control their own movements were most frequently diagnosed with the illness, as their compulsory mobility was supposed to make them particularly vulnerable to this compulsive fixation on home.

In the nineteenth century, when the concept was first used outside of Europe in the United States and the wider Atlantic world, the meaning of nostalgia shifted dramatically. Rather than a disease of forced migration, it assumed a new status as the disease of forced confinement. Chinese coolies, Scotch-Irish indentured servants, poor European emigrants, prisoners-of-war from rural homes, and slaves of African descent were all said to die from a catastrophic reaction to new conditions of confinement, like those found on plantations and ships, in alien households, almshouses, and asylums, or in camp and prison. In scenes of nostalgia, members of these populations do not die gradually, but swiftly, violently, and tragically: hallucinating sailors plunge to watery graves, mistaking the green sea for the green fields of their homes; soldiers drop to the ground, paralyzed by the notes of a native song; slaves commit

suicide by drowning themselves or throwing themselves out of windows. Out of all the migrant workers whose compulsory labor helped build Atlantic empires, ethnic and racial populations were singled out as bearing the greatest risk of suffering from nostalgia. Physicians and humanitarians, the first non-medical writers to employ the concept, disagreed over whether the home or exploitative labor conditions bore greater responsibility in inducing the disease, but they both agreed that minority populations lacked the agency necessary to sacrifice the natural freedoms afforded by their homes and accept the rules and boundaries of rationalized institutional spaces. While physicians argued that the scarcity of resources available in the minority home intensified domestic attachments so much that it pathologically predisposed its inhabitants to nostalgia when in exile, humanitarians argued instead that minority population should be protected from conditions of confinement that they were unequipped to handle. In both cases, the power that the home held over these populations was magnified. Consequently, the train of symptoms comprising nostalgia changed: in place of disconnected talk of home, the primary mark of the disease was the inability of victims to describe what they wanted. The disconnect between language and desire was treated as proof that an insane desire had confined these victims within their bodies and was used to legitimate trained observers as the only people able to recognize nostalgia through careful study of physical symptoms.

Consider the illustration of “Nostalgia” in the *Chirurgico-Comico* (1838), a volume of fifty caricatures of obscure medical terms, from *anypeuthis* (“an accidental event which cannot be charged on the physician”) to *zygomatikus* (“the risible muscle”; see Figure 1.1).¹ The image can be read according to either of the eighteenth- or nineteenth-century versions of nostalgia – either as a disease of forced mobility or one of forced immobility. A wooden sign in the background informs us that the scene is Van Diemen’s Land (present-day Tasmania), the

¹ Pillbox (Edward W.H. Hopley). *Chirurgico-Comico: ABC of Fifty Professionals* (London: Henry Renshaw, 1838).

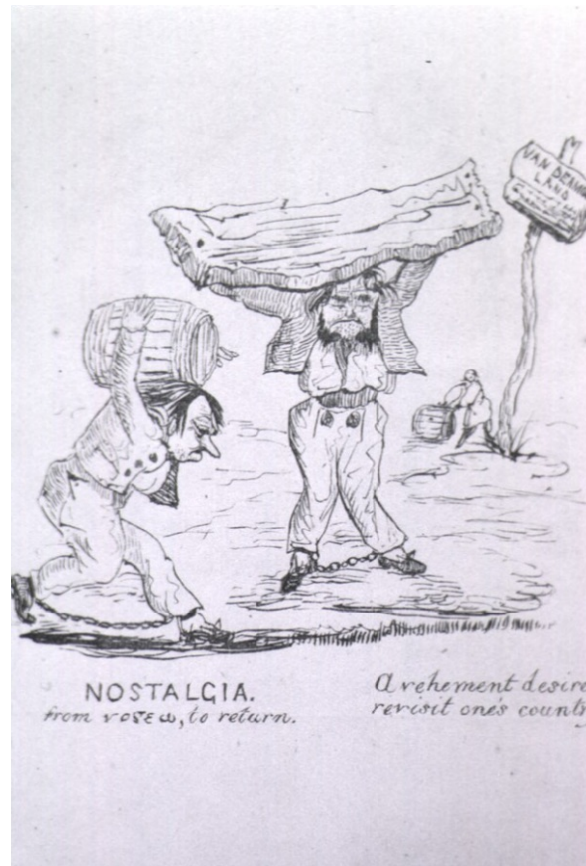


Figure 1.1: "Nostalgia," from *Chirurgico-Comico*, 1838. Transported convicts performing manual labor in Van Diemen's Land in Australia.

primary penal colony for British convicts for much of the time between 1803 and 1853, when penal transportation was abolished. In the foreground, two convicts with grizzled, hangdog countenances perform backbreaking labor, one man staggering under the weight of a barrel, the other walking bowlegged while holding up an enormous, unwieldy plank. The shackles highlight their confinement, restricting the convicts' motions, making their work all the more punishing. The wood they carry, in different stages of refinement, alludes to the chief industry of the convicts, who were tasked with logging the island's valuable timber, constructing the penal colonies that they were then confined within, and, in a final turn of the screw, building ships for further transportation of goods and convicts. In framing this scene as an typical instance of nostalgia, however, the medical illustration shows how figures of restricted

mobility were closely linked to pathological desire. Indeed, the chain was often used as shorthand to indicate how minority populations were disabled by compulsory travel, as when it is said of the resource-poor Swiss mercenary soldier that “the love of his country holds him there like a chain.”²

Some features of these two nostalgias are obviously archaic. Nostalgia no longer kills, it is not recognized as a disease by physicians and psychiatrists, and it is hardly ever used to describe the affective states of subaltern laborers, homesick prisoners, forcibly displaced minority populations, or refugees. It is now primarily associated with temporal dislocation rather than spatial dislocation. It is not a technical term, but an ordinary word in the lexicon. It has a recognizable aesthetic, which is often associated with the recycling of period styles and fashions. Entire swathes of consumer and visual culture are built around nostalgia.

Yet nostalgia’s current status as a sentimental historical attachment is also not completely divorced from these older nostalgias. Academic critics have long found nostalgia distasteful, particularly during the postmodern debates of the 1980s, and the sentimental historical emotion is still often pathologized in scholarly writing. In such venues, we find it diagnosed as a “symptom” of the waning of historical consciousness, as a species of historical “amnesia” that supports settler colonialism and economic modernization; or as a “melancholy without an object,” “a fascination with an etheric image of the past wrested from its historical context.”³ These stigmas were not new to the era of high theory, but are almost as old as nostalgia

² Brion and D’Yvoiry. *Essai de Médecine Théorique et Pratique. Ouvrage Périodique, Dédié Aux Amis De L’Humanité*. Vol. 2 (Geneva, 1784), 216.

³ The opposition between nostalgia and history is most famously articulated by Fredric Jameson. Nicholas Dames and Renato Rosaldo have formulated the strongest positions regarding nostalgia’s status as a type of forgetting that supports imperialism and economic modernization. Susan Stewart’s account is explicitly deconstructionist, whereas Slavoj Žižek’s uses structuralist psychoanalysis to arrive at a typically “perverse” viewpoint that uses nostalgia to demonstrate the inadequacies of historicist detachment. Jameson, Fredric. “Nostalgia for the Present,” in *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1991), 2-11; Dames, Nicholas. *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810-1870* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press,

itself. This disgust is a legacy of nostalgia's centuries-old status as a distorted longing for a lost place and time, a myopic, absorbing mood that renders individuals oblivious to the less pleasant aspects of history and to the pressing interpersonal concerns of the present. Indeed, skepticism regarding nostalgia continues to be marked by the morality of Christian metaphysics, with its central tenets that possession allows for love while dispossession turns love into desire; that the imagination is easily corrupted by the pleasures of the image; that the desire for a lost object like the home is bound to trick a person into a harmful fixation on memories that dissociate the person from the world and thwart attempts to recover this object. Most rehabilitations of the concept do not trouble this morality.

GENEALOGY, HISTORY, METHOD

If critics and theorists write about a nostalgia that largely commits its political, social, and historical sins through errors of omission, historians have capitalized on the differences between its contemporary form and an older, medical version. This account conventionally opens with a cinematic teaser – “People once died of nostalgia” – and proceeds to recount the first use of the portmanteau word, “nostalgia,” in Johannes Hofer’s medical school dissertation at the University of Basel in 1688 in what is now Switzerland. These differences are cast in sharp relief: nostalgia is now a longing for another time (the past, childhood, simpler times, utopia, etc.), then it was a longing for the physical home; it is now a mixed emotion, a bittersweet memory, it began as a fatal disease, an extreme melancholic fixation. It won’t come as a surprise to hear that this is the

2001), 3-20; Rosaldo, Renato. “Imperialist Nostalgia,” in *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon), 68-90; Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1984), 14-24; Žižek, Slavoj. *Enjoy Your Symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 92-96. For the more strident public intellectual versions of these positions, see Coontz, Stephanie. *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1993) and Lasch, Christopher. *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1991).

setup for a mystery. How could someone die of nostalgia? How did *that* become *this*? These questions organize two main narrative trajectories in current histories of nostalgia. To answer the first, the historian amasses evidence to show how nostalgia was used during its time as a “transient illness,” to borrow Ian Hacking’s term.⁴ For the second, she seeks to solve the mystery by explaining how nostalgia was depathologized. What’s surprising is that these well-researched empirical accounts have failed to answer either question convincingly. Part of this failure is discussed later in this section, and has to do with the monolingualism and mononationalism of these studies, as well as an overreliance on specialized medical and military archives. The other part has to do with a lack of attention to causality, morality, and narrative form.

Prisoners of Loss argues that the transformation of nostalgia from a fatal disease in medicine to a personally therapeutic, collectively harmful historical emotion only became possible when nostalgia was transformed into a biopolitical narrative form. Its title refers more specifically to the reinvention of nostalgia in late Enlightenment medicine as the exemplary disease of forced migration, a disease that by 1800 was primarily diagnosed in ethnic and racial populations who were removed from home and transported abroad to perform empire-building labor in the Atlantic world as soldiers, sailors, servants, and slaves. My study begins by tracing the geographic dispersion of the concept across Europe and to the colonies of the Americas between 1688 and 1800; concurrently, it reconstructs the apparent transformation of the concept into a linear, causal explanation. In its current version, it narrows in scope to account for nostalgia’s dispersion within the United States before 1925. Three chapters and a coda describe the new shapes that this narrative form assumed in Romantic sentimentalism and humanitarianism, the military, realism, and local color.

⁴ Hacking, Ian. *Mad Travelers: Reflections on the Reality of Transient Mental Illness* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002).

This study is a genealogy in the strong sense in which Michel Foucault practiced this method, as it restores the genealogy of causality to its place alongside the genealogy of morality. Indeed, it would be very difficult to describe the transformation of nostalgia into a biopolitical narrative form in eighteenth-century medicine without taking causality into account. If this narrative invariably consists of scenes of home, inhabitants, displacement, and nostalgic decline or death, the content of these scenes does not explain why it has proven so malleable and yet remained so durable. The form given to nostalgia by medicine has allowed it to be used by slave owners to support slavery, abolitionists to end it, by military physicians to prevent soldiers from deserting for their homes, by Romantics to prevent natives from being forced out of their homes, by Henry James to diagnose how Americans get stuck in the past, and by Sarah Orne Jewett to show how they can become more present. Today, of course, nostalgia is everywhere: conservative and left politics, the exile's lament and the domestic's family album, popular culture and the Museum of Modern Art. In Patricio Guzmán's extraordinary film, *Nostalgia de la Luz* (2010), the astronomer's telescopic gaze is aimed skywards, away from the same Atacama desert where women come to daily to search for the traces of their relatives, killed in Pinochet's concentration camps. To explain the vine-like tenacity of such a form, even just to recognize it as a form, it is necessary to understand how nostalgia was constructed and dispersed. It is necessary, that is, to recover the full set of operations designated by the concept of "genealogy."

Following the American reception of Foucault's work in the 1970s, the genealogical method has been widened to refer more generally to the study of relations of power that connect discourse and institutional practice. At the same time, the number of analytic procedures composing this method has been reduced. Specifically, as a consequence of the fact that this

American reception was routed through literature departments and closely related humanities disciplines, genealogical studies have privileged critique and formal description at the expense of formal analysis. Yet the force of Foucault's critique of synthetic concepts such as the subject, author, history, the book, and the oeuvre was not directed at these concepts alone. Rather, its larger aim was to purge the human sciences of the classical conception of universal causality, which had been used to rationalize the fields of human sciences in the early-nineteenth century and to produce these concepts. The problem with such "predetermined syntheses" was not simply that they biased accounts in advance, but also that classical causality "cannot be described in logic," and therefore could not be a part of a new, common epistemological basis for the human sciences. Even more ignored in the American reception is the *positive* side that complimented this critique: the formalization of a method of logical description and analysis that would not rely on this older model of causality.⁵ Thus, formal descriptions of the histories of the human sciences in Foucault's works also comprise descriptions of the uses and configurations of causality in different states of these disciplines. The comparison of these states leads to a derivation and a major claim: that despite appearances and received opinion, the concept of causality that was used to rationalize the human sciences was not transformed when it assumed a new shape as a linear explanation. In other words, the narrative of progress was organized temporally, but also illogically. Unyoking the critique of classical causality from the formal analysis of history has significantly diminished the potential of genealogical investigation. The study of biopolitics is instructive here. Though it has been the subject of brilliant work – think of

⁵ That is to say, a method that understands relationity in the manner of structuralist linguistics:

1. Relations are not homogeneous or universal, but can be of multiple types.
2. They do not have to be determined by the elements they join together, but can join elements without themselves changing.
3. They do not have to exist between two elements, but can be non-linear.
4. They may establish relations with other relations.

See Foucault, Michel. "Linguistiques et sciences sociales," in *Dits et Écrits (1954-1988), tome I: 1954-1975* Eds. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (Paris: Gallimard), 821-842.

Achille Mbembe's "Necropolitics," Warren Montag's "Necro-Economics," and other essays in the *Biopolitics* reader – it is much more difficult to think of a study that explicitly describes the conditions of possibility for the perniciousness of modern biopolitics in terms of an illogical concept of universal causality.⁶ If my study restores the genealogy of causality to its place alongside the genealogy of morals, this is not because I am a purist or a rationalist at heart. Rather, I find this account convincing because I arrived at a similar conclusion, albeit on a much smaller scale, in my attempt to explain the persistence of nostalgia beyond the medical domain. I also happen to find convincing the case for connecting formal analysis to radical politics. This study is thus partly a description of how a fatal disease was transformed into a popular therapeutic historical emotion in the Americas. It involves a genealogy of the morality that underwrote nostalgia from its very inception. Yet this genealogy alone cannot account for the malleability of nostalgia, however. Nor can it fully explain nostalgia's durability.

The narrative form of nostalgia was able to survive translations into various literary genres, institutions, and mass media due to the embedding of this morality in a symmetrically explained causal chain. What made nostalgia so powerful in the nineteenth century as a pathological narrative form was its organization around a fundamental tautology that was very difficult to perceive, since it concerned perception itself. Biopolitical narrative form has proven so durable in part because the abstract categories of the home, exile, and nostalgia could be rearranged and remoralized in numerous ways without calling into question its tautological organization, which was founded on an arbitrary redistribution of the tautological construction of disease. While this tautology was once recognizable in the early-modern explanation of nostalgia, which equivocated between whether nostalgia was caused by a person's predisposition toward melancholy or by the conditions of displacement, it becomes invisible in the nineteenth

⁶ *Biopolitics, A Reader*. Eds. Timothy Campbell and Adam Sitze (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2013).

century when it is relocated in the relation between medical diagnosis and prognosis – which is to say, in medical authority. The consequence of this redistribution was that physicians acquired the tremendous, easily abusable power to read the homes and bodies of entire populations forwards and backwards in time. If physicians made the pathological home serve as the basis for predicting and calculating a native population’s risk of nostalgia, diagnoses of actual cases of the disease could confirm this explanation by reading the body as the historical product of this type of home. This mutually reinforcing, vicious cycle participated in the invention of the categories of ethnicity and race.

The failure of scholars to explain the transformation of nostalgia into a sentimental historical emotion is largely attributable to problems involving the constitution and use of historical archives. Despite increased attention to nostalgia in the past decade, the complete lack of consensus on when the disease was depathologized is a symptom of these problems. Existing answers vary from 1810 through the 1890s. This is not so much a question of what qualifies as pathological or non-pathological as much as it is an evidentiary problem. Indeed, some future naval historian may stumble upon the 1916 case of a midshipman who “committed suicide while suffering from acute nostalgia,” an act that was ruled outside the “line of duty and misconduct.”⁷ She may also encounter the Navy’s *Psychiatric Unit Operational Procedures* (1954), with its distinction between “simple” and “cryptic nostalgia.” If the former “presents the familiar signs of a person with a mild reactive depression” and is likened to a “mildly retarded” person, the latter presents a much more serious “home fixation” that “is easily confused with two more serious entities, mental deficiency and schizophrenia.” Consider the following case, which was supposed

⁷ McClellan, Edwin. *Naval Digest containing Digests of Selected Decisions the Secretary of the Navy and Opinions of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy 1916* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), 421.

to illustrate an example of “the Neuropsychiatric Unfit,” whom the neuropsychiatric selection program, inaugurated in 1941, had been designed to “eliminate”:

This 18-year-old seaman recruit was raised in a broken home. The father divorced the mother when the recruit was 3 years old. Since then his mother has supported him on alimony payments, devoting her entire life to him. He is an overprotected, sissified individual who has never been away from home until his enlistment. He has never dated, has no friends, and relies completely on his mother for all social life.

‘Motivation for enlistment was to avoid the draft. He says his mother preferred him to enter the Navy because it was a cleaner, more gentlemanly life. He was severely nostalgic on the trip to the Training Center and cried frequently. This resulted in his being referred to the Psychiatric Unit immediately upon arrival at the Training Center. He was held on the observation ward for several days until his nostalgia subsided, and then sent to duty. In company, he was a complete failure. He remained nostalgic, lachrymose, and completely lacking in motivation. He failed to understand and enter into his training duties, and was a detriment to his company. He was returned to the observation ward for several days, and then returned to duty. His failure to adjust continued and his Company Commander returned him to the Unit, reporting him a detriment to the service.

The psychiatric findings reveal an immature, unstable individual with strong passive dependency. In view of his inadequate personality structure and his repeated failure to adjust his further retention in the service is unwarranted.⁸

The case of this “overprotected, sissified” boy, who has “never dated,” strongly suggests a connection between nostalgia and homosexuality, as the report associates both nostalgia and the “sexual deviate” with schizophrenia and obsession. The boy was discharged without receiving mental or physical disability benefits.

This case is offered here not to call for more scholarly attention to naval archives. In fact, quite the opposite: the lack of consensus over the periodization of nostalgia is the product of an over-reliance on specialized archives, which were retrospectively consolidated around particular topics and themes, and which necessarily limit what can be said about histories that don’t fall neatly within these lines. This problem is magnified by research funding structures and disciplinary norms, which help predetermine which archives are selected for an inquiry. So, for

⁸ *Psychiatric Unit Operational Procedures, Revised Edition 1954; Neuropsychiatry Branch; Professional Division, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Department of the Navy. Prepared under ONR Contrast No. N7onr-450 11, NR 154 091 (1954), 59-60.*

example, the American military historian may only consult national military archives to understand the record number of soldiers hospitalized by nostalgia during the Civil War; at the same time, his counterpart, who has only consulted French military archives, may conclude that the disease was depathologized when the French military sought to manage the *nostalgie* of its soldiers during the occupation of Algeria in the 1840s by reproducing the trappings of the French home; the French historian of medicine, in turn, will produce another account, and so on.

An equally important problem is monolingualism. In scholarship on nostalgia, there is almost no attention paid to Latin primary sources, which make up the majority of medical texts published before 1800. Scholars who study the French history of medicine and military medicine, like Patrick Dandrey, Thomas Dodman, Lisa O’Sullivan, and Michael Roth, rely on French sources. Literary scholars like Linda Austin primarily consider English sources. With the exceptions of Simon Bunke’s magisterial, untranslated *Heimweh: Studien zur Kultur- und Literaturgeschichte einer todlichen Krankheit* (2009) and Helmut Illbruck’s *Nostalgia: Origins and Ends of an Unenlightened Disease* (2012), hardly any studies have considered German sources, as well as important sources in Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. Due to monolingualism, knowledge about nostalgia in the eighteenth century is impoverished, with the vast majority of accounts relying instead on the translation of Jean Starobinski’s seminal essay, “*Le Concept de Nostalgie*” (1965), which itself relies on the handful of sources compiled in a *habilitation*, Max Ernst’s *Vom Heimweh* (1945).

A third problem is thematic. Both British and American Studies have recently broadened in scope to include the study of their imperial geographies, while American Studies has developed a hemispheric focus that juxtaposes American and Spanish settler colonialisms. While expanded ways of studying the nation-state have begun to make room for sophisticated

comparative perspectives on empire, like Lisa Lowe's *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015), this scholarship tends to recover traces of the migrant itineraries of historical individuals and peoples through the interpretation of anecdote. Historical epistemology, the history of emotion, and the history of medicine are largely alien to this body of work. Conversely, historical epistemologists, historians of emotion, and historians of medicine rarely incorporate imperial and colonial histories into theirs.⁹

Yet what if we were to imagine a different way of writing history? What if we privileged first and foremost the positive traces left across any and all archives? How would we give shape to a history if its boundaries were not conditioned by monolingualism and a specialized use of specialized archives? Nostalgia is a good test case for an experiment in a new kind of history, and not simply because its associations with rootlessness, exile, and displacement makes it thematically suitable. It also happens to be a word that is particularly easy to track across languages, as it is a portmanteau word and a technical term that combines two Greek roots and was originally circulated in Latin medical texts. As a result, most European languages adopted the word without modification, with the sole exception of the French "*nostalgie*," an alteration that is not particularly hard to adjust for. Because of its relative invariance across languages, it is also possible to track the history of the geographic movement of the concept, from Switzerland and Germany to France, England, Spain, and Portugal, and then to the colonies of the Americas, including Brazil. These are the two initial approaches of this study.

Prisoners of Loss aims to combat monolingualism and disciplinary and archival specialization through the collection of evidence from digital archives, which makes the historical and

⁹ Some exceptions include Bewell, Alan. *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1999) and Anderson, Warwick. *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2006).

geographic breadth of this project possible. In producing a cartography of emotion, I am interested in tracking the dispersion of nostalgia across the Atlantic. This side of the project is research intensive, as it requires amassing an abundance of evidence. On a methodological level, it is relatively simple, however. The second side of the project is more complex, as it concerns the historical epistemology of emotion, and requires comparing different states of the discursive and non-discursive relations that comprised nostalgia in a specific site and using these comparisons to derive an account of the transformation and diversification of the concept.

Digital humanists have been particularly successful at using “metadata” – the classificatory information once stored in library card catalogs – to reconstruct the history of the book. In practice, this has tended to mean mapping the spread of certain formal features that computational methods can readily identify – for example, studying how poems moved by being reprinted in nineteenth-century American newspapers. In contrast to most digital mapping projects, or the history of the book more generally, this study is not primarily invested in tracking the geographic movement of a formal pattern, but is instead organized around tracking the dispersion of a single concept. As I have suggested, one advantage of this approach is that conceptual history is particularly compatible with keyword search. It also allows for cross-linguistic analysis that tracking the history of forms (a poem or genre, for example) does not. It is therefore possible to reconstruct the dispersion of a concept across multiple languages (and, hence, greater geographic areas) without needing to be able to read those languages. Knowing when and where nostalgia was printed is a primary step in composing what Foucault called a “general history” (as opposed to a total history, which would include references to lost instances of nostalgia).

My first chapter describes the formation of nostalgia in early-modern medicine, its reorganization into a linear, causal explanation in medical geography, and its translation into humanitarian discourse. It situates the initial formulation of nostalgia in Johannes Hofer's 1688 medical dissertation within the field of iatrochemical medicine, which replaced humoral theories of the body with a theory based on chemical and anatomical knowledge of the circulatory system. The figure of circulation was able to assume such importance in part because it was perfectly compatible with a certain style of tautological reasoning, which linked objects together on the basis of analogies of formal resemblance. In this circular reasoning, emotions were not only said to be produced by the body's motions, but also to take the same form as them. The figure of circulation was also compatible with the morality of Christian metaphysics, which was used to determine the type and quality of emotions produced when the human body entered into new situations, or "occasions." Thus, nostalgia only occurred in situations where dispossession disrupted the orderly circulation of love, which was only supposed to be possible through possession. In nostalgia, compulsory physical circulation deprives the individual of home and is reproduced internally as a compulsive circulation of emotions around images of home. Melancholy (over the loss of the home), as well as fear and loathing (of an alien environment) push the nostalgic to dwell on memories of home until the love of home intensified into an unbreakable desire, fatally imbalancing the circulatory system.

When late-eighteenth century European medical geographers drew upon this poetics to explain why certain populations suffered more frequently from the disease, they wound up giving nostalgia a linear narrative form. They argued that nostalgics had already been exposed to dispossession at home in the form of economic scarcity. The nostalgic's powerful reaction to forced exile was redefined as a symptom of the pathological home. I argue that humanitarians like

Wordsworth and Benjamin Rush only half undid this logic when they recast nostalgia as a disease produced by the impact of global economic movements on these inhabitants, and particularly on the African slave, who, by virtue of this redefinition, came to serve as the most extreme example of the disease. What these writers did not do, as I've suggested, was reject the causal narrative that connected economic scarcity to stronger native feeling and a higher risk of nostalgia when in exile.

My second chapter reconstructs the dominant channel by which the European medical concept of nostalgia was introduced into America between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars: military medicine. In addition to magnifying the power of medical prognosis and diagnosis, biopolitical narrative form made it possible to use predictive medical knowledge for a new purpose: disease prevention. Nostalgia posed a problem because soldiers comprised a population who were least able to return home. This chapter argues that the institutional organization of the paramedical domains of military hygiene, sanitation, and medical jurisprudence around medical knowledge about emotion set the stage for the first major transformation of the longstanding Enlightenment poetics that had underwritten nostalgia and that had been used to calculate a person's agency in terms of their motions and emotions. With the new attention to the management of the emotions of captive populations, a new poetics of the compulsive subject emerges, one that draws analogies of formal resemblance not between types of mobility, but rather types of immobility. The compulsive subject is someone for whom emotion is confining, who is thus triply confined (by home, by exile, and by the body), and who cannot say why.

The second half of *Prisoners* uses the case study form to show how late-nineteenth century American literary texts reframed the emergent relation between nostalgia and compulsion. My third chapter considers Henry James's *The Bostonians* (1885) in terms of its

revision of biopolitical narrative. While Olive Chancellor and Basil Ransom lack the ability to voice how they are compulsively bound to the antebellum home, the novel argues that this nostalgic attachment is the product not of the natural poverty of the home or the ethical impoverishment of the global economy, but rather aesthetic impoverishment. Specifically, the novel pathologizes the antebellum genres of the sentimental domestic novel and the southern historical romance for producing a paternalistic dependency on the “naturally” stronger feeling of minority populations. This dependency is problematic in part because it trains readers to see every home as natural and to refuse any and all historical change to their own homes. Historical events make Americans nostalgic because these genres fail to produce aesthetic habits that would be capable of managing Americans’ shifting affective relation to the historical modification of their homes. In rejecting the sentimental opposition between the nature of the home and the artifice of the economy in favor of a new opposition between genre and history, *The Bostonians* stages a catastrophic event of loss as a cure for nostalgic desire, a cure, I contend, modeled on electroshock therapy, which began to be widely used after the Civil War. This is Olive’s loss of Verena Tarrant. If Olive compulsively depends on Verena for love, for a public voice, and for a future where women will be liberated from domestic dependencies like her own, the destruction of this love represents a catastrophic historical event where these dependencies fail and, with them, her compulsive attachment to sentimental domesticity. In James as in other practitioners of this “calamity form,” traumatic loss is endorsed as the precondition for giving voice to nostalgic desire and asserting rational control over the future of history. This realist reconfiguration of nostalgia might best be called biohistorical narrative.

By contrast, Sarah Orne Jewett's fiction, the focus of my fourth chapter, does not seek to negate nostalgic desire through historical trauma, but to use it for therapeutic ends. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896) does not pathologize the sentimental naturalization of the home as the cause of compulsive attachments to home. Rather, through the case history of Littlepage, it pathologizes economic genres like shipping that produce sovereign, acquisitive desire. *Captain Littlepage*, the shipmaster of a Hudson's Bay trading vessel, is desensitized to the world because his body has been dematerialized by a compulsive sovereign desire that has confined him to his "queer head." By contrast, Jewett's fiction from "A White Heron" on promises the ability to learn how to be at home. This therapeutic rendition of nostalgic narrative does not hinge on a rational solution for the compulsive refusal of loss that sets medical and imperialist nostalgias in motion, but rather on an unlearning of acquisitive desire through an education of the senses. Specifically, it posits that the deceleration of the senses can provide an escape velocity from sovereign desire when coupled with sensations that reward slow attention and help produce a new equilibrium between motion and emotion. Ecstatic communion with the world is how one undoes the inherited grammar of imperialist nostalgia: nostalgic love for an object turns both subject and object into indirect objects alike, into a series of outward bound paths. In learning how to let people, places, and animals present themselves on their own terms and in their own times, one leaves behind the acceleration of possessive individualism, which fails to grasp its objects, in favor of a new desire, the desire to extend and sustain feelings of presence.

My coda ends with Willa Cather's *The Professor's House*. In the final section of the novel, Godfrey St. Peter nearly commits suicide. The professor falls asleep on the couch in the old house he refuses to leave, in the cramped, poorly ventilated room he used as a study to write his histories; the window he props open for fresh air blows shut, and his leaky gas stove begins

to asphyxiate him. It is tempting to say that he nearly dies of his own passivity; it is more precise to say that he nearly dies of nostalgia – his isolating, insulating compulsive desire to remain attached to the past. What the professor’s near-suicide raises is the possibility of an alternative kind of life where the opposition between desire and will is no longer important. This is one way of saying that the depathologization of compulsive nostalgia did not necessarily entail changing its structure, but rather giving it a new moral valence. The professor’s near-suicide occurs after he has written his history, after he’s even finished editing the journal of the boy, Tom Outland, who had given St. Peter “a second youth,” and after he’s come to the conviction that he is nearing the end of his life. This is how the novel poses a problem: if compulsive desire is harmful to one’s ability to abide in the social and domestic spheres, but beneficial to singular pursuits such as art and science, can nostalgia really be considered a weakness? “It is with a rush of home-sickness that the thought of death presents itself,” Walter Pater writes in *The Renaissance* (1873). For Cather, writing a half-century later, Pater’s religious nostalgia, this “universal pagan sentiment,” becomes the principle of her anti-modernism, of a mode of writing that attempts to linger in the feelings produced by the backward pull of desire, to allow nostalgia to open up solitary spaces for writing and death.

The rich irony of contemporary critical exhortations to avoid nostalgia by seeing it for what it is – a naïve, myopic, self-centered, self-deluding, affective attachment to a lost home – is that they entail an implicit endorsement of the historian as the ideal embodiment of the Enlightenment human, as the universal figure whose capacities for rational thought and voluntary action are predicated on calming the passions and regularly maintaining a measure of distance from worldly attachments. This is the figure that has been used to determine who gets into that exclusive club called

cosmopolitanism, that highly regarded travel agency that tells the privileged that they and they alone possess the freedom to travel, just so long as they leave their emotional baggage behind them. When we endorse the historian over the nostalgic, we perpetuate the same medical framework that was used to invent minority populations – European ethnic laborers, mutinous common soldiers and sailors, African slaves, compulsive women – as people who were uniquely imperiled by travel because their love for home was too great. We perpetuate a framework where the historian is someone who is unmoved by loss, the nostalgic someone who is moved too much. While one detaches and flourishes, the other attaches and withers.

Rather than give the privileged another chance to unburden themselves abroad, rather than use nostalgia and its moral baggage for yet another critique of this unburdening, I want to know what nostalgia can be when we remember what it was – when we remember the exemplary status it once held in late-Enlightenment medicine as the disease of forced migration, when we remember the place it occupied in nineteenth-century American institutions as the disease of compulsory confinement. When the humanitarian called for abolition by saying that the slave in the Middle Passage committed suicide from nostalgic insanity because she was unfitted by her emotions to withstand the marketplace, I want to explode the faulty conditions that statements like this stand on. Most of all, I want to know what would happen if nostalgics were allowed to travel lightly. This dissertation is about the “rational” formations of the withering, moving attachment that we call nostalgia.

II

THE CIRCULATION OF NOSTALGIA

In 1815, a female slave jumped out of a third-story tavern window in Washington, D.C. after overhearing that she and her children had been sold and were “destined for transportation to Georgia.” When he heard the sensational story, a Philadelphia physician-abolitionist named Jesse Torrey became so “agitated” that he raced across town to interview the “mangled slave,” whose spine, “badly shattered,” made it “doubtful she would ever walk again, if she should survive.”

She explained:

‘They brought me away with two of my children, and wouldn’t let me see my husband—they didn’t sell my husband, and I didn’t want to go;—I was so confus’d and ’istracted, that I didn’t know hardly what I was about—but I didn’t want to go, and I jumped out of the window; but I am sorry now I did it;—they have carried my children off with ’em to Carolina.’¹

¹ Torrey, Jesse. *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery, in the United States: with Reflections on the Practicability of Restoring the Moral Rights of the Slave, without impairing the Legal Privileges of the Possessor; and a Project of a Colonial Asylum for Free Persons of Colour: Including Memoirs of Facts on the Interior Traffic in Slaves, and on Kidnapping* (Philadelphia: Published by the Author, 1817), 42-43 (emphasis in original).

When Torrey printed this testimony two years later in *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery in the United States*, he diagnosed the woman with a case of nostalgia. While nostalgia has not served as an officially recognized medical condition since the end of the Second World War, in 1817, Torrey could not presume that his lay readers had even heard of the word.² Nostalgia was still a rare medical concept taxonomized by nosologists as a species of the “false or defective appetites” and placed alongside diseases whose names remain in our vocabulary –bulimia, anorexia, nymphomania, anxietas – and those that have passed out of favor, like polydipsia, or “preternatural thirst,” diseases that Ian Hacking calls transitory illnesses.³ In addition to having to exhibit to ignorant readers just what nostalgia was (or, rather, his humanitarian variation), Torrey also faced the secondary task of convincing physicians of the credibility of his diagnosis. While new slaves who had been recently transported from Africa to Brazil and the West Indies were regularly said to jump to their deaths en route and drown themselves after landing because an unbearable nostalgia drove them to take “insane” measures to return home, this case is likely the only example of the nostalgia-induced self-destruction of a slave on American soil.⁴ While Torrey cited the authority of

² In the 1946 John Huston war documentary, *Let There Be Light*, a highly articulate African-American ex-soldier is interviewed in a psychiatric institution. The psychiatrist asks about his service overseas. “It says here on your record from overseas that you had headaches and that you had crying spells,” he says. Speaking quickly, the former soldier replies, “Yes, sir. I believe in your profession that it’s called nostalgia.” When he starts to describe an event provoked by “letters from his sweetheart,” though, he breaks down in an uncontrollable fit of crying and tells the psychiatrist that the interview is over. Nostalgia did not make it into the first edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in 1952, so it is likely that this brief, moving scene is one of the last instances of the diagnosis on record.

³ “False or defective appetites” is William Cullen’s classification. Sauvages, Linnaeus, and Sagar place nostalgia alongside polydipsia and bulimia as well. Vogel classifies nostalgia as a species of melancholia. See *Synopsis Nosologiae Methodicae* (Edinburgh, 1769). For Hacking’s concept of “transitory mental illnesses,” see *Mad Travelers: Reflections on the Reality of Transient Mental Illnesses* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002).

⁴ On slavery, suicide, and melancholy, see Snyder, Terri. *The Power to Die: Slavery and Suicide in British North America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2015) and Bell, Richard. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2012). On slave nostalgia in Brazil, see Mattoso, Katia M. De Queirós. *To Be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1987). On slave nostalgia in Cuba, see Pérez, Jr., Louis *To Die in Cuba: Suicide and Society* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005) and Denis, Adrián López. “Melancholia, Slavery, and Racial Pathology in Eighteenth-Century Cuba,” *Science in Context* 18, no. 2 (June 2005): 179-199. For a primary source account of the relations between plantation management, nostalgia, and slave self-destruction in Haiti, see Descourtilz, Michel-Étienne. *Voyage d’un Naturaliste...* Vol. 3 (Paris: Dufart, 1809).

his teacher, Benjamin Rush, who had written that “Africans become insane [from nostalgia], we are told, in some instances, soon after they enter upon the toils of perpetual slavery in the West Indies,” in the Americas the diagnosis was usually reserved for the suicides of people who had suffered not just the loss of their liberties but misery, usually via some combination of violent mistreatment or disease.⁵ Both disease and mistreatment were more associated with the warmer Spanish and French slaveholding colonies. It was also almost exclusively diagnosed in slaves who were subject to constant, compulsory motion, as in the scandalous 1819 case of *Le Rôdeur* (“The Prowler”), an illegal French slave trader bound for Martinique; when, following an epidemic of ophthalmia that blinded and killed many of the 160 slaves and 22 crewmembers, the surviving slaves were brought above deck for air, “it became necessary to abandon this expedient, salutary as it was, because...many of those Negroes, affected with nostalgia...threw themselves into the sea, locked in each other’s arms.”⁶ Similarly, the “unseasoned” slaves known as *Bozales* in Spain’s American colonies were supposed to become nostalgic from a failure to adjust to the repetitive, monotonous motions of forced labor. And even then, the diagnosis of nostalgia in African slaves – by slaveowners and abolitionists alike – rested on politically contested grounds, as it required identifying Africans with “the poorer or less civilized inhabitants of modern Europe,” like the Scottish Highlanders and especially the Swiss mountaineers, who had been used by physicians to invent a new category of people who bore the greatest risk of this fatal weakness of

These anecdotes tend to complicate rather than refute Cristobal Silva’s claim that Africans “appeared to be immune to nostalgia” when compared to the frequency of the diagnosis among soldiers whose bodies were “deployed to advance colonial interests and protect the plantation system of labor.” See “Nostalgia and the Good Life,” *The Eighteenth Century* 55, no. 1 (2014): 126.

⁵ Rush, Benjamin. *Medical Inquiries and Observations, upon the Diseases of the Mind* (Philadelphia: Kimber & Richardson, 1812), 41.

⁶ *The Sixth Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States* (Washington: Davis and Force, 1823), 63. The passage was excerpted from an article originally published in a French medical journal, *Bibliothèque Ophthalmologique* in 1819. The article was reprinted and excerpted an immense number of times.

will.⁷ I choose to call this category the “provincial,” though it could also be called the pastoral or the minority, as it clearly belongs to a moment in the historical formations of race and ethnicity before they were more clearly distinguished.

Forging an alliance between African and European populations on the basis of their extreme reactions to forced migration constituted, I contend, a dominant strategy of early-nineteenth century transatlantic humanitarianism. In the case of Torrey, the slave’s defenestration is compared to the first part of Erasmus Darwin’s definition of nostalgia in *Zoonomia; Or, the Laws of Organic Life*, which relates that European sailors were known in “long voyages...[to] become so insane as to throw themselves into the sea, mistaking it for green fields or meadows.”⁸ For this alliance to work as a call for the total abolition of the slave trade, however, humanitarians were led to reject the primary reason that physicians had used to explain why only certain European populations suffered from nostalgia: their home. So long as physicians held the home chiefly responsible for fatal cases of nostalgia, it would be a simple step for slavery apologists to reject abolition by following the lead of military and plantation medicine in advocating for more hygienic systems for the transportation of slaves and the management of negative affect.⁹ Indeed, for nearly all physicians in the second half of the eighteenth century, mountainous environments were supposed to produce the potential for nostalgia in their inhabitants, as the natural “scarcity” of this type of home was said to force them to adopt irregular forms of mobility that over time enhanced their capacities for love and melancholy, intensified “local attachments” to the home, and consequently diminished their ability for reason. These provincials, affectively shackled by their

⁷ Arnold, Thomas. *Observations on the Nature, Kinds, Causes, and Preventions of Insanity, Lunacy, or Madness* (Leicester: G. Ireland, G. Robinson, T. Cadell, 1782), 26.

⁸ Darwin, Erasmus. *Zoonomia; Or, the Laws of Organic Life* Vol. 2 (London: J. Johnson, 1796), 367.

⁹ On the treatment of nostalgia in the French military in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Dodman, Thomas. *Homesick Epoch: Dying of Nostalgia in Post-Revolutionary France* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2011). For the American context, see chapter 2 of this dissertation.

natal attachments to home, emerged as the polar opposite of the cosmopolitan individual, whose reason allows him to leave the earth.¹⁰ These two figures represent the two sides of a “vexed relationship between mobility and the will, or choice, to move.” As Kevis Goodman argues, this poetics of mobility was used by medical practitioners to invent provincial populations like the Swiss mountaineers and Scottish Highlanders around their common weakness to “pathologies of travel” like nostalgia.¹¹ The home thus predetermined who was capable of suffering from nostalgia in conditions of compulsory mobility, like those found in mercenary, military, nautical, and indentured service. Though compulsory migratory occupations frequently deprived provincials of their freedoms to direct their movement, choose an occupation, and act according to their volition, it was the home that was said to kill them.¹²

In Torrey’s diagnosis of the slave in Washington, D.C., by contrast, it’s the economy that kills. “The relation of this shocking disaster,” he writes, “fully confirmed the sentiments, which I had already adopted and recorded, of the multiplied horrors added to slavery, when its victims are bought and sold, *frequently for distant destinations*, with as much indifference as fourfooted beasts” (Torrey, 42; my emphasis). His account helps us understand the sentimental humanitarian revision of medical nostalgia. With the introduction of environmental determinism, and, specifically, the concept of scarcity, medical geography made it possible to narrativize nostalgia, transforming the pathological explanation that had been dominant since the disease’s initial formulation in 1688 into a linear sequence of congruent causal explanations. This

¹⁰ On the opposition between natality and cosmopolitanism, see Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998).

¹¹ Goodman, Kevis. “‘Uncertain Disease’: Nostalgia, Pathologies of Motion, Practices of Reading,” *Studies in Romanticism* 49, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 208. Also see “Reading Motion: Coleridge’s ‘Free Spirit’ and its Medical Background,” *European Romantic Review* 26, no. 3 (2015): 349-56.

¹² The rights to direct one’s movement and choose one’s occupation were considered two of the four kinds of freedom in antiquity and are inscribed on the earliest known tablets to discuss the sale of slaves. See Westermann, William. “Between Slavery and Freedom,” *The American Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (Jan. 1945): 213-227; Westermann is cited in Arendt (1998), 12.

sequence begins with the “irregular” compulsory motions of the provincial home, continues with scenes that mirror and repeat these motions through forced migration, which is installed in the imagination as a pathological fixation on memories of home, and ends with either death by progressive immobilization or life by the liberty to return home. As a consequence of this narrativization, it also became possible to use this narrative to challenge its terms. Indeed, sentimental writers redeployed nostalgia both critically and positively. On the one hand, they expose the failure of physicians to account for the severity of affective violence involved in the modes of economic coercion that displaced European provincials, like Leonard in Wordsworth’s “Brothers,” and enslaved Africans, like those described by Thomas Winterbottom, a British physician-abolitionist who had been stationed in Sierra Leone. On the other hand, they produce a new narrative, one where the privation of home is not the cause of fatal nostalgia, but the origin of the love of natural freedom. Formerly, nostalgic self-destruction served as proof that the desire of provincials to be free was in fact a false form of freedom, produced by attachment to home and not, as in a legitimate expression of freedom, by the reason and will. Through this revaluation, the false freedom of the excessive love for home is remoralized as the legitimate origin of natural freedom, and is newly opposed to the illegitimacy of a global economy that threatens to destroy provincial populations with its movements. Nostalgia now serves as proof of the pathological consequences of global economic movement, which is obviously not the product of any home. In sum, the sentimentalization of nostalgia retains the form of the linear narrative provided by medicine, but splits apart the congruency between the home and the scene of nostalgia, in particular by rejecting the claim that they represented congruent motions; the home is now juxtaposed against the global economy according to a now-familiar set of oppositions, of which nature and artifice, rhythm and repetition, and therapy and pathology are only a few. As a

result of this juxtaposition, nostalgia came to signal the need to protect populations who couldn't protect themselves from the violence of the market and the monotony of repetitive labor.

The sentimental version of nostalgia I am describing would thus seem to resemble the nostalgia that is often said to characterize Romanticism: an intense longing for nature, freedom, and the organic rhythms of pastoral life. Yet it also relies on the hierarchical sympathetic identification of cosmopolitans with a provincial population. This is a second-order nostalgia, a strategic aesthetic adaptation of the medical narrative that works to intensify mimetic responses to the forced migration of minority populations.¹³ Scenes of the perversion of the provincial's superhuman love into a subhuman nostalgia form an emergent tragic narrative that elicits in cosmopolitans a wish that the provincial would never have been displaced from home at all. It is an impossible longing to reverse time by preventing other people from leaving home because of the superior knowledge that if they do, they may die from nostalgia and their own heightened emotions. This is the sentimental doubling of nostalgia. Far from signaling the imminent depathologization of the disease, however, this practice anticipates the enlargement of nostalgia's pathological domain in the nineteenth century. The emergence of the medical narrative of nostalgia gave physicians the power to read the homes and bodies of entire minority populations forwards and backwards in time, which allowed institutions to design preventive measures (exercises, regimens, discipline) to avoid disease in minority populations or populations with minorities in them, like the army and the city. In a not so different light, sentimental humanitarianism's chiaroscuro of love and horror enlisted cosmopolitans in the protection of their country-cousins, at the same time as it made the provincial home attractive as a destination that promised the chance to recycle native ways of life as a form of therapy. If

¹³ There is a strong resemblance here to Schiller, Friedrich. "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry," in *Friedrich Schiller: Essays*. Eds. Walter Hinderer and Daniel Dahlstrom (New York: Continuum, 1993): 179-260. Recall that Schiller was trained as a physician and that the German states were long the major site for scholarship on nostalgia.

nostalgia has driven the ever quickening recycling of period style since the 1960s, we can locate the moment of the emergence of this mode in sentimental's aesthetic transformation of the provincial home into a tourist destination for the rest cures of cosmopolitans. For this therapy to work, of course, the provincial would be forced to play a role and stay in a place.

Ultimately, sentimental nostalgia depends on both medical narrative form and this form's conditions of possibility. Despite revaluing the provincial home, making it into a wellspring for a natural love of freedom, and pathologizing global economic motion as a threat to provincial life, it still retained the fundamental tautology that had organized medical nostalgia since its inception. It is this tautology that becomes particularly apparent in the Janus-faced practice of medicine of the nineteenth century. For just as a desperate act could be said to be caused by nostalgia, so long as the person involved was a minority, so too could all minorities be earmarked as at risk of nostalgia based on their home – whether or not this home was valenced positively or negatively, as pathological and dangerous or merely natural and tragically endangered. In sentimentalism as in medicine, minority populations are endowed with a uniquely enhanced capacity for love and nostalgia.

In the illustration that accompanies Torrey's case history, the woman is figured in the act of jumping out of the window (Figure 2.1). Uncannily, she seems held in suspension, hovering like an angel or a ghost haunting the scene of her death, proleptically indicating her fate. Her whole body is magnified, the size of two or three bodies. Rather than call this a simple lapse in geometric perspective, I read it as a rendering of the tautology at the heart of nineteenth-century medical and historical narrative, of the interchangeability of diagnosis and prognosis. The picture is a characteristically humanitarian attempt to make suffering visible, in this case by externalizing on the surface of the woman's body the magnification that memories

have always been said to undergo in nostalgia. Yet unlike in almost all other versions, there is no distortion or exaggeration. Rather, this African-American slave is drawn in a manner that gives her something like a “natural” dignity even as she is in the act of destroying herself. It is an image that juxtaposes the natural beauty of a mother’s love, here bathed in moonlight, against the gruesomeness of the immanent effects of history on her body, effects which, even if they do not exaggerate and distort, as in racist caricature, still promise mutilation. Indeed, a typesetting note on the top of the page says for the image “To face page 43,” exactly where the bloody wounds and broken bones and worse are described. The woman is thus triply transported: transported to “Carolina,” transported out of the window by the impossible intensity of her nostalgia, transported heavenward as a martyr – perhaps to the “Paradise for Negro Slaves” that Benjamin Rush imagined as an African heaven where slaves returned after death.¹⁴ In fact, the image makes it easy to imagine temporary flickerings of the impossible, as it seems as if, as in a cartoon, she will remain suspended in the air indefinitely, only falling once she finally looks down.

My intuition is that this is how abolitionist images used the black female slave body’s fatal nostalgia to induce a sense of nostalgia in viewers. Continental apologists for nostalgia in recent years, like Jankèlevitch, Svetlana Boym, and Barbara Cassin, continue to make use of this doubling, as they seek to redeem nostalgia in prose that plays and replays just how exquisite and delicate the pleasures of exile can be when one is “reflective” about one’s nostalgia. We are all exiles is the obvious answer to the question in the title of Cassin’s *Nostalgia: When Are We Ever*

¹⁴ Rush’s vision of an afterlife for former slaves that resembles Africa seems to capitalize on the alleged, but possibly false opinion that held that many slaves of West African descent believed that their deaths would bring happiness and freedom because it would transport their souls back to Africa. Rush, Benjamin. “Paradise of Negro Slaves—A Dream,” in *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical* (Philadelphia: Thomas and William Bradford, 1806), 305-309. While there is a fairly large literature on this topic, one notable example is Gomez, Michael. *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1998).

*at Home?*¹⁵ Yet this abolitionist image should not simply serve as a reminder to be wary of universalizing, recuperating claims about nostalgia like these. Rather, it points to a sentimental practice where the pathological emotion of nostalgia could be made safely available to readers precisely because they were deemed incapable of the disease, safeguarded by what Hannah Arendt called “the abyss of freedom,” the caesura that separates natural from political freedoms and which was enforced by the mutually reinforcing tautology between diagnosis and prognosis that organizes both the sentimental and medical narratives of nostalgia.¹⁶ If we take a step back, not in the manner of historians or cosmopolitans who wish to universalize nostalgia, but as utopians who believe that the world can be different, we might say that this woman is not doomed to die by the inexorable laws of motion, but has been caught in the amber of history, immobilized by a narrativized epistemological and moral formation that talks out of both sides of its mouth, calling her emotions a fatal weakness of the will and a natural strength, listening to her only when her words confirm what its practitioners already know about her history, but still want and need to hear.

Now, if we ever want to do something about nostalgia, let’s get moving.

¹⁵ Boym, Svetlana. *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001); Cassin, Barbara. *Nostalgia: When Are We Ever At Home?* Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2016); Jankèlevitch, Vladimir. *L’irréversible et la nostalgie* (Paris: Flammarion, 1974).

¹⁶ Arendt, Hannah. *The Life of the Mind* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 195-217.



Figure 2.1. “–but I did not want to go, and I jump’d out of the window.–” Image of a slave committing suicide from nostalgia in Washington, D.C., 1815. Jesse Torrey. *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery in the United States*, 1817.

BODIES OF KNOWLEDGE

The history of nostalgia begins with a single short dissertation. When Johannes Hofer, a nineteen-year old medical student at the University of Basel, first coined the word “nostalgia” in 1688 in his *Dissertatio Medica de NOΣΤΑΛΓΙΑ, oder Heimwehe*, he sought to explain reports of Swiss youths who had nearly died after being forcibly removed from their homes.¹⁷ He said that their imaginations had been so severely injured by their repeatedly frustrated desires to return home that, “had they not been carried back...they would have met their final day on foreign shores.”¹⁸ In first half of the eighteenth century, during which time Hofer’s dissertation was reprinted three times (1710, 1745, 1757), medical texts helped legitimize the new disease entity, as well as disseminate it to German cities to the north and northwest, principally Frankfurt, Halle, and Leipzig. Of the 61 works I’ve found published before 1752, 49 are written in Latin and 36 were published in German cities.¹⁹ For Hofer, as for nearly all of these writers, nostalgia designated a deadly “disorder of the imagination”

¹⁷ As this title indicates, Hofer’s medical term connects nostalgia to a previously existing vernacular term, *heimweh*. According to Alan McKillop, *heimweh* comes from a Swiss-German dialect and first appeared in Swiss documents in 1569. It would be a mistake to assume that this vernacular concept is perfectly translated by nostalgia, however. The other vernacular term that Hofer associates nostalgia with, *maladie du pays* (or *maladie du pais*, as it was then spelled), is a case in point. Before 1688, this phrase often designated maladies that were supposed to be specific to a particular country. Saying that the Swiss were most commonly afflicted by the *maladie du pays* most likely first meant saying that the disease specific to Switzerland was homesickness. McKillop, Alan. “Local Attachment and Cosmopolitanism—The Eighteenth-Century Pattern,” in *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*. Eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965): 191-218.

¹⁸ Hofer, Johannes. *Dissertatio Medica De NOΣΤΑΛΓΙΑ, Oder heimwehe* (Basil: Jacobi Bertschii, 1688), 1-2. Hereafter “Hofer.” Some scholars list the original publication date as 1678, and there is in fact a copy of the dissertation in the Vienna National Library with this date. However, this is a typo, given that Hofer would have been nine-years old at the time and that there appears to be a smudged out roman numeral.

A translation of Hofer’s dissertation was printed in 1934. The translation is unfortunately overly literal and fails to recognize many technical medical concepts, and sometimes omits translating entire clauses and sentences. I’ve tried to give my own translation whenever possible. See “*Texts and Documents: Medical Dissertation on Nostalgia by Johannes Hofer, 1688*,” Trans. Carolyn Kiser Anspach. *Institute of the History of Medicine Bulletin* No. 2 (1934): 376-391.

¹⁹ 12 works were written in vernacular languages: 5 in German, 4 in French, and 3 in English. In addition to the German texts, 11 were published in Switzerland, 5 in the Netherlands, 4 in France, 3 in London, 3 in Italian cities. I eventually plan to use this information to map out the geographic and linguistic dispersion of the concept. The major nosologies (by Sauvages, Linnaeus, Sagar, Vogel, and Cullen) only began appearing in the 1750s and likely played a major role in translating nostalgia into vernacular languages, and particularly into French, which became the hegemonic “language of nostalgia” in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and still holds this reputation today, though to a lesser degree.

(*imaginatio laesa*) that progressively and ineluctably killed its victims precisely because they were prevented from getting what – and where – they wanted.²⁰

When early-modern physicians diagnosed someone with a disordered imagination, what they were saying was that a patient's impaired ability to execute rational operations was symptomatic of a fault with her imagination (also called the fancy or fantasy). Because the church enforced the belief that the rational soul was perfect in all humans, any "disparity" among people's intellects was said to "proceed immediately from the fantasy," and only "mediately and principally from the [rational part of the] brain, being variously disposed" by errors of the imagination.²¹ What made the imagination so susceptible to disorder was that, as part of the animal body, it was assumed to be "capable only of distinguishing pleasure and pain, not right and wrong."²² Thus, the imagination gets into trouble when humans meet with certain kinds of "occasions" that elicit these animal inclinations toward pleasure and aversion from pain, but prevent them from being satisfied. Based on the further assumptions that the animal body works like a machine and is triggered automatically and remains "on" as long as an occasion lasts, physicians said that these frustrating occasions increased the intensity of these tendencies (and any passions associated with them) in a linear manner. If an occasion occurs and the reason fails to intervene in a timely fashion to correct matters, the internal motions of the body eventually undergo a permanent alteration, and disease (also called distemper or disorder) is the result.²³

²⁰ This section expands upon Jean Starobinski's passing suggestion that "Hofer makes use of the classic notion of the *imaginatio laesa*...If some of the terms which he used cause one to think of the influence of Thomas Willis, others send one back to the old masters, Aretaius of Cappadocia, Galen, etc." See "The Idea of Nostalgia," Trans. William Kemp, *Diogenes* 14, no. 8 (1966): 87.

²¹ Willis, Thomas. *Two discourses concerning the soul of brutes which is that of the vital and sensitive of man which is that of the vital and sensitive of man...* Trans. S. Pordage (London: Thomas Dring, C. Harper, and J. Leigh, 1683), 41.

²² Babb, Lawrence. *The Elizabethan Malady* (Lansing: Michigan State P, 1951), 18; Browne, Jonah. *Institutions in Physick, Collected from the Writings of the Most Eminent Physicians* (London: Printed by W.R. for Jonah Browne, 1714), 220.

²³ While rational operations were supposed to allow individuals to regulate, govern, and calm the animal passions, to bring the soul into a temporary state of repose, to form true knowledge of the material world, and to contemplate the

Another way of saying this is that physicians used a tri-partite model of causality to explain the etiology of disease. This model, while subject to significant variation and elaboration, is suitable for present purposes.²⁴ In this model, a disease occurs when an occasion (the “exciting” or “procatartec” cause) triggers a predisposition to disease (the “remote cause”) to the point that changes to the circulatory system become significant enough to install the disease (the “proximate cause”) in the brain, where the imagination was located.²⁵ Because the remote cause is what “makes [the body] fit to receive the disease,” and the procatartec cause is whatever excites the remote cause, these two causes were complementary and could not independently produce a disease (Brown 219). When combined for long enough, however, they were said either to cut off communication between the imagination and the reason, or to distort the sensory images conveyed by the imagination to the reason. Either way, as Nicolas Malebranche wrote, “[w]hen the imagination overrules the soul, this is a most mischievous vice, and a kind of madness.”²⁶

abstract, immaterial, and perfect idea of God with due devotion and attention, the imagination, by contrast, was what allowed the animal passions to become ungovernable, superstition to persist, and distractions as small as the buzzing of a fly to grow into error, sin, madness, and death. The philosopher Susan James, channeling Hobbes and Spinoza, writes:

Appetites and aversions are, then, our conscious awareness of the body’s endeavour to maintain itself, and since the internal motions that constitute endeavour persists as long as the body continues to function in the manner that qualifies it as existing, we can never be without a susceptibility to passion. When the internal motions that are our appetites and aversions cease, we die, and become corpses rather than human beings. But as long as they continue, we are subject to passion, to short-term satisfaction allied to lifelong insatiability. *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press: 1997), 131.

²⁴ Medical causation was considerably more complex than this, of course, as it also incorporated internal and external causes, which could be mapped onto any of the three causes listed here. On internal and external causes, see Jankovic, Vladimir. *Confronting the Climate: British Airs and the Making of Environmental Medicine* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Lester King: “Physicians then as now tried to correlate particular bodily or environmental states with particular disease states and appreciated a multiplicity of relevant causal factors. Of the many relevant conditions some were recognized as forming a background or predisposition. This background, the so called ‘remote’ or ‘predisposing’ cause, would not of itself produce the disease but required some further activating factor, called ‘exciting’ or ‘occasional’ or ‘procatartec’ or ‘accessory’ cause. Neither remote nor accessory cause is sufficient to produce the disease, but both must act together.” See King, Lester. “Some Problems of Causality in Eighteenth Century Medicine,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 37 (1963): 19.

²⁵ See Crawford, John. *Cursus Medicinae or a Complete Theory of Physic* (London: W. Taylor, 1724), 268-70.

²⁶ Malebranche, Nicolas. *Malbranch’s Search after Truth. Or a Treatise of the Nature of the Humane Mind And of its Management for avoiding Error in the Sciences* (London: Printed for J. Dunton, 1694 [1674]), 223.

Before Hofer, the disease that most resembled nostalgia was what Thomas Willis, the Sidley Professor of Natural Philosophy at Oxford and one of the most important physicians of the seventeenth-century, called “special melancholy.” In contrast to pathological melancholy, “commonly defined to be a raving without fever or fury, joined with fear and sadness,” the special melancholic “raves” about “a certain particular thing, or some kinds of things” – for example, the objects associated with the home. Willis argues that the special melancholic’s hyper-fixation on a single idea arises when one of “two kinds of general occasions” occurs (see Table 1.1).²⁷ These are the frustrating occasions mentioned above which trigger but cannot satisfy the human’s automatic animal tendencies for movement. In the first occasion, the individual has lost or been deprived of “some good before obtained,” or has despaired of “something wished for or desired.” Here, the corporeal soul is pulled “outwardly,” and “omits all domestic care, either of itself, or of the body, or of the rational soul.” According to Willis, a good example is unrequited love. In the second kind of occasion, the individual is burdened by a “present evil.” Because of the constant presence of this evil, the “corporeal soul” is “pressed inwardly,” with the result that it “relinquishes or perverts” its two chief duties – communicating with the reason, and performing the involuntary animal functions of the body.²⁸ Jealousy is therefore the exact opposite of unrequited love, because unrequited love represents the animal body’s increasing desire to remain attached to the love-object – to incline toward it – when this

²⁷ The critical literature on melancholy is voluminous. For a good survey of early-modern melancholy, see Gowland, Angus. “The Problem of Early Modern Melancholy,” *Past & Present* 191, no.1 (2006): 77-120.

²⁸ According to Willis, the human has two souls, one “sensitive” or “corporeal,” which humans share with other animals, and the other rational, which is unique to the human. The corporeal soul is located in the cerebellum, and performs the “involuntary actions” of the body, such as the beating of the heart, respiration, and the generation of new blood. While it generally exercises these functions autonomously, it is also “the immediate subject of the rational soul,” which has the further power of “effect[ing] the form, and acts of the humane body.” The faculty that calls the rational soul to action is the imagination, which sits in the part of the brain that Willis calls the “oblong marrow,” and which communicates between the two souls. For when the imagination is excited by a particularly strong impression, the intellect is brought into play in order to “perform the government of the whole man.” For Willis, the administrative capacity of the sovereign will is necessary to defend against the disturbing effects of powerful impressions on the animal economy – specifically, against alterations in the composition and constitution of the blood. See Willis 1683.

object is physically absent and unattainable, and can “crowd the imagination only with tragical notions.” The problem is that the body remains attached to the absent love-object in order to avoid the pain of loss, even though the absence of this object also produces sadness.

General Occasion	Ontological Status	Value	Corporeal Tendency
Version 1	Absent	Good	Inclination
Version 2	Present	Evil	Aversion

Table 2.1. General Occasions for Diseases of the Passions.

In short, if a person who is already slightly melancholic is exposed to either of these general occasions for long enough, her body conforms to the respective tendency, and special melancholy is the result.

As its name indicates, nostalgia designates a disease where both of these frustrating occasions occur at once. Nostalgia, that is to say, happens when the love and sadness occasioned by an unattainable absent good are combined with the hate and fear occasioned by an inescapable present evil. While Hofer’s neologism, which joins the Greek words for “return home” (νόστος/nostos) and “suffering or grief” (άλγος/algos), has been frequently understood by critics to mean something like “the painful longing for home,” it more specifically refers to each of these two distinct occasions (see Table 1.2).²⁹ When individuals cannot return home, their preference to remain attached to an absent good is triggered. They remain attached because the body cannot choose to give up a love-object, even when its absence creates sadness. When the physical home remains absent and stops providing pleasure, the body accordingly seeks pleasure elsewhere, and inclines inward toward images of home stored in the memory. This is their *nostos*. “We presuppose in nostalgia,” Hofer wrote, “that the soul is singularly intent on the return to the native land; this object is thereafter continuously represented,”

²⁹ See, for example Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1984), 14-24.

and is now the only source of pleasure, however inferior (Hofer, 11).³⁰ At the same time, the inability to return home eventually leads individuals to fear and loathe their current situation, which confronts them with the threat of losing their home. This is the product of an equally automatic aversion to the pain of a present evil, which Hofer chooses to call *algos* (a word which, as C. Nadia Seremetakis notes, can mean pain).³¹ When the inclination to travel home is frustrated for long enough, a situation arises that provokes diametrically opposed responses.

General Occasion	Status	Value	Object	Corporeal Tendency
<i>Nostos</i>	Absent	Good	Home	Inclination
<i>Algos</i>	Present	Evil	Exile	Aversion

Table 2.2. General Occasions for Nostalgia.

Thus, in nostalgia, the body’s twin tendencies align and move in the same direction, one rushing inward toward the pleasures of the imagination, the other shrinking inward from the horrors of the present situation. It is the combined force of this alignment that made nostalgia a stronger – and therefore deadlier – form of fixation than melancholy. For nostalgia’s centripetal motion not only cuts off communication between the reason and external objects, but also distorts the communication between the imagination and the reason, which is “able to imagine nothing except the body, and directs itself to the body by the necessity of the imagination, and contemplates the image of the physical object” (Hofer, 8).³² It was because of this manifold danger that only one cure was almost ever suggested: to return the victim home. The return home was the most expedient way of materially restoring the absent good and removing the present evil.

³⁰ “...presupponimus in Nostalgia animum unice intentum esse in reditum in patriam; Hoc objectum dein continuo repraesentatum...”

³¹ Seremetakis, C. Nadia. *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996), 4.

³² “...nihil imaginari possit, nisi corporeum, ac imaginando ad corpus se convertat, objectique corporei imaginem contempletur...”

Because these general occasions were so general, Hofer and subsequent physicians worked to identify specific features in cases of nostalgia. Scant attention was paid to the remote cause beyond the claim that a slight depression of the motions of the circulatory system – i.e. a melancholic predisposition – was a prerequisite for the disease. The Swiss, who made up the majority of cases, were simply said to be “more soothingly handled by their mothers,” to be “unable to be deprived of their mother’s breast milk,” or to have received a peculiarly “pleasant education.”³³ This predisposition was supposed to be visible in the repetitive statements of victims of nostalgia. “Do we not hear men complaining in sadness, when their hearts are shackled, *mon coeur se ferme, mein hert werd mei toegeneepen!*” (my heart is closed). In Hofer, a servant girl repeatedly exclaims, “I want to go home, I want to go home.” In Favier, an “anorexic” and melancholic student of twenty exclaims while weeping, “O my native land, O my mother!” In another case, a “robust youth” from Thuringia (central Germany), “who died miserable in Copenhagen of that same *nostalgia*, on account of being refused a return to his native land,” was reported to “sigh continuously, right until the last breath of his life” the following words, “Ah if only I were able to be present with my kin at home, in our own Thuringian dialect: *“Ich wann ich nur daheim máre!”*”³⁴

Physicians instead focused on specifying the features of the two general occasions. “For instance,” Michael Valentini wrote in 1711:

in a preternatural state of melancholy and other diseases, a denial of the remedy or cure for patients is able to give an occasion, so that [youths] think of returning to their native Gods and fall into the disease by denials of this kind. Certainly, on the contrary, it is curious that in camps the Swiss, upon hearing melodies and songs, which the Rustics,

³³ Valentini, Michael. “Cas. IX: Nostalgia,” in *Praxis Medicinae Infallibilis, e principiis mechanicis dispensationi publicae aeque ac dometicae applicatae & Archiatrorum Felicissimorum consiliis illustrata* (Frankfurt: Dominicum a Sande, 1711), 592.

³⁴ Hofer 1688, 5; Favier 1713, 10; Hoyer, Johann Georg. “Observatio XIX. DN. D. JOANNIS GEORGII HOYERI. De Nostalgia,” in *Acta Physico-Medica Academiae Caesare Leopoldino-Carolinae Naturae Curiosorum exhibentio Ephemerides sive Observationes Historias et Experimenta Celeberrimis Germaniae et Exterarum Regionum Viris habita & cummincate, singulari studio collecta*. Vol 3 (Nuremberg: W.M. Endter and J.A. Engelbrecht, 1733), 76.

pasturing among Swiss herds, play on pipes and are accustomed to call in the Vernacular ‘die Kuh-Renen,’ are seized by this disease, so far indeed, that the Tribunes of the soldiers have prohibited it by a severe law, lest any more of the song, either by whistling with the mouth, or by playing on a pipe, occur.... (*Ibid*, 598)

In Valentini’s account, repeated refusals to grant Swiss soldiers leave to return home make them feel trapped in their situation by evil forces. For Pierre Favier in Avignon, the “customs of foreigners, the different rationale of living, injuries brought on by chance,” and other misfortunes produce this same sense of evil.³⁵ The desire to return home, by contrast, was variously said to be excited by frequent conversation among youths who were similarly “deprived of their liberty” (Hofer 1688, 7); by the reading of “letters sent to camp” (Valentini 1711, 592); and by the playing of rustic melodies like the “Kuhreihen” (known as the “Ranz des Vaches” in French), a rustic herding song that would become famous in the romantic period.

For these physicians, physical absence from home is imprinted on the inside of the body as a new kind of absence – chemical deprivation. Privation becomes deprivation, as the exciting cause is formally mirrored in the proximate cause (the working of the disease on the body). When protracted exile provokes a melancholic individual, his animal tendencies intensify and chemically transform his body’s fluids, with the result that his “animal spirits” are degraded and concentrated around the imagination. These “transparent, subtle, and lucid” particles were said to be essential for conveying sensory images to the imagination and reason.³⁶ When a “perturbation of the economy” alters the circulation, however, new blood is produced which contains an excess of bonds between the spirits and salt, thereby disrupting the chemical balance of the circulatory system.³⁷ Because the memory is continually provoked to call forth images of home, the body is forced to use impure spirits to convey

³⁵ Favier, Pierre. *Quaestio Medica...An Pothopadridalgia, seu anxio Patriam repetendi desiderio vulgo maladie du Pays; promptus ad Patriam reditus, sit cateris omnibus remediis praeferendus* (Avignon: Franciscus Mallard, 1713), 13.

³⁶ Willis, Thomas. *Dr Willis’s Practice of Physick, Being the whole Works of that Renowned and Famous Physician: Containing These Eleven Several Treatises...* (London: Thomas Dring, C. Harper, and J. Leigh, 1685), 3.

³⁷ Kupfferschmid, Johannes. *Dissertatio Chirurgico-Media de Morbis Praeliantium quos quidem in victoriosa Bernatum Expeditione Bellica Anno MDCCXII passim inter milites praeliantes, numeroseque sauciatos observare licuit* (Basil: E. and J.R. Thurnisiorum, 1715), 123-25; Valentini 1711, 593-96.

these images between the imagination and memory. Yet since these spirits are heavier and more acidic and can no longer irradiate the entire brain, they instead tend to concentrate around the middle brain, where they “cut” new pathways between the memory and imagination, further fixating the afflicted individual on the home. Through continual agitation, degradation, concentration, and a resulting dearth of animal spirits elsewhere in the body, the senses stop being able to convey new sensations, and the spirits concentrated around the imagination cannot be replaced properly and become “burnt” from the heat of overuse, making the images there appear dark and cloudy. Thus the external constraint on the individual’s mobility is reflected in these internal constraints on his circulation. When individuals appeared to be insensible to most external objects and “excessively moved by [certain] small external objects,” this was taken as the sign that exaggerated, distorted images – known as “phantasms” and sometimes even “ghosts” (*manes*) – were depleting and injuring the body by entralling the imagination and reason (Hofer 1688; Favier 1713, 11). The phantasm is the invisible sign that an individual has crossed over a threshold into madness.

At the same time as fixation dulls the body to external sensation, the phantasm confuses the reason by magnifying and distorting the original image. In a clear allusion to his colleague Robert Hooke’s *Micrographia* (1667), Willis analogizes the phantasm to images magnified under a microscope.³⁸ When an image is conveyed to the melancholic imagination, the “conflux” of spirits concentrated in the middle brain makes “every object appear an horrid and huge monster,” such that, as in the sublime, only “a small portion of the visible matter or thing, being increased to that immensity, is received by the aspect.”³⁹ Thus, an image appears larger than it does to other people when concentrated animal spirits make its parts visible but fail to provide the framing details that would give them scale

³⁸ Hooke, Robert. *Micrographia: Or some Physiological Descriptions of Minute Bodies made by Magnifying Glasses with Observations and Inquiries thereupon* (London: James Allestry, 1667). Willis 1685, 188.

³⁹ Willis is likely reading Hooke’s *Micrographia* by way of Francis Bacon’s *Novum Organum*, as Bacon also observes that objects under the microscope look more irregular and often uglier than they do to the naked eye. Thanks to Jessica Wolfe for this suggestion.

and context.⁴⁰ In special melancholy, this image appears monstrous – like one of Hooke’s insects – when the melancholic passions are attached to it (see Figure 2.2). In nostalgia, by contrast, images acquire a greater charm and fascination, for when misfortune “places the sweetness of the homeland before one’s eyes,” this sweetness is magnified, until it becomes an object of desire, rather than love (Hofer, 11).⁴¹ As the animal spirits degenerate, these images become increasingly distorted, thus

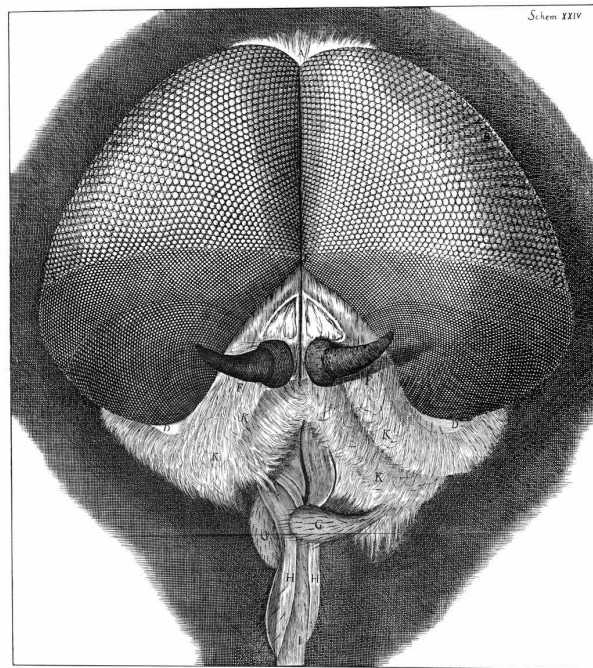


Figure 2.2. Robert Hooke. "Head of a Blue Fly," *Micrographia*, 1665.

rendering the reason less and less effective. When the “*fantasy* is prevaricated about the conceptions of things,” because phantasmatic images have assumed “more weight than usual,” the “acts of judgment and reason are falsely framed (Willis 1685, 189-90). Like other diseases of the imagination, nostalgia tricks the reason into taking actions that not only fail to achieve their desired goal (in this case, returning home), but also harm the body in the process. These actions only isolate the nostalgic

⁴⁰ Jonathan Lamb makes a similar point in regard to Thomas’s scorbutic nostalgia. “This delusion is the same asleep and awake, and so powerful it cannot be shared or communicated; it stands outside the series that constitutes history, and beyond the framework of position or situation.” See “Scorbutic Nostalgia.” *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no.1 (2013): 27-36.

⁴¹ The difference between love and desire here is that desire is the intensification of love past a certain threshold.

more completely from the material world as he becomes more and more absorbed in illusory images of a home.

While the chemical theory of the animal spirits would eventually pass out of favor, the shape it helped give to nostalgia has endured. Nostalgia is still associated with phantasmatic images of desire, with, in Susan Stewart's words, "melancholy without an object" (Stewart, 14). For philosophically minded scholars like Stewart, Edward Casey, and Vladimir Jankèlevitch, the history of nostalgia runs parallel to the unmooring of meaning from matter that some say characterizes modernity, as what was once a longing for a lost, yet still recoverable place has become an impossible longing for lost time. The nostalgia for the home has become a nostalgia for being *at home* in the world.⁴² The mistake in this alienation narrative is to imagine that alienation is somehow new; indeed, even at the very moment of its emergence, nostalgia already refers to a narrative about the growing non-equivalence between image and thing, about how loss makes images of home appear larger than the home itself, but also about how these images come to replace the home as a source of pleasure.

What we should be arguably critiquing instead in this history is the validity of the conditions of possibility that were used to fabricate nostalgia and other pathological emotions. For, above all, this concept of phantasmatic desire was formed on the assumption that material possession is *the* prerequisite for the orderly communication of feeling. Nostalgia first names a state where the orderly circulation of love is disordered by the negative feelings elicited by dispossession, as well as by several other questionable assumptions: the animal body's weaknesses to pleasure and pain, the corrupting power of images, the positing of an exact correspondence between motion and emotion, and the notion that desire is produced by absence. Indeed, there is a strong connection between nostalgia and Christian morality. Hofer's family helped bring the Reformation to his hometown of Mulhaus; four of his ancestors had served as mayor, nine as pastors. Hofer himself did not wind up

⁴² Casey, Edward. "The World of Nostalgia," *Man and World* 20 (1987): 361-384; Jankèlevitch (1974).

practicing medicine, but became mayor and later “doctor of the city.”⁴³ When doctors reconsidered nostalgia later in the eighteenth-century, they did not question the moral conditions that underwrote the explanation of the concept. Rather, by reconfiguring nostalgia by producing a new explanation for its remote cause, they made it possible to assign the potential for nostalgia to entire populations. If, in the medical framework I have tried to describe above, “the doctor was essentially a motion detector and regulator...his tasks...to read and regulate the balance of excitation within the patient’s frame,” it is critically important to recognize how this framework came to serve in turn as the basis for reading human bodies as not only historical, but also, in the case of minority populations, pathological.⁴⁴

GEOGRAPHIES OF EMOTION

In his entry for “Nostalgie, Maladie du Pays, ou Heimweh” in the 1774 supplement to the *Encyclopédie*, Albrecht von Haller declared that no adequate explanation for the “genre of fantasy” known as nostalgia existed. The famous Swiss physiologist and student of Hermann Boerhaave enjoined physicians to begin “discovering the cause which so supremely affects certain peoples, and the Swiss more remarkably than other nations.”⁴⁵ In other words, finding a new rationale for the remote cause – why some people are naturally melancholic – would unify the current explanation of nostalgia, and hopefully reveal why nostalgia had come to be called the “Swiss malady.”⁴⁶ The Swiss became a problem in medicine that promised not just an answer to

⁴³ See Herrliberger, David. *Schweizerischer Ehrentempel, in welchem die wahren bildnisse teils verstorbenen, teils annoch lebender Beruhmter Manner geistlich und weltlichen Standes, sowol aus den XIII. Als zugewandten Orten...* (Basel: Daniel Ectenstein, 1748). Thanks to Julian Henneberg for help with this translation.

⁴⁴ Goodman (2010), 207-8.

⁴⁵ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques and Albrecht von Haller. 1774. “Nostalgie,” in *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Universel Raisonné des Connoissances Humaines*. Vol. 30 (Yverdon 1774), 519.

⁴⁶ Pulteney, Richard. *A General View of the Writings of Linnaeus* (London: T. Payne, and B. White, 1781), 178. See Rice-Davis, Charles. “‘La Maladie des Suisses’: Les Origines de la Nostalgie,” *Dix-Huitième Siècle* no. 47 (2015): 39-53.

how nostalgia occurred, but also, much more sweepingly, a theory of how places produced disease. This is how Swiss nostalgia helped orient the general project of “noso-geography,” now called medical geography, which sought to develop a “useful map” of “the diseases particular to each country” in order to explain human difference, including susceptibility to disease, in terms of the comparative analysis of environmental differences.⁴⁷ Beginning in the 1750s, the new field of medical geography drew concepts from geography, stadial history, and economics together to compare different regions against one another in order to abstract the geographic features unique to particular diseases and thereby to calculate the probability of a disease in native inhabitants.⁴⁸ Indeed, it was by giving native environments this sort of analytic priority that the concept of the population was created, as a population was defined by common residence within the physical boundaries of a certain kind of environment, like the Swiss mountaineers who were said to exhibit a peculiar propensity to nostalgia. In other words, long before Dipesh Chakrabarty enjoined scholars to provincialize Europe, Europe provincialized itself.

The concept used to unify nostalgia was a new type of absence: *scarcity*. Scarcity transformed the remote cause because it allowed physicians to claim that disease was the product of environmental lack. For example, an earlier leading theory said that the Swiss suffered from nostalgia because they were acclimatized to thin, alpine air and were unable to withstand the heavy air pressure of the lowlands. Now, physicians claimed that the Alps engendered nostalgia because their barren, steep slopes prevented the Swiss inhabitants from consistently obtaining the resources

⁴⁷ Bertholon, Pierre. *De L'Électricité du Corps Humain dans L'Etat de Santé et de Maladie; ouvrage couronné par l'Académie de Lyon, dans lequel on trait de l'Électricité de l'Atmosphère, de son influence & de ses effets sur l'économie animale. &c. &c.* (Lyon: Bernuset, 1780), 333.

⁴⁸ On medical geography, see *Images of the Earth: Essays in the History of the Environmental Sciences*. Eds. L.J. Jordanova and Roy S. Porter (Chalfont St. Giles: British Society for the History of Science, 1979). I date this emergence to the 1750s, when Pierre Barrère's *Observations Anatomique* (1753) and Guillaume de Meyserey's *La Médecine D'Armée* (1754) appeared. A later version of this chapter will stretch to include this material.

needed to become civilized.⁴⁹ With the introduction of scarcity, nostalgia, that “immense void” opened up by the separation from home, “which can only be filled by the prompt return,” is now said to begin *at home*.⁵⁰ The irony of this effort to harmonize the explanation of nostalgia was that it actually transformed this theory of pathological causation by giving the remote cause diagnostic priority. In the process, the Swiss were made into the prototype for a new abstract category, the provincial population, which allowed doctors to transform the hinterlands of Europe and beyond into seedbeds for nostalgia.⁵¹

In 1781, when William Falconer published his *Remarks on the Influence of Climate, Situation, Nature of Country, Population, Nature of Food, and Way of Life*, he argued that the Swiss “way of life” was dictated by the scarcity of their home. The Bath physician compared the modern-day Swiss to the Swiss tribes described in Caesar’s *Commentaries*. In Roman times, he noted, the Swiss had not been nostalgic at all. Rather, because they had been hunter-gatherers, they had no problem leaving home, but had, “to a man, left their own country from ambitious motives” to invade and settle Gaul. “But this very people,” he wrote, “who formerly quitted their country with so little remorse, have now, since it has been improved, and fully cultivated, contracted such a degree of local attachment to it, as to pine away, and to be affected with a real disorder, when separated from it for any length of time.”⁵² Farming produces much stronger “local attachment” than do savage and

⁴⁹ Scheuchzer, Jean-Jacques. *AEPOΓPAΦΙΑΣ Helveticæ Partem I* (Zurich: Ex Officina Gessneriana, 1723). Hofer had argued that the remote cause of nostalgia was the circulation of opinion among expatriates “deprived of liberty.” What Willis called “love excited by opinion” made naturally melancholic individuals more melancholic, thus setting in motion the disease of nostalgia. Scheuchzer’s explanation largely supplanted Hofer’s, which is important because it collapsed the remote and procatactic causes into a single remote cause: the air. Later explanations rejected this content, but preserved the form of the explanation.

⁵⁰ Brion and D’Yvoiry. *Essai de Médecine Théorique et Pratique. Ouvrage Périodique, Dédié Aux Amis De L’Humanité*. Vol. 2 (Geneva, 1784), 216.

⁵¹ It is curious that physicians only occasionally mentioned the law’s role in creating the conditions for nostalgia among the Swiss by enforcing nearly unbreakable contracts for mercenary and domestic service.

⁵² Falconer, William. *Remarks on the Influence of Climate, Situation, Nature of Country, Population, Nature of Food, and Way of Life* (London: C. Dilly, 1781), 273. Helmut Illbruck claims that the prevalence of nostalgia among Swiss soldiers was indebted to radical changes in European militaries in the latter part of the seventeenth-century, which led to an increase in standing armies among the absolutist powers and, consequently, increased service time

barbaric states, associated as they are with nomadic hunting and pastoral herding respectively. This is not simply because an agricultural people build houses. Rather, it is because permanent dwellings encourage a kind of mobility that in turn engenders an array of feelings: self-regard and natural gratitude (for the fruits of one's labor), endearment and partiality (to a place), religious veneration (like that of the *lares*, or Roman household gods), and pride. For Falconer, this kind of mobility – repeated, regular motion in proximity to the agricultural home – is responsible for the material accumulation of not simply steady supplies of food and wealth, but also steady, sustainable supplies of feeling.

Agriculture thus explains why the Swiss love their native land, but not why they're susceptible to nostalgia. The answer lies partly in the fact that the Swiss were not fully agricultural, and therefore were not considered fully civilized. As one travel writer wrote, the mountainous landscape of Switzerland meant that even as "agriculture...is industriously pursued" in the lowlands, agriculture alone could not provide enough food.⁵³ The Swiss were therefore a case of arrested development, in an "intermediate state between modern civilization and ancient simplicity."⁵⁴ In addition to agriculture, they were forced to maintain a pastoral herding economy and to send their sons to serve as mercenaries in exchange for natural resources like salt.⁵⁵ As one historian writes, "between 1450 and 1850, over one million young men left the countryside or towns of what today is Switzerland to serve as contract

for Switzerland's mercenaries, which were sent to other countries as part of a treaty agreement that allowed the Swiss Confederacy to obtain sovereign recognition and necessary goods. Illbruck, Helmut. *Nostalgia: Origins and Ends of an Unenlightened Disease* (Northwestern Univ. Press, 2012), 30-37. One problem with this argument, which is indebted to John Casparis's excellent article on the subject, is that it fails to account for the fact that medical geographers almost wholly ignored Swiss political and economic history. The entry for "nostalgia" in *L'Encyclopédie* is a notable exception.

⁵³ Stolberg, Friedrich Leopold. *Travels through Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Sicily*. Trans. Thomas Holcroft. Vol. 1 (London: C.G. and J. Robinson, 1798), 134.

⁵⁴ Anonymous. "Review of *Constitution du Corps Helvetique, Extrait du Guide Voyageur, en Suisse*. Paris. Buisson," *Critical Review* 5 (1792): 523.

⁵⁵ See Zimmer, Oliver. "In Search of Natural Identity: Alpine Landscape and the Reconstruction of the Swiss Nation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 4 (Oct. 1998): 637-55.

laborers in some mercenary army of Europe.”⁵⁶ Yet at the same time as the mountains arrested Swiss development, they were also said to be responsible for preserving the Swiss “simplicity of manners, courage, and love of freedom,” and for insulating their “ancient manners” against the corrupting influence of commerce (Stolberg 116). As Oliver Goldsmith wrote of the “bleak Swiss” in *The Traveller: Or a Prospect of Society*, “every good his native wilds impart, / Imprints the patriot passion on his heart, / And ev’n those ills, that round his mansion rise, / Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.” Stated more pithily, “every want, that stimulates the breast, / becomes a source of pleasure when redrest.”⁵⁷ The Swiss differ from agricultural populations because of a lack of arable land. And yet it is this lack that makes all the difference.

This is because scarcity magnifies Swiss local attachment and predisposes them to nostalgia. This is the new explanation of the remote cause. While “local attachment” simply designates the home as an object of love, scarcity explains why the Swiss love of home is stronger than other agricultural populations and why they become especially melancholic when away from home. Specifically, food shortages and herding force the Swiss to travel away from home, to depart from the routines of agricultural labor have formed their habit of local attachment and mapped out the space of the home for them. These forays were thus read as periods of temporary dispossession, in which absence turns the home into an object of the imagination, with the consequence that the love of home is magnified and distorted, in a manner of melancholic or nostalgic desire. While successful homecomings save the Swiss from succumbing to actual diseases of the imagination, these cycles of departure and return intensify Swiss local attachment by reinforcing the body’s tendency to fixate

⁵⁶ Casparis, John. “The Swiss Mercenary System: Labor-Emigration from the Semiperiphery,” *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 5, no.4 (1982): 593.

⁵⁷ Goldsmith, Oliver. *The Traveller, or a Prospect of Society. A Poem Inscribed to the Rev. Mr. Henry Goldsmith* (London: J. Newbury, 1765), 12. In a later version, I would like to include a reading of Goldsmith’s poem in this section.

and concentrate feeling on images. This logic is what made the departures and homecomings of the Swiss soldier into a commonplace in Romantic art, as can be seen in an immensely popular set of prints by a Basel artist, Sigmund Freudenberger (see Figures 2.3 and 2.4). Thus, for medical geographers, strong local attachment was a “wise compensation, established by the Author of nature,” because it made inhabitants willing to live in “awful regions where ferocious beasts outnumber individuals of the human species.” At the same time, it was not considered a rational capacity at all, but rather an exaggerated, illusory attachment to home. Hence why we read that, for the resource-poor Swiss, “the love of his country holds him there like a chain” (Brion and D’Yvoir, 217-8). If psychologists today view nostalgia as a buffer against loss, for eighteenth-century physicians, this buffer was not a feature of nostalgia itself, but rather of enhanced local attachments that characterized “the poorer or less civilized inhabitants of modern Europe” (Arnold 1782, 26).⁵⁸ Nostalgia named what happened to these inhabitants when this buffer was taken away.

The Swiss therefore succumb to nostalgia because their homes have already made them quasi-nostalgic by virtue of requiring them to leave home frequently. “Nostalgic insanity,” the English physician Thomas Arnold wrote in 1782, “[t]his unreasonable fondness for the place of our birth, and for whatever is connected with our native soil, is the offspring of an unpolished state of society, and not uncommonly the inhabitant of dreary and inhospitable climates, where the chief, and almost only blessings, are ignorance and liberty” (*Ibid* 266). Perhaps the only kind of insanity found in “modern Europe,” it “arises chiefly from a partial attachment to their native soil” and from the inability of these populations to regulate the extreme passions provoked by separation (*Ibid* 26). Thus, in this new explanation, the Swiss do not require a long time to fall prey to nostalgia,

⁵⁸ This is the collective view of the 30 psychologists who belong to the Nostalgia Laboratory, based at the University of Southampton. See in particular the work of Constantine Sedikides and Tim Wildschut, such as Sedidikes, C. Wildschut et al. “Nostalgia fosters self-continuity: uncovering the mechanism (social connectedness) and consequence (eudaimonic well-being), *Emotion* (January 11, 2016; advance online publication): 1-17.



Depart du Soldat Suisse.

à Bern, chez l'artisan, avec privilège.



Retour du Soldat Suisse
à Bern, chez l'artisan, avec privilège.

Figures 2.3 and 2.4. Sigmund Freudenberger. *Departure of the French Soldier and Return of the French Soldier*, 1774-1800. Courtesy of the British Museum Archives.

since their homes already pitch their love just below the threshold of intensity required to make their love pathological. Accordingly, their nostalgia is described as occurring more suddenly and violently than before, and can be triggered by sensations associated with the home – a house, family, cattle, and, above everything else, song. James Beattie’s *Essays on Poetry and Music* (1776) is only the most instructive of numerous accounts:

There is a dance in Switzerland, which the young shepherds perform to a tune played on a sort of bagpipe. The tune is called *Rance des vaches*; it is wild and irregular, but has nothing in its composition that could recommend it to our notice. But the Swiss are so intoxicated with this tune, that if at any time they hear it, when abroad in foreign service, they burst into tears; and often fall sick, and even die, of a passionate desire to revisit their native country; for which reason, in some armies where they serve, the playing of this tune is prohibited. This tune, having been the attendant of their childhood and early youth, recalls [sic] to their memory those regions of wild beauty and rude magnificence, those days of liberty and peace, those nights of festivity, those happy assemblies, those tender passions, which formerly endeared to them their country, their homes, and their employments; and which, when compared with the scenes of uproar they are now engaged in, and the servitude they now undergo, awaken such regret as entirely overpowers them (Quoted in McKillop, 205).

In this new theory of nostalgia, this native song assumes far more importance because it suddenly and dramatically triggers nostalgia in the Swiss. In previous accounts, the Ranz des Vaches had been only one of several objects that gradually produce a fixation on memories of home. The fact that the power of this rustic melody was confined to the Swiss is what made it such an important trope and object of fascination for sentimental and romantic art, from Rousseau’s *Dictionnaire de Musique* (1768) to Samuel Rogers’s *The Pleasures of Memory* (1792) to Franz Liszt’s “Heimweh. Mal du Pays. Nostalgia. Honvagy,” from the suite, *Années de pèlerinage* (1855).⁵⁹ To take just one example, in 1798, in *The Influence of Local Attachment with Respect to Home*, the Cornish clergyman Richard Polwhele wrote that upon hearing the Ranz des

⁵⁹ Haruki Murakami makes Liszt’s suite central to his novel, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and his Years of Pilgrimage*. Trans. Philip Gabriel (New York: Vintage, 2015).

Vaches, the Swiss soldier immediately becomes useless, dropping his “sabre from his nerveless hand” in a state of reverie and unceasingly attempting to return to his homeland.⁶⁰

Scarcity not only created a new symmetry in the causal explanation of nostalgia, but also produced a dramatic reordering of the disease:

Cause	Absence	Presence
Remote	Scarcity (of food)	Local Attachment (to home)
Procatactic	Exile (from home)	Reminders (of home)
Proximate	Deprivation (of sense)	Fixation (on home)

Table 2.3. New Account of the Pathological Causation of Nostalgia.

With scarcity, the remote cause assumes *priority* over the procatactic cause, thereby eliminating their former complementarity and producing a new, linear causal explanation. This is not to say that this new version eliminates the older one, which merely explained nostalgia as the combined production of a melancholy predisposition and compulsory exile. Rather, this tautology is displaced. That is to say, the notion that the causes should mirror one another in terms of the form of their explanation winds up giving the remote cause precedence, with the result that the explanation of the three causes assumes the shape of a narrative sequence, which is also to say a *temporal* sequence. What is tautologous in this new version is not the ordering of the relationship between melancholy and exile, but, to put it in its most general terms, history and nature. In other words, just as the person who comes from a certain type of environment can now be said to be most likely to suffer from nostalgia, so too the person who is suffering from nostalgia can be said to be most likely from a certain type of environment. The circular reasoning of the earlier explanation is thus narrativized, in a manner that allowed physicians and others both to prognosticate and diagnose the biopolitical temporalities of ethnic (and, later, racial) populations

⁶⁰ Polwhele, Richard. *The Influence of Local Attachment with respect to home, a Poem, in Seven Books* (London: Johnson, Dilly, and Cadell and Davies, 1798).

as the product of their natural origins. “The savage,” the Scottish philosopher John Millar wrote, “is never without difficulty prevailed upon to abandon his family and friends, and to relinquish the sight of those objects to which he has been long familiar:”

The poorer the country in which he has lived, the more wretched the manner of life to which he has been accustomed, the loss of it appears to him the more unsupportable. That very poverty and wretchedness, which contracted the sphere of his amusements, is the chief circumstance that increaseth his attachment to those few gratifications which it afforded, and renders him more a slave to those particular habits which he hath acquired. Not all the allurements of European luxury could bribe a Hottentot to resign that coarse manner of life which was become habitual to him; and we may remark, that the ‘maladie du pays,’ which has been supposed peculiar to the inhabitants of Switzerland, is more or less felt by the inhabitants of all countries, according as they approach nearer to the ages of rudeness and simplicity.⁶¹

In this new model, semi-cultivated environments form populations whose affective habits predispose them to nostalgia. The severity of an individual case can be determined in the same manner as the population’s risk factor is calculated: by assessing the scarcity of the home. In this new model, the procatactic cause is subordinated to the remote cause, as the predisposition to nostalgia is produced at home by a chain of prior occasions whose form is almost identical to that of the procatactic cause (see Table 2.4). This shift in emphasis helps explain why so much time is needed to produce the predisposition, and so little to trigger the disease.

This biohistorical model allowed physicians to label other populations as nostalgic. The Swiss served as the prototype for a combination of scarcity and local attachment that came to characterize provincial populations in general. These populations were said to lack the rationality – the “superior action of the mind,” in Benjamin Rush’s phrasing – that allowed rational cosmopolitan individuals to regulate their emotions and move freely beyond the home (Rush 1805, 285-86). Nostalgia, wrote Arnold, evincing a characteristically cosmopolitan bias:

⁶¹ Millar, John. *Observations concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society* (Dublin: T. Ewing, 1771), 118-19.

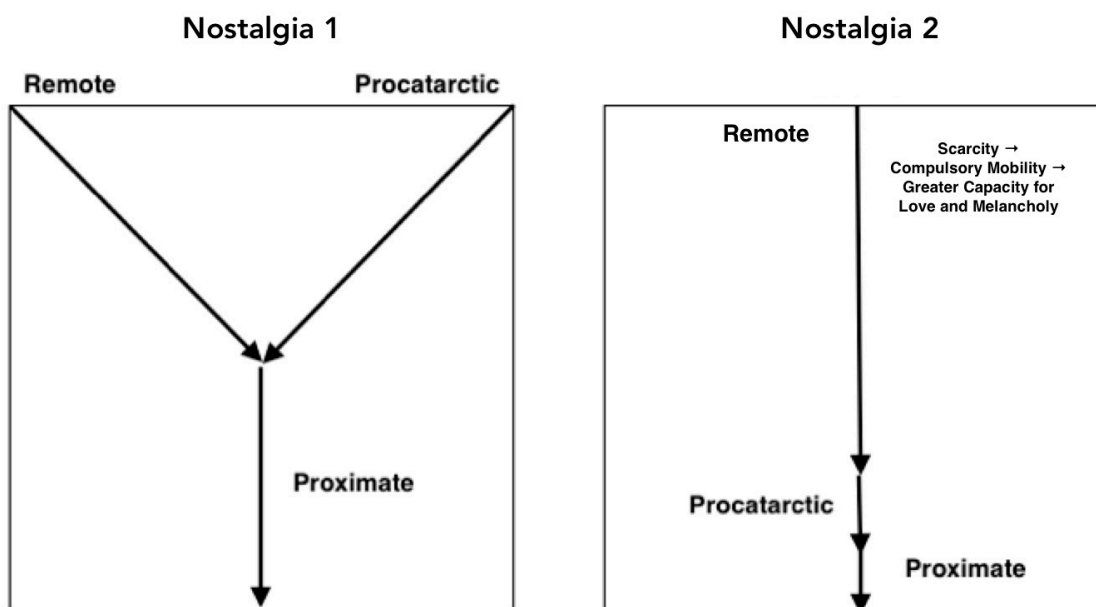


Table 2.4. Comparison of the Two Models of Pathological Causation for Nostalgia.

shuns the populous, wealthy, commercial city, where a free intercourse with the rest of mankind, and especially the daily resort and frequent society of foreigners, render the views and connections more extensive, familiarize distant nations with each other, rub off the partiality of private and confined attachments, and while they diminish the warmth, vastly increase the extent of affection, making of rude and zealous patriots, benevolent, though less ardent, citizens of the world, and of bigots in their attachment to some insignificant state, or petty district, the friends, and often the benefactors of human nature: —from these scenes of civilization, and refinement, it flies to pastoral life, and rural retirement; and loves to roam at large, with the peasant, or manufacturer, in his forests, and plains— (Arnold, 266-67).

From the 1780s through the 1850s, physicians progressively labeled Laplanders, Greenlanders, Scottish Highlanders, the Irish, the Turkish, the Welsh and others with the risk of nostalgia.⁶²

When we read that the “peasantry became a prey to nostalgia, while the young citizens hardly

⁶² See, for example, Rousseau and Von Haller 1774; Brion and D’Yvoiry 1784; and Hamilton, Robert. “History of a remarkable Case of Nostalgia affecting a native of wales, and occurring in Britain. By Dr Robert Hamilton physician at Ipswich,” in *Medical Commentaries, for the Year M,DCC,LXXXVI. Exhibiting A Concise View of the Latest and Most Important Discoveries in Medicine and Medical Philosophy*. Ed. Andrew Duncan. Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: C. Elliot and Co., 1786), 343-348. Laplanders are “so proud of their country and constitution, that when removed from the place of their nativity, they usually die of the nostalgia, or longing to return” (1780).

perceived they were absent from their families”; of “a country lad from the fens of Lincolnshire” who died “on his passage to Canada, in 1813”; or find that nostalgia especially affected “the inexperienced” and “troops from rural districts,” we encounter the systematic provincialization of Europe and its colonies.⁶³ In one particularly dramatic example, a porter from the Tyrolean Alps is said to be liable to the disease even though his backbreaking work means that he rarely is able to view his native land. “Provided he can fill his pipe, [the home he cannot see] is all he thinks about, or perhaps, that is all he thinks he thinks about; for, take him from his mountains, and he will pine for them, and sicken with nostalgia, that terrible and incurable disease” (see Figure 2.5).⁶⁴ These populations were all invented according to the Swiss model, affectively chained to the home *by* the home.

In 1796, Erasmus Darwin combined nostalgia with “calenture” in his *Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life*. In suggesting the rough equivalence between the nostalgia of Swiss mercenaries and the calenture suffered by hallucinating sailors on “long voyages,” who “bec[a]me so insane as to throw themselves into the sea, mistaking it for green fields and meadows,” Darwin helps us see that the fate of nostalgia had increasingly become tied to imperial and colonial ventures (Darwin 1796, 367).⁶⁵ And in classifying the hybrid disease under the category of “diseases of volition,” he also helps us see that the modern division between normal and pathological agency was forged out of an earlier medical division between more feeling, less rational provincials and less feeling, more rational cosmopolitans. For when physicians cast the Swiss as a quasi-barbaric people whose environment

⁶³ Duncan, Andrew. *Annals of Medicine, for the Year 1799. Exhibiting a Concise View of the latest and Most Important Discoveries in Medicine and Medical Philosophy*. Vol. 4 (Edinburgh: J. Pillans., 1800), 103; Beck, Theodric and William Dunlop. *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence* (London: John Anderson, 1825), 15; Brand, Charles. *Journal of a Voyage to Peru: A Passage Across the Cordillera of the Andes, in the Winter of 1827, Performed on Foot in the Snow; And A Journey Across the Pampas* (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), 325-26; Calhoun, J. Theodore. “Nostalgia as a Disease of Field Service.” *The Medical and Surgical Reporter: A Weekly Journal* (Feb. 27 1864), 130.

⁶⁴ Anonymous. “The Tyrolese Carrier,” *The Welcome Guest*. No. 57 (May 28, 1859), 328.

⁶⁵ For a version of this argument, see Lamb, Jonathan. “‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’, a Ballad of the Scurvy,” in *Pathologies of Travel*. Eds. Richard Wrigley and George Revill (Amsterdam: Rodopi P, 2000), 157-174.



THE TYROLESE CARRIER.—FROM A PICTURE BY CARL MAAG.)

Figure 2.5 "The Tyrolean Carrier. – From a Picture by Carl Maag," 1859.

preserved their manners and intensified their feelings, they invented a new rationale for calling populations nostalgic that relied upon a distinction between two kinds of freedom: freedom tied to agency and freedom tied to home. With nostalgia, the Swiss' well-known love of freedom is redefined as a passion determined by the home – one that, in the wrong circumstances, produced a weakness of the will that interferes with their desired aim of returning home. As an early instance of “partial insanity,” the diagnosis that psychiatrists would use in the nineteenth-century to legitimate their particular brand of expertise, nostalgia helped medical practitioners enforce an older, *a priori* negative judgment against intense emotions.⁶⁶ The eighteenth-century transformation of medical causation only reinforced this judgment, as it provided practitioners and theorists with a materialist basis for isolating the environments that predisposed entire populations to diseases of the emotions like nostalgia.

Yet this new explanation also contained a logical implication that medicine, concerned as it always has been with pathological states, all but ignored. For if medical geographers posited that a population's intensity of feeling was proportionate to their risk of disease and inversely proportionate to their intensity of agency, then this does not just mean that the less rational you are the stronger you feel things, the harder it is to control your feelings, and the more likely you are to become ill. It also implies that more rational populations possess stronger agency, greater immunity to disease, and, crucially, weaker feelings. When romantic and abolitionist writers became the first non-medical writers to make important use of nostalgia at the end of the eighteenth-century, they did so by exploiting some consequences of this implication. The final section considers how Romantic and abolitionists authors transformed the medical description of nostalgia by

⁶⁶ Goldstein, Jan. *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth-Century* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987), 152-196.

depathologizing the home and pathologizing anew the economic forces that broke local attachments and cruelly turned these strong domestic feelings into their monstrous counterpart, nostalgia.

BONDS OF EMPIRE

Medical geography made populations gradable according to their environmentally produced affective susceptibility to disease. In aligning different versions of the home with differences in the affective intensities of populations, doctors became able to read the home as the origins of a population's risk of disease when members were later set in compulsory motion. In the process, nostalgia was redefined as a disease suffered exclusively by populations who had been habituated to a certain form of mobility by a particular kind of home, the mountain environment. At the same time, we can see that this model fails to take into account the fact that occasions can vary in intensity too. Not all forms and modalities of displacement are the same. While a graduated scale of the procatarctic cause (one that would grade occasions by the affective intensities they elicited) would have exactly mirrored medical geography's new model of the remote cause, this possibility was ignored, as physicians had avoided describing the thing that displaced provincial populations from home and made them unable to return to it: coercion. If we want to draw an inference as to why medicine ignored this possibility, we will likely be led beyond the description of the discursive statements that formed the conditions of possibility for nostalgia and into the way that these conditions were constrained by non-discursive relations. As Michel Foucault might say, this is where power limits what could be said about nostalgia.

Sentimental humanitarianism was the first non-medical genre to make significant use of nostalgia and the first to connect it with this concept of coercion. Whereas medicine had only considered how the local economy emerged as a byproduct of the natural limitations of the

home, sentimentalism divorces the economic from the natural environment in order to bring attention to wider economic flows that are obviously not the product of any home. In this new version, provincials may still feel more strongly than cosmopolitans, but this now explains very little of why they suffer when abroad, or even go abroad at all. Rather, the provincials' heightened sensitivity of feeling, though still naturally determined, now serves as a barometer for gauging the intensity of coercion and compulsion involved in the market relation that displaces them from home and binds them to service.

Thus, at the same time as nostalgia was afflicting thousands of soldiers in the Napoleonic army, it also increasingly comes to serve as a sentimental strategy for representing the pathological effects of British and French empire on provincial sailors and soldiers. By opposing the economic to the natural, sentimental writing comes to include the African slave within the demographic compass of this disease. Indeed, as one author wrote, "the Laplander, the Swiss, and the Negro whom we steal from among his native mangroves...to steep in slavery" are all said to share the same "sensibility" to local attachment, and are only differentiated according to a new criterion: the severity of their exile.⁶⁷ The severity of captivity is now determined by two types of absence: the duration of absence from home (this is the logic of scarcity applied to exile), and the violence required to install provincials in fixed economic stations to produce luxury goods like rum and sugar.

William Wordsworth's "The Brothers" is a prime example of this reconfiguration of medical geography's narrative of nostalgia. Added to the 1800 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, the poem was initially intended as the conclusion to a series of pastorals set in the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland, precisely the type of environment most associated with

⁶⁷ Anonymous 1823, 261

nostalgia.⁶⁸ The first two stanzas inform us that our protagonist, Leonard, has returned home to Ennerdale after twenty years at sea, where he had suffered from the marine variant of nostalgia, calenture, a disease whose rising popularity coincided with the expansion of British empire.⁶⁹ The poem tells of a “Shepherd-lad,” “rear’d / among the mountains,” who “in his heart / was half a Shepherd on the stormy seas,” where he was subjected to that most monotonous species of compulsory mobility, the long voyage. As we’ve seen before, negative and positive occasions conduce to trigger Leonard’s nostalgia: if the “piping shrouds” (the scream of the rigging in a storm) provoke associations of the “tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds / Of caves and trees” in and around Ennerdale, the “weary” conditions of the voyage coerce his imagination to play out this train of past associations using other senses:

[A]nd when the regular wind
 Between the tropics fill’d the steady sail
 And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence would often hang
 Over the vessel’s side, and gaze and gaze,
 And, while the broad green wave and sparkling foam
 Flash’d round him images and hues, that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep
 Saw mountains, saw the forms of sheep that graz’d
 On verdant hills, with dwellings among trees,
 And Shepherds clad in the same country grey
 Which he himself had worn. (ll. 49-66)

In his “feverish” hallucination, Leonard is tempted to make the fatal mistake that served as the hallmark of calenture: acting as if he were on land and inadvertently drowning. In contrast to Hofer’s nostalgia, where the senses are progressively dulled as the victim withdraws inward into

⁶⁸ Wordsworth, William. *Lyrical Ballads, with Other Poems. In Two Volumes* (London: T.N. Longman and O. Rees, 1800).

⁶⁹ Lamb, Jonathan. *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2001), 114-131.

a continuous fixation on his memories, Leonard's senses are outwardly dazzled by the sun's glittering reflections on the waves created by the ship's steady motion through the ocean. It is here, in the cloudless tropics as his ship plies a steady *trade* wind whose constant, unchanging velocity deprives him of his marine employment – which is to say, when he is at the farthest possible remove from home – that “the employment of his heart” is worked upon and “overcome.” “[W]here there is in the memory ‘a rooted sorrow’ or ‘written troubles of the brain,’” Benjamin Moseley wrote in *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases...in the West Indies*, “*Nostalgia* exerts its painful influence in the remotest regions, and magnifies to danger, the most trivial indisposition of either body or mind, when both are already half subdued by the heat and dread of climate.”⁷⁰

In contrast to medical accounts like Moseley's, however, what the poem renders especially grotesque about Leonard's calenture is that, even as it conjures up the images of a flooded Ennerdale landscape, it cannot escape the logic of his exile. In contrast to the nostalgic soldier, whose fixation rendered him useless for active service and confined him to a military hospital bed, as, in Hofer's words, “the object” of his desires is “continuously represented” before his imagination, causing him to progressively deteriorate, no such continuity is permitted here. Each breaking wave will interrupt the images of home that his imagination attempts to call forth and hold before his “bodily eye,” each nautical mile traveled will present him with new waves to “gaze and gaze” upon, and each time his imagination's capacity to form images will be interrupted by the prefixed motion of a commercial shipping industry that has replaced the natural commerce of motion and emotion that he formerly enjoyed at home. In Wordsworth's calenture, the sailor's hallucination of home still indicates his provincial origins, but his inability

⁷⁰ Moseley, Benjamin. *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; on Military Operations; and on the Climate of the West-Indies* (London: T. Cadell, 1792), 130-1.

to find a stable setting to affix his hallucinations onto signals that his desire is not of his own making. The intensification of Leonard's desires follows the movement of his ship.

If this verse suggests that nostalgia is more than a provincial longing for home, the remainder of the poem continues to reconfigure the medical narrative of nostalgia. In contrast to medicine's claim that the home's material scarcity limits where provincials can travel safely, it suggests that tropical colonial ventures indirectly create conditions of *economic* scarcity in the provincial home – long before the Leonards of the world are forced to take to the sea. This disruption is thematized by images of water, which set up an opposition between oceanic foreign debt (a different form of absence, but not the same as scarcity) and wellsprings of local feeling. We learn that the grandfather's feelings have “*o'erflow'd* the bounds of [the family] inheritance, that single cottage,” but, “*buffeted* with bond, / interest and mortgages; at last he *sank*, / and went into his grave before his time” (my emphasis). The grandfather's name, Walter Ewbank, announces his occupation as a shepherd – his function as a “wall” or “bank” to protect his sheep from “water” – as well as his ultimate failure to avoid financial obligations (cf. “The Shepherd's Last Lamb”). When Leonard is initially mistaken for a sight-seeing tourist, the local priest compares the “roaring cataract” that carried sheep and shepherd to their deaths to “a water-spout [which] will bring down half a mountain,” likely unaware that a “water-spout” can also name a vortex in the tropics and not simply a hard downpour. By the time we learn that a “torrent” of debt has necessitated the sale of the entire family estate, sending Leonard to sea, where he is no longer able to protect his “delicate” brother, James, whom he had once carried across “swollen streams,” his brother's death comes to look like another instance of calenture. As the physician Thomas Trotter wrote, calenture was not simply a waking hallucination of “green fields, and streams of pure water” that tempted victims to their deaths; rather, it works on imagination in

sleep too: “but in dreams they are tantalized by the favourite idea; and on waking, the mortifying disappointment is expressed with the utmost regret...”⁷¹ Thus, if James becomes a somnambulist after his brother goes to sea, and one day falls off a high mountain crag, either while seeking his brother in his sleep or as an act of suicide, it stands to reason that the brother’s dreams merge home and water in much the same way that Leonard’s daydreams bodily call forth a submerged Ennerdale landscape – a hallucination that the poem renders less as provincial insanity and more like a nightmarishly prophetic vision.⁷² For if Leonard’s visions predict the fate of his brother, this is not simply because “his soul was knit to this his native soil,” as in Goldsmith’s *The Traveller*, and by extension to his brother; it is also because both brothers are exposed to the obligations of economic desire. In “The Brothers,” calenture is not just a flickering nostalgia standing outside global commerce. Rather, it is the after-image of the flickering, dazzling, erosive movement of commercial desire itself. Commercial desire compounds provincial desire, leading the provincial to become nostalgically fixated on their home. The continuous representation of the home by the imagination, so central to the two versions of medical nostalgia, is voided over and over again by the inexorable march of commercial movement. If physicians had initially pathologized nostalgia to demonstrate the dangers of indulging in the pleasures of images, the poem argues that it is not indulgence itself that induces nostalgia, but the interruption of the imagination, which provokes the body’s response to loss, an attempt to recover not simply the home, but the very possibility of imagining the home promised by uninterrupted reverie, solitude, and dreams. Only death seems to offer a solution.

By opposing the provincial’s natural movement of the imagination to the artificial regularity of commerce, by revising the medical narrative of nostalgia, that is, it became possible

⁷¹ Trotter, Thomas. *Observations on the Scurvy, with a Review of the Opinions Lately Advanced on the Disease* (London: T. Longman and J. Watts, 1792), 44.

⁷² Bewell, Alan. *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2003), 55-65)

to forge an alliance between European provincials and African slaves. Abolitionists stressed that African slaves were even more vulnerable to this imaginary process. “NOSTALGIA,” wrote Thomas Winterbottom wrote in 1803 in the passage that serves as this essay’s epigraph,

affects the natives of Africa as strongly as it does those of Switzerland; it is even more violent in its effects on the Africans, and often impels them to dreadful acts of suicide...No reader of sensibility can peruse without emotion Haller’s empassioned regret for the calm retreat of Hasel; but even Haller’s glowing language appears cold and lifeless, if compared with the agonizing expressions of distress poured out by the poor African, when, waking from the sleep in which delusive fancy had wafted him back to his friends and much loved home, he finds only the cruel mockery of a dream.⁷³

If “The Brothers” flirted with the idea of connecting suicide to nostalgia, Winterbottom makes the connection explicit. The English physician, who was stationed for three years in Sierra Leone, the colony with the highest death rate from disease in the British empire, aligns Africans with the sentimental depiction of provincials: both enjoy the same feelings, and are equally vulnerable to the amplification of these feelings into pathological forms of desire like nostalgia (Bewell 2003, 11). Representations of the nostalgic suicides of slaves would become a common abolitionist strategy in the next twenty years, in part because it helped align Africans with provincials in terms of their common natural feeling, while showing that Africans suffered more cruelly because of their more extreme form of forced migration. As Winterbottom wrote:

This disease has been supposed to be almost peculiar to the natives of mountainous countries; hence the Highlanders of Scotland, as well as the Swiss, have been remarked to be extremely prone to it. May it not rather be said to prevail most among those people who live in that happy state of simplicity which nature, as her choicest gift, has bestowed upon her favourites, and of which too many have been deprived by the baneful effects of luxury? (Winterbottom, 174-75)

Abolitionist representations of nostalgia like Winterbottom’s closely resemble Trotter’s calenture, as it contrasts the “delusive fancy” of the comforts of home with the “cruel mockery” of waking from these

⁷³ Winterbottom, Thomas. *An Account of the Native Africans in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone; to which is added, an account of the Present State of Medicine among them*. Vol. 2 (London: C. Whittingham, 1803), 174..

dreams, as the verse rendering of James Montgomery (notably also the author of “The Wanderer of Switzerland”) in *The West Indies* (1809) indicates:

The home-sick passion which the negro feels,
When toiling, fainting in the land of canes,
His spirit wanders to his native plains;
His little lovely dwelling there he sees,
Beneath the shade of his paternal trees,
The home of comfort:—then before his eyes
The terrors of captivity arise.⁷⁴

For both Montgomery and Winterbottom, market crops like sugarcane expose African slaves to “the baneful effects of luxury.” According to the Scottish travel writer, Pierre McCallum, “the thoughts of being thus held in hard and hopeless bondage, together with the brutality of their tyrants, brings on a gradual *ennui*” in Scottish indentured servants in America, “which tempts them to end their miserable existence by suicide...It is the same with the negroes, but far more violent from the nature of their bondage.”⁷⁵ The slave’s “delusive fancy” more convincingly carries him “back to his friends and much loved home” in dreams because slavery, a permanent form of captivity offering no hope of return, intensifies the slave’s imaginary fixation. Like Wordsworth’s sailor, whose motion is fixed by constant trading winds and far-flung colonial ports of call, the African is a slave to commercial desire, condemned to perform repetitive labor, labor that her body is said to resist because it is habituated to provincial motion. The captivity of slavery is absolute, however, only terminating with death, and its motions are fixed by the demands of plantation labor, with its market crops of mahogany, sugar, coffee, and rum. Using the medical logic of desire, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in arguing against the slave trade in 1796,

⁷⁴ Montgomery, James. *The West Indies, and Other Poems* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1809), 40.

⁷⁵ McCallum, Pierre. *Travels in Trinidad during the Months of February, March, and April, 1803, in a Series of Letters, Addressed to a Member of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain* (Liverpool: W. Jones, 1805), 80.

said that the British public's fixation on luxury had produced a series of "*imaginary Wants*."⁷⁶ "Luxury is the indulgence of gratifications which are not essentially necessary to our existence or health," one of Coleridge's opponents, the slavery apologist Alexander Geddes wrote, "every indulgence begetting a new desire, they at length become innumerable.—What is worse, they become, in time, almost necessary: so that we cannot conveniently dispense with them.—Such is precisely our case, with respect to the productions of our colonies."⁷⁷ Thus, slaves are double-bound to their economic station by two competing forms of the imagination – bound from outside by the public's fixation on goods of desire, a fixation that requires the creation of fixed economic stations to satisfy demands for luxury goods, and bound by the conditions of forced labor that induces their provincial predisposition to nostalgia. If nostalgia initially described how a person's inclination toward home and aversion from her present exile combined to produce a pathological imaginary fixation, sentimentalism represents the slave as a figure whose nostalgia propels her toward the home, but whose motion is constantly thwarted by an economic force that runs in the opposite direction: towards the plantation. This is the sentimental narrative of the two imaginations of captivity.

CONCLUSION

Historians have said that nostalgia was depathologized in the nineteenth-century when it was "softened" by literature, leaving us with a recognizably modern form of nostalgia that sentimentalizes the past by confining it to the private, ahistorical experience of the home.⁷⁸ This statement mischaracterizes the relation between literary genre and medicine because it relies on

⁷⁶ Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. "On the Slave Trade," in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: The Watchman*. Vol. 2. Ed. Lewis Patton (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1970), 132.

⁷⁷ Geddes, Alexander. *An Apology for Slavery; or, Six Cogent Arguments against the Immediate Abolition of the Slave-Trade* (London: J. Johnson, 1792), 30.

⁷⁸ See Dodman (2011) and Matt, Susan. *Homesickness: A History* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012).

an anachronistic, undifferentiated concept of the home and the human. As this chapter suggests, eighteenth-century medical geography produced just such differentiated concepts, one where some homes and humans were more disease-prone than others. Sentimental writers depathologized one cause of nostalgia— the provincial home – at the same time as they pathologized the global forces that coerced provincials into leaving their homes to follow the movements of commerce and colonialism. By naturalizing the provincial home, provincial feeling was made to seem attractive (and therefore worthy of pity, admiration, conservation, and emulation) and its economic denaturing repulsive. In turn, as a pathologically self-destructive form of provincial feeling, nostalgia came to represent, metonymically and proleptically, the scene of the destruction of what Coleridge termed “a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican.”⁷⁹ And by involving the reader in pathologizing the affective consequences of violent modes of commerce like the slave trade, these genres instruct their readers to view affective attachments to home as the flowers of a fragile ecosystem that should be protected and preserved.

Yet the naturalization of the provincial home also indicates how sentimentalism reinforced the poetics that underpinned medical geography’s narrative of nostalgia. Despite widening the scope of medical explanation to give historical and economic structures a dominant role in the production of nostalgia, they continue to accept the claim that the people who suffer from nostalgia suffer because their homes make them more feeling and less rational. In particular, abolitionist spectacles of nostalgic suicide, “fixed melancholy,” and other diseases of the emotions triggered by the imposition of commercial desire arguably service the sentimental structure of reading by inducing cosmopolitan readers to assume responsibility for the

⁷⁹ Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria, or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. Vol. 2 (London: Rest Fenner, 1817), 40.

preservation of provincial populations' homes and lives.⁸⁰ Additionally, it makes strong domestic feeling desirable and perhaps worthy of imitation by these readers. In the process, the sentimental witnessing of the nostalgic destruction of domestic feeling produces a certain wistfulness and regret that would later become a part of nostalgia itself.

⁸⁰ Mallipeddi, Ramesh. "A Fixed Melancholy': Migration, Memory, and the Middle Passage." *The Eighteenth-Century* 55, no. 2-3 (2014): 235-253.

III

THE CONFINEMENT OF NOSTALGIA

“Verses Inscriptive and Memorial,” the suite of 16 poems that concludes Herman Melville’s Civil War collection, *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (1866), borrows an old British convention of the poem as gravestone epitaph to ask how different kinds of wartime deaths should be commemorated. In one case, “On a natural Monument in a Field of Georgia,” the question is especially difficult to answer. What kind of fame do the 13,200 Union soldiers who died in the Confederate Andersonville prison deserve? How should soldiers be remembered who died not performing heroic deeds on the battlefield, not with the “cheer of hymns” in their ears, but as prisoners of war beset by “withering famine” and gloating “disease?” “Their fame is this,” the poem concludes:

they did endure—
Endure, when fortitude was vain
To kindle any approving strain
Which they might hear. To these who rest,
This healing sleep alone was sure. (ll. 21-25)

Today, it is easy to read these lines as an expression of wonder at the human instinct to survive. To us, what may seem worthy of commemoration is the prisoners' anonymous, silent struggle against death.

This reading unfortunately misses the mark by virtue of its generality, for it's not death that the soldiers refuse, nor the survival instinct that's being celebrated. Rather, the poem carefully memorializes the soldiers' resistance to a certain *way* of dying: dying from a mental disease. The prisoners, already suffering from starvation and accompanying diseases of nutritional deficit like dysentery and scurvy, resist the added pain of a mental illness whose deadly allure is described in the immediately preceding lines, which make up the bulk of the poem:

Even Nature's self did aid deny;
In horror they choked the pensive sigh.
 Yea, off from home sad Memory bore
(Though anguished Yearning heaved that way),
Lest wreck of reason might befall.
 As men in gales shun the lee shore,
Though there the homestead be, and call,
And thitherward winds and waters sway—
As such lorn mariners, so fared they.
But naught shall now their peace molest (ll. 11-20).¹

The inverted syntax of the verse dramatizes just how difficult it is for the prisoner to withdraw his "sad Memory" from the place toward which his desire ("anguished Yearning") urges it to go: home. The only "aid" that the prisoners can draw upon to resist this urge is horror, a mood that does not exactly seem promising. Surprisingly, though, the object of this horror is not captivity itself, nor the sharpening of their longing for home by disease, famine, and imprisonment, but the future that these signs portend. What the prisoner is most horrified by is the knowledge that if he yields to the impulses of his own "nature," he will die.

"Pensive sigh," "sad Memory," "anguished Yearning," "the wreck of reason" – these are

¹ Melville, Herman. "On a natural Monument in a Field of Georgia," in *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1866), 178-79.

the symptoms of a disease that physicians called nostalgia. *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of Rebellion* (1870-79) records 5,266 hospitalizations and 74 deaths of white Union soldiers from this clinically insane fixation on home.² 334 African-American soldiers were hospitalized, with 16 deaths, and the Freedmen's Bureau reported 108 cases among emancipated or "contraband" African-Americans who sought protection in and around Union army camps.³ These numbers collectively represent the largest incidence of the disease in recorded history, larger even than in the Napoleonic wars, where the furlough was first used with the express goal of preventing nostalgia, or pathological homesickness.⁴ In spite of these unprecedented statistics, ex-military surgeons still lamented that "these numbers scarcely express the full extent to which nostalgia influenced the sickness and mortality of the army."⁵

Far from commemorating the human survival instinct, Melville's poem celebrates the exact opposite: the heroic willpower of the Union soldier to endure the "natural" desire to escape captivity. By extension, it also celebrates the military training that had taught soldiers to

² See *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of Rebellion*. Ed. Joseph Janvier Woodward (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1879).

Confederate records mostly burned at the end of the war. However, historian Kathryn Meier reports that in surviving records nostalgia was listed as one of only two species of mental illness (the other being mania). See *Nature's Civil War: Common Soldiers and the Environment in 1862 Virginia* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2013). When a "Mrs. B.T.L." wrote in to the *Southern Bivouac* in 1882 to ask if "soldiers suffered much from homesickness" during the war, the editor replied: "Only those who were in weekly communication by letter or message with home. There were a number of deaths in hospital from "nostalgia," of such men and boys, but we do not remember of a case occurring among Kentuckians, Missourians, or Marylanders, all of whom, except Morgan's cavalry, were hopelessly cut off from home influences and communications" (129).

³ The last two sets of numbers are drawn from Hoffman, Frederick. *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro* (New York: MacMillan, 1896), 136. While this study is a classic example of scientific racism, it is currently the only source I've found that lists the statistics of the Freedmen's Bureau.

⁴ For the history of nostalgia in French medicine in the nineteenth century, see Dodman, Thomas "Homesick Epoch: Dying of Nostalgia in post-revolutionary France" (University of Chicago Ph.D Diss. 2011), O'Sullivan, Lisa "Place, Loss, and Longing: Clinical Nostalgia and the Boundaries of Identity in 19th Century France" (Queens College, PhD Diss 2007), and Roth, Michael "Dying of the Past: Medical Nostalgia in Nineteenth-Century France," *Hist. Mem.* (1991): 5-29.

⁵ Bartholow, Roberts. "Sanitary Memoirs of the War," in *Sanitary Memoirs of the War of the Rebellion. Collected and Published by the United States Sanitary Commission*. Ed. Austin Flint (New York: U.S. Sanitary Commission, 1867), 21. This is not merely an opinion. Because nostalgia superinduced death in cases of patients with prior diseases (often scurvy, whose symptoms resembled that of nostalgia), it was difficult to identify nostalgia as a specific cause of death. "Of all diseases," declared Bartholow, "nostalgia is undoubtedly the most fatal; none are less amenable to treatment." For a classic account of the emergence of statistics, albeit mainly in British and Prussian contexts, see Ian Hacking. *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990).

recognize and avoid the symptoms that announced the arrival of fatal diseases of the emotions like nostalgia. In the words of William Hammond, Surgeon General of the United States Army (1862-1864) and a founder of American neurology, nostalgia arose from a lack of “sufficient diversion for the mind,” as might occur in camp, in a military garrison in winter, in prison, or in any confined space where monotony and *ennui* reign. In such conditions:

the mind of the soldier who has a home instinctively turns to the fireside he has left. Imagination pictures to him the events which are there transpiring; at night he dreams of them, awaking in the morning to pass another weary day in pining for the companionship of those he loves, and for the scenes amid which he was born. The continuation of such emotions eventually produces a diseased condition of the mind, and by sympathy, disorder in the functional operations of the organism. The most prominent symptom is a general emaciation from want of appetite and defect in the powers of digestion and assimilation. This is conjoined with an excessively depressed state of mind, during which nothing diverts the thoughts from home and its remembrances.⁶

As in the poem, nostalgia names a degenerative disorder in which conditions of confinement lead the imagination to stray toward memories of home, until it becomes so intensely fixated on them that insanity, emaciation, and the destruction of the body follow, one after the other. In antebellum America, nostalgia became admissible in court as a cause of arson, suicide, and infanticide, and was used as grounds for admission to lunatic asylums, military hospitals, and almshouses.⁷

This chapter reconstructs the dominant channel by which nostalgia was introduced to America between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars: military medicine. It describes how medical knowledge was used by military physicians to install new preventative regimes of conduct that were explicitly designed to maintain soldiers’ health by managing their motions and

⁶ Hammond, William. *Treatise on Hygiene, with Special Reference to the Military Service* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1863), 127.

⁷ Unlike in the West Indies and Brazil, where the disease was diagnosed in both racial and ethnic minorities, in the United States, it was almost exclusively diagnosed in ethnic groups. The transit of the European medical concept of nostalgia across the black Atlantic world, particularly to British, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies in the Caribbean and South America, will be the subject of a future chapter, which will focus on the selective use of nostalgia as a cause of slave suicide in plantation medicine and humanitarian discourse in the Americas.

emotions. Because these new regimes not only sought to break potentially pathological habits, but also taught soldiers how to recognize the symptoms of disease, it became necessary to police diagnoses like nostalgia. The emergent field of medical jurisprudence consequently supplied a new definition of nostalgia that defined the disease as a set of corporeal symptoms and as an inability to articulate the body's desire to escape institutional confinement, thereby making it much more difficult for soldiers to counterfeit the disease in order to gain a furlough to return home and potentially desert the army. I argue that the organization of these paramedical domains – military hygiene, sanitation, and medical jurisprudence – around medical knowledge about emotion resulted in a major transformation of the longstanding Enlightenment poetics of agency that had been used to compose the diseases that are now categorized under the heading of mental illness. What emerges in place of this poetics, which had linked excessive motion and emotion to a fatal weakness of the will, is a new poetics of the compulsive subject. In antebellum America, nostalgia was refigured as a result of compulsory *immobility* – of excessive confinement within closed spaces like the home, the camp, and the prison. This transformation, I contend, was not the product of an internal, theoretical transformation within medical discourse, but rather of the insertion of this theory into new military and juridical practices. The militarization of nostalgia thus runs parallel to the sentimentalization of nostalgia discussed at the end of the previous chapter; both variations were made possible by the narrativization of the disease by medical geographers in the eighteenth century.

THE FUTURE OF NOSTALGIA

In a February 6, 1787 speech to inaugurate the founding of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Benjamin Rush introduced the European medical concept of nostalgia to the American public.

Trained in Edinburgh under William Cullen and sympathetic to the abolitionist arguments of Philadelphia Quakers like Anthony Benezet and John Woolman, Rush stands as an exemplary figure in this history, as his writings helped usher in two different permutations of nostalgia. The sentimental humanitarian version of nostalgia is a focal point of the previous chapter. The second of these is the subject of this chapter, and emerged via the institutionalization of nostalgia in American military medicine. While Rush's role as the Physician General to the Military Hospitals of the United States during the Revolutionary War has been overlooked by scholars, it was in this capacity that his writings helped transform nostalgia by connecting it to the prevention of disease. Indeed, his suggestions regarding how to prevent the incidence of nostalgia and other diseases of the emotions among soldiers proved hugely influential, as they were used to design and implement a new brand of military discipline that was specifically geared toward preserving emotional health.⁸ In the nineteenth century, the new domains that came to yoke medicine together with conduct were called hygiene and sanitation. While they extended far beyond the military into the management of domestic economy, it was only in the military that these domains were concerned with nostalgia, since nostalgia was said to be precipitated by conditions of compulsory mobility.⁹

In his speech, Rush singled out emigration as an important problem for the new nation and “for the improvement of medicine” alike.¹⁰ Calling for a study of the “effects of emigration upon

⁸ While Rush only served as chairman of the middle department of the medical service for ten months, E.T. Carlson has argued that “his influence on military medicine would persist long past his own lifetime.” See “Benjamin Rush on Revolutionary War Hygiene,” in *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* (1979): 614-35.

⁹ For a study on the effects of the sanitation movement on household management, see Tomes, Nancy *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999).

¹⁰ While, due to his Edinburgh training, Rush was likely the first American citizen to use the medical category of nostalgia, the concept seems to have already been available to Americans via imported European medical texts. The 1806 *Catalogue of the Medical Library, Belonging to the Pennsylvania Hospital* (founded in 1751, opened 1756) lists many of the major European writings on nostalgia, including works by Thomas Arnold, Leopold Auenbrugger, Thomas Beddoes, William Falconer, Albrecht von Haller, and Johann Zimmerman. American physicians even had access to Hofer's dissertation on nostalgia, which was included in the library's copy of Albrecht von Haller's

life and health,” which “have as yet been the subject of no enquiry,” he referred to nostalgia by its vernacular names, asking:

Is the *maladie de pays*, or homesickness, so distressing and fatal to the Swiss, common to all the emigrants from Europe on their first arrival among us? Are they most subject to our epidemic diseases, the first or second year after they arrive in our country? Is there any mode of preventing these diseases? And lastly, do these persons exceed in health or life the natives of America?¹¹

Collectively, these questions represented a call to extend the project known as medical geography, which in Europe since the 1750s had gathered together physicians around the project of isolating the geographic features responsible for particular diseases. This project involved comparing different regions against one another in order to abstract the geographic features unique to particular diseases and thereby calculate the probability of a disease in native inhabitants. Indeed, it was by giving native environments this sort of analytic priority that the concept of the population was created, as a population was defined by common residence within the physical boundaries of a certain kind of environment, like the Swiss mountaineers who were said to exhibit a peculiar propensity to nostalgia.

While, at the time of Rush’s speech, works of medical geography had largely examined the regions and inhabitants of Europe, the expansion of European empires made it possible, not to mention important, to expand the scope of this inquiry. Furthermore, medical geography’s reliance on ideal, abstract categories (cold, temperate, warm; plains, desert, mountains; savagery, barbarity, civilization, et al.) meant that the project was fundamentally open-ended. Once a set of geographic categories was established, it could endlessly proceed by analogy, incorporating new

Disputationes ad morborum historiam et curationem facientes (1757).

¹¹ Rush, Benjamin. “A Discourse delivered before the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Feb. 6th, 1787. On the Objects of their Institution,” in *Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia* Vol 1-Part 1 (Philadelphia: T. Dobson, 1793): xxvi. See also “Information to Europeans who are Disposed to Migrate to the United States of America. In a Letter to a Friend in Great Britain,” and “An Account of the Progress of Population, Agriculture, Manners, and Government, in Pennsylvania,” in *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical* (Philadelphia: Thomas and William Bradford, 1806), 189-225.

information and humans and environments to calculate the pathological risk of a population. Thus, on a very basic level, Rush asks his listeners to extend this method to see how the American environment exacerbates or alleviates tendencies toward nostalgia among newly arrived European-born populations. In this regard, he followed the Swiss physician Johann Zimmerman, who had combatted claims that nostalgia was “peculiar” to the Swiss by citing, in a chapter on “the Passions, considered as the remote Causes of disease,” military case histories that conclusively demonstrated the incidence of the disease among French soldiers from Burgundy, Austrian troops, the Scottish, and, at the “Spanish hospital in Vienna,” “young people, who had been enlisted by force.” “Indeed,” Zimmerman concluded, “I believe [nostalgia] will be met with in men of every nation, who in foreign countries feel the want of those delights and enjoyments they would meet with amongst their friends at home.”¹² It is also notable too that, in 1786, the physician Robert Hamilton published a history of the first case of nostalgia on British soil, which had been observed in a young Welsh recruit stationed in the north of England.¹³

For Rush, then, America represented an ideal laboratory for multiplying knowledge about nostalgia. Its distance from Europe and its physical and atmospheric differences meant that the country’s large population of European emigrants would most likely feel this contrast even more sharply. As the British physician Benjamin Moseley wrote with regard to the West Indies, “*Nostalgia*,—that longing after home, exerts its painful influence in the remotest regions, and magnifies to danger the most trivial indisposition of either body or mind, when both are already

¹² Zimmerman, Johann. *A Treatise on Experience in Physic*. Vol. 2 (London: J. Wilkie, 1778), 284-5.

¹³ Hamilton, Robert. “History of a remarkable Case of Nostalgia affecting a native of wales, and occurring in Britain. By Dr Robert Hamilton physician at Ipswich,” in *Medical Commentaries, for the Year MDCCLXXXVI. Exhibiting A Concise View of the Latest and Most Important Discoveries in Medicine and Medical Philosophy*. Ed. Andrew Duncan. Vol. 1. (Edinburgh: C. Elliot and Co., 1786): 343-348. Other populations said to be predisposed to nostalgia: Laplanders, Greenlanders, and sometimes the Irish. In the nineteenth century, as nostalgia became more synonymous with a natural desire for freedom from inhumane bondage (and therefore a false, because irrational, expression of freedom), the Turkish, Egyptians, Africans, Native Americans, and Chinese were assigned the label.

half subdued by the heat and dread of climate.”¹⁴ These effects were studied by subdividing the European emigrant population by natal region and by then evaluating them in terms of the geographies of their old and new homes.¹⁵

Yet Rush does not simply enjoin his colleagues to pursue the encyclopedic cataloguing of medical knowledge about the human race. Rather, on a more sophisticated level, he proposes a new way to use this knowledge. Indeed, because the knowledge that medical geography produced was probabilistic, it opened up two ways of dramatically expanding the role of prediction in medicine. The first is fairly obvious: geography gave pathological diagnosis a much wider terrain. Yet if medical knowledge could use the entire topography of the earth to calculate the risk of disease in different groups of inhabitants, it also followed that this probabilistic knowledge could be used to give pathological prediction a new temporal dimension as well. In other words, medical geographic knowledge could be used narratively and historically – not only to predict where diseases occur and in which populations, but also to prevent these diseases from developing at all by eliminating their early symptoms. This possibility initially manifests itself via targeting native populations to prevent them from coming into contact with new environments that will trigger their predisposition to nostalgia (hence why economic protectionism is a hallmark of humanitarianism). But it also manifests itself through a new form of governmentality that was soon directed at the populations of the post-revolutionary nation state. Because many Americans were emigrants, exiles, and captives, it became important for

¹⁴ Moseley, Benjamin. *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; on Military Operations; and on the Climate of the West-Indies* (London: T. Cadell, 1789), 71. This paragraph was reprinted in America in an 1806 review. See “ART 1. *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; on Military Operations; and on the Climate of the West-Indies. By Benjamin Moseley, M.D. &c. 4th Edition*, 8vo. p. 670. London, 1803” in *The Medical Repository, and Review of American Publications on Medicine, Surgery, and the Auxiliary Branches of Science*. Edited by Samuel Latham Mitchill and Edward Miller. Vol. 3 (New York: T.&J. Swords, 1806), 189.

¹⁵ By 1789, 600,000 Europeans had arrived on American shores. While Rush is not referring here to the 300,000 Africans who came either as servants or slaves during this same period, he later suggested that West Indian slaves also suffered from nostalgia. Statistics cited in Matt, Susan. *Homesickness: An American History* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011).

officials to know how to better manage and regulate the passions of the nation's citizens, and not simply because many of them were unwilling or unable to return home. More importantly, reverse migration and other forms of mobility became undesirable to the extent that they represented a threat to national defense. Predictive knowledge about who will attempt to return home served as the basis for preventing these attempts.¹⁶

In asking how the effects of nostalgia can be minimized so as to extend the average lifespan of emigrants, Rush thus connects disease prevention to an inquiry into the effects of government on the human body. In this capacity, the degree to which it extended the life and health of citizens is the metric by which a form of government is measured. "America furnishes almost the only spot on the surface of the globe to determine whether different forms of government have any influence upon health and life," Rush wrote. "In a country, where safety, power, and offices of government are the objects of attention or desire of every man, it is a matter highly interesting to know what are the effects of the passions, which are excited by those objects, upon the human body" (Rush 1793, xxv). This knowledge is thus imagined as a way of helping officials better manage and regulate the passions of the nation's citizens.

Two years after his speech in Philadelphia, in "An account of the influence of the military and political events of the American Revolution upon the human body," Rush mentioned nostalgia by name for the first time, writing that "the NOSTALGIA of Doctor Cullen, or the *homesickness*," had been "a frequent disease in the American army" during the War.¹⁷ Writing as the former Physician General of the Revolutionary Army, he used nostalgia to redescribe the

¹⁶ For two good accounts of medical geography, see Jordanova, L.J. "Earth Science and Environmental Medicine: the Synthesis of the Late Enlightenment," in *Images of the Earth: Essays in the History of the Environmental Sciences*. Eds. L.J. Jordanova and Roy Porter (Chalfont St. Giles, British Society for the History of Science, 1979): 119-46. Also see Jankovic, Vladimir. *Confronting the Climate: British Airs and the Making of Environmental Medicine* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

¹⁷ Rush, Benjamin. "An account of the influence of the military and political events of the American Revolution upon the human body," in *Medical Inquiries and Observations* Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: J. Conrad, 1805), 285.

peculiar prevalence of homesickness “among the soldiers of the New-England states,” and particularly to emphasize the need for the military to draw upon medicine’s new predictive and preventative powers. Specifically, Rush referred to the numerous examples of “homesickness” cited by American military officers among New England troops serving in Canada and New York in 1775 and 1776. For these officers, however, homesickness had not named a medical condition, but rather a series of voluntary reactions to badly designed terms of enlistment and attempts to persuade troops to reenlist against their will. These anecdotes are important precisely because they show that before nostalgia was introduced into military medicine, homesickness had been defined in a very different manner, primarily in terms of the utilitarian organization of the army. Only later in the nineteenth century did nostalgia and homesickness become synonyms for one another in virtually every dictionary.¹⁸

When American military officers wrote about homesickness, it was primarily as a threat to the successful prosecution of the war of independence. Unlike in medicine, they rarely connected it to environmental causes, but rather to problems regarding adequate training and terms of enlistment. In particular, they pointed to the militia system, which was composed of emergency soldiers who had enlisted on short notice for a term of three years, and which since the seventeenth century had been organized at the level of the individual colony.¹⁹ “The New England troops are the worst stuff imaginable for soldiers,” Richard Montgomery wrote in October 1775 from Quebec toward the beginning of the war:

They are homesick; their regiments have melted away, and yet not a man dead of any distemper. There is such an equality among them, that the officers have no authority, and there are very few among them in whose spirit I have confidence. The privates are all

¹⁸ The two terms would come to differ primarily in terms of severity, as nostalgia named the pathologically extreme version of homesickness.

¹⁹ This opposition between volunteer and regular soldiers is important since new soldiers, unaccustomed to military life, were said to be most susceptible to the disease, much like “unseasoned” slaves on plantations.

generals, but not soldiers.²⁰

The Connecticut militia came in for the harshest criticism, however. In November, Philip Schuyler wrote that an “unhappy home-sickness” prevailing in the army in Canada had forced him to discharge 300 Connecticut troops, or a full third of the colony’s militia:

Those mentioned above all came down invalids; not one willing to re-engage for the winter service, and unable to get any work done by them, I discharged them, *en groupe*. Of all the specificks ever invented for any, there is none so efficacious as a discharge for this prevailing disorder. No sooner was it administered, but it perfected the cure of nine out of ten, who, refusing to wait for boats to go by the way of Fort *George*, slung their heavy packs, crossed the lake at this place, and undertook a march of two hundred miles with the greatest good-will and alacrity.²¹

If Schuyler evinces skepticism (with what Washington Irving called his characteristically “testy and subacid humor”) about the legitimacy of these medical complaints, his grievance stems from two sources: the refusal of the Connecticut militia to re-enlist, and the fact that they cannot be made to work.²²

The militia system initially threatened the success of the war because recruiters were unable to find sufficient replacements to keep the system running smoothly. Faced with the possibility of an undermanned army being overrun during the winter months, officers resorted to “persuasion” and “force” to coerce militia members to extend their service to avoid numerical weakness. As the wealthy Boston lawyer William Tudor wrote to John Adams a few weeks later:

We have had much Disturbance in The Camp here, by the Connecticut Troops insisting upon returning home at the Expiration of their Enlistment...Every Act of Persuasion was used to prevail with them to reinlist, but to no Purpose. Numbers of them refused staying only till the Militia could be called in to man the Lines. When Intreaty fail’d, force was used, and the greatest Part of them have at Length consented to stay Ten Days longer. Orders have been issu’d for 5000 Militia to come down immediately and join the Camp.²³

²⁰ Quoted in Coffin, Victor. *The Province of Quebec and the Early American Revolution: A Study in English-American Colonial History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1896), 522.

²¹ Philip Schuyler to the President of Congress, Nov. 20, 1775.

²² Irving, Washington. *Life of George Washington* Vol. 2 (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1856), 132.

²³ William Tudor to John Adams, Dec. 3, 1775.

In contrast to medical nostalgia, homesickness was not a way to attribute an “unconquerable” and hence pathological desire to return home to the soldiers; rather, these soldiers are described as perfectly within their legal right to refuse to sign on for a new term, but for all that, unpatriotic.²⁴ Their discontent is legitimate, voluntary, but libertarian. The concept of homesickness does not even refer to their discontent so much as to the threat it posed on the collective level for military strategy. When Nathaniel Greene writes that “the troops inlisted very slowly in general” and that he “was in hopes then that [the Connecticut troops] would not have deserted the cause of their country,” he is thus not charging the troops with actual desertion, since they had finished their service. Rather, in writing that “they seem to be so sick of this way of life, and so home-sick, that I fear the greater part, and the best of the troops from our Colony, will go home,” he faults the militia volunteers’ character for their refusals to adapt to military life and to subordinate domestic concerns and concerns over personal freedom to the collective objective of national independence.²⁵ “They may defend their own Farms and Houses,” Tudor wrote, “but a Militia will not fight from home. They must be gradually train’d to War, and learn to fight as they learn any Thing else.”²⁶ The short enlistment term was not said to afford sufficient time to create new attachments to army and country to supplant attachments to home and individual liberty.

Militia members were said to spread “loose discipline” and “disorder” among the regular army, partly because of their status as amateur soldiers and particularly after the expiration of

²⁴ Later, many of the colonies created a substitute system to avoid conscription via the draft, which, as one English journal noted, was “disagreeable” for “those who were contending for liberty on the most enlarged plans, and who considered all the rights of freemen as sacred.” See “The History of Europe,” *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1777* (London: J. Dodsley, 1778), 119. This system essentially made coercion the individual’s responsibility, as any individual who could provide “a healthy, able bodied recruit, being a freeman, or an Irish or American indentured servant, or apprentice” to serve would be granted a three year exemption from service. See “An Act to Reinforce the American Army,” *The Remembrancer, or, Impartial Repository of Public Events for the Year 1777* (London: J. Almon, 1778), 305.

²⁵ Nathaniel Greene to Samuel Ward, Dec. 10, 1775.

²⁶ William Tudor to John Adams, Sept. 6, 1776

their term. Tudor wrote to Adams in the fall of 1776:

I hope in God that the Short Inlistment of the present Army may not prove our Destruction. This is certain that if Congress does not raise an Army for 3 Years or during the Contest, all the best Officers in the Service will quit it. There is even at this very critical Juncture a most scandalous Relaxation in the Discipline in most of the Continental Regiments. And the Reason is, that the Time of Inlistment is almost expired, and the Officers think that if they shew any Severity, the Men will not again inlist.²⁷

According to Tudor, Schuyler, and others, the inability to find replacements threatened to undermine the hierarchical organization of the military, as officers could no longer give orders backed by the threat of punishment, but were forced to resort to persuasion and solicitation. Nor could they oblige free men to take part in training exercises and practices to mold them into better soldiers.

In contrast to these examples, George Washington did attribute homesickness to a pathological condition induced by environmental change, in addition to the organizational flaws and logistical difficulties already mentioned. For Washington and a select few others, homesickness constituted an actual “sickness” brought about by “change in...living”:

The impulse for going home [among the Connecticut militia]...affords one more melancholy proof, how delusive such dependences are. The dependence, which the Congress have placed upon the militia, has already greatly injured, and I fear will totally ruin our cause. Being subject to no control themselves, they introduce disorder among the troops, whom we have attempted to discipline, while the change in their living brings on sickness; this causes an impatience to get home, which spreads universally, and introduces abominable desertions.²⁸

In other words, the Congress should not depend on the militia because the rapid change in the militia’s living conditions aggravates their strong dependency on home, producing an “impulse” to return home. By “leaving their homes so suddenly,” Washington feared that the militia members had “sustained some injury”:

To this cause I must impute, in a great measure, their impatience to return, and the

²⁷ William Tudor to John Adams, Sept. 6, 1776

²⁸ George Washington to John Augustine Washington, Sept. 22, 1776.

diminution of their numbers at this time, to about two thousand. Their want of discipline, the indulgences they claim and have been allowed, their unwillingness, I may add, refusal to submit to that regularity and order essential in every army infecting the rest of our troops more or less, have been of pernicious tendency, and occasioned a good deal of confusion and disorder.²⁹

For Washington, pathologizing homesickness as the consequence of a change of environment serves to discount their “unwillingness” to re-enlist by transforming it into an involuntary desire, a natural response that was dangerous because it was contagious and might spread even to well-trained troops. As a consequence, homesickness becomes a factor that must be taken into account when designing new provisions for enlisting volunteer soldiers. As one German officer in the British army wrote, homesickness “is such a dominant passion with them that General Washington keeps his troops constantly moving.”³⁰ At the same time, medicalizing homesickness served as a way to avoid faulting militia members for a lack of patriotism. By naturalizing their response, he creates space both for their reenlistment and for a renewed profession of faith in the future nation-state.

Benjamin Rush and another military surgeon, James Thacher, both proposed ways that the army medical staff might “suspend” the development of the disease. As Thacher wrote in his journal:

Our troops in camp are in general healthy, but we are troubled with many perplexing instances of indisposition, occasioned by absence from home, called by Dr. Cullen *nostalgia*, or home sickness. This complaint is frequent among the militia, and recruits

²⁹ George Washington to Governor Trumbull, Sept. 9, 1776.

³⁰ Carl Baurmeister to Friedrich Von Jungkenn, Jan. 20, 1778. Quoted in “Letters of Major Baurmeister during the Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-1778 II,” Trans. Bernhard Uhlendorf and Edna Vosper, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 60, no. 1 (Jan. 1936): 50. Homesickness was also said to attack the German troops, as suggested by the following anecdote:

A very remarkable disease prevailed among them [the Germans], if the accounts of respectable officers attached to Burgoyne’s army may be credited. While on their way down from Canada, a presentiment would take possession of twenty or thirty at a time that they were going to die, and that they never would again see their father-land. The impression could not be effaced from their minds, notwithstanding every exertion of their officers and the administering of medical remedies. A perfect *maladie-du pays*, a home-sickness, of the most fatal kind oppressed their spirits and destroyed their health; and a large number actually died of this disorder of the heart. This is a fact too well established to be denied, and equals any thing I ever heard related of the Swiss.

See Becker, John. *The Sexagenary, or Reminiscences of the American Revolution* (Albany: W.C. Little and O. Steele, 1833), 117-118.

from New England. They become dull and melancholy, with loss of appetite, restless nights, and great weakness. In some instances they become so hypochondriacal as to be proper subjects for the hospital. This disease is in many instances cured by the raillery of old soldiers, but is generally suspended by a constant and active engagement of the mind, as by the drill exercise, camp discipline, and by uncommon anxiety, occasioned by the prospect of a battle.³¹

Thacher's entry is perhaps the earliest to ascribe the common symptoms of nostalgia to the cases of homesickness in the war ("loss of appetite, restless nights, and great weakness"), and to prescribe "drill exercise" and "camp discipline" (not to mention "uncommon anxiety") as the best ways to activate the mind and thereby avoid melancholic fixation on home.

Rush too ascribed the "nostalgia" of New England troops to a failure to keep the minds of soldiers "occupied," or in motion. He wrote:

The NOSTALGIA of Doctor Cullen, or the *home-sickness*, was a frequent disease in the American army, more especially among the soldiers of the New-England states. But this disease was suspended by the superior action of the mind under the influence of the principles which governed common soldiers in the American army. Of this General Gates furnished me with a remarkable instance in 1776, soon after his return from the command of a large body of regular troops and militia at Ticonderoga. From the effects of the nostalgia, and the feebleness of the discipline, which was exercised over the militia, desertions were very frequent and numerous in his army, in the latter part of the campaign; and yet during the *three weeks* in which the general expected every hour an attack to be made upon him by General Burgoyne, there was not a single desertion from his army, which consisted at that time of 10,000 men.

For Rush, homesickness served as striking examples of the need for a rational system directed at regulating soldiers' passions, much like the system employed by the British army. In contradistinction to the officers who saw homesickness primarily as a product of badly designed contracts, he echoes Washington in treating the disease primarily as a consequence of "the feebleness of the discipline, which was exercised over the militia," who, as has been mentioned,

³¹ Thacher, James. *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783, describing interesting events and transactions of this period, with numerous historical facts and anecdotes, from the original manuscript* (Boston: Richardson and Lord, 1823), 242. While Thacher mentions "nostalgia" by name, his diary was published in 1823, so it is possible that the concept was added in after the fact. The only other even pseudo-medical use of homesickness I've come across by a Revolutionary war figure is from the "Diary Kept at Valley Forge by Albigence Waldo, Surgeon in the Continental Army, 1777-78."

were volunteers and untrained when they entered the army (Rush 1805, 285-86). In contrast to the organization and order of the British army, he found Washington's army sorely lacking. "I am more convinced than ever of the necessity of discipline and system of management of our affairs," he wrote to John Adams in 1777.³² In a follow-up letter, he suggested that "[t]he disorders of our army do not proceed from any *natural* faults in our men," but rather are a product of "the ignorance, the cowardice, the idleness, and the drunkenness of our major generals."³³ Thus, redescribing homesickness as a disease, nostalgia, he also introduces a biopolitical argument, one that pushed for the reorganization of the army to better manage the passions of its soldiers. He does not group the New England soldiers with the proto-ethnic populations whom medical geographers had said were particularly prone to nostalgic insanity, but rather focuses on improving the conditions in the army that held responsible for nostalgia.

In his "Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers, Addressed to the Officers of the Army of the United States," he prescribed two measures to incite "the superior action of the mind" and thereby prevent the onset of diseases of the emotions: "*regular*" military exercise "performed at *stated* periods" and "constant employment," which should not "be suspended during [the soldier's] recess from the toils of war in his winter quarters."³⁴ By "interest[ing] the understanding," these measures were supposed to prevent soldiers from fixating on "the object of his affections," as in cases of "hopeless love."³⁵ When these means failed and nostalgia began to infect a larger portion of the army, however, he recommended a different kind of cure – not a remedy "intended to act indirectly upon the body, through the medium of the mind," but rather,

³² Benjamin Rush to John Adams, October 21, 1777.

³³ Benjamin Rush to John Adams, October 31, 1777.

³⁴ Rush, Benjamin. "Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers, Addressed to the Officers of the Army of the United States," *The Pennsylvania Packet* (April 22, 1777), 1.

³⁵ Benjamin Rush. *Medical Inquiries and Observations, upon the Diseases of the Mind* (Philadelphia: Kimber & Richardson, 1812), 317. It's worth considering Rush's dispute with William Shippen over the proper role of medical care in the army to understand the contours of Rush's medical politics.

one “intended to act directly upon the body.” In this situation, he wrote, the disease “should be opposed by exciting a powerful or active counter passion,” as in the following anecdote:

In the year 1733, General Praxin led a Russian army to the banks of the Rhine. At this remote distance from their native country, five or six soldiers became unfit for duty every day from home-sickness. The General issued an order to bury alive all who were affected with it. This punishment was inflicted in two or three instances, in consequence of which the disease instantly disappeared from the army. Fear, excited by a far less cruel remedy, I have no doubt would have had the same effect.³⁶

With only slight reservations, Rush endorses the “moral remedy” of fear because it adheres to the conventional medical wisdom that vehement passions can be cured by antithetical passions, so long as the latter are of greater intensity. Thus, in this anecdote, the soldiers’ fear of death excites an aversion that successfully counteracts their melancholic desire for the pleasures of home.³⁷ Such a remedy was recommended as a last-ditch effort to save the lives of nostalgic patients, and followed from the determination that these patients had already developed a fixation that could not be dislodged by alternate means; like shock therapy, it is engineered to disrupt the nervous system so as to break the patient’s chronic fixation on a single idea, the home – to break the hold of the nostalgic passions of sadness and unrequited love over the mind and body.

Considerations of proper methods to intervene affectively in advanced cases of homesickness were far less common than those that proposed preventative measures. Following the war, the discourses of hygiene and sanitation expanded dramatically as physicians designed new exercises and regimens for training soldiers. “Frequent, diversified, and amusing exercises,” the British physician William Blair wrote in *The Soldier’s Friend, or the Means of Preserving the Health of Military Men*:

tend also to prevent that longing desire to return home, which has been termed *Nostalgia*

³⁶ *Ibid*, 111. Note: I have been unable to locate a “General Praxin.” Rush probably refers to Stepan Fyodorovich Apraksin, who commanded the Russian armies during the Seven Years’ War. Apraksin was poised to conquer Prussia in 1757 (not 1733), but upon reaching the Rhine mysteriously retreated.

³⁷ *Ibid*. 325

by medical writers: This propensity is so strong in many instances, as to be attended with very serious consequences to the soldier's health, unless it be gratified; and has, therefore, given rise to the well known adage,

'Qui patriam querit, mortem invenit.' [He who seeks the homeland finds death]³⁸

"The intention of all discipline," a handbook for infantry stated, "is to supply a kind of artificial instinct, and to make this uniform throughout the whole mass of an army."³⁹ Thus, in medical terms, military discipline assumes a new set of functions in the late-eighteenth century, as it attempted to accomplish two objectives: first, by creating new activities to eradicate the precipitating conditions of emotional disease (also known as "camp diseases"); and, second, by forming in at-risk soldiers new habits of conduct to replace allegedly pathological ones.

Over the next century, idleness, proverbially said to be "the mother of vice" and to "bur[y] a man alive," would be persistently opposed to occupation, employment, and activity, and come to designate a new pathological domain that encompassed both diseases and the undisciplined actions said to encourage their production.⁴⁰ It is this expanded domain that would serve as the target of military and naval hygiene. As Rush wrote during the Revolutionary War:

Idleness is the bane of a soldier. It exposes him to temptations not only to every kind of military vice, but to every species of military disorder... 'We remark (says Montesquieu in his excellent treatise on the rise and fall of the Roman greatness) in modern times, that our soldiers perish from *immoderate* fatigue, notwithstanding it was by immense labour the Romans preserved their armies. The reason I believe was, their labour was *constant*, whereas among us our soldiers pass from the extremes of labour to the extremes of idleness, than which nothing can be more destructive to the lives of men' (Rush, April 21, 1777, 1).

While vices ranging from alcohol, gambling, and opium to torturing lepers by tossing them heated coins were all said to proceed from idleness and to be sure signs of disease, the

³⁸ Blair, William. *The Soldier's Friend: or, the Means of Preserving the Health of Military Men; addressed to the Officers of the British Army* (London: Longman, Vernon and Hood, Murray and Highley, Hookham and Carpenter, 1798), 74.

³⁹ Holbrook, John. *Military Tactics: Adapted to the Different Corps in the United States, according to the Latest Improvements* (Middletown: E&H Clark, 1826), 18.

⁴⁰ Both were common maxims at the time. See *Proverbs; or, the Manual of Wisdom, being an Alphabetical Arrangement of the best English, Spanish, French, Italian, and other Proverbs* (London: Tabart and Co., 1804), 52.

unproductive activities that produced the depressing, fixated emotions known as melancholia in the eighteenth-century and monomania in the nineteenth commanded special attention. While nostalgia would come to be criminalized with the emergence of medical jurisprudence, for the moment it is important to consider that these military practices were designed to eliminate *free* or empty time. The assumption is that soldiers are most likely to yield to their instinctive desire to think of home during periods of inactivity. Thus, what becomes paramount in mental health is the control of soldiers' movements, which is also to say the control of their time. While all soldiers were obliged to practice the same exercises, members of proto-ethnic populations were most likely subjected to an increased level of supervision because they had been identified by medical geographers as at particular risk of the disease and therefore a particular threat to the success of military objectives.⁴¹

In the War of 1812, in contrast to the Revolutionary War, homesickness was treated wholly as a disease that could be predicted and prevented through discipline and medicine. Its regular periodicity (occurring in the cold of fall and winter), its natural features (rapid change from a comfortable to uncomfortable environment), and its institutional features (harsh treatment) became increasingly standardized and codified signs of the disease. This war is notable in part for featuring the first instance of an American soldier dying of nostalgia. One diary relates an anecdote told by a certain Dr. Wheaton:

A large number of men last winter, in the encampment at Burlington died of home sickness. The Dr said, often he would see a man, with a thoughtless countenance cutting a piece of wood, or engaged in some foolish business of that kind, he would ask them what was the matter, the answer would be Nothing; no pain? no; Do you want to go home, his eyes would assume more expression, and he'd say, I would like. If the matter rested here the man would in a day or two be found dead; if the Dr ordered an officer to get his discharge, the knife is put up the stick thrown away and the man being deceived with the

⁴¹ In a later version, I plan to include additional research on the particular behaviors that were identified as examples of idleness, examples of specific drills and exercises that military physicians recommended for soldiers in order to prevent disease, and the specific objects of these practices and the effects they were supposed to have.

fond hope a few day recovers.⁴²

In the winter of 1812 in Natchez, Mississippi, Andrew Jackson closely reproduced the actions of the Russian general who had ordered all victims of homesickness to be buried alive. A regiment of drafted militia, “disgusted with the neglect and ill treatment they had received, and seized with the home-fever, resolved to quit the camp and return to Tennessee.” Learning of their plans, Jackson drew his volunteer regiment to the front, and “ordered them to fire whenever the mutineers commenced their march. Awed by this act of boldness, the militia returned to their duty.” The next morning, on finding that his volunteers were now “in a state of rebellion,” and were “so homesick and dispirited” as to be useless for “any enterprise:”

he seized a musket, stood out in front of the brigade, levelled the musket across the neck of his horse, and proclaimed that the first man who moved in the ranks should be shot down. Mute astonishment seized on the whole army—no one moved—no one spoke.⁴³

As in Rush’s example of General Praxin, Jackson’s actions dispel this state of mutinous homesickness by opposing it with a more intense, antithetical state, “astonishment.”

Most preventive approaches attempted to ameliorate the condition, however. In drawing “attention...to the preservation of the soldier’s health,” Samuel Mitchill, a well-known physician and naturalist who served as the Surgeon General to the Militia of the State of New York during the war, concentrated on enforcing “a few plain rules” to “render the transition from the domestic to military life as little inconvenient as possible. While the citizen is changing to a soldier, unlearning old associations and habits, and acquiring new in their stead, this critical season of his existence ought to be watched with peculiar care.” He drew particular attention to the soldier’s “state of mind”:

⁴² Dulles, Joseph Heatly. “Extracts from the Diary of Joseph Heatly Dulles. Contributed by Charles W. Dulles, M.D.,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 35, no. 3 (1911), 282.

⁴³ Garland, Hugh. “Eulogy delivered at Petersburg, VA., July 12, 1845” in *Monument to the Memory of General Andrew Jackson: containing twenty-five Eulogies and Sermons delivered on the occasion of his death...* (Philadelphia: James A. Bill, 1848), 17-18.

Babyism, or the longing for maternal care and tenderness, is sometimes a distressing complaint; and home-sickness is reported in certain cases to have weakened the force of armies. The assurance of kind treatment, and the engagement of the individual in some amusing and steady pursuit, are the best preventives and remedies.⁴⁴

Another military physician listed “the nostalgia, or home-sickness, of Dr. Cullen” as a remote cause of an epidemic of pneumonia among troops stationed in New York, writing that a “deficient and depraved” diet was a “fruitful source of disease.” For “raw recruits,” accustomed to having their food prepared at home by women, the resulting “coarse living and hard fare for the militia and recruits, who have recently left their families and their friends” served as a depressing influence that sometimes induced nostalgia:

To such who had left their own fire-sides and feather beds, for the tented fields, or cold barracks of the frozen regions of the north, the situation was peculiarly hard and distressing. Although they were for a time, buoyed up by patriotism and the love of fame, which, together with the passing events of the war, and the anticipation of future successes, operated as a stimulus to the mind; yet their situation not unfrequently produced the *nostalgia*, or *home-sickness*, of Dr. Cullen.⁴⁵

Hygiene and sanitation were considered necessary to avoid intensifying disappointment to the point of becoming pathological.⁴⁶

As these examples suggest, Rush’s original call to study the effects of emigration on the human body was mainly answered by American military physicians, not by physicians who served the public. “I know but little of Nostalgia as a disease, even in the human kind,” Benjamin Smith Barton wrote in 1805, a profession of ignorance that is surprising in light of the fact that he replaced Rush as professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine at the University of

⁴⁴ Mitchill, Samuel. “Extracts from a Report, made by Samuel L. Mitchill, M.D. Surgeon-General of the Militia of New York, to his Excellency Dewitt Clinton, Commander in Chief, &c. pursuant to his command; and laid by the Governor before the Legislature.—New-York, October 30, 1818,” in *The Medical Repository of Original Essays and Intelligence relative to Physic, Surgery, Chemistry, and Natural History; with a Critical Analysis of Recent Publications on these Departments of Knowledge and their Auxiliary Branches* 5, no. 1 (1820), 33.

⁴⁵ Whitridge, J.B. “An Essay on the Epidemic, Which Prevailed in the Northern Division of the Army of the United States, During the Autumn of 1812; and Winter of 1812-13. Addressed to Wm. M. Ross, M.D. Hospital Surgeon of the United States Army,” in *Transactions of the Physico-Medical Society, of New York* Vol. 1 (New York: Collins & Co., 1817), 275-6.

⁴⁶ See Larrey’s *Memoirs*; Henry Marshall on examining recruits.

Pennsylvania.⁴⁷ Within the army, however, the theory of nostalgia supplanted that of homesickness, in the process introducing a European medical framework that was used to diminish the intensity of negative affects before they became pathological. In bending this theory to the utilitarian logic of the army, which sought to maximize the efficiency of its soldiers, military physicians and surgeons thus used nostalgia to redescribe discontent among soldiers as a natural though avoidable response to ill treatment and mismanagement. While physicians were particularly concerned with designing new exercises to prevent the development of the chief conditions for the disease, such as idleness and monotony, medical jurists would seek to create stricter conditions for recognizing and diagnosing nostalgia. If the stated goal of the new field of medical jurisprudence was to instruct physicians in how to differentiate genuine from counterfeit cases of the disease, its answer was to confine nostalgia to the body.

⁴⁷ Barton made this claim in an 1805 review of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's *On the Natural Variety of Mankind*, a work which called nostalgia one of the seven diseases unique to the human race. The handful of non-military American physicians who wrote on the subject before 1820 relied for their knowledge of nostalgia on nosologies, or systematic arrangements of disease, like the *Synopsis Nosologiae Methodicae* of William Cullen. The first American edition of Cullen's nosology appeared in 1792. American reprints of British medical texts, like the 1802 edition of the Reverend Joseph Townsend's *Elements of Therapeutics*, often reinforced these taxonomic classifications, either by endorsing the theory of causality that linked the risk of nostalgia to the environmentally acquired affective capacities of ethnolocal populations, or by exemplifying how this theory could be expanded to identify new at-risk populations, as in the case history of one particular young Welsh recruit who contracted nostalgia while stationed in the north of England in 1781, becoming the first victim of the disease to appear on British soil, and was cured upon receiving furlough to return to his rural home. Erasmus Darwin's *Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life* (1794-96; three American editions by 1809) presented a new classification of nostalgia as a "disease of volition," characterized by "increased actions of the organs of sense," though the first American dictionary entries for the disease adhered closely to earlier British and Scottish definitions.

The Philadelphia Medical Dictionary (1808) defined nostalgia as "broken heart, national insanity; disease from attachment to home; a species of melancholy," and the *American Medical Lexicon* defined it in Cullen's terms as "a vehement desire of revisiting one's country...A genus of disease in the class *locales* and order *dysorexiae* of Cullen, known by impatience, when absent from one's native home, and a vehement desire to return, attended with gloom and melancholy, loss of appetite, and want of sleep (Coxe 1808; *American Medical Lexicon* 1811, np). The first definition combines Cullen's nosology with the entry for nostalgia in the *New Medical Dictionary* (published in London in 1795), which itself makes use of the English physician Thomas Arnold's 1783 definition of nostalgia as a species of "national insanity." The division of nostalgia into simple and complex forms dates back to François Boissier de Sauvage's *Nosologia Methodica* (1761).

All of the primary sources I cite here, including British and French texts, were printed in America. Nineteenth-century catalogues of American medical school libraries, almshouses, and the American Antiquarian Society have been very helpful in establishing the availability of these texts. See, for example, *A Catalogue of Books in the Library of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts* (1837).

MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE

We've just seen how the medical theory of nostalgia was used to design new paramedical domains like hygiene and sanitation, particularly in the American military. These domains were used to govern the conduct of soldiers, as they prescribed new ways of acting to help soldiers avoid succumbing to disease. Because the strong emotions were said to lead to physical and mental illness alike, these exercises were supposed to inculcate a new habit of "occupation" by teaching soldiers to build and maintain their camps in a sanitary manner, cook and eat in prescribed ways, and perform labor (e.g. cleaning of weapons) that was associated with "readiness." Occupation was designed to ward off the major threats associated with inactivity, or "idleness," which was said to breed both vice and mental illness, particularly melancholic fixation on home and family. The case of nostalgia helps us see that military discipline was designed in the nineteenth century with health in mind. By controlling the conditions for thought and feeling, army surgeons designed disciplinary practices with both positive and negative functions, as they were designed both to eradicate the possibility of illness by unlearning old habits and developing new ones in soldiers to ensure optimal health in the army. This is how the utilitarianism of the military was thus extended to the hearts and minds of its soldiers.

The boundaries of this discourse were defined by the law. For once a soldier enlisted in the army he was bound by a number of obligations, as he was obliged to fulfill the duration of his contract and remain with his regiment. Otherwise, he risked facing charges like dishonorable conduct and desertion. Enlistment, then, constituted a sacrifice of the individual's freedoms of mobility and occupation. From the perspective of the soldier, however, there were ways to circumvent these requirements. If we recall the various kinds of ailments that individuals falsified to lower their draft number and avoid serving in the Vietnam War, we get some idea of

the way that health has been used to avoid legal obligations. In earlier wars, however, it was less often a question of avoiding conscription and far more often a case of getting out of active service altogether. In the nineteenth century, the best way that a healthy soldier could return home was to *pretend* to be nostalgic. It thus became a real concern for the military to determine what counted as a “genuine” case of nostalgia.

Feigned and disqualifying diseases, as historian James Mohr writes, “had long been included in the tradition of medical jurisprudence, since European rulers had wanted to know from an early date which military conscripts were trying to avoid service and which should be excused for their own sake or for the sake of others.”⁴⁸ Yet no such professional field existed in America until 1823, when the publication of *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence* made Theodric Romeyn Beck an international authority on the subject. According to Mohr, medical jurisprudence effectively facilitated the exchange of medical knowledge and legal authority, and mediated between the medicine and the law. To give an idea of the field’s importance, 11 editions of Beck’s work were published between 1823 and 1860, while five editions of its successor, *Wharton and Stillé’s Medical Jurisprudence*, appeared between 1855 and 1905. In keeping with the role that European medical jurisprudence played in serving the needs of state armies, the field came to provide the American military with a new framework for distinguishing between kinds of nostalgia.

Beck treated nostalgia from two medico-legal points of view: as a feigned disease and a species of insanity. By noting “this mental affection, if carried to excess, soon produces a physical one, and a mixed state is produced, in which all the marks of melancholy and hypochondriasis are visible,” Beck set up one of three arguments, as he claimed that the physical

⁴⁸ Mohr, James. *Doctors and the Law: Medical Jurisprudence in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993), 20-21.

transformation of the nostalgic's body could not be feigned, as it was only found in advanced stages of the disease. In a second, probabilistic argument, he noted that “[y]oung men are more subject to it than persons advanced in life, villagers more than citizens; and among nations it is found to prevail most in the Swiss, the Savoyards, the inhabitants of the Pyrenees, the Flemings, &c.” If this argument depended upon some familiar lines of reasoning, his final argument differed in its concern with the distinction between genuine and false instances of the disease:

pretenders generally express a great desire to revisit their native country, while those who are really diseased are taciturn, express themselves obscurely on the subject of their malady, dare not make an avowal, and are little affected by the consolations which hope or promises offer to them.’ The healthy color, the strength and regularity of the pulse, and the aversion to low diet and setons, also serve to distinguish the one from the other.⁴⁹

Thus, while the “alteration of countenance” is “impossible to feign,” clinical observation can also weed out pretenders based on the fact that they are able to *speak* of their desire to return home. Real cases, by contrast, are “taciturn.” Beck likely drew this distinction from French medical jurisprudence, for that same year, *The Western Quarterly Reporter of Medical, Surgical, and Natural Sciences* published a translation of an article by the French psychiatrist Charles Marc on the topic. In naming nostalgia as one of the “species of insanity which frequently requires the attention of medico-jurist,” Marc wrote that “true nostalgia is distinguished from false by a kind of *reserve* respecting the cause of depression” and also exhibits “a greater or less alteration of the expression of the countenance,” among other symptoms (emphasis added).⁵⁰ “[T]he spurious nostalgic patient is ever sure to discover himself by the excellent state of his functions,” another French physician wrote:

It may, moreover, be remarked that the malingerer, ever fearful lest the idea of the existence of nostalgia should not occur to the inquirer, is always anxious to lead his

⁴⁹ Beck, Theodric Romeyn. *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence* (London: John Anderson, 1825 [1823]), 15-16.

⁵⁰ Marc, Charles-Chretien-Henri. “Article VIII. Medical Jurisprudence. Translated from the French. Insanity,” *The Western Quarterly Reporter of Medical, Surgical, and Natural Science* 2 (1823): 31.

medical attendant to the subject, and prematurely to express to him his desire to revisit his village and his family.⁵¹

“To understand the gist of this last remark,” the reviewer wrote, “it must be recollected that the truly affected with nostalgia are in some manner ashamed of their situation, and strive vehemently to combat or dissimulate it” (*Ibid* 307). “It is almost impossible to imitate the alteration and expression of countenance, the languid appearance, and sadness, so impressed on all the features, which are always present in the real disease,” Hector Gavin wrote in *On Feigned and Factitious Diseases, Chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen* (1843):

[T]he simulator is wanting in the involuntary abandonment, and the apathetic indifference for every thing, which is foreign to the cherished idea of the true nostalgic; as also in the sudden extravagance of joy, which the sight of some object connected with home produces: moreover, pretenders generally express a great desire to revisit their native country, whilst those who are really diseased are taciturn, express themselves obscurely on the subject of their malady, dare not to make an open avowal, and are little affected by the consolations which hope or promise affords them.⁵²

“Those affected with Nostalgia,” one reviewer of Gavin’s work summarized, “are reserved and wrapt up in melancholy contemplation. They do not willingly commence about the object of their yearning.”⁵³

Medical jurisprudence required physicians to satisfy three new criteria to diagnose a patient with nostalgia, as the patient now needed to display a noticeably melancholic appearance, undergo physical changes like anorexia, and be unable to express his desires prior to the intervention of the physician. In other words, to satisfy the requirements of medical jurisprudence, only soldiers exhibiting the later stages of the disease could be considered eligible for a furlough home or a complete discharge. These markers not only indicated that

⁵¹ Quoted in *London Medical and Surgical Journal* 1835, 307.

⁵² Gavin, Hector. *On Feigned and Factitious Diseases, Chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen, on the means used to simulate or produce them, and on the best modes of discovering impostors: being the prize essay in the class of military surgery, in the University of Edinburgh, Session, 1835-36, with Additions* (London: John Churchill, 1843), 177.

⁵³ Anonymous. “On Feigned and Factitious Diseases, Chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen. By Hector Gavin, M.D. &c.” *The Medico-Chirurgical Review, and Journal of Practical Medicine* 95, no. 1, (Jan. 1844): 83.

homesickness had crossed a threshold into the dangerous territory of nostalgia, in which the victim might commit “suicide” from “despair, from being separated from one’s country,” but it also was used as a set of signs indicating that a soldier was no longer fit for service and could only henceforth represent an economic burden on the army. For both reasons, the individual needed legal permission to be sent home. Nostalgia most likely became a problem worthy of additional attention in the early nineteenth-century – first in the Napoleonic armies and later in the American army – because military discipline had taught soldiers how to avoid early symptoms of the disease. As a result, it also became possible to counterfeit the disease.⁵⁴

While medical jurisprudence helped define the criteria for diagnosis and granting furloughs, it did not in any way change the fact that the nostalgia continued to be predominantly diagnosed among ethnic and racial minorities. “Of *Nostalgia*, we have seen several real but no feigned cases,” one author wrote, “Almost all [patients] who fell under our observation, were highlanders, and some of the Indian hill-tribes. In one case, the patient was a Frenchman from Britanny, who had not the means of returning to his native land. It terminated in insanity of a mild character, closed by death. Those affected with Nostalgia are reserved and wrapt up in melancholy contemplation. They do not willingly commence about the object of their yearning.”⁵⁵ In fact, by making the body into the primary marker of the disease, medical writers made it more likely that the disease would be henceforth diagnosed in minority populations, since they were already supposed to be more animalistic than human, more passionate than verbally articulate, and more likely to suffer from nostalgia as a consequence. To support this argument, consider the role of

⁵⁴ As Lisa O’Sullivan has written, nostalgia was perceived as a critical problem in France during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815), with some reports estimating that up to five-percent of the army suffered from the disease. “Case studies of successful cures of nostalgia were used to demonstrate the efficacy of the novel treatment methods deployed by the Idéologues, particularly the “moral” cure. Moral treatments were most closely identified with a new and innovative approach to mental disorders described by Philippe Pinel in relation to his work in the Parisian asylums.” See also Dodman (2009).

⁵⁵ Anonymous. “On Feigned and Factitious Diseases, Chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen. By *Hector Gavin*, M.D. &c.,” *The Medico-Chirurgical and Journal of Practical Medicine* no. 79 (1844): 83.

language in eighteenth-century cases of nostalgia. In these cases, we find a servant girl repeatedly saying that she wants to go home (“Ich will heim! Ich will heim!). We find a young nobleman weeping and exclaiming, “*Ah patria, ah mater mea* / Oh native land, oh my mother.” And we hear of a son of an army commander who died while sighing in his native German dialect, “Ah if I were able to be present with my kin at home!”⁵⁶ In cases like these, repetitively speaking of home was said to be the outward manifestation of an inward melancholic fixation on memories of home. The inability of these victims to speak of anything except the home was the marker of their madness. In the antebellum period, by contrast, repeated statements about one’s desire to return home become a sign of a *false* case of nostalgia; the true case is marked by the person who is not able to connect his words to his desires. Absolute silence on the topic becomes the ideal proof of the legitimate case of nostalgia.

ASYLUMS

In *Console and Classify*, Jan Goldstein argues that the category under which nostalgia was classified in the nineteenth century, monomania, helped legitimate the new profession of psychiatry. With the increased use of “partial insanity” in diagnosis, French psychiatrists were able to claim that apparently normal subjects exhibited pathological behavior that could only be detected by the watchful, trained eye of the medical expert. The pathological fixation on singular objects that came to be called monomania in the nineteenth century (previously known as melancholy) came to serve as a leading form of diagnosis as a result. Goldstein contends that the category fell out of favor in the 1850s due to a “boundary dispute” between psychiatry and the law, as lawyers claimed that “skillful and thorough questioning of a supposed monomaniac, or

⁵⁶ Hofer 1688, 5; Favier 1713, 10; Hoyer, 76 (see Chapter 1).

daily contact over a long period of time, would inevitably reveal that the delirium was not confined to a single subject.”⁵⁷ In the American context, however, the legal profession did not undermine the diagnoses of emotional monomania like nostalgia as much as entrench it, especially in non-civilian domains. Nostalgia was first regularly used as a cause of admission to psychiatric asylums from the 1840s through the First World War.⁵⁸

Reports of admissions of nostalgics into French asylums and hospitals began appearing in British medical journals in the 1820s. A “habitually melancholy and morose” twenty-six year old man was admitted to the Val de Grace hospital, hoping to be cured of “a defect in his pronunciation—a stutter.” He “lost his appetite; all at once he was seized with a delirium, and died,” surprising the eminent French physician, François-Joseph-Victor Broussais, who conducted a post mortem examination in which he examined the “vessels of the brain” and the color of the stomach,” finally concluding that the man had suffered from nostalgia, which he said has “its principal seat in the abdominal viscera” (recall that nostalgia was sometimes classified in the eighteenth century as a defective appetite).⁵⁹ In another case, Recamier and Laennec examined a sixteen-year old girl from Lisle who had been sent to boarding school in Paris. There, “she became completely nostalgic, pining for a return to her parents and to the delights of a rural life. She however pined in secret lest her situation should render her parents unhappy.” After recovering somewhat, she lost her appetite and, eight days later became completely cataleptic: “The patient could hear everything that was said around her but could make no answer or sign.” The catalepsy became so severe that she was compared to “a figure of wax,

⁵⁷ Goldstein, Jan. *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987), 190.

⁵⁸ This discrepancy may have to do with the fact that monomania was introduced to America several decades after it appeared in France. Alternatively, it may have to do with the kinds of archives that Goldstein consulted.

⁵⁹ “Extracts from Journals, Foreign and Domestic,” *London Medical Gazette, or Journal of Practical Medicine* 67, no. 3 (March 14, 1829): 490

which could be moulded to any form and would remain in such form till altered to another.”

Upon slight recovery, she was sent home and declared “completely recovered.” The British authors who reviewed the case agreed with the French physicians’ assessment:

that in this case the separation from parents who were probably over-indulgent, the great change of life on coming to the vortex of Paris from the fresh air and rural exercise of her native residence, the nostalgia that succeeded the derangement of the digestive organs as evinced by obstinate constipation and epigastric pain were the first deviations from health and led the way to the strange and anomalous phenomena which followed.⁶⁰

Nostalgia held a liminal position in French clinical medicine and psychiatry because it constituted a mental and physical illness. For psychiatrists, it was an important area of study because it showed that pathological emotion alone could produce organic illness. “In this disease,” Hector Guislain wrote, “we recognize only one cause, entirely moral,—the discontent which preys on the mind of the individual from absence from his native land”:

‘Why should the gloomy disquietude of home-sickness...produce these serious changes in organization and structure? Explain how this merely moral cause induces inflammation of the lung, of the pericardium, of the alimentary canal, of the mesenteric glands, of the brain and its membranes? And we shall know if the theory of morbid alteration of the soul rests on solid foundation, or is destined to be ranked only in the annals of our errors.’⁶¹

By aligning post-mortem discoveries of inflammation of the organs with a patient’s emotional state, history, and situation prior to death, clinical medicine provided psychiatry with the scientific foundations necessary to legitimate nostalgia as a serious mental illness.

Psychiatrists often claimed that “home is not the place for the recovery of the lunatic,” as “separation from familiar scenes and people is the first and a necessary step” toward recovery. However, nostalgia represented an exception, as it actually went against medical opinion to confine a nostalgic patient to an asylum, seeing as the general prescription for the disease was

⁶⁰ “Quarterly Periscope of Practical Medicine; being the Spirit of the Medical Journals, Foreign and Domestic; with Commentaries,” *The Medico-Chirurgical Review* 4, no. 7 (January 1826): 201-204.

⁶¹ “Art. III.—*Traité sur l’Alienation Mentale, et sur les Hospices des Alienés*. PAR JOSEPH GUISLAIN, Medecin à Gand. *Ouvrage couronné et publié par la Commission de Surveillance Médicale dans la Province de Norde-Hollande, Séant à Amsterdam*,” *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* 31, no. 99 (April 1829): 358.

invariably a return home. While admitting that, “if the monomaniac still retains his affections for, and his confidence in his family and relations, it may seem cruel to deprive him of their attentions,” one writer staunchly concluded that “notwithstanding his attachment to home, the subjects of his illusions are about his ordinary fairs, or haunts, or associates, it is still best to remove him.”⁶² It is for reasons like these that most of the nostalgics admitted were likely poor emigrants.

Asylums around the world began publishing statistical reports in the 1830s: 12 male and five female cases of nostalgia in St. Petersburg from 1819 to 1829, five male cases in Naples in 1833. American psychiatrists most likely modeled their asylums on European models and a combination of French and American medicine.⁶³ For example, after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Pliny Earle studied in the hospitals of Paris and conducted a survey of asylums that he published in 1841 as *A Visit to Thirteen Asylums for the Insane in Europe*. While he believed that Americans were less likely to become insane from moral causes than their European counterparts, he also reproduced Benjamin Rush’s entire 1812 list of moral causes, among which was included “absence from native country.”⁶⁴ Early American asylums and almshouses initially used Rush’s “absence from native country,” as well as “homesickness” as admitting causes of insanity. In a Baltimore almshouse report, the youngest case was a 19 year-old boy whose “homesickness” was said to be “chronic” and “not

⁶² Jarvis, Edward. “What shall we do with the Insane of the Western Country?” in *Report Relative to an Asylum for Lunatics, by the Joint Committee of Council and Assembly, to which was referred that part of the Governor’s Message Related Thereto* (Trenton: Sherman and Harron, 1841), 11.

⁶³ “State Medicine. Report of the Lunatic Asylum of St Petersburg for ten years subsequent to 1819, (Journal der Praktischen Heilkunde, April 1831.)” *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* 36, no. 109 (October 1831): 463.

⁶⁴ Earle, Pliny. *A Visit to Thirteen Asylums for the Insane in Europe; to which are added a brief notice of similar institutions in transatlantic countries and in the United States, and an essay, on the causes, duration, termination and moral treatment of insanity. With Copious Statistics* (Philadelphia: J. Dobson, 1841), 120.

improved.”⁶⁵ At the Bloomingdale Asylum in New York, where Earle had become the resident physician, he wrote one of the few extended descriptions of a case of nostalgia:

The latter [of three cases] was a Swiss girl who had been but a short time in this country, and could not speak English. Separated from her friends and surrounded by strangers, her spirits were most oppressively borne down by that disease—if disease it may be termed—so proverbial among her countrymen when removed from the sight of their native mountains and valleys, and beyond the hearing of the *ranz des vaches*. After a residence of a few weeks at the Asylum a victim at once to the delusions of insanity, and to the harrowing emotions from which that disease originated, she ended her temporal sufferings by suicide.⁶⁶

The physician of the City Prison of New York reported in 1850 that:

twenty-seven (27) cases have been sent to Ward’s Island, being recent emigrants, laboring under fever, or temporary insanity from its effects, or from moral causes—*nostalgia* especially, to which their peculiar temperament, unhappy and destitute circumstances, strongly predispose them,—persons less requiring the restraints of a lunatic asylum, than a shelter and a home.”⁶⁷

At the Massachusetts State Lunatic asylum in 1850, a 31 year-old single woman was admitted for homesickness (said to be a hereditary condition).⁶⁸ And in an 1856 report, nine cases of nostalgia were cited, eight women and one man, all from Ireland or Germany.⁶⁹

The fact that many of these women worked as domestic servants was not incidental, for psychiatrists and medical jurists had determined that nostalgic insanity often led to criminal behavior, and, above all, to pyromania, arson, and incendiarism. The case that was most often reprinted in American, French, and German sources was of a girl named Grabowska:

A servant girl, fifteen years of age, and suffering from nostalgia, twice committed the act

⁶⁵ *The Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal, and Official Organ of the Medical Department of the Army and Navy of the United States*.

⁶⁶ “Art. I.—History, Description, and Statistics of the Bloomingdale Asylum for the Insane, State of New York, America. By Pliny Earle, M.D., Physician to the Institution. New York, 1848,” *The Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology* 2, no. 6 (April 1849): 213.

⁶⁷ Covell, John. “Office of the Physicians of the City Prison,” *Second Annual Report of the Governors of the Alms House, New York, for the Year 1850* (New York: Wm. C. Bryant, 1851), 57.

⁶⁸ *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Trustees of the State Lunatic Hospital, at Worcester* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1850), 37.

⁶⁹ “Appendix B: Return of Deaf and Dumb, Blind, Insane and Idiotic Persons in the Several Counties of the State of Ohio, in the Year 1856,” in *Message and Reports made to the General Assembly and Governor of the State of Ohio for the Year 1856 Part II* (Columbus: Richard Nevins, 1857), 194-96.

of incendiarism, in order to leave her masters. She affirmed, that from the moment of entering upon service, she was beset with the desire of setting something on fire. It seemed to her that a shade, constantly by her side, impelled her to this act. This girl suffered from violent pains in the head, and her menses were tardy. Henke, in the 7th vol. of his *Annals*, among many other examples, relates that of a girl twelve years of age, who thrice set fire to buildings, and purposely suffocated her infant.”⁷⁰

This association between nostalgic insanity and arson was drawn from German medical jurisprudence and reproduced in American and British texts. In 1853, Isaac Ray, the American psychiatrist and founder of the discipline of forensic psychiatry, cited another case of “A servant girl, seventeen years old, [who] was guilty of incendiarism, for the purpose, as she stated, of being sent back to her parents.”⁷¹ A review of a German doctor, Willers Jessen, cited five additional cases of servants from the ages of 9 to 14 who had set fire to their masters’ houses, and in the case of the nine-year old, two murders, in order to return home. “It was the medical opinion that the burning was a childish act, brought about by an irresistible passion, (homesickness), and was the effect of long years of sickness and nervous irritability.”⁷² “Homesickness,” Francis Wharton and Moreton Stillé wrote, “is sufficient to mislead the poor tortured, half-grown child to the last extremes of action,—not to arson alone, but to murder,—particularly the poisoning of children.”⁷³ According to the British medical jurist, Robert Jamieson, nostalgia deserved to be called a “diseased passion” rather than “a more benign insane impulse” because it carries with it “the propensities to suicide, homicide, theft, incendiarism, drunkenness, and

⁷⁰ See, for example, De Boismont, A. Briere. *Hallucinations: Or, the Rational History of Apparitions, Visions, Dreams, Ecstasy, Magnetism, and Somnambulism* (Philadelphia, Lindsay and Blakiston, 1853), 527.

⁷¹ Ray, Isaac. *A Treatise on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1853), 200. This case appears in different versions in earlier and later versions of Ray’s work.

⁷² “Incendiarism in Mental Affections and Diseases: a Contribution to Legal Medicine, for Jurists and Physicians. By Dr. Willers Jessen. Kiel: E. Homann. 1860,” *American Journal of Insanity* 18, no. 2 (October 1861) 175-79. Karl Jaspers wrote his dissertation, *Nostalgia and Crime (Heimweh und Verbrechen, 1909)* on the question of why young women separated from their homes sometimes committed arson and infanticide. For one take on Jaspers’s work, see Elisabeth Bronfen, *The Knotted Subject: Hysteria and its Discontents* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1998).

⁷³ Wharton and Stillé. *A Treatise on Medical Jurisprudence* (Philadelphia: Kay & Brother, 1855), 158.

unnatural crimes, where such [it] can be characterized as diseased.”⁷⁴ There is additional evidence that this association between incendiarism and nostalgia was put into legal practice in America. In *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*, Austin Reed, a freeborn person of color from upstate New York, describes his attempt to burn down the Ladd’s property, the family he had been bound out to as a servant around the age of 10, and a crime for which he was in fact arraigned, tried, and convicted by a Livingston County jury in 1833.⁷⁵

Thus, following its introduction into medical jurisprudence, it seems likely that victims were actually jailed for nostalgia and definitely committed to insane asylums. While the evidence is slender for the former, it is highly likely that in both cases these victims were victims in the sense that they were almost exclusively poor ethnic and racial minorities, and primarily female (in striking contrast to the majority of cases elsewhere). The criminalization of the behaviors said to follow from nostalgia, like arson and suicide, contributed to making the laboring ethnic and racial poor into a dangerous class, more prone to “diseased passions,” which now not only index their own self-destructiveness, but their propensities to harm others as well.

The asylum and the military represented two sides of the legal transformation of nostalgia. In both cases, they put in practice rules and regulations that helped to expand nostalgia’s pathological domain by identifying it with criminal behavior and the conditions to produce such behavior. While the asylum helped to warehouse poor, mostly female immigrants whose criminal actions were said to result from nostalgic insanity, in the military, nostalgia was carefully policed as a diagnosis in order to prevent “malcontents” from successfully escaping from their obligations to the army and thereby depleting the soldier population. We might

⁷⁴ Jamieson, Robert. “Lectures on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, Delivered in the Medical School of King’s College, Aberdeen. By Robert Jamieson, M.D. Lecturer on Medical Jurisprudence in the University. Lecture II,” 46, no. 1185 *London Medical Gazette, or, Journal of Practical Medicine* (Aug. 16, 1850): 268.

⁷⁵ *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*. Ed. Caleb Smith (New York: Random House, 2016).

describe the relationship between the asylum and the military practices of nostalgia as forming a reciprocal arrangement for policing the borders of these institutions.

CONCLUSION

Following newspaper reports about the prevalence of homesickness among American troops fighting in Mexico in 1847, William Proctor submitted a dissertation the following year, “On the Diseases of the United States’ Army on the Rio Grande.” As was common practice at the time, Proctor had already worked as a physician prior to receiving his medical degree, and as a result devoted his dissertation to the diseases he had observed in his capacity as hospital steward of the Louisville Legion in the Mexican-American War.⁷⁶ He focused on ways in which “many chronic diseases, and constitutions destroyed by lives of dissipation, or else by nature or previous habitude too delicate for military hardships,” could be avoided. In particular, Proctor argued that the common soldiers’ “little regard for personal cleanliness,” “intemperance, unwholesome food, and irregularity of diet” were responsible for “much of the subsequent disease and its virulency” and were “prolific sources of ill health.”⁷⁷ This study is notable in this history first for its inclusion of a statistical table that enumerated cases of nostalgia in the army for the first time – 8 cases are listed that came under his observation in 1846 and 1847 on the Rio Grande, which are classified under the heading of “diseases of the brain and nervous system.”

More significantly, Proctor chose to focus at length on nostalgia as an example of “melancholia.” He wrote that the disease’s predisposing causes were “previous habits, mental

⁷⁶ See Warner, John Harley. *Against the Spirit of the System: The French Impulse in Nineteenth-Century American Medicine* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2003).

⁷⁷ Proctor, William. “Art. 1.—On the Diseases of the United States’ Army on the Rio Grande. By William G. Proctor, M.D. of Louisville, Ky. (An Inaugural Dissertation submitted to the Trustees and Medical Faculty of the University of Louisville for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine, March 8th, 1848.),” *The Western Journal of Medicine and Surgery* 1, no. 6 (June 1848): 2.

developments, great domesticity, mental and physical inertia, temperament, masturbation, &c.” and its exciting causes “previous diseases, disappointments, &c.” The disease “was always most rife when we had been encamped for a considerable length of time in one position, and when the soldiers were permitting to remain in idleness: this disease was manifesting itself to a fearful extent in a company of young countrymen, who had been for several weeks encamped in one position and permitted to remain idle.” In particular, Proctor stressed the necessity of early diagnosis and “preventive and palliative” treatment,” as he did “not now remember a single recovery from this disease, after it had become thoroughly developed.” He included three case histories of the disease, which agreed with Rush and earlier physicians about the importance of using “mental emotions” to counteract the disease, but also suggested that the therapeutic manipulation of the emotions was only effective within certain limits:

T.B.F., a young man of sensitive feeling, had been for several days affected with the premonitory symptoms, great taciturnity, unless on matters pertaining to his returning home, disinclination to association, sadness, &c. On applying to the surgeon for a discharge, he was reprimanded in a caustic manner, which aroused his pride and anger; he left the tent, and from that time no more was heard of Mr. F.’s inability to do his duty as a soldier. This treatment will not answer in more advanced states as was evidence in the case of F.S. Stimulated by the happy result in the preceding case, the same treatment was tried in one more advanced, but this was as near proving fatal as the preceding had been fortunate; the patient sank as if stunned by electricity, and did not again rise from his bed until a discharge was procured for and presented to him. This seemed to act like a charm,—in half an hour he was making active preparations for his departure, and a few hours saw him cheerfully on his way home. I.B. upon receiving a final refusal upon an application to be discharged was seized with symptoms of palpitation of the heart, which terminated his life in a few hours.

In these cases, the refusal of a furlough fails as a form of emotional manipulation when nostalgia is in more advanced stages. In using the cases to make a call for more accurate clinical assessment and treatment, Proctor offered “a more extended description” of one last case as an indication of the “rapidity and irremediability of the disease:”

J.P., a young man of good constitution and habits, was attacked with tolerably violent diarrhoea; this yielded to the ordinary remedies. Melancholic symptoms, soon running into nostalgia, supervened; he ceased to notice surrounding objects, lay apparently comatose; when aroused and stimulated to conversation, he always spoke of home, held conversation with his relatives, muttered disconnected sentences, generally about domestic affairs, such as calling hogs, driving hogs, talking to children, &c. There were present no other symptoms of cerebral inflammation, no preternatural heat about the head, no flushing of the face; pulse soft, weak, and slow; the tongue was clean; and, in short, there was no indication for any sort of treatment, except the condition of the mind which I have already described. There was a relaxation of the sphincters for twenty-four hours previous to dissolution.

On the one hand, Proctor's description repeats the majority of the symptoms that had been associated with nostalgia since the seventeenth century: inattention to all objects except those associated with home, immobilization and withdrawal into the self, and recurrent talk about the home. On the other hand, the conditions that excited nostalgia and the significance of this talk had changed completely by the mid-nineteenth century. In this last case, when J.P. talks of home, what matters is that these sentences are "disconnected" and that his "conversations" are not with the people addressing him, but with "relatives" who are obviously not present. And while continuous withdrawal into an imaginary fixation on the home had formerly been taken as the consequence of conditions of forced migration and compulsory mobility, it is now seen as a consequence of the monotony and idleness produced by long periods of encampment. The dissociation of language from desire becomes a direct reflection of the nostalgic's confinement within his own body and his aversive reaction to confinement within the closed space of the military, or, as we've seen in other cases, the house and the prison. By the time that South Carolina seceded from the Union, marking the beginning of a war that would see more death and more sickness than in all other wars in American history combined, the figure of the nostalgic would come to be called the compulsive subject.

IV

THE SHOCK OF HISTORY

There is surely no principle of fictitious composition so true as this,— that an author's paramount charge is the cure of souls. — Henry James (1865)¹

This chapter situates the compulsive subject within a new opposition between nostalgia and history. For Henry James, the Civil War helped make America into a nation of nostalgic subjects at the same time as the near-universal losses suffered during the war created the common, tightly knit affective relations necessary for Americans to become historical actors. *The Bostonians* takes place against this backdrop, and in fact stages a repetition of the Civil War via the clash of two compulsive subjects, the northerner, Olive Chancellor, and the southerner, Basil Ransom. As in the legal definition of nostalgia, both characters lack the ability to give voice to the object of their compulsive desires. In James's revision of biopolitical narrative, what makes these characters nostalgic is not the ethnic minority's exposure

¹ James, Henry. "11. — *Azarian: an Episode*. By Harriet Elizabeth Prescott, Author of 'The Amber Gods,'

to the impoverished home's pathological motions, as in medicine, or to the ethically impoverished global economy's pathological motions, as in sentimentalism. Rather, James argues that it is aesthetic impoverishment that is responsible for making Americans into nostalgic bodies, buffeted by the motions of history. Realism's rational cure for negating compulsive nostalgia is history itself: specifically, the choreographing of a traumatic event that causes compulsive desire to fail, thereby allowing for a new education that would introduce the realist pedagogy of cosmopolitan agency into the public sphere. This agency is what I call "historical feeling," as it designates a way that individuals are supposed to situate their personal affective relations within the affective relations that are engendered by historical events and therefore found in other people as well. This is how Olive Chancellor is nominated as the carrier of the hope of realism, as the first American with the possibility of assuming control over her relation to history.

On January 1, 1863, a young law student with literary pretensions went to Boston Music Hall to attend a jubilee concert organized by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and other leading Bostonians. He was there like three thousand others to celebrate the imminent release of President Lincoln's second Emancipation Proclamation. The Boston Philharmonic set the tone with Beethoven's Overture to Egmont, Mendelssohn's Hymn to Praise, the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*, and Rossini's William Tell Overture; Oliver Wendell Holmes read his "Army Hymn" with Francis Parkman looking on (see Figure 3.1). When an announcer interrupted the proceedings to say that official confirmation had arrived by telegraph that the Proclamation had finally gone into effect,

the hall broke into “tumultuous applause” – three cheers for Lincoln, three more for William Lloyd Garrison.² And when Harriet Beecher Stowe was spotted in the balcony, a new round of chanting broke out for “the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war”: “Harriet Beecher Stowe! Harriet Beecher Stowe! Harriet Beecher Stowe!”³ It was, the *Boston Morning Journal* declared, “the celebration of a day which will hold a place in history forever.”⁴

Nearly a quarter century later, when confirmed law school dropout Henry James reflected on the concert he had attended that day, he recalled not the explosion of celebration following the news that the law had taken effect, but the electric atmosphere of anticipation that had led up to it. In particular, he wrote about the very first speaker of the day, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Out “of the momentousness of the occasion, the vast excited multitude, the crowded platform,” what occurred to James was “the tall, spare figure of Emerson, in the midst, reading out the stanzas that were published under the name of the Boston Hymn.” Though “not the happiest” of verses, though “there is a certain awkwardness in some of them,” James quoted one stanza for the “immense effect with which [Emerson’s] beautiful voice pronounced the lines”:

² Frederickson, George. *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 113; Oakes, James. *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 175.

³ Reynolds, David S. *Mightier than the Sword: ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin’ and the Battle for America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011), ix-x.

⁴ Quoted in Oakes 175.

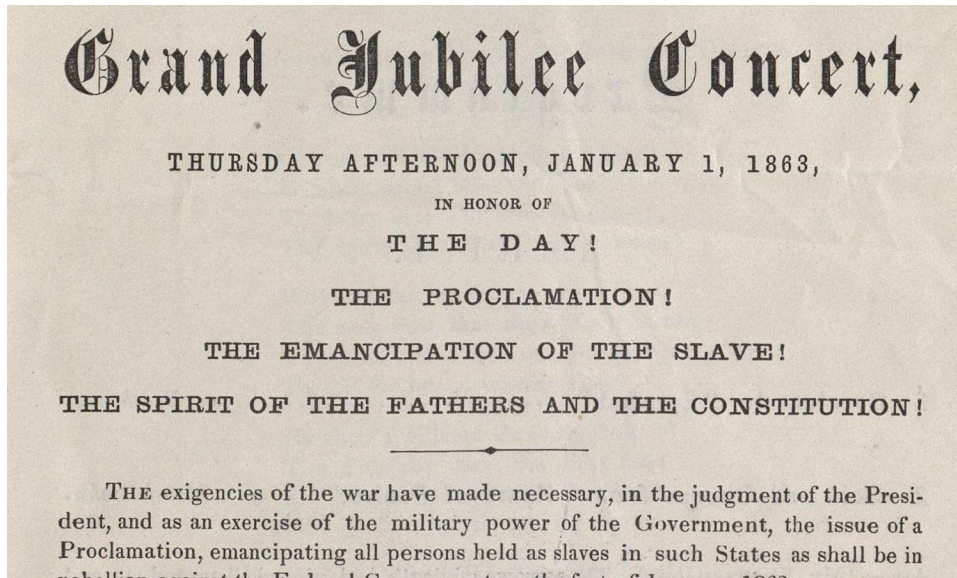


Figure 4.1. Grand Jubilee Concert program, January 1, 1863.

Pay ransom to the owner
And fill the bag to the brim
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay *him!*⁵

In 1863, Emerson had spoken with God on his side, calling for the nation to resume a divine plan of breaking “bonds and masterships” and “unchain[ing] the slave.” Because slavery had violated this plan by alienating the labor of the slave and the slaveowner alike, at the moment of emancipation, the poem thus commands American citizens to buy back their bodies by paying “ransom” to the ex-slave, thereby dissolving the hostage situation that Emerson uses to figure the legacy of slavery.⁶

By the time James wrote his essay on “Emerson” in 1888, however, the poem had become a monument of failed hopes and failed art, a fact nowhere so clearly dramatized as in *The Bostonians*, James’s novel of three years prior. In a final scene set in the same Boston Music Hall where a young James had heard Emerson read, we no longer

⁵ James, Henry. “Emerson,” in *Partial Portraits* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888), 27-28.

⁶ Emerson, Ralph Waldo. “Boston Hymn,” *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc.* Vol. 7. Ed. Frank Moore (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864), 17.

encounter the “vast excited multitude” of the jubilee concert but rather an angry “multitude,” a pathological public sphere grown restless from waiting for a star speaker to appear, as Emerson, Longfellow, Parkman, and others had before. This time, though, the first speaker never makes it to the stage. Instead, Verena Tarrant, the great hope of the suffragist movement, is kidnapped by a former slaveowner whose name, *Ransom*, is taken from the “Boston Hymn” and seems to mock Emerson’s optimistic politics. And just as, Olive Chancellor, takes the stage to deliver the speech in place of Verena, in a heroic move that could reignite the audience’s hopes for justice, the novel abruptly ends: we never learn what happens. There is no end in sight at the end, for *The Bostonians* refuses to endorse Emerson’s optimism that historical progress unfolds with the force of law, divine or otherwise. The future is uncertain.

Henry James’s writings on America, from *Hawthorne* (1879) through *The American Scene* (1907), argue that compulsion is the historical legacy of the place that the antebellum genres of the sentimental domestic novel and the southern historical romance gave the home. In particular, the historical event of the Civil War makes Americans nostalgic because antebellum sentimental genres fail to produce aesthetic habits capable of managing Americans’ affective relation to the historical modification of their homes. The sentimental doubling of nostalgia, mentioned in previous chapters, is pathologized here for duping readers to treat their own attachments to home as natural, rather than naturalized by the mediation of their genres. This confusion becomes a pressing problem when historical events transform the conditions of possibility for the home. When the home has been destroyed and cannot be restored, as in the case of the abolition of slavery, which banishes the possibility of Basil

Ransom's plantation home, failed efforts to restore the home can be called compulsive, since they seem to be made blindly and without any recognition of the existing historical possibilities for action.⁷ The pernicious result of this naturalized refusal to allow for historical alteration to the home is that each failure amplifies the intensity of this refusal, relegating the compulsive subject to alternative temporalities, as in the case of Basil, who is described as "about 300 years behind the age" in his opinions.

The Bostonians cannot imagine a way that characters can break free from weakness of the will on their own accord. What the novel can imagine, however, is a narrative cure in the form of a catastrophic historical event – the repetition of the Civil War. This is why, despite the fact that Olive Chancellor represents the potential for realist agency, her pathological shyness can only be negated via a traumatic historical event. The loss of Verena is the historical event that makes her genre's desires fail, and which strongly resembles the kind of electroshock therapy that James's sister, Alice, underwent in 1883. Through a traumatic event that Basil Ransom unwittingly brings about, it allows Olive to perform her loss and begin a new career as a realist, thereby bringing her formerly inadmissible subjectivity (and potentially other ones too, like that of the African-American) into the public sphere. This is how Olive Chancellor becomes a tragic actress in the realist mode.

In Jamesian realism, this catastrophic loss is the price that must be paid to break compulsive behavior and begin a new pedagogy of the will. What realist self-cultivation promises is control over temporal (historical) and spatial (cosmopolitan) mobilities. This pedagogy depends, however, on breaking provincial attachments to home, because the

⁷ Jennifer Fleissner describes compulsion as the "breakdown of ordinary actions into minute, exacting rituals...a seemingly endless spiral" (Fleissner 2004: 10).

attachments of one's provincial childhood are supposed to limit the flexibility, elasticity, and mobility of attachments to the world. What cosmopolitan detachment is supposed to allow that provincial attachment doesn't is the cultivation of pleasurable and sustainable historical attachments that prevent fixation through what James calls "the habit of comparing." "To be a cosmopolite is not, I think, an ideal," he wrote early in his career:

the ideal should be to be a concentrated patriot. Being a cosmopolite is an accident, but one must make the best of it. If you have lived about, you have lost that sense of absoluteness and the sanctity of the habits of your fellow-patriots which once made you so happy in the midst of them... There comes a time when one set of customs, wherever it may be found, grows to seem to you about as provincial as another; and then I suppose it may be said that you have become a cosmopolite. You have formed the habit of comparing.⁸

COMPULSIVE NOSTALGIA

Basil Ransom begins *The Bostonians* under a series of obligations. The loss of the Confederacy in the Civil War has destroyed slavery, and with it, his home and source of income. The poverty of his family drives him north in an act of desperation to try his hand at a new career. And even when he comes to Boston to the home of his distant cousin, Olive Chancellor, he is answering an offer of charitable assistance, which threatens to put him even further in debt. Accepting the terms of any obligation, however, is precisely what Basil Ransom proves to be incapable of doing. In his new career, he draws up no contracts. In his new life in Boston and New York, he forms no lasting human relationships. "Not only had he not extended his connexion," we learn, "but he had lost most of the little business which was an object of complacency to him a

⁸ James, Henry. "Occasional Paris," in *Portraits of Places* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1883). The passage is dated 1877 and was first published in *The Galaxy* 25, no 1. (Jan. 1878): 1

twelvemonth before. He had had none but small jobs, and he had made a mess of more than one of them.”

With no business connections and no money to make them, the failed lawyer follows his “desire for public life; to cause one’s ideas to be embodied in national conduct appeared to him the highest form of human enjoyment.” As we learn, he “was much addicted to judging his age.” In poring over De Tocqueville and Carlyle and similarly “suggestive reading” at the Astor Library, he writes a “half-a-dozen articles” to give expression to his conservative doctrines, to “convictions he had arrived at [which] were not such as mix gracefully with the time-honoured verities a young lawyer looking out for business is in the habit of taking for granted.” And while his first round of articles is rejected for being “three hundred years behind the age,” he continues writing, less in the hope of supporting himself than to consolidate and publish his “opinions.”

If this initial rejection demonstrates how behind the times Basil is, the acceptance of his writing for the *Rational Review* later in the novel would then show that there is a public for his reactionary opinions about “his age” – about the dangers of freedom and democracy, the need for less public talk and more quiet, the place of women in the private sphere, etc. However, there is a very subtle line of detail that suggests that his writing for the *Rational Review* was not accepted. Indeed, Basil hints to Verena that he paid the journal to publish his essay. Additionally, consider how Verena informs Olive about the news: “But just lately a change has taken place; his state of mind altered completely, in the course of a week, in consequence of the letter that editor wrote him about his contribution, and his paying for it right off. It was a remarkably flattering letter.” While the parallelism of the sentence suggests that “his paying for it right off”

suggests the editor has paid Basil, the immediate antecedent to the pronoun is actually Basil. Furthermore, the “remarkably flattering letter” that Basil receives doesn’t suggest that the article was subject to critical review, but was an editor out to solicit money from a contributor. This reading is supported by an earlier moment in the novel. During a brief moment when Basil fantasizes about living a life of leisure as Adeline Luna’s husband, the narrator writes that “it became tolerably vivid to him that if editors wouldn’t print one’s lucubrations, it would be a comfort to feel that one was able to publish them at one’s own expense.” At this point in the novel, Verena says that Basil now has enough money “to pay his way,” while before “he had no money.” Of course, “before” would be about the same time that we learn that Basil’s “half-a-dozen articles” were all rejected and called “three hundred years out of date” in the process. We also learn of Basil’s two incentives: “to cause one’s ideas to be embodied in national conduct,” and to send “twenty-dollar greenbacks” to his female relatives in the South.

The novel is not a *bildungsroman*, however, but rather a dramatization of the failure of the novel of education, as Basil’s conservative opinions only harden under seemingly impossible conditions.

Basil’s conservatism is not simply a set of political positions, but is embodied in his manners and emotions, as we see in the novel’s first major set piece, which serves as a foil for the final scene in Boston Music Hall: Basil’s visit to Harvard University’s Memorial Hall. Critics have described the scene as a turning point in the novel, for it is only following this moment that Verena begins to keep Basil’s visits to her a secret from Olive, thus indicating a wedge in their relationship.⁹ But it also turns on a much more

⁹ For one exception, see Trilling, Lionel. *The Opposing Self: Nine Essays in Criticism* (New York: Viking Press, 1955), 104-17.

closely guarded secret, a secret that Basil cannot express to himself, let alone Verena: namely, the hold that the War has over him. Asked if he would like to enter the Civil War monument, opened in 1870 to commemorate the Harvard students who had died for a winning cause, Basil's ready assent is surprising: "I must be brave enough to face them – it isn't the first time." The resulting description, however, reveals Basil's secret – the reason for his courage and readiness – to the reader. Inside Memorial Hall, the ex-Confederate soldier lingers in the transept and inspects the twenty-eight tablets inscribed with the names of the fallen student-soldiers (see Figure 3.2):

The effect of the place is singularly noble and solemn, and it is impossible to feel it without a lifting of the heart. It stands there for duty and honour, it speaks of sacrifice and example, seems a kind of temple to youth, manhood, generosity. Most of them were young, all were in their prime, and all of them had fallen; this simple idea hovers before the visitor and makes him read with tenderness each name and place—names often without other history, and forgotten Southern battles. For Ransom these things were not a challenge nor a taunt; they touched him with respect, with the sentiment of beauty. He was capable of being a generous foeman, and he forgot, now, the whole question of sides and parties; the simple emotion of the old fighting-time came back to him, and the monument around him seemed an embodiment of that memory; it arched over friends as well as enemies, the victims of defeat as well as the sons of triumph. (*B* 224)

Basil's "simple emotion of the old fighting-time" returns in a scene that reenacts the most affecting event of his life. The hall's power to recall him to this attachment fully directs his attention. Basil is captivated, "touched...with respect, with the sentiment of beauty," and passively gives way to the "emotion" and "memory" of the war. And yet if "the artistic sense in Basil had not been highly cultivated," this yielding specifically has to do with a certain form of encounter with the affecting object (*B* 14). For Basil's response to the object is counterfactual: he experiences his old emotion as if he has not lost it, as if



MEMORIAL HALL PROPER.

Figure 4.2. "Memorial Hall Proper," In *The Harvard Book. A Series of Historical, Biographical, and Descriptive Sketches. By Various Authors. Illustrated with Views and Portraits. Collected and Published by F.O. Vaille and H.A. Clark, Class of 1874. Vol. 2.* (Cambridge: Welch, Bigelow, and Company, University Press, 1875).

the war is still happening and he has everything to fight for. The crux of the scene is that, faced with the impossibility of feeling as he once had during the war, he continues to do so. In acting out a feeling prior to loss, he avoids addressing his loss, and for all that, it is the fact of loss that renews the intensity of this feeling. This is the structure of Basil Ransoms's compulsive nostalgia, one that the novel reveals and Basil cannot see himself.

When Henry James visited Memorial Hall (or Alumni Hall, as it was then known) on his tour through the Harvard campus in *The American Scene*, he reveals that Basil's



M E M O R I A L H A L L .

Figure 4.3. "Memorial Hall," from *the Harvard Book*, 1875.

response is at least as much the fault of the Hall as it is Basil's. James criticizes the design of Memorial Hall as "the great official, the great bristling brick Valhalla of the early 'seventies,' that house of honor and of hospitality" (see Figure 3.3). While "the recording tablets" in the transept retain "their collective beauty," he observes that the monument "suffer[s] throughout from the too scant presence of the massive and the mature." Ultimately, James concludes that "criticism has no close concern with Alumni Hall; it is as if that grim visitor found the approaches closed to him—had to enter, *some relaxing air of mere sentimental, mere shameless association.*"¹⁰ If Basil systematically avoids confronting his own emotions in his own visit, James diagnoses the design of the building as partly responsible, as he suggests that, in its sentimentalism, it fails to draw Basil's attention to his specific relation to loss (a relation that was not unique to him).

¹⁰ James, Henry. *The American Scene* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1907), 59-60 (my emphasis).



Figure 4.4: The Harvard Union, 1902. Courtesy of the Harvard Square Library.

Yet in the course of his tour, James also visits a second Civil War monument, the Harvard Union, which had been completed by McKim, Mead, & White in 1900 and designed as a “home or meeting ground for graduates and undergraduates” (see Figure 3.4).¹¹ James juxtaposes these two war monuments in such a way as to call attention to his own act of comparative judgment. The comparative faculty is one of the preconditions for realist self-cultivation and is expressly set against narrow “provincial” and nostalgic attachment. The Union represents a successful instance of historical feeling, for in contrast to Memorial Hall’s “scant presence,” the Union commands a “vibration of response [that] seemed most to turn to audible music”:

¹¹ Bacon, Edwin. *Boston: A Guide Book* (Boston: Ginn, 1903), 100. The Harvard Union is now called the Barker Center and is home to the college’s English department.

The place was addressed in truth so largely to an enjoying and producing future that it might seem to frown on mere commemoration, on the backward vision; and yet...its very finest meaning might have been that of a liberal monument to those who had come and gone, to the company of the lurking ghosts. The air there was full of them, and this was its service, that it cared for them *all*, and so eased off the intensity of their appeal. (James 1907, 59)

If the monument works to ease the intensity of the appeal of the dead, it only does so because it possesses a corresponding aesthetic intensity to appeal to the observer. The figuration of the “pull” of loss is provocative, but how this effect is produced and why it is important are left unsaid at first, at least until James comes to stand in front of John Singer Sargent’s larger-than-life portrait of the hall’s benefactor, “Major” Henry Lee Higginson, which had been installed in 1903.

Sargent’s portrait stands as the ultimate testament to the power of realism, according to James, because of its ability to deploy an economy of detail to convoke the affective relations that link the dead to the living. In the portrait, a cavalry officer’s cloak is draped across Higginson’s lap (see Figure 3.5). Most dramatically, a saber-scar appears prominently across his right cheek (Higginson had survived three saber cuts and two pistol shots in the war).¹² James grows positively ecstatic, modeling the ecstasy the trained observer should feel, as he analyzes Sargent’s depiction of Higginson’s personal relation to the Harvard Union and to the war:

Innumerable, ever, are the functions performed and the blessings wrought by the supreme work of art, but I know of no case in which it has been so given to such a work to make the human statement with a great effect, to interfuse a group of public acts with the personality, with the characteristics, of the actor. The acts would still have had all their value if the portrait had less, but they would not assuredly have been able to become so interesting, would not have grown to affect each beneficiary, however obscure, as proceeding, for him, from a possible

¹² There is some debate over whether the scar on Higginson’s cheek was actually suffered during the Civil War or from falling off a horse; however, it’s indisputable that the scar still testifies to a personal relation to injury, and that, given the location of the painting and Higginson’s reputation as a Civil War officer, this injury would almost certainly be read as a personal relation to the injuries of the war.

relation, a possible intimacy. It is to the question of intimacy with somebody or other that all great practical public recognition is finally carried back—but carried only by the magic carpet, when the magic carpet happens to be there. Mr. Sargent's portrait of Henry Lee Higginson is exactly the magic carpet (James 1907, 58-59).

In this formulation, the magic of the realist artwork lies in its ability to use precise, powerful detail, like the battle scar, to call its “beneficiaries” into “a possible relation, a possible intimacy.” In contrast to Basil's failure to read Memorial Hall on its own terms, Sargent's portrait encourages the observer to step into just such a sympathetic relation with the artwork. By selecting relations that *are likely to have* powerful affective resonances with its audience members, the realist artwork furnishes its observers with the materials necessary to make critical comparisons about *all possible relations*, but especially those that bring the intimate, personal lives of the observer into relation with the historical events that have shaped their lives.

Comparing these different visits allows us see a number of things, beginning with the fact that, from the point of view of the novel, the problem with Basil's disavowal of the present in his encounter with Memorial Hall resides as much in the Hall's design as it does in Basil's. The problem is that the Hall forecloses the possibility of critical observation because it has been designed according to the logic of an antebellum sentimentalism, which James argues cannot lead individuals to give voice to the affectively charged object-relations of the War. Basil's encounter with the northern monument thus could not have been transformative even were he a trained observer (this is the second problem), for the hall's sentimentalism yields too easily to the force, or “pull,” of what I will shortly explain is Basil's compulsive nostalgia. Not only does the hall fail to transform Basil, but it does not even achieve its sentimental function: in a



Figure 4.5. John Singer Sargent, *Henry Lee Higginson*. Oil on canvas 96.5 x 60.25. Harvard University Portrait Collection, Gift by Student Subscription to the Harvard Union, 1903.

place that allows him to be moved rather than overwhelmed by emotion, the intensity of Basil's relationship to the southern defeat is not alleviated. It is instead *repeated* and recalled. Instead, all that the Hall's antebellum sentimentalism does is trigger the genre that has formed Basil, the southern historical romance. *The Bostonians* argues that the persistent repetition of the dominant antebellum genres of the North and the South *after* the Civil War, after they have ceased to be historically relevant, has led them to become compulsive. They qualify as compulsive because they repetitively and automatically continue to produce the attachment to home even when the old objects of this attachment has been destroyed. Generic longings for home that cannot be discharged accumulate in force and make populations nostalgic.

Reconsider how Basil's genre is invoked by the scene. When Memorial Hall triggers Basil's "simple emotion," it does so because it enshrines a set of masculine virtues that he already values because the historical romance is predicated on chivalric and gallant manners. These are the manners that Basil practices and preaches throughout the novel.¹³ The Northern "temple to youth, manhood, generosity" "sacrifice and example," "duty and honor" inadvertently resonates with the masculine qualities that have already made Basil a southerner. It is significant that this point of contact is accidental, because it shows how Basil is historically conditioned by the romance to be receptive only to objects that are already "congruous" with his southern romantic masculinity. Congruous is a word that William James was fond of, as when he writes that "when any strong emotional state whatever is upon us, the tendency is for no images but

¹³ Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* is helpful here, as one of the illustrations accompanying Twain's chapter on the historical romance is captioned, "Chivalry," and depicts a jousting match before a grandstand. While it's unclear if this is a representation of a southern reenactment or a scene from Scott, the final illustration of the chapter, of a pile of Civil War rifles, bugles, battle standards, and Confederate hats, propped up against the wall of a ruined house, illustrates Twain's connection between the romance and the war.

such as are congruous with it to come up.”¹⁴ Basil’s strong emotional state – his “simple emotion” intensified by repetition of the loss of home – makes him only capable of attending to the objects that correspond to the domestic associations and desires of his genre.

In addition to the conventionality of his manners, Basil’s storyline closely follows the stages of the “chivalric rescue narrative” that Amy Kaplan associates with the popular historical romance of the 1890s. According to Kaplan, the romantic hero begins in a position of melancholy, lamenting a lost frontier or way of life (in Basil’s case, the defeated South, with its chivalric protection of the home its gallantry toward women). Compelled by loss to seek adventure abroad (Basil moves to New York to become a lawyer), he invariably falls in love with a native woman (Verena Tarrant). In the finale, he saves “the kingdom from falling to its barbaric enemies,” liberating “the heroine...by marrying her” (Basil “rescues” Verena from his suffragist enemies, and carries her away, apparently to restore women to their place as “private and passive” members of the home).¹⁵

The formulaicness of Basil’s character and narrative trajectory are two symptoms that the novel diagnoses as a manifestation of the two pathological features of the historical romance: first, that it rests on the precondition that the loss of home can and must be surmounted by force, and second, that the home is natural and stands outside history. Thus, the romance is built around the refusal of the loss of the home, as it takes shape as a narrative about the restoration of the home, in all of its dimensions. If for James, genres make people, the romance is dangerous because it trains readers to affix

¹⁴ James, William. *The Principles of Psychology* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1891), 1167.

¹⁵ Kaplan Amy. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2005), 100.

their desires to the home, to refuse to accept any alteration to it, and to accept this situation as natural and inevitable.¹⁶ In doing so, it makes people who are unable to recognize that their relationship to home is not natural, but naturalized by the mediation of the romance. Acting as if this relationship were natural not only means that the agent possesses reduced resources for adapting to change, but will also be more likely to respond violently to change. This becomes an especially pressing issue when the restoration of the home becomes impossible, as in the case of southerners after the Civil War. After the war, Basil's can no longer fight to preserve his home in the same way, not simply because the war is over or even that his home has been destroyed beyond repair. Much more fundamentally, the conditions of possibility for the plantation have been banned by the fourteenth amendment.¹⁷ When this character is repeatedly described with substantives like "cynicism," "stiffness," and "conservatism," these should all be read as signs that is the figure that the James of *Hawthorne* had not deemed possible: the cynical citizen who refuses to accept an America after abolition. So long as Basil's nostalgic attachment persists, there can be no reconciliation, no "romance of reunion."

In order to see how a genre becomes compulsive, it is helpful to see Basil as a case of the philosophical concept of "the weakness of the will." For it is not simply that Basil's genre impedes him from accomplishing what he wants to do. Rather, these impediments combine to harm his capacity for agency. When an affective relation is of a

¹⁶ In uncritically making the home into a locus of desire, the romance naturalizes this desire. In contrast, for James, homesickness is not a biological tendency, a *cri du sang*, but is simply the historical product of the romance's conditioning of the body. As we know from Michel Foucault's work, the problem with naturalizing a category is that it makes it seem necessary and inevitable, and therefore makes it unavailable to critical self-fashioning.

¹⁷ There's something to be said here about how the novel is unable to represent African-Americans. It is possible that ex-slaves represent a population that troubles James's theory of history and aesthetics. Turning to the Richmond chapter in *The American Scene* could be helpful (also see Ken Warren's *Black and White Strangers*). This analysis would also have to take into account Basil's reticence about slavery, as well as the way he translates the subjugation of slaves into the subjugation of women.

negative character, as with loss, and when an aesthetic mode proves incapable of taking hold of it, this relation continues to impact the body until the entire relation becomes compulsive. Basil's compulsion in the novel is the result of a prolonged failure to recognize that the loss of the War is of a different kind than the relative losses that the genre is equipped to handle. The inability to see this difference is what leads Basil to refuse the new legal order of Reconstruction America, which is why he is compared to John Wilkes Booth when he enters Boston Music Hall at the close of the novel. It is only when southerners like Basil come to be seen as a threat to the nation that nostalgia comes to serve as the antithesis of historical agency.

In medical case histories, the nostalgic is a person whose love of home was previously intensified by temporary absences from home; when this person is exposed to absence of a different kind – permanent, forced migration or compulsory exile for multiple years – only then would a person develop a degenerative, isolating, melancholic fixation on memories of home that served as a substitute for the home itself. In the case of James's novel, this home no longer exists, such that nostalgia primarily operates in a temporal register and in an affective register of refusal and resistance. This tenacity, like the southern tenacity to the Lost Cause, leads the novel to pathologize Basil as a case of the diseased will. This is the meaning that James's novel gives to Basil's last name, Ransom, which no longer refers as it once did in Emerson's poem to the price that ex-slaveowners have to pay to make amends for the crime of slavery, but refers instead to the persistence of this debt into Reconstruction. Basil's romantic nostalgia makes him compulsively incapable of admitting the debt that he has incurred on account of slavery. Basil literally lives on borrowed time, a time that he has borrowed from minority subjects

– from women and slaves. The vampiric extraction of labor from others so as to maintain an abstract idea of home represents the *ransoming* of history. Thus, the novel may be said to ask the question, what price must be paid to regain the possibility history? This is a question that transforms nostalgia into the disease of history. And any answer must carry with it a proposal for a cure for nostalgia.

COMPULSIVE SHYNESS

Olive Chancellor is as much a Bostonian as Basil Ransom is a Mississippian, and as much a product of the domestic sentimental novel as Ransom is of the historical romance, but she is also the critical observer who carries the hope for an American realism first laid out in *Hawthorne*. James remarks in his notebooks that Alphonse Daudet's *L'Évangéliste* (1883) gave him the idea for *The Bostonians*.¹⁸ What gives the French novelist a “peculiarly modern” status, James wrote in an essay on Daudet that same year, is that “he has all the newly-developed perceptions.” There is “a new sense, a sense not easily named or classified, but recognisable in all the most characteristic productions of contemporary art” which has been engendered by “modern manners, modern nerves, modern wealth, and modern improvements”:

It is partly physical, partly moral, and the shortest way to describe it is to say that is a more analytic consideration of the appearance of things. It is known by its tendency to resolve its discoveries into pictorial form. It sees the connection between feelings and external conditions, and it expresses such relations as they have not been expressed hitherto. It deserves to win victories, because it has opened its eyes to the fact that the magic of the arts of representation lies in their appeal to the associations awakened by things. It traces these associations into the most unlighted corners of our being, into the most devious paths of experience.

¹⁸ James, Henry. *The Notebooks of Henry James*. Eds. F.O. Matthiessen and Kenneth B. Murdock (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981), 67.

The appearance of things is constantly more complicated, as the world grows older, and it needs a more and more patient art to divide it into its parts.¹⁹

This passage elaborates on the potential of realism as a species of historical feeling formulated in *Hawthorne* and exemplified by *The American Scene*, but it is also surprising to hear “modern nerves” cited as so important for this “new sense.” Scholars who write about nervousness in the late-nineteenth century almost always view it as an affliction.²⁰ So it is surprising to hear that nervousness was frequently cited as a necessary quality of the realist observer, as what allowed her to reproduce the intensities of affective situations and events. Nervousness is what makes the feminist suffragist Olive Chancellor the carrier of the hope of historical feeling, as the individual who “deserves to win victories.” There is in fact no reason to read Olive’s “highstrung” nerves as necessarily pathological, and certainly not as symptoms of neurasthenia. Olive is in fact not pathologically nervous, she is pathologically shy. This shyness is symptomatic of her inability to break free of a nostalgic attachment to the New England domestic sentimentalism that has formed her and that compulsively confines her to the private sphere. Her shyness is a compulsive attachment to the private sphere that disables her from performing in public as a feminist suffragist.

Nervousness had a positive value as a form of sensitivity that was neither compulsive nor pathological. According to the novel, if Olive possesses “the advantages as well as the disadvantages of a nervous organization,” this is because her nervousness gives her “something very modern and highly developed in her aspect.” Indeed, what

¹⁹ James, Henry. “Alphonse Daudet,” in *Partial Portraits* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888), 206. This essay was first published in *The Century* 26, no. 4 (August 1883): 498-509.

²⁰ This body of scholarship is large, but some notable examples include: Lutz, Tom. *American Nervousness 1903: An Anecdotal History* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991); Rabinbach, Anson. *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992); Schuster, David. *Neurasthenic Nation: America’s Search for Health, Happiness, and Comfort, 1869-1920* (New Brunswick, Rutgers Univ. Press, 2011); Seltzer, Mark. *Bodies and Machines* (London: Routledge, 1992).

James writes about Daudet's nervousness could just as well describes Olive's "delicate, nervous organization, active and indefatigable in spite of its delicacy, and familiar with emotion of almost every kind, equally acquainted with pleasure and with pain" (James 1888, 203).

In *American Nervousness*, the New York physician, George Miller Beard, recalled boarding a train at Providence in 1878 and finding himself in a car of women who had just attended the sixth annual Woman's Congress. What surprises Beard upon encountering a "large number of ladies in the cars" was that they would venture abroad on "a very stormy morning." He describes the women as "handsome," "of an intellectual cast of feature," "strong and vigorous, as though they lived well, and were equal to a long walk or, if necessary, a hard day's work."²¹

For Beard, the women's appearance, combined with their ability to brave the storm, was sufficient proof that they were not neurasthenics, whether or not they possessed nervous constitutions. Had they been neurasthenics, as London physician Hugh Campbell writes in *Nervous Exhaustion* (1873), their poor health and unpleasant sensations would have been aggravated by just such a stormy morning, because neurasthenics were roundly believed to possess a "great susceptibility to atmospheric changes, especially such as involve much electrical disturbance," and were supposed to be most prostrated "before a thunderstorm, when negative electricity abounds."²² Just as Henry James argued that the war has indelibly made contact with Americans by forming networks of discrete, affective pathways, for Beard and other physicians electricity was a

²¹ Beard, George Miller. *American Nervousness, Its Causes and Consequences: A Supplement to Nervous Exhaustion (Neurasthenia)* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1881), 336. We can date the annual Women's Convention to 1878 because it was held in Providence that year.

²² Campbell, Hugh. *Nervous Exhaustion and the Diseases Induced by it, with observations on the Origin and Nature of Nervous Force* (London, Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1873), 7-8.

sign of the historical environment's imprint on the nervous individual. As Jane Thraillkill and Paul Gilmore have shown, electricity, which began to be used in the 1850s as a form of therapy, was also used as a model for describing how the body conducted and stored energy.²³ The trope of electricity helped to define a new conception of the body, one defined by the body's ability or inability to keep a charge, and by its efficiency or inefficiency in doing so. Specifically, interaction between the nervous system and the world was modeled on the electrical circuit of the Galvanic battery. Compulsion, then, would reflect an inability to discharge energy, an inability that James attributes to the effects of aesthetic genres.

The most common trope to describe the expenditure of nervous force was not the "economy of scarcity," as T.J. Jackson Lears has claimed, but electricity.²⁴ Indeed, the emergence of various forms of electric shock treatment seems to have arisen from a conception that the nervous system acts as a kind of "Galvanic battery," one with the capacity "to generate and give out force to every part where there are muscular fibres." The electricity metaphor allowed writers to bring together a two-fold understanding of functional nervous disorders (as opposed to organic nervous disorders, i.e. traumatic physical damage to the brain and nervous system) as comprised of inherited and environmental factors. If neurasthenia was "essentially the disease of civilization," doctors and psychologists used the metaphor to offer a Lamarckian understanding of evolution whereby civilization's influences could be incorporated into the body and passed on as hereditary traits. The nervous system, wrote the famed English physiologist,

²³ Gilmore, Paul. *Aesthetic Materialism: Electricity and American Romanticism* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009); Thraillkill, Jane. *Affecting Fictions: Mind, Body, and Emotion in American Literary Realism* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007).

²⁴ Lears, T.J. Jackson. *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2011).

William Carpenter, operates roughly like “the galvanic battery, by which the electric telegraph acts, the white or fibrous portion of the brain and nerves being like the conducting wires of the telegraph.”²⁵ Thus, the nervous system was imagined as a system of communication within the body and between the body and the environment.

After finding out that the women in the train car were suffragists, and after reading accounts of the convention proceedings, Beard condescended to write that “I was both interested and mildly surprised to find that the essays were of a far higher order in topics and in treatment than I had been accustomed to expect in organizations sustained wholly by women; the subjects selected being more closely related to science, in its various branches, and the discussions were carried on in the scientific spirit” (Beard, 337). Beard marshals the incident as evidence toward answering a question that was often raised in manuals on nervousness, invested as they were in understanding how to distinguish clinically between pathological cases of nervousness and nervous individuals who were able to derive advantages, even “enjoyment,” from their nervousness (Campbell 1873, 5). These suffragists were decidedly not like the paralytics, hysterics, hypochondriacs, and chronically bedridden patients (like James’s sister, Alice), cases who were considered, in the memorable words of one doctor, “too strong to die and yet too weak to live.”²⁶ For what made the suffragists normal cases of nervousness was their education. “A well-trained intellect is itself medicine and hygiene,” he concluded, “enabling its possessor to guard successfully against *the appeals of passion and the storms of emotion*, keeping the mind constantly supplied with the fresh and varied material for thought and action...” (Beard, 337). In diametric opposition to the

²⁵ Carpenter, William. “On the Unconscious Action of the Brain,” *Popular Science* (Sept. 1872): 552.

²⁶ Porter, Robert. *Nervous Debility and its Treatment, with a Series of Cases* (Louisville: John P. Morton, 1879), 5.

widespread assumption today that bourgeois and upper-class educated women were considered most susceptible to nervous disorders, Beard explicitly states that extreme cases of “nervous female patients of our time do not come from the most intellectual of the sex” – neither from the “pioneers in feminine development” like the suffragists, nor from exemplary individuals like George Eliot (*Ibid* 338). Rather, education is a salve for the atmospheric sensitivity of the nerves, and it is the uneducated who are most prey to atmospheric disturbances.²⁷ Beard’s example is important because it also helps us see that in the late-nineteenth century treatment of nervousness, the aim was not to abolish nervousness altogether, but rather simply to address pathological manifestations of nervousness, such as those said to be prevalent in undereducated populations.

The discourse on nervousness helps explain James’s logic by which individuals can become historical observers and historical actors. By making the body into the seat of habituated, automated processes, and by locating these processes in the pathways of the nervous system, this discourse establishes the body as the central node in a network of linkages with the outside world. At the same time, the acquisition of conscious control over bodily processes becomes the privilege of the educated – specifically those who have attained an aesthetic education. How to alter the nerves positively – to produce what the famed French neurologist Charles-Édouard Brown-Séquard called “hyperaesthesia” and thereby avoid “anaesthesia” and “perverted or morbid state[s]” – becomes a major problem for scientists, doctors, and realists alike.²⁸ Within this complex, the body

²⁷ Standard accounts that link nervousness with privileged, educated women include Leach, William. *Lands of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture*; Lears, T.J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*; Lutz, Tom. *American Nervousness 1903: An Anecdotal History*; Rabinbach, Anson. *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity*; Seltzer, Mark. *Bodies and Machines*.

²⁸ Brown-Séquard, Charles-Édouard. *Lectures on the Diagnosis and Treatment of Functional Nervous Affections* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1868), 12.

becomes a site for a new kind of historicism: the human body now carries the impressions of historical events in the nervous system, and expresses these impressions as movements, emotions, and other behaviors. How to recognize this history through indexical signs of the body, how to recognize which ones are harmful, and how to acquire control over the historical relations that they belong to becomes a primary aim of realism. The capacity for history is now located in the twofold acquisition of conscious control over the body and the sensitive observation of the world – in harnessing nervousness so that it works in tandem with cognition.

Beard may as well have been talking about Olive Chancellor and Verena Tarrant. When Basil asks Verena about the Women’s Convention she and Olive had attended the previous year, Verena’s reply is even more eloquent than usual:

Oh, last June, for a week, we just quivered! There were delegates from every State and every city; we lived in a crowd of people and of ideas; the heat was intense, the weather magnificent, and great thoughts and brilliant sayings flew round like darting fireflies. Olive had six celebrated, high-minded women staying in her house—two in a room; and in the summer evenings we sat in the open windows, in her parlour, looking out on the bay, with the lights gleaming in the water, and talked over the doings of the morning, the speeches, the incidents, the fresh contributions to the cause. We had some tremendously earnest discussions, which it would have been a benefit to you to hear, or any man who doesn't think that we can rise to the highest point (*B*).

Verena’s description has the effect of making the scene seem real even for the compulsively imperceptive Basil, “put[ting] the scene before him vividly,” such that “he seemed to see the crowded, overheated hall...” What makes the scene so vivid is the relation of the women “quivering” under a combination of the “intense” heat of summer and the “tremendously earnest” exchange intellectual ideas. As in Beard’s account, the atmosphere contributes to the educated women’s excitement. [...]

Olive's nervous sensitivity makes her an ideal candidate to realize the potential for a realist historicism. "Nervous signs," William James writes, "are the raw material of all knowledge of the outer world according to the most decided realism." And indeed, the novel links Olive's critical ability to her sensitivity to emotion: Olive is "a splendid critic," and is able on occasion to assume an "elevation of view" that seemed "historic and philosophic" to Verena. "If Basil considered women superficial," the narrator writes, "it was a pity he couldn't see what Olive's standard of preparation was":

Olive's displeasures, disappointments, disapprovals were tragic, truly memorable; she grew white under them, not shedding many tears, as a general thing, like inferior women (she cried when she was angry, not when she was hurt), but limping and panting, morally, as if she had received a wound that she would carry for life. On the other hand, her commendations, her satisfactions were as soft as a west wind; and she had this sign, the rarest of all, of generosity, that she liked obligations of gratitude when they were not laid upon her by men (*B* 130).

We learn too that Olive's nature "was like a skiff in a stormy sea," that "her nature" is "anxious, suspicious, exposed to subtle influences," but that, for Verena, Olive's qualities "were so bound up with what was noble in her that she was rarely provoked to criticise them separately." Thus, Olive's education, when combined with her nervous tension, displays a degree of receptivity to the world. It is this receptivity that makes her the only character capable of realizing the potential for historical feeling opened up by the Civil War. As the critical observer who can form aesthetic impressions about the present, Olive is the diametric opposite of Basil, the cynic who is completely unreceptive to the present and who consequently rejects it. Olive is the observer that *Hawthorne* had called for. One thing unites them, however, and that is their nostalgia. In both cases, their compulsive attachments to the aesthetic genres associated with their respective homes serves to prevent them from directly engaging with the present.

First, let's recap James's distinction between the historical event and historical agency. For the early James, the potential for historical agency emerges when an event happens that charges a nation with intense affect. One resulting question that James's work asks is how art can train individuals to identify and take hold of the resulting field of affective relations. Implicit in this formulation is that it can help individuals establish and maintain control over discrete relations of intense pleasure and/or pain, and hence help subjects acquire a resilience that will allow them to flourish within a newly massive, newly integrated, newly volatile nation. *The Bostonians* asks two new questions: how can individuals come to adopt a new form of literature more suitable to this situation when the Civil War has charged the nation with more affect than the art of the nation has equipped its citizens to handle – and not just any affect, but loss as intense as that associated with the absolute destruction of entire modes of existence?²⁹

We've seen in the example of the Sargent painting that the realist answer is not to dispel the intensity of loss, for, as James writes in "The Art of Fiction," to do so would be to abolish the potential of art and history. If "a novel is in its broadest definition a personal impression of life," James argues there, then much of what "constitutes its value" comes from "the intensity of the impression." For intensity opens up the "freedom

²⁹ It is not outside the scope of this chapter to attend to the novel's treatment of mass culture, but a strong argument can be made that the proliferation of mass culture is tied to the intensification of affect after the Civil War. During this time, the American population more than triples from 23 million to 76 million between 1850 and 1900; people are linked together as never before by commodities and futures speculation, which joined farms to urban areas, and by the invention of print syndication and new methods of distribution; and new technologies like the railroad, telegraph, and photograph collapse time and space. See Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992); Kern, Stephen. *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1983); Wiebe, Robert. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966); Cronon 1991; Kern 1983). What historians often overlook is that new technological infrastructure also allowed for the affective power of events to be communicated more rapidly and widely. The danger posed by mass culture for Jamesian historical feeling lies in the fact that the proliferation of objects makes it more difficult to identify dense nodes of affective intensity, at the very moment that the power of these sites is amplified and extended. Any argument of this kind must consider Verena Tarrant.

to feel and say.” Without it, art “has no value.”³⁰ This prompts a second set of questions: if Americans like Basil and Olive have become compulsive because of their aesthetic genres of being, how can the intensity of their compulsion be redirected? How can realism give new form to the free expression of this intense loss? To understand how realism hoped to cure compulsion, it helps to know something about late-nineteenth-century theories of the nervous system.

For the novel diagnoses Olive as pathologically shy, and it is this shyness which prevents her from making observations in public. “Miss Olive Chancellor, it may be confided to the reader, to whom in the course of our history I shall be under the necessity of imparting much occult information, was subject to fits of tragic shyness, during which she was unable to meet even her own eyes in the mirror.” Her shyness is a huge reason why she needs Verena to speak on her behalf: she is unable to speak in public. When Verena exclaims to Olive how great her private speeches are, Olive “shook her head with a melancholy that was not devoid of sweetness,” and remarks ‘I have no facility; I am awkward and embarrassed and dry.’” The narrator laments, “[i]t may therefore be imagined how sharp her vision would have been could she only have taken the situation more simply; for she was intelligent enough not to have needed to be morbid, even for purposes of self-defense.” Overpowered by emotion, Olive is “entangled in contradictions.” “Such is the penalty of being of a fastidious, exclusive, uncompromising nature; of seeing things not simply and sharply, but in perverse relations, in intertwined strands.”

The distinction between Basil and Olive corresponds to the two opposed perversions of the will that William James calls “the explosive will” and “the obstructed

³⁰ James, Henry. “The Art of Fiction,” in *The Art of Fiction* (Boston: Cupples, Upham, 1885), 60-61.

will.” Explosive individuals are incapable of controlling their impulses, either because “inhibition is insufficient or impulsion in excess.” This is the problem with alcoholics:

Ask half the common drunkards you know why it is that they fall so often a prey to temptation, and they will say that most of the time they cannot tell. It is a sort of vertigo with them. Their nervous centres have become a sluice-way pathologically unlocked by every passing conception of a bottle and a glass. They do not thirst for the beverage; the taste of it may even appear repugnant; and they perfectly foresee the morrow’s remorse. But when they think of the liquor or see it, they find themselves preparing to drink, and do not stop themselves; and more than this they cannot say (James 1147).

The alcoholic drinks because his lack of impulse control is habitual: his nervous system has formed very short pathways of impulse, such that “the slightest rise in the level of innervation produces an overflow,” causing him to drink. Because of their perviousness, “there is no opportunity for strain or tension to accumulate within them; and the consequence is that with all the agitation and activity, the amount of real feeling engaged may be very small” (1148).

In other cases, the inhibitory power remains normal, but “*the strength of the impulsive idea is preternaturally exalted*, and what would be for most people the passing suggestion of a possibility becomes a gnawing, craving urgency to act”:

Most people have the potentiality of this disease. To few has it not happened to conceive, after getting into bed, that they may have forgotten to lock the front door, or to turn out the entry gas. And few of us have not on some occasion got up to repeat the performance, less because they believed in the reality of its omission than because only so could they banish the worrying doubt and get to sleep (1152).

In each case, the explosive individual ends up acting impulsively because of her “hair-trigger organization. The problem with the uncontrollable urge is that it leads to “disorderly and impulsive” conduct.

In obstructed individuals, by contrast, “impulsion is insufficient or inhibition in excess.” While “the healthy state of the will requires...both that vision should be right, and that action should obey its lead,” in the obstructed conditions, “the vision may be wholly unaffected, and the intellect clear, and yet the act either fails to follow or follows in some other way” (1152-53). The figures most associated with these kinds of will, James writes, are “the hero” and “the neurotic subject.” These are precise descriptors for Basil Ransom and Olive Chancellor.³¹

HISTORICAL FEELING

The final scene of *The Bostonians* is famously ambiguous. Why, when Olive Chancellor runs out to speak at the podium in Boston Music Hall, does the narration cut to the street, where Basil Ransom has just forcibly escorted Verena Tarrant? Why does Verena say at this moment, just as she hears the crowd hush, “Ah, now I’m glad,” at the same time as she begins to cry? And what does it say about the future of suffragist feminism that the speech was meant to be given not by Olive but by Verena, the brilliant young girl who was born-and-raised to be a star speaker? Olive, painfully shy and incapable of public speaking, was supposed to serve as the woman behind-the-scenes – lecture coach, manager, teacher, intimate friend, and maybe lover. Verena was supposed to become a star; she’s modeled after characters like Émile Zola’s Nana and serves as a prototype for

³¹ This discourse on the will also has a bearing on the troping of the human body as a machine. Indeed, the mechanical actions of the characters in *The Bostonians* is one of the main reasons why the novel has been considered part of James’s brief naturalist phase. Mark Seltzer and Anson Rabinbach have described how the human body was redescribed as a machine over the course of the nineteenth century. With this transformation, the line between nature and technology grew increasingly uncertain as the body and machine were considered in tandem for their potential to perform work.

Theodore Dreiser's *Carrie Meeber*.³² If we consider that the novel encourages us to read Olive and Basil's struggles over Verena as a displacement of the Civil War's question of slavery onto the question of women, and therefore also a continuation of the war by other means, this ending seems to dash all hopes, expectations, and desires for the future of women. The carefully laid plans of women have been laid to waste. With the exception of Nina Auerbach, almost all critics have responded to the scene this way and awarded the victory to Basil.³³ The South has risen again, and this time, it has won. Cue sectional reconciliation music.

Read in light of the history of nostalgia and James's other writings on America, however, it is possible to come to the exact opposite conclusion. Olive's failure is a victory, and Basil's victory a failure. To begin making this case, let's reconsider the Emerson stanza that gives Basil Ransom his name:

Pay ransom to the owner
And fill the bag to the brim
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay *him!*

In the context of the novel, the stanza suggests a rough analogy between the plights of women and slaves. The analogy makes sense for both Basil and Olive: Basil is a former Mississippi slaveholder who is now preoccupied with subjugating women, and Olive is a Boston Brahmin woman whose romantic relationships are predicated on class inequality, of making women of lower social standing act as her servants.³⁴ Just as Basil forces Verena out of Boston Music Hall and presumably into marriage, Olive bribes Verena's

³² Castle, Terry. "Haunted by Olive Chancellor," in *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1993), 150-185.

³³ Auerbach, Nina. "The Bostonians," in *Communities of Women: An Idea in Fiction* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1978), 119-140.

³⁴ Fisher, Philip. "Hierarchical Social Space: Twain, James, and Howells," in *Still the New World: Literature in a Culture of Creative Destruction* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999), 120-151.

impoverished parents with money in order to attain undisputed possession of her and make her speak for her. In both cases, Emerson's poem applies: "But, lay hands on another / to coin his labor and sweat / He goes in pawn to his victim / for eternal years in debt" (Emerson 1863). Whether possessed by Basil as a wife or Olive as a speaker for her ideas, Verena's labor is used to profit another. So when Olive loses Verena and has to speak for herself, the possibility exists that in the future Olive won't form relationships based on class inequality, but will instead embody the ideas she espouses and thereby begin repaying the debts she has incurred.

This is how *The Bostonians* reframes Emerson's poem. At the same time, it is important to understand how James's novel changes Emerson's terms. Instead of a distinction between spiritual and worldly payment, James's realist novel works according to secular distinctions between history, politics, and aesthetics. In the process, it replaces Emerson's teleological narrative of progressive liberation with a new dialectic where historical events no longer guarantee freedom. In order to prepare us adequately to understand the larger stakes of Basil and Olive's conflict, then, we need to know how these concepts are related in Jamesian realism, and what a traumatic event such as the loss of Verena Tarrant could mean in terms of American history.

James is famous among critics today for his list in *Hawthorne* (1879), which compares all the "items of high civilization," and the "accumulation of history and custom" of Europe to the relative "poverty" of antebellum America.³⁵ But it's worth remembering what this list of absent material objects is used to explain: why it has proven so difficult for American authors to write novels set in America. James's point is not that America is completely ahistorical, but rather that it has not had the right kind of

³⁵ James, Henry. *Hawthorne* (London: Macmillan, 1879), 43. Hereafter *Hawthorne*.

history for aesthetic production. Thus, while James's claim would have sounded preposterous to his contemporaries who had recently attended the Philadelphia centennial exposition in 1876, many of whom were undoubtedly Civil War veterans, and recently begun publishing historical monographs in unprecedented numbers, it is important to see that James's concept of history is not concerned with history by itself, but with the relationship between history and aesthetics.

If America still lacks the right kind of history in 1879 as it had in Hawthorne's time, this is not because historical conditions have remained the same. Rather, James writes that Hawthorne's generation, while not "wholly passed away...it may at least be said that the circumstances that produced it have been greatly modified" (*Ibid* 141). And yet he also claims that these changes have been insufficient to make America historical in 1879. In order to understand this claim, we need to consider that the essay is attempting to explain why Hawthorne could not have been a realist (like his contemporaries, Balzac and Flaubert), and why the country still lagged behind Europe in producing realist writers. For James, Hawthorne proves the general rule or "moral" of the poverty of American literature – "that it takes a great deal of history to produce a little literature."

The case of antebellum literature reveals something absolutely crucial to any understanding of the Jamesian project, and that's the fact that aesthetics and history are inseparably linked in one global theory where history opens up new potential for art. The artist is the subject endowed with the ethical responsibility of realizing this potential – which is to say, of making art keep step with history. If a Jamesian philosophy of history differs from the popular, teleological attitude toward history at this moment, then, it is not because James rejects the progressive narrative of history altogether, but rather because

his writings incorporate aesthetics into this narrative, thereby adding a wrinkle to historical inevitability.

Indeed, the lesson that James draws, that art requires “a great deal of history,” provokes a new question in *Hawthorne*: if historical conditions have changed since the 1850s, why has art not followed suit? Why is there no realist art in America comparable to that of Europe? By way of an answer, James turns to the event he considered responsible for changing everything, the Civil War. What the war did is render the optimistic art of the antebellum period, a time where myth, allegory, sentimentality, and romance flourished, inadequate for representing the present. In the process, it produced “a social revolution as complete as any the world has seen,” a turning point “in the history of the American mind”:

It introduced into the national consciousness a certain sense of proportion and relation, of the world being a more complicated place than it had hitherto seemed, the future more treacherous, success more difficult. At the rate at which things are going, it is obvious that the good American, in days to come, will be a more critical person than his complacent and confident grandfather. He has eaten of the tree of knowledge. He will not, I think, be a sceptic, and still less, of course, a cynic; but he will be, without discredit to his well-known capacity for action, an observer (*Ibid* 144).³⁶

³⁶ James returns to the subject of the Civil War in his late autobiographies:

“Great public convulsions are an upheaval of many things, and are only too apt to destroy more treasure than they collect, to agitate, even fatally to deform, more questions than they settle; so that among the elements let loose and the bewilderments multiplied confusion overtakes inward values no less than outward, matters of knowledge and experience, appreciation, conviction, faith, as one has held them and as one has more or less comfortably lived by so doing. To take a thousand things for granted is to live comfortably, but the very first effect of great world-shocks is to blight that condition by laying bare all our grounds and our supposed roots.” James, Henry. *England at War: An Essay* (London: Central Committee for National Patriotic Organisations, 1915), 3.

“The first sense of it all to me after the first shock and horror was that of a sudden leap back into life of the violence with which the American Civil War broke upon us, at the North, fifty-four years ago, when I had a consciousness of youth which perhaps equaled in vivacity my present consciousness of age...The sudden new tang in the atmosphere, the flagrant difference, as one noted, in the look of everything, especially in that of people’s faces, the expressions, the hushes, the clustered groups, the detached wonderers, and slow-paced public meditators, were so many impressions long before received and in which the stretch of more than half a century had still left a sharpness.” James, Henry. *Within the Rim and Other Essays 1914-15* (London: W. Collins, 1920), 11-12.

“Proportion,” “relation,” “critical,” and especially “observer” – these are the keywords of Jamesian realism. It is not a stretch to say then that the Civil War heralds both the possibility of a new American literature and the possibility that America will become historical – precisely, paradoxically, because it is the nation’s first historical event.

According to James, what the war does is galvanize the country with affective intensities for the first time. It’s not that strong feelings didn’t exist before; rather, the difference is that these feelings were purely subjective – they had no complex objects. In the war’s aftermath, discrete objects have acquired the capacity to provoke strong responses. And when material objects acquire this capacity, emotions are differentiated because subjects now have new attachments to these objects. When objects acquire this potential, they can produce fields of affective relations – relations which give objects newfound distinctness and vividness. And when subjects see things in this new way, their emotions cease to be subjective. This is what James calls “local color.” By contrast, as James writes in his essay on Emerson, “what the life of New England fifty years ago offered to the observer was the common lot, in *a kind of achromatic picture, without particular intensifications*” (my emphasis; James 1888: 8).

So we can now be very precise about what, to James, makes his time different from Hawthorne’s, as it amounts to one thing and one thing only – a new set of affective conditions. My previous question is now answerable: art does not necessarily follow history, and in fact in this case hasn’t. Only affect does, because it is unavoidable mark of the historical. However, while they are inevitable, these affective conditions only create the *potential* for new art forms, a potential carried by new subjects; they do not dictate

historical progress. This is because it is only the minimum prerequisite for the emergence of history and realism. So we can now define what James means by history: *discrete objects, affectively charged by events, which are capable of being recognized by a receptive observer*. It's worth pausing to consider the distance of this definition from academic concepts of history today: history is not tied to knowledge but to an aesthetic encounter, it does not distinguish between personal and transpersonal events, between autobiography and history, and it does not require any great length of time to pass before it can become historical. It merely requires an individual who understands that her intensity of feeling may be a measure of an object's historical importance. This aesthetic recognition of an affective relation is what I am going to call historical feeling.

We're now in position to reframe James's initial riddle as follows: if America has experienced a historical event, the Civil War, why has it remained ahistorical in the late-nineteenth century? Put another way, if new affective conditions have already by necessity produced new kinds of subjects, and if the landscape is saturated with new feeling, how is it even possible for the country to remain ahistorical? These questions will become increasingly important for James's later writings about America, from *The Bostonians* to *The American Scene* to *The Sense of the Past*, which expend considerable effort addressing precisely the problem of why historical feeling has failed to emerge in a country ripe for it. Now that we've connected the historical event to affect, and feeling to aesthetic recognition, these questions will hopefully appear less imposing. The problem, quite clearly, has something to do with the observer, the figure that James invests with all the possibilities of the Civil War. It's not that there are no observers – after all, everyone affected by the war is at least a potential observer. Rather, something has happened after

the war to prevent this potential from being realized, and therefore prevent historical feeling from either being recognized or being broadcast in public and made a part of a national dialogue. Something has happened to hinder the observer from publishing her historical feeling. When the newspaperman Matthias Pardon says in *The Bostonians* that he wants to make history, then, he might be said to help history stall, because in his desire to make every fad historical, he exemplifies the subject who is incapable of parsing the object world for the things that are actually affectively powerful.

The Bostonians, which I will turn to momentarily, picks up where *Hawthorne* leaves off by suggesting that what has come to hinder the historical observer is compulsion. It is here that James's theory of historical feeling intersects with the history of nostalgia. In anatomizing Reconstruction as an affectively charged period where old subjective formations become compulsive, *The Bostonians* situates nostalgia at the point between expression and impression, between language and desire, and between attachment to the past and the impact of intense loss in the present. The following two sections pursue the question of how compulsion takes shape in two of the novel's characters, Basil Ransom and Olive Chancellor. Understanding why the novel considers Basil incurable and Olive treatable cases is vital to understanding the stakes of their final conflict in Boston Music Hall.

THE SHOCK OF HISTORY

So the conventions of domestic sentimentalism that have become nostalgic are associated with how Olive performs her emotions in public. This nostalgia is associated not with the absolute destruction of her home, as in Basil's case, but rather with her exclusion from

fighting in the Civil War. Thus, Basil's fighting feeling, which locates him in the past and which motivates his impossible fight to restore his home, is exactly inverted in Olive, who desires to destroy the Boston home that has only too successfully survived the war. However, the novel argues that she is compulsively unable to participate in public life because she is incapable of escaping the conventions of domesticity associated with antebellum Boston. Shyness means here compulsively performing feminine domesticity in public. In contrast to Gillian Brown, who reads the novel as reinstating domestic femininity, I believe that the novel argues that domestic femininity never went away, and that it compulsively conditions even those like Olive, who most radically want to leave it behind.³⁷

Olive's nostalgia, however, is less severe than Basil's, because it designates an affective relation between a sentimental genre and relative loss. Olive's desire to effect political progress for women stems from her desire to martyr herself. As Caleb Smith has argued, martyr figures like Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry David Thoreau, in "repair[ing] to the private sphere by way of the perception that the deliberative public sphere had been thoroughly corrupted by a ruthless capitalism in league with the slave system," endowed their literary works with a "peculiar authority." Their "self-abnegating modes of address" might have constituted a mode of authority, but it also reimagines the domestic separation between the private and public *within* the public sphere itself.³⁸

Additionally, Olive retains a form of class-condescension that contributes to making her avoid confronting her own inability to live up to her standards of equality for women. She is only able to form relationships with women of lower social standing, a

³⁷ Brown, Gillian. *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992), 197-201.

³⁸ Smith, Caleb. *The Oracle and the Curse* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2013).

pattern of behavior that is intimately related to the structure of abolitionism, a structure that remains in the figure of Miss Birdseye, whose “best hours had been spent in fancying that she was helping some Southern slave to escape. It would have been a nice question whether, in her heart of hearts, for the sake of this excitement, she did not sometimes wish the blacks back in bondage.”

Her involuntary retention of an older domestic formation is apparent in her Beacon Hill apartment. Even to Basil Ransom, “it seemed to him he had never seen an interior that was so much an interior as this queer corridor-shaped drawing-room of his new-found kinswoman; he had never felt himself in the presence of so much organised privacy or of so many objects that spoke of habits and tastes. Most of the people he had hitherto known had no tastes; they had a few habits, but these were not of a sort that required much upholstery.”

What Olive has lost is the ability to fight for the rights of slaves, the ability that women abolitionists had earned by virtue of their participation in political discourse. Olive’s “two brothers—her only ones—had given up life for the Northern cause,” a sacrifice that the would-be martyr, Olive, considers the highest virtue. So even as Olive continues to fight in the political sphere, what she desires most is to be able to hurt herself. This is the effect of her “perversion,” that her desire for political justice manifests itself as the desire for self-harm.

We are now prepared to understand the stakes of Basil and Olive’s final confrontation over Verena in Boston Music Hall.³⁹ I think we are meant to suspect that

³⁹ So not only does the novel invert the then-popular romance of reunion, where the ex-Union soldier marries a southern belle, by inventing a marriage plot for the southern ex-soldier and northern woman, but it also refuses to give Basil’s romance closure. In doing so, it exposes the genre as fundamentally compulsive. In refusing this sense of closure, the novel underlines how the romance is fundamentally

the “convulsive scene” in the final chapter between Verena and Olive, a scene which is only described in its aftermath, has not paralyzed Olive but instead has transfigured her, thereby allowing her to confront what she fears the most: her self and other Boston *bourgeoisie* like her, many of whom comprise the audience in the hall. While both Ransom and Mrs. Farrinder, the leader of the suffragist movement, dismiss Olive offhand when she runs onstage to speak for Verena, Olive only flings an answer behind her as she rushes onstage: “I am going to be hissed and hooted and insulted!” Because both Basil and Olive are explosive characters whose desires urge them to fight, their collision produces this change in the less pathological Olive.⁴⁰

While Olive is already called a “tragic figure” earlier in the novel, while the hall likened to the Roman Coliseum, these details only beg the question: what kind of a tragedy is this? Consider the ending again in light of the following information: Olive never speaks in public because of her shyness, so we have no direct ability to judge her talent as a public speaker. But we can assume from her coaching of Verena that she knows the speech by heart, down to the last “intonation.” She wants Verena “armed at all points, like Joan of Arc” for her public appearance, an analogy, the narrator tells us,

incapable of achieving closure: it is a plot which is only suitable for a world where loss is an unusual occurrence. When loss becomes the norm, when people are continually disembedded from the homes they remember, however, the genre is continually short-circuited and continually in the position of having to mount new rescue narratives.

⁴⁰ I believe that this collision is modeled on electroshock therapy, which had been introduced into treatment in the 1850s and was very different than the convulsive electroshock therapy we tend to think of today. For this collision amounts to an historical event, and we have already seen that James’s novel figures compulsion as a diseased aesthetic relation to history. What James imagines is a situation where two sets of compulsive desires, both historically determined, collide and produce a therapeutic shock. This shock represents the negation of desire: it is a moment where Olive’s desires fail so suddenly and so intensely as to change her desires, even if just for a moment. James was fond of writing in his letters, “it’s the first step that costs,” and his brother William had erected a psychology of habit that claimed that the most difficult part of changing a morbid habit is the first act of will. James’s novel cannot imagine any way that Olive can initiate this act; rather, only history itself can create this space for her, such that she can begin her training and adopt a new mode of publicness.

which “had lodged itself in Olive’s imagination” (*B*, 134). And most importantly, we learn very early on that “[t]he most secret, the most sacred hope of her nature was that she might some day have such a chance [of offering up her life like her brothers in the Civil War], that she might be a martyr and die for something” (*B*, 11).

So might we not say that Olive, by virtue of her personal tragedy, has become a tragic actress? Indeed, James’s friend, the actress Ellen Terry, was famous for her turns as Ophelia and, later, Lady Macbeth, and could plausibly be seen as a model for Olive (see Figure 3.6). While the ending is ambiguous, the preponderance of evidence suggests this reading. As Verena is leaving, the narrator describes the sound of Olive stepping on stage: “Every sound instantly dropped, the hush was respectful, the great public waited, and whatever she should say to them (and he thought she might indeed be rather embarrassed), it was not apparent that they were likely to hurl the benches at her.” This narration is told in free indirect discourse from the point of view of Basil, at the very moment he is “palpitating with his victory,” and Basil, who hates the public only slightly less than he hates women, is not exactly a reliable narrator. Clearly coming from a much different place is Verena’s last line, “Ah, now I am glad!” Her words, both empowered and powerless, could refer to Olive’s appearance on stage, or serve as a reassurance for Basil that she is happy staying in the intimate sphere. Regardless of the proper object, we know that Verena was raised for public life, and has only been able to establish bonds with people, even Basil, over a mutual desire for publicity. Given that Verena is the only person who has witnessed Olive display emotion openly in her speech, it stands to reason that she would hold Olive’s capabilities in high esteem.

I believe that the collision between Basil and Olive is modeled on electroshock therapy, which had been introduced into treatment in the 1850s. This collision amounts to an historical event, and we have already seen that James's novel figures compulsion as a diseased aesthetic relation to history. This event is constructed as a situation where two sets of compulsive desires, both historically determined, collide and produce a therapeutic shock. This shock represents the negation of desire: it is a moment where Olive's desires fail so suddenly and so intensely as to change her desires, even if just for a moment. James was fond of writing in his letters, "it's the first step that costs," and his brother William had erected a psychology of habit that claimed that the most difficult part of changing a morbid habit is the first act of will. James's novel cannot imagine any way that Olive can initiate this act; rather, only history itself can create this space for her, such that she can begin her training and adopt a new mode of publicness.

Ultimately, the struggle between Basil and Olive over the American past turns out to be no struggle at all: Basil's performance of his masculinity is a series of hollow gestures which produces a conservative public sphere which, as critics have noted, is parasitic upon the women's public sphere. What critics haven't addressed, however, is how Basil's production of his own conservative masculinity enables Olive's own personal transformation, a transformation in precisely how she displays emotions in public, in how she might inspire spectators to see the world – not as Verena once made her see, "with a sunrise-mist of emotion," but with a new, tragic vision (*B*, 35), which I think we can comfortably call a "realist vision." For the local color Olive will reproduce, which had once belonged to her "very private life," is the love she once held for Verena, expressed now as loss and longing, her queer love martyred by Basil Ransom and

exposed to the eyes and ears of the world (*B*, 128). If James calls for a future where American realism will take wing under the banner of history, his novel suggests that we



Figure 4.6: John Singer Sargent. *Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth*, 1889.

need look no further for this future than Olive Chancellor's interlaced words of love to Verena Tarrant.

CONCLUSION

It might appear curious that in James's writings both historical feeling and nostalgia depend upon the intense affective power of the past to call an observer into an emotional relation. What differentiates the two, however, is that in the case of nostalgia, the force of the past only affects the body and cannot extend beyond this relation, whereas in historical feeling, the past circulates between the body, the emotions, and consciousness – which is to say, the entire self. So even when nostalgia provokes a powerful emotional state, as in Basil's encounter with Memorial Hall, it obscures this relation. Ultimately, this is because nostalgia is figured as the result of aesthetic conditioning, whereas historical feeling is seen as the product of aesthetic training. While realism advertises itself as a flexible mode capable of engineering new relations between the self and the past, the older aesthetic genres that engender nostalgia are cast as rigid, naïve products of their place and time that are incapable of being updated. Thus realism can argue at once that in divorcing desire's relation to the past from the emotions and consciousness, nostalgia *immobilizes* the self in a static configuration that increasingly recedes into the past (so, while medical nostalgia described a total immobilizing of the individual, James's nostalgia stops at psychological immobility). And it can argue in the next breath that historical feeling offers its practitioners the opportunity to repair the damage to the self performed by older genres, as well as the chance to regain a connection to the present.

Realism can make these promises because of its belief that when individuals deliberately attend to aesthetic objects that repay this attention (like Sargent's portrait, or the historical buildings that populate James's travel writings), that the effect will be to repair and strengthen the relation between perception and action. "*The essential achievement of the will*," he continues later in the chapter, "*in short, when it is most 'voluntary,' is to ATTEND to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind.*"⁴¹ The sign of the strong will is not the determination to get what one wants, but rather the capacity to sustain attention long enough to get something one has never sufficiently wanted:

Sustained in this way by a resolute effort of attention, the difficult object ere long begins to call up its own congeners and associates and ends by changing the disposition of the man's consciousness altogether. And with his consciousness, his action changes, for the new object, once stably in possession of the field of his thoughts, infallibly produces its own motor effects (*Ibid*, 1168).

For Henry James, the habit of critical observation not only heals the will, but, in the process, also helps individuals take control of their affective relations to the past, thereby making them capable of making history in the present – of making America historical. The logic of these paragraphs I take to be what motivates the famous "ugliness" of realism. If the novelist is to be a faithful "historian of feeling and character," as William Dean Howells wrote, he must assume "a higher function, something like that of a physician or a priest," and treat passions other than love: grief, avarice, pity, ambition, hate, envy, devotion, friendship.⁴² In claiming to confront the unpleasant, yet "greater part in the drama of life," realism promises its readers a therapy

⁴¹ James, William, 1891, 1152.

⁴² Howells, William Dean. *Criticism & Fiction* (New York: Harper, 1891), 155-56.

for their compulsive immobility in the form of the cultivation of a more mobile, more adaptable, more flexible subjectivity.

If *The Bostonians* serves as an object lesson in how to connect pathological symptoms, like the ones comprising Basil (and Olive's) compulsive nostalgia, to anterior, local causes (this is what makes the novel a work of local color), James's travel writings suggest why nostalgia is an inappropriate response to the predicament of homelessness. If novel connects Basil's compulsive nostalgia to his "provincial" attachment to the *South*, the travel writings show that the provincial is antithetical to cosmopolitanism. For James, the cosmopolitan is the subjective attitude invented by and best suited to the post-war era of mass transit and mass communication. Rather than refusing to accept one's disembedding by associating happiness with a fixed version of a past place, the cosmopolitan is the figure who learns how to find pleasure in dislocation. The cosmopolitan is the citizen who has "lost that sense of the absoluteness and the sanctity of the habits of your fellow townfolk which once made you so happy in the midst of them."⁴³

The realist project does not entail abandoning a belief in progress altogether, but rather moving it to one side of a new distinction between two kinds of history: on the one hand, history occasioned by events like the Civil War, and, on the other, history produced by agency.⁴⁴ For in James's writings on America, as in the work of other realists,

⁴³ James, 1883, 75.

⁴⁴ There are plenty of examples of earlier novels where characters "make history" – we need think only of the world-historical actors of Walter Scott's novels – but I'm talking about something different. In earlier historical novels, the hero pursues a set of local concerns which only happen to be connected to larger, transpersonal concerns. The hero makes history by accident. In the realist novel, a character makes history by staging an event, which is deemed felicitous or infelicitous according to the accuracy with which that character has assessed the conditions for action. Foucault's example of the parrhesiast, the person who speaks truth to power, and in doing so, transforms this power, is quite close to this. It is this assessment, which entails the deployment of clinical diagnostic techniques borrowed from medicine, which is new. The

Emersonian faith in progress is relocated in the agent: in particular, in the successful cultivation of an aesthetic capacity to attend to the affective relations in which an individual finds herself enmeshed (by historical events, accidents of birth, etc.). Entailed in this emphasis on making progress through the cultivation of agency is a new focus on teaching individuals how to pay *attention* to the objects around them. The feeling of attention, which is the defining feature of the will for William James, becomes in Henry James the defining mark of realism: the sustained observation of the objects that makes an event's affective relations expressible as the feeling of history. The hope of realism is that through increasingly attentive acts, the individual will develop the capacity to liberate herself (and, eventually, others) from the material relations that make her who she is. The historical actor now holds the keys to progress. Unlike contemporary accounts of cosmopolitanism, such as Amanda Anderson's, for James, cosmopolitan detachment is never impersonal. Rather, it depends upon feeling, and specifically upon the premise that the cosmopolitan subject inherits a pregiven situation – homelessness – and must accordingly develop a new source of pleasure in “the habit of comparing” that James discusses in the second epigraph to this chapter.

The prerequisite for cosmopolitan realism is the severing of provincial attachments. Only then can one learn how to derive pleasure from history, and not the home. It is only through the narrative staging of a catastrophic event of loss that James can imagine a cure for nostalgia. This cure, I argue, is modeled on electroshock

irony of *The Bostonians* is that it is the narrator who must occupy the role of hero, since the problem of the novel is how to inaugurate a realist historicism in a country with no aesthetic resources for accepting loss. This is why the work is self-reflexively constructed as a failed historical novel: the non-event of Verena's speech turns out to be an actual historical event, because it makes Olive's desires fail and thereby eliminates the one compulsive behavior, shyness, that prevents her from acting in public and from being only a realist observer.

therapy, which began to be widely used after the Civil War. When Basil kidnaps Verena Tarrant in the final scene in his compulsive and violent quest to restore the plantation home and conserve the chivalrous and gallant manners of the southern historical romance, he repeats the central conflict of the Civil War, with the difference being that instead of a fight over the future of slavery, this fight is over who will get to subjugate Verena. Indeed, though Olive's queer love for Verena has been the subject of an extensive body of criticism, it has hardly ever been noted that this love is predicated on Olive's position of dominance over Verena, who is not only a girl of the lower classes, but of ambiguous ethnic origins as well. If, in the Civil War, Basil was habituated by the historical romance to enter the public sphere to fight between men to preserve the paternalistic structure of the plantation home, Olive's sentimental genre confines her to the northern private sphere, which possesses its own set of hierarchical dependencies, such as those between masters and household servants and between sympathetic white female readers and African-American slaves. In this fight, Verena thus comes to occupy the position of both servant and slave. If Olive compulsively depends on her for love, for a public voice, and for a future where women like her will be liberated from dependencies like these, the destruction of her love for Verena represents a catastrophic historical event where these dependencies fail and, with them, her compulsive attachment to sentimental domesticity. By losing Verena, Olive simultaneously is dispossessed of her love and forced to speak in public in place of Verena, compelled to speak the words that she has written for her. While the novel drops the curtain before we learn how this speech unfolds, it is safe to say that it endorses this traumatic loss because it means that Olive has been thrust

into the public sphere, forced to assume agency over her own future as a woman and a suffragist, through a tragic performance of her own private suffering. In James, traumatic loss is the precondition for giving voice to nostalgic desire and asserting rational control over the future. The novel is thus both a critique of Emerson's sentimental optimism in the "Boston Hymn" that Americans will be able to make reparations for the debts of slavery and a fulfillment of the prophetic lines that give Basil Ransom his name:

Pay ransom to the owner
And fill the bag to the brim
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay *him!*

Traumatic loss, whether in the form of Olive's loss or Hank Morgan's genocidal electrocution of a legion of knights in King Arthur's England, is the price that realist fiction asks the reader to pay to escape from the compulsive, hierarchical dependencies of the past. It is the price that must be paid for the possibility of democratic progress, for historical action, and for the cosmopolitan ability to move and feel without the harmful fetters of nostalgic attachments. The realist reconfiguration of nostalgia might best be called biohistorical narrative. In contrast to the autobiography and the *bildungsroman*, in this pathological historical novel characters lack the agency necessary to receive an education and can only begin to receive one after the felicitously traumatic coincidence of historical events with their compulsive desire. Like the "moral remedy" long employed in the military to cure "epidemics" of nostalgia and mutinous feeling, *The Bostonians* aims to cure a vehement passion by counteracting it with an antithetical passion of even greater intensity. Jamesian realism can only imagine a sovereign means by which to break

compulsive attachments to home. In the following chapter, we turn to Sarah Orne Jewett's vision of a non-sovereign therapy that promises the dissolution of desire through an education of the senses.

THE THERAPY OF THE SENSES

When distance produces immediacy, we are squarely in a state of nostalgia. As Kathleen Stewart argues, “nostalgia sets in motion a dialectic of closeness and distantiation; its goal is not the creation of a code based on empty distinctions but the redemption of expressive images and speech.”¹ In this chapter, I take seriously Stewart’s polemical call to reclaim nostalgia from its debased status as a false form of historical consciousness. In particular, I take it as inspiration to call for a halt to the view of nostalgia as a self-centered, self-deluding, self-harming mode of desire. I believe that this long-running stigma is the product of a misguided set of moral and medical judgments that have historically pathologized solitude – in all its versions, from reverie

¹ Stewart, Kathleen. “Nostalgia – A Polemic,” *Cultural Anthropology* 3:3 (Aug. 1988): 228.

² We might detect just such an overhasty condemnation in Jackson Lears’s proclamation that therapy in the 1890s

to suicide – as irrational, unproductive, and harmful to the self and the social. When a disease formerly suffered by the less rational, more feeling minority populations whose compulsory migrant labor built European empires becomes the name for the affective disposition that drives the creative destruction of capitalism, it is worth moving in this direction. Rather than mobilize nostalgia and its implicit moral baggage for the purposes of economic critique, I want to know what nostalgia can do when we let it travel lightly.² If Sarah Orne Jewett and Willa Cather, the subject of my coda, share this impulse too, it remains to be addressed why they remoralize nostalgia as part of a therapeutic withdrawal from the social and economic, but continue to base this retreat on the “natures” of ethnic and indigenous people.

INDIRECT IMMEDIACY

The shooting of a white heron near Portland, Maine was part of the thrill of being an ornithologist in 1881. While the heron, a warm-weather species, had never been recorded so far north, and this sighting significantly extended the known range of the bird, the real pleasure issued from elsewhere. The *Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club* gives the official account:

During the summer of 1881 a small white Heron took up his abode in a dense swamp bordering the eastern side of Scarborough Marsh. He foraged regularly about the neighboring ponds and rivers, and before autumn had been seen and unsuccessfully shot at by many covetous gunners. In September, however, he fell captive to the wiles of Mr. Winslow Pilsbury [*sic*], and now reposes in the cabinet of Mr. Chas. H. Chandler, of Cambridge, Mass. Before writing Mr. Chandler, to ascertain the species represented by his specimen, I learned that Mr. Henry A. Purdie had seen the bird and pronounced it the Little Blue Heron (*Florida caerulea*). No previous instance of its occurrence in Maine is on record.³

² We might detect just such an overhasty condemnation in Jackson Lears’s proclamation that therapy in the 1890s worked to hermetically seal the individual from the world. Lears, T.J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981), 47-58. See Seremetakis, Nadia C. *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994) for the idea that sensory relations turn objects into indirect objects.

³ “General Notes,” *Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club* 7, no. 2 (April 1882): 123. This anecdote challenges William Howarth’s claim that “Jewett sacrificed nature to allegory” since “it is a stubborn fact that white herons

For the bird-enthusiast, this account is filled with drama. The heron, straying by accident into Maine, escapes the clutches of the “covetous gunners,” who most likely were local boys called plume-hunters who hunted birds and sold their carcasses and skins to taxidermists and milliners.⁴ This heron did not wind up ornamenting a woman’s hat, however, nor was he shipped to a Boston-area shop and sold as an ornamental trophy to a male customer. Rather, Chandler, an accountant, amateur naturalist, and later treasurer of the Boston Camera Club, likely took the four-hour train ride up to the coastal Maine town of Scarborough on a semi-regular basis, where he spent a weekend or more at Pillsbury’s Sportsman’s House and employed Pillsbury as a local hunting guide.⁵ In making these trips, he was defining himself as a hunter of rare specimens; indeed, by putting his recreational pursuit in the service of a scientific pursuit, he could count himself among other notable hunters, like Theodore Roosevelt, a fellow Nuttall club member, and Andrew Carnegie, acting secretary of the Society of American Taxidermists. Most importantly, Chandler could display his trophy like an autograph, an embalmed testament to his *presence* before the bird. In capturing the bird, he had captured a moment in time.

never nest in Maine.” Howarth, William. “Imagined Territory: Writing the Wetlands,” *New Literary History* 30, no. 3 (1999): 509-539. See the following footnote.

⁴ The snowy heron was “once abundant, but it has been so systematically persecuted and destroyed that it is yearly becoming more rare. It breeds, according to locality, from early in March till late in June. It is particularly difficult to give accurate data as to the natural breeding time of this and others of the smaller Herons, for they are hunted just during the period of the full perfection of the plumes with such unremitting perseverance by the cruel plume hunters that scarcely a ‘rookery,’ no matter how small, escapes. So that the poor survivors of these massacres are constantly seeking new nesting grounds, and I have found Herons about Tarpon Springs and other points, breeding *late in August...*” Scott, W.E.D., “A Summary of Observations on the Birds of the Gulf Coast of Florida,” *The Auk: A Quarterly Journal of Ornithology* 6, no. 1 (Jan. 1889): 18.

⁵ For a brief biography of Chandler, see “Descendants of Joseph Bemis.” (2009). Retrieved from <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/d/a/h/Steven-L-Dahlstrom/GENE34-0163.html>. For a list of members of the Boston Camera Club, see *Clark’s Boston Blue Book: The Elite Private Address, Carriage and Club Directory, Ladies’ Visiting List and Shopping Guide...* (Boston: Edward E. Clark, 1900), 542. For a time schedule of the Boston & Maine, see Farrar, Charles A.J. *Illustrated Guide Book to Moosehead Lake and Vicinity* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1880), 27-32. Pillsbury’s lodge is listed in the *Maine Register or State Year-book and Legislative Manual from April 1, 1889 to April 1, 1890* (Portland, Maine: G.M. Donham, 1889), 355.

Yet Chandler's trophy fails to secure his induction into the avian hall of fame. Purdie, the leading expert in the club, concludes that the bird is in fact an immature little blue heron (*Florida caerulea*), and not a young snowy heron (*Ardea candidissima*). The note is by turns exciting and disappointing, as this proves not to be the most sought-after bird in America. Indeed, so overhunted and so consequently rare was the white heron that by the turn of the century its plumes were worth twice their weight in gold.⁶ Yet, while not the ultimate trophy as Chandler likely hoped, it is still a family relative with epistemological importance, as it expanded the known range of the little blue heron. In one fell swoop, Purdie's expertise legitimates the continued hunt for rare specimens and divorces his discipline from the profitable, pleasurable, and violent sides of the enterprise associated with its enthusiasts. This is how middle and upper class men took their pleasure in Gilded Age America. Chandler may have made a mistake, but it was only a mistake of classification. The heron may have died, but he died for science. Preserved in a cabinet in a house on Harvard Street, it probably made for a good after-dinner story.

In Sarah Orne Jewett's best-known story, "A White Heron" (1886), the heron does not die. In a clear allusion to the 1881 sighting, a young ornithologist has traveled to coastal Maine to hunt a white heron he has heard reports of; only this time the local girl he consults, a timid nine-year old named Sylvia, decides at the last minute to keep the location of the bird's nest a secret because she intuits that the man's apparently friendly request is pregnant with danger.

⁶ "That Herons are rapidly becoming scarce and more difficult to obtain by the plume-hunters," the chairman of the *Audubon Society* wrote in 1906, "is shown by the difference in price in the raw material. Twenty years since, the cost per ounce was only a few dollars, now it is more than quadrupled. In circulars sent by New York feather dealers to plume-hunters in Florida during 1903, thirty-two dollars per ounce was offered for fine plumes. This not only indicates the rapidly increasing scarcity of the white Herons, but also that some dealers are willing, in order to obtain the plumes, to offer special inducements to hunters to violate laws enacted for the protection of these birds." Dutcher, William. "Educational Leaflet No. 7: The Snowy Heron," *Bird-Lore: An Illustrated Bi-Monthly Magazine Dedicated to the Study and Protection of Birds, Official Organ of the Audubon Society* 6, no. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1904): 39. While \$32 only came from one circular and only referred to the highest grade of plumage, this number was accepted as the general price by environmentalists, to the point that one author could exclaim that in 1903 "the price for plumes offered to hunters was \$32 per ounce, which makes the plumes worth *twice their weight in gold*." Job, Herbert. "The Extermination of the Egret for Women's Hats," *Country Life in America* 7, no. 6 (April 1905): 629.

What she senses is what the story critiques: not just that the heron will die if she talks, but that her revelation will also clear him to continue serially killing birds without him ever learning that it is his desire to record the thrill of an encounter that compels him to keep accumulating his collection. Permitting such behavior ultimately destroys both the natural order of things and that of convention-bound communities like her grandmother's household, which Sylvia has come to for a summer escape from the factory town of her mother.

And this is the point of the story: to demonstrate that when individuals seek out the thrill of immediacy with the goal of capturing and preserving an object, they debase the individual encounter and violently replace a contiguous relation to nature and history with a metaphorical relation. What the man *almost* does to the girl and the bird is what the story diagnoses as part of a systemic problem at the nexus of the economic, recreational, and aesthetic, which collectively promotes the desire for immediacy and thwarts its possibility all at once. To play on words a little, we can call this the live recording fallacy, as the live record inevitably fails to match the original performance, and often only renews the search for a better version or another performance. The brilliance of Jewett's story lies in its ability to diagnose how this fallacy can persist without being exposed as a fallacy. By refusing to oblige the man's request, the story refuses not only hunting itself, but the entire economy and aesthetic that underwrites such behavior as well.

Unmindful that he is destroying the birds he cares for, the ornithologist inhabits the compulsive space that anthropologist Renato Rosaldo has called "imperialist nostalgia," a paradoxical structure of feeling that enables individuals not only to maintain their innocence in the face of their participation in processes of domination, but also to mourn the ways of life that

they have helped destroy.⁷ By collapsing the hunter and naturalist into the same character, Jewett's story exposes what the ornithological club had suppressed: that violence, pleasure, and the pursuit of knowledge are intimately connected in the new leisure economies of consumption and recreation of late-nineteenth century America.⁸ In fact, the thrill of hunting closely resembles the thrill of shopping in the city. Imagine for a moment who could say the following words and in what contexts: "I can't think of anything I should like so much as to find that heron's nest...I would give ten dollars to anybody who could show it to me...and I mean to spend my whole vacation hunting for it if need be."⁹ With the barest of changes, the ornithologist's impassioned remarks could be passed off as the comments of a bargain-hunter shopping for a (plumed) hat in a department store or a tourist seeking a souvenir.¹⁰ Even more so than the shopper or the tourist, more than even the hunter, the ornithologist is the extreme figure who subjugates all material relations to an attempt to realize a set of affective and epistemological desires: his desire becomes a matter of finding, possessing, and transporting the bird, not of approaching it on its own terms; his relationship with the girl is predicated on an exchange of money for information; and his vacation turns into a monomaniacal hunt for an object that is worth more to him dead than alive. Though science gives his desire a cover of legitimacy, he is not prepared to be satisfied with this object of knowledge.

Imperialism, whether directed at nature or indigenous societies, is built on *a priori* fantasy frameworks of acquisitive desire that are imposed on the environment and not altered by

⁷ Rosaldo, Renato. "Imperialist Nostalgia," in *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon, 1989), 68-87.

⁸ See Brown, Bill. *The Material Unconscious: American Amusement, Stephen Crane, and the Economics of Play* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997).

⁹ Jewett, Sarah Orne. "A White Heron," in *A White Heron and Other Stories* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1886), 11.

¹⁰ I hear an echo here of Jennifer Fleissner's claim that "the deepest repositories of sentimental, therapeutic, indeed nostalgic culture in the 1890s may have belonged to the era's manly men." Fleissner, Jennifer. *Women, Compulsion, Modernity: The Moment of American Naturalism* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005), 17.

the encounter with it. Hunting exemplifies how excessive focalization abstracts an object from its site-specific relations by making it seem autonomously capable of maintaining its vitality. Imperialist nostalgia names this bad form of absorption, which facilitates the decontextualization and destructive reorganization of the world. So to revise Rosaldo, imperialist nostalgia is not just a discourse where nostalgia helps powerful individuals forget that they helped to destroy indigenous ways of life. Rather, it is a forgetting built into the entire life cycle of economic transactions that trains individuals to act compulsively, solipsistically, and unreflectively. At no point when the hunter is looking for his object will he recognize what he is doing: not before, when his desire is oriented to the future, not in the actual encounter, and not after, when he is faced with the choice of mourning or moving on with his desires. By learning how *not* to encounter the object as a set of relations, the individual's motivating desire extends toward and beyond the object, pleasure never adhering to or emerging from the object, only springing from the speed and cadence of consumption itself. In this seemingly endless compulsive movement toward immediacy that paradoxically always fails to grasp its object, imperialist nostalgia names the affective disposition that allows for individuals to cycle through the desire for possession and melancholic fixation and back again.¹¹ The irony of Jewett's story is that in semi-rural Maine, at the contact point of uneven development where old and new meet, there is no contact.

If these two hunters reveal the wider sweep of imperialist nostalgia, Sylvia's portion of "A White Heron" suggests a way of undoing this vicious cycle of sovereign, instrumental desire. Like much of Jewett's fiction, the story offers an alternative account of what nostalgia might be, an account that was new in 1890s America and that is recognizably modern enough

¹¹ Rather than forming a *representation* of what is, man has become the *representative* of matter, he says, in the "sense of that which has the character of object." Heidegger, Martin. "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 131-32.

to approximate what another anthropologist, Jennifer Wenzel, calls “anti-imperialist nostalgia.” For Wenzel, imagining a counterfactual is a way to dissolve the structure of feeling that keeps imperialist destruction going.¹² Yet to revise nostalgia as merely proleptic mourning is to remain focused on the relationship between the ornithologist and Sylvia and to ignore Sylvia’s relationship with the heron. The problem with mourning the loss of an object in advance, as if one already bears responsibility for this loss, is that it will most likely resolve into efforts to secure the future of the object by erecting a new enclosure for it. Such enclosures, as you may know, are oftentimes suffocating. At any rate, it ignores Sylvia’s relationship with the heron, which is predicated not on mourning but ecstasy. This is the therapeutic side of nostalgia, a nostalgia that is not boxed in by an economic relation, a nostalgia that remains stubbornly loyal to the possibilities of love. Therapeutic nostalgia is Jewett’s way, but not hers alone, of counteracting the acceleration of compulsive desire. As important to Jewett’s local color as to naturalism, as Jennifer Fleissner has argued, compulsion is a medical name for the melancholy that follows in the wake of progress, that appears to slow it down, but which through its very refusal to accept loss helps drive its acceleration. While naturalist description gains its shock value from hyperbolizing the degenerative narrative of compulsion, Jewett’s local color attempts to find an escape velocity through a different kind of slowness.¹³ The proto-modernist nostalgia narrative does not hinge on the refusal of loss that sets medical and imperialist nostalgias in motion, but rather on an unlearning of compulsive desire that begins with an education of the senses.

¹² Wenzel, Jennifer. “Remembering the Past’s Future: Anti-Imperialist Nostalgia and Some Versions of the Third World,” *Cultural Critique* 62 (Winter 2006): 1-32.

¹³ See Fleissner, 75-122.

When Sylvia, excited by the ornithologist's ten-dollar offer, climbs to the top of the tallest pine tree in the neighborhood to locate the heron, the story does not provide the commanding view we've come to expect. To expand on a point made by Robert Smithson, the sublime description of a coastal horizon at the break of dawn, with a picturesque bird in the foreground, would only detract from the material presence of these things by forcing them into old aesthetic categories.¹⁴ Instead of a transcendental view of the horizon, the narrator assumes the same point of view as the girl atop the tree and guides her vision and ours:

Now look down again, Sylvia, where the green marsh is set among the shining birches and dead hemlocks; there where you saw the white heron once you will see him again; look, look! A white spot of him like a single floating feather comes up from the dead hemlock and grows larger, and rises, and comes close at last, and goes by the landmark pine with steady sweep of wing and outstretched slender neck and crested head. And wait! wait! do not move a foot or finger, little girl, do not send an arrow of light and consciousness from your two eager eyes, for the heron has perched on a pine bough not far beyond yours, and cries back to his mate on the nest and plumes his feathers for the new day!¹⁵

The passage reduces the anticipated sublime vista of the sunrise on the nearby Atlantic Ocean to the play of light on the trees of a marsh. Inversely, the heron, already reduced by recreational and consumer economies to the single plume of the fashionable hat, metonymically expands to its full size as it flies up to her, alighting near her for a moment, before passing on to its nest. The whiteness of the heron made it an easy target for hunters and an easier object of sympathy: because the heron was only killed while nesting – the only time it wears its valuable plumage – it became a centerpiece of conservation and was dubbed “the white badge of cruelty” by early

¹⁴ See, for example, Smithson, Robert. “Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape,” in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. Ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1996), 157-171. On Smithson's entropic vision of history, see Roberts, Jennifer. *Mirror-Travels: Robert Smithson and History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004) and Lee, Pamela. *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006).

¹⁵ Jewett, Sarah Orne. “A White Heron,” in *A White Heron and Other Stories* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1886), 19.

Audubon society members. Jewett's friend and fellow local colorist, Celia Thaxter, most likely coined the phrase in 1885.¹⁶

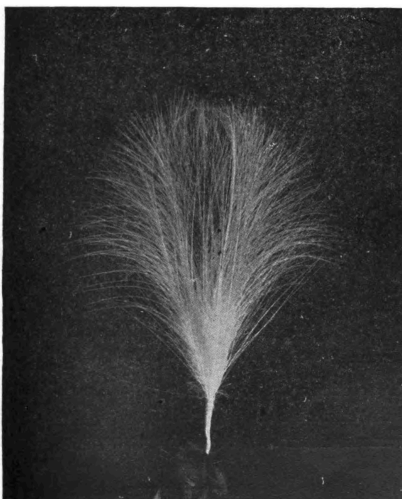
Just as the heron is resurrected in Sylvia's presence from the much sought-after plume, so too does Sylvia become aware of her own resurrection, aware that, as we've already learned, "she had never been alive at all before she came to live on the farm" (3; see Figure 4.1). And now at the end, the narration guides and participates in Sylvia's vision, imitating with its cadence and pacing the bird's flight and its impact on the girl, whom we strongly suspect, based on the narrator's use of free indirect speech, has become ecstatic in the heron's presence. Sylvia's deep attention, made possible by her summer inhabitation of the woods, trumps the temptation of the ornithologist's money or any other society he can offer. "What is it that suddenly forbids her and makes her dumb?" the narrator asks. "The murmur of the pine's branches is in her ears, she remembers how the white heron came flying through the golden air and how they watched the sea and the morning together, and Sylvia cannot speak; she cannot tell the heron's secret and give its life away" (21). The immediacy that the man seeks happens for her precisely because she acts in a way that we know he never would have. She is falling for the heron.

I take this scene as the beginning of a therapeutic nostalgia in Jewett's fiction. Ecstasy produces real contact by drawing the girl out of herself and into a communion with nature and the animal. Indeed, this is the word's etymological meaning: *ek-stasis*, "standing outside oneself." With ecstatic experience, Thoreau writes, the individual can acquire an elastic potential that comes from a subjunctive mode of accepting experience for what it is, that makes the future newly

¹⁶ "What woman whose head is bristling with feathers knows, for instance, the hymn of the song sparrows, the sweet jargon of the blackbirds, the fairy fluting of the oriole, the lonely, lovely wooing call of the sandpiper, the cheerful challenge of the chickadee, the wild, clear, whistle of the curlew, the twittering of the swallows as they go careening in wide curves through summer air, fill earth and heaven with tones of pure gladness, each bird a marvel of grace, beauty and joy? God gave us these exquisite creatures for delight and solace, and we suffer them to be slain by thousands for our 'adornment.'" Thaxter, Celia. "The Badge of Cruelty — Protection for Birds," *Cottage Hearth: A Magazine of Home Arts and Home Culture* 11, no. 6 (June 1885): 186. By 1881, Thaxter had moved from her home on Appledore Island to Kittery Point, Maine, about 14 miles from Jewett's South Berwick home.

National Association of Audubon Societies

SPECIAL LEAFLET No. 5.



THE WHITE BADGE OF CRUELTY

The Aigrette Loses Caste

Figure 5.1. National Association of Audubon Societies. "The White Badge of Cruelty, 1906.

workable by enhancing the agency and choice of the individual.¹⁷ Not instantly attainable, ecstasy requires a gradual education of the senses through the radical inhabitation of one's surroundings, the abandonment of acquisitiveness, which would destroy the presence of the object and the capacity to form new relations to it (sensory, affective, psychic, and so on), and an attitude that Jewett called "self-forgetfulness." But this is exactly what Jewett's story proposes – a new, non-economic relationship with the object.

What close proximity promises ultimately is self-affirmation through the affirmation of a new mode of relationality. This modality of therapeutic nostalgia is what I call *indirect*

¹⁷ Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden: A Fully Annotated Edition*. Ed. Jeffrey Cramer (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004), 140.

immediacy. This is how one undoes the inherited grammar of imperialist nostalgia: the payoff of nostalgic love for an object should be to turn both subject and object into indirect objects alike, into a series of outward bound paths. Instead of seeking out mementos that will only become live records, instead of mourning loss in advance, this therapy strives for the production of presence.¹⁸ This is how Jewett's story works to show how the occasional loss of sovereignty can serve as a precondition for generating a new sense of self-affirmation.

Jewett's writing over the final sixteen years of her career is dedicated to positively changing how people pursue the objects that provoke feelings of presence. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896) is the best known of these attempts to work out how local color's hyperrealism can be turned to therapeutic purposes. This loosely connected cycle of stories at once models the catalyzing effect that concerted attention to objects has on its narrator's senses and feelings during a summer vacation in Maine, and makes this kind of attention equally available to its readers through its use of improvisational narrative form. It newly demonstrates not only the power of the sentimental attachment that nostalgia can generate when placed in a therapeutic register of love rather than melancholy, but also argues that this is a better approach to material contact. Therapeutic nostalgia seeks to transform destructive behaviors by demonstrating that nostalgic desire is futile unless the subject learns how to relinquish her desire and let immediacy happen on its own time. Neither an appeal to the past nor to the lost home, it is a utopian appeal that promises a seachange in how subjects live out their desires. Learning how to relinquish one's desire in favor of this indirect mode marks Jewett's attempt to free individuals from the compulsive behavior at large in American fiction and a new consumer capitalism.

¹⁸ On presence, see Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich. *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2003); Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Birth to Presence* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1994); Seel, Martin. *Aesthetics of Appearing*. Trans. John Farrell (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2004).

The nostalgia narrative of indirect immediacy ultimately marks a departure from the realist training of the eye by praising the invisible, intensive qualities of experience on their own terms. Familiarizing oneself with an object-world teaches the “snap an’ power o’ seein’ things just as they be” (as the local herb-gatherer and amateur therapist, Almira Todd, says of her mother), only to bring the subject close to the limits of sensory knowledge of the essence of the object.¹⁹ If local color fosters a desire for the hidden truths of empirically observable objects, Jewett’s novel suggests that these truths cannot be taken possession of, but must instead possess the observer during brief, ecstatic encounters in solitude, like when the narrator sits in Mrs. Todd’s mother’s rocking chair in her house on Green Island, when she communes alone on Shellheap Island with the memory of Joanna Todd, under the grove at the Bowden family reunion, and in Elijah Tilley’s house among his things.²⁰ In short, through an education of the senses, we learn to be moved when an object is doing its thing. We open ourselves up to the possibility of a transformative encounter “by keeping our senses still, listening another way, for something indescribably and unmistakably pleasant to all our senses.”²¹

This education represents a transvaluation of the pathological status that nostalgia received from medicine and retained in later sentimental and realist narrative forms. When Cather dedicated *O Pioneers!* to Jewett, she said that she had written her novel “as if I were telling it to her by word of mouth.” With this statement, Cather pays homage to Jewett’s nostalgic project of immediacy, which marries the formality of writing with the improvisation of living.²² The increasing attention to sensory experience of Jewett’s local color, and in particular

¹⁹ Jewett, Sarah Orne. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1896), 75.

²⁰ I have written more extensively about the conventions of local color elsewhere. See Schroeder, Jonathan. “The Painting of Modern Light: Local Color before Regionalism,” *American Literature* 86, no. 3 (2014): 551-581.

²¹ Cavell, Stanley. *The Senses of Walden* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972), 107-108.

²² Cather, Willa. *Willa Cather in Person: Interviews, Speeches, and Letters*. Ed. L. Brent Bohlke (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1986), 9.

to the truths that perception cannot perceive (but can aspire to), produces a desire for sustained presence that does not destroy the object, but exhorts individuals to extend and sustain a *feeling* of presence with the object. In what follows, I analyze how the novel reforms the relationship between writing and experience by framing it in the terms of a therapeutic education. I describe the pedagogy of the novel at length, first by turning to Captain Littlepage's tale, which produces a new link between pathological nostalgia and a sovereign mode of reading, and then by considering Mrs. Todd as the novel's model of indirect immediacy.

THE ARCTIC MIRAGE

The pedagogy of therapeutic nostalgia has its counterpoint in Captain Littlepage, who is on the face of it a classic case of pathological nostalgia. Littlepage is an individual whose compulsive desire has rendered him immobilized, withdrawn from the world, insensible to all sensations except those that remind him of his *idée fixe*. When he interrupts the narrator at work in her schoolhouse, he moves "his chair out of the wake of the sunshine" (24). When he hints that he has privileged access to transcendental knowledge, he fails to take notice of the "flurry" of "a swallow [that] flew into the schoolhouse at this moment as if a kingbird were after it, and beat itself against the walls for a minute, and escaped again to the open air" (25). In contrast to the narrator, who initially has problems learning how to write amidst distracting sensations, Littlepage is not distracted by sensation at all. Rather, he is distracted from sensation by a compulsion, which is evident in his repetition of the statement, "shipping is a very great loss," and, above all, in his unsolicited retelling of an arctic tale (28, 43). It is this fixation that has rendered him "the one strange and unrelated person in the company" of Dunnet Landing

residents.²³ In contrast to Herman Melville's prisoners-of-war, who refused to succumb to the siren's call of home, "as men in gales shun the lee shore," the captain has been "wrecked on the lee shore of age" by nostalgia (143). Littlepage is most animated when his desire diverts him from immediate experience, when he is most absorbed in the "reverie" of narrative. Only in these serial spells of suspended animation does the "clear intentness" of vision, the "alert, determined look and the seafaring, ready aspect" replace the "dulled look in his eyes" and "old, pathetic scholarly look" that he ordinarily wears (32, 41). Months later, when the narrator sees him for the second and last time, "sitting behind his closed window..., watching for some one who never came," she says: "I tried to speak to him, but he did not see me. There was a patient look on the old man's face, as if the world were a great mistake and he had nobody with whom to speak his own language or find companionship" (143).

Yet Littlepage is at home. If the homecoming was recommended as the most effective cure for nostalgia by physicians, military personnel, and, under certain conditions, sentimental writers, then why does he remain nostalgic? It is here that the novel departs from institutionalized medicine. For Littlepage is not simply desensitized, he is also dematerialized. In contrast to the pathological nostalgic, whose corporeal movements are progressively disabled by the fixation of his desire on memories of home and an attendant withdrawal from the world, the captain's body is not immobilized by insanity. Rather, due to the "lighter" motions of his "thin, bending body," he is compared to "an aged grasshopper of some strange human variety," who was "made to hop along the road of life rather than to walk," (16, 17, 22). If his desensitization and dematerialization are the symptoms of an inability to form affective attachments to home, this prompts a new question: what is he nostalgic for? As in Henry James, the answer has to do

²³ Elijah Tilley is the other strange and unrelated character in the novel, but his lack of mobility means that he no longer participates in the social gatherings of Dunnet Landing life. He is physically immobilized in his house by the memories attached to his late wife's things; Littlepage is psychologically immobilized.

with genre and the aesthetic habits it engenders. Mrs. Todd alerts the narrator to the fact that Littlepage “had overset his mind with too much reading,” and was prone to “‘spells’ of some unexplainable nature.” Littlepage is not trapped within a sentimental genre, however. Rather, he “gave his time to the poets,” to Milton and Shakespeare above all (28). The question in Jewett is not what genre these hypercanonical writers belong to, but rather, what genre determines how Littlepage reads them.

The answer is shipping. Indeed, Jewett initially imagined her novel as a story solely about the former sea captain. The three titles that Jewett first submitted to the *Atlantic* – “The Last of the Captains,” “A Master Mariner,” “The Last of the Shipmasters” – highlight Littlepage’s occupation, which is primarily responsible for his plotlessness in the novel and placelessness in Dunnet Landing.²⁴ Far from being totally out of place in a novel about a cosmopolitan narrator’s therapeutic absorption of the provincial rhythms of the inhabitants of a pre-industrial, seaside village in Maine (a village that we’re repeatedly told is securely attached to the land), this episode about transcendental homelessness encourages the habit of comparison that both Henry James and Jewett saw as pivotal for mediating sensory experience, as it stands in sharp relief against Elijah Tilley’s material entombment within the home and Almira Todd’s holistic ability to be at home in the world.

Littlepage notes that the captains of his day tended to develop myopic reading interests while at sea due to the isolation created at the top of a ship’s intertwined hierarchies of ownership and rank. In the mundane shipping narrative that frames the fantastic arctic tale, Littlepage owns the greatest share in the voyage’s profits (one-eighth, twice as much as the first mate). Likewise, as a shipmaster, he was “not expected to be familiar with his crew,” and thus

²⁴ Sedgwick, Ellery. “Horace Scudder and Sarah Orne Jewett: Market Forces in Publishing in the 1890s,” *American Periodicals* 2 (Fall 1992): 79-88.

“for company’s sake in dull days and nights...turn[ed] to his book” (28). Thus, when captains read, they read within a space made for the sovereign, but an evacuated, solitary space nonetheless. As the narrator comments, paraphrasing Charles Darwin: “there is no such king as a sea-captain; he is greater even than a king or a schoolmaster!” (23).²⁵ Thus, just as sovereign isolation creates the conditions for fixated reading, it also invests captains with the power to execute their reading as commands, designs, and plans. Some captains, we learn, read on “farming topics,” others “on medicine,—but Lord help their poor crews!”; one captain’s ship was known as “Tuttle’s beehive” because of the captain’s fixation on beekeeping, that emblem of business, industry, and organization; another built a scale model of Solomon’s Temple “from the Scripture measurements.”²⁶ In contrast to Wordsworth’s “The Brothers,” it is not the compulsory regularity of commercial movement that triggers compulsive desire. Sovereign desire, even for farming, is not the same as the common sailor’s desire to return home, which was said to produce hallucinations of green fields and meadows. The sailor’s nostalgia is intensified by his compulsory confinement within a network of sovereign economic relations; for the shipmaster who navigates and extends these relations, nostalgia is a product of his acquisitive desire. This is Rosaldo’s imperialist nostalgia, which is bound to the constant acceleration of commerce, but which cannot encounter the object as an integrated part of social and natural worlds. When the narrator, noting the captain’s “refinement of look and air of command,”

²⁵ The quote is actually from a letter that Darwin wrote to Charles Whitley in 1834 about Captain Fitz-Roy of the *Beagle*: “As captains of men-of-war are the greatest men going, far greater than kings or schoolmasters, I am obliged to tell him everything in my own favour.” Darwin, Charles. *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, including an Autobiographical Chapter* Vol I. Ed. Francis Darwin (New York: Appleton, 1919), 226.

²⁶ The latter topic is perhaps an allusion to Captain Charles Warren, a former ship captain and one of the first British archaeologists to survey the Temple Mount. Warren, Charles. *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of some of the Principal Difficulties encountered in its Exploration, and the Results obtained, with a Narrative of an Expedition through the Jordan Valley and a Visit to the Samaritans* (London: R. Bentley, 1876).

wonders if he had “sprung from a line of ministers,” we can answer what Littlepage is nostalgic for: a spiritual home. “Certainty, not conjecture, is what we all desire” (23).²⁷

“The experience of how we are ‘embedded’ in a historical continuum,” Slavoj Žižek argues, “is allegedly superseded by the logic of *nostalgia*, by the fascination with an etheric image of the past wrested from its historical context.”²⁸ Littlepage is just such a character who wrests things out of context. Yet his fascination with etheric images is also the product of a sovereign reading style. Indeed, it is by mining texts for spiritual truths that he becomes transcendently homeless. Just as the nostalgic doesn’t make it home, but is immobilized by a fixation on images of home, so too does Littlepage find only illusion in his desire for truth. If the local color genre envisions a form of subjectivity that recognizes the true qualities of things, qualities which are present but invisible, he is the antithesis of this subject, the person who finds truth in things that are visible but absent. In other words, he does not know how to parse images. Deprived of a sensory education by his occupation, he has no sensory memory to fall back on, and must rely on his mind alone. This is why he is dematerialized, why he is not nostalgic for Dunnet Landing; all his attachments are cerebral, rational, imaginary. He is a nostalgic cosmopolitan, a sovereign with a “queer head” and a compulsive desire to be transcendently at home and to leave his body behind. In *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, he is a “little page” torn from a book, insubstantial and easily blown away.

The captain’s framing narrative of his merchant voyage for the Hudson Bay Company is all about delays and waiting. People and nature keep getting in the way of the ship’s schedule:

²⁷ Recall that Jewett was also the author of *The Story of the Normans: Told Chiefly in Relation to their Conquest of England* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s, 1889). In a future version, I plan to consider to what extent Jewett uses the notion of a “racial predisposition” to explain the various qualities of the Dunnet Landing natives.

²⁸ Žižek, Slavoj. *Enjoy Your Symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 92.

his ship is delayed by men loading the boat, winds, a choppy sea, a malingering crew, his own anxiety-induced fever, and the “red-tape rigging at the company’s office.” Eventually, the ship runs off course, drifting northwest into the area first made famous by the explorer Edward Parry’s failed voyages in the 1820s to discover a Northwest Passage.²⁹ They run aground on a barren island, “uninhabited” save a Moravian missionary station and the “few Esquimaux left in that region” (32). Forced to wait out the winter until the next supply ship, Littlepage meets a Scotsman named Gaffett, who tells him the incredible tale of arctic exploration. It is during this longer period of confinement in yet another cabin that he makes “good of [his] reading,” taking consolation in reciting “[t]he old poets,” and particularly Shakespeare (34).

For military men like the ex-naval officers whom the British government sought to keep occupied after the Napoleonic wars by redeploying them on patriotic voyages of exploration, long periods of waiting in confinement engendered nostalgia. For example, when the ex-Confederate naval hero, David Porter, and ex-Union officer, Henry Howgate, were consulted by the U.S. Government regarding their proposed bill to “fit out an expedition to the north pole” and execute a plan of “polar colonization,” they demonstrated their qualifications by cautioning that “Nostalgia is the greatest enemy you would have to fear; and if every man should be obliged to understand some mechanical pursuit which he could follow when the party was laid up for the winter, it would go far toward bringing about a successful issue.”³⁰ With the purplest of prose, Howgate elaborated on the topic of homesickness in *Polar Colonization* (1878):

The members of former expeditions, when they sailed from the hospitable shores of Christendom, severed every link that bound them to their homes and to civilization. In

²⁹ For a survey of nineteenth-century arctic discovery, see Berton, Pierre. *The Arctic Grail: The Quest for the North West Passage and the North Pole, 1818-1909* (New York: Penguin, 1988). On American voyages of discovery, which began at mid-century, see Robinson, Michael. *The Coldest Crucible: Arctic Exploration and American Culture* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2006).

³⁰ “45th Congress, 2nd Session, House of Representatives, Report No. 96: Expedition to the Polar Seas,” in *Index to the Reports of Committees of the House of Representatives for the First and Second Sessions of the Forty-Fifth Congress, 1877-’78* Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878): 1-2, 8.

all the frozen realm they entered there was no place of refuge or succor; nor could there be even a witness of their fate should failure attend them in their desperate lonely struggle with the giant forces of nature. With proud yet foreboding hearts, they passed into the very shadows of death.

Nostalgia, that dreaded foe of isolated men, found in them an easy prey through the long, sunless Arctic winter, and drove some to mutiny and others to suicide, while when the hour of deadly peril came—the supreme moment of despair—the stoutest of heart was appalled by the knowledge that succor, if sent at all, must be guided by the merest chance, and that rude cairn which covered his last resting place or his frozen effigy upon some drifting ice-floe might never meet the gaze of human eye.³¹

In order to combat the idleness and “the desperate forces of nature” that served as preconditions for nostalgia, captains regularly commanded their crews to take up literary pursuits. Theatrical performances of Shakespeare and other plays were common, as was the publication of homemade newspapers, which bore names like the “Aurora Borealis” and the “Illustrated Arctic News.” For example, one week after curing “poor” Hans Christian, a nineteen-year old Inuit boy, of nostalgia by giving him “salts” and a “promotion” to trap-builder, dog-harnesser, and hiking companion, Elisha Kent Kane, the American explorer and newspaperman, bragged of “schemes innumerable to cheat the monotonous solitude of our winter. We are getting up a fancy ball; and to-day the first number of our Arctic newspaper, ‘The Ice-Blink,’ came out with the motto, ‘IN TENEBRIS SERVARE FIDEM’” (“To serve the faithful in the shadows”).³² In the arctic, these explorers viewed nostalgia as a compulsive, catastrophic response to confinement produced by the sensory deprivation of a barren environment and inactivity.

In contrast to these preventive “schemes,” Littlepage does not appear to do anything except recite literature. Yet far from succeeding, it is precisely his “occupational reading” that has prevented him from attending to the arctic phenomena that he could have witnessed on his

³¹ Howgate, Henry. *Polar Colonization: Memorial to Congress and Action of Scientific and Commercial Associations* (Washington, D.C.: Beresford, 1878), 21-22.

³² Kane, Elisha Kent. *Arctic Explorations: The Second Grinnell Expedition in Search of Sir John Franklin, 1853, '54, '55, illustrated by upwards of three hundred engravings, from Sketches by the Author* Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Childs & Peterson, 1856), 145.

trips to Hudson's Bay. Without the sensory knowledge, he is easily duped in his encounter with a new genre, the arctic tale, the "voyage of discovery" that met with catastrophe that Gaffett tells. Somewhere far north in the northwest passage's complex geography of islands, straits, and seas, Gaffett's ship gets crushed by the ice and carried away by a current that carries it northward past the ice into a warm open sea until "they struck a coast that wasn't laid down or charted" (35-36). From a distance, the crew is awestruck by the sight of "a great town" populated by "inhabitants":

't was an awful condition of things. It appeared, as near as Gaffett could express it, like a place where there was neither living nor dead. They could see the town when they were approaching it by sea pretty near like any town, and thick with habitations; but all at once they lost sight of it altogether, and when they got close inshore they could see the shapes of folks, but they never could get near them, — all blowing gray figures that would pass along alone, or sometimes gathered in companies as if they were watching. The men were frightened at first, but the shapes never came near them, — it was as if they blew back; and at last they all got bold and went ashore, and found birds' eggs and sea fowl, like any wild northern spot where creatures were tame and folks had never been, and there was good water. Gaffett said that he and another man came near one o' the fog-shaped men that was going along slow with the look of a pack on his back, among the rocks, an' they chased him; but, Lord! He flittered away out o' sight like a leaf the wind takes with it, or a piece of cobweb. They would make as if they talked together, but there was no sound of voices, and 'they acted as if they didn't see us, but only felt us coming towards them,' says Gaffett one day, trying to tell the particulars. They couldn't see the town when they were ashore. One day the captain and the doctor were gone till night up across the high land where the town had seemed to be, and they come back at night beat out and white as ashes, and wrote and wrote all next day in their notebooks, and whispered together full of excitement, and they were sharp-spoken with the men when they offered to ask any questions (37-38).

When the crew grows mutinous from waiting, they decide to abandon the captain and doctor to their observations. Once they "got a little way out to sea," however, they look back. Littlepage begins to "whisper[s] quickly," with "a strange look in his eyes," repeating the excited whispering of the captain and doctor, as he closes in on the pivotal revelation:

Those folks, or whatever they were, come about 'em like bats; all at once they raised incessant armies, and come as if to drive 'em back to sea. They stood thick at the edge o' the water like the ridges o' grim war; no thought o' flight, none of retreat. Sometimes a standing fight, then soaring on main wing tormented all the air. And when they'd got the boat out o' reach o' danger, Gaffett said they looked back, and there was the town again,

standing up just as they'd seen it first, comin' on the coast. Say what you might, they all believed 't was a kind of waiting-place between this world an' the next. (38-39).³³

In this game of telephone, the crew's belief in ghosts is passed to Gaffett, who "believed it was the next world to this" and whose "mind ran on nothing else," and finally to Littlepage, who embellishes the story with allusions to Milton. Gaffett "blowing gray" ghosts, which the narrator calls "human-shaped creatures of fog and cobweb," become Milton's angels at war with Satan (37, 42).³⁴ Thus Littlepage forces this serialized narrative of the movements of etheric images to fit his *idée fixe*.

Even without first-hand experience of the Arctic, Littlepage might still have recognized the fantastic details of this narrative as the optical phenomena commonly described in the arctic tale, perhaps the most popular non-fiction genre in Britain and America in the nineteenth century, which helped make Victorian explorers like Parry, Sir John Franklin, Lady Jane Franklin, Elisha Kent Kane, Robert Peary, Roald Amundsen and others into some of the first celebrities. These tales alternate between scientific explanations and fantastical illustrations. Regarding the "great town" on the island, consider what William Scoresby wrote in 1822 about the "very curious exhibition of the phenomena of unequal refraction" under the evening's "brilliant sun" (see Figure 4.2):

Hummocks of ice assumed the forms of castles, obelisks, and spires; and the land presented extraordinary features. In some places, the distant ice was so extremely irregular, and appeared so full of pinnacles, that it resembled a forest of naked trees...in others it had the character of an extensive city, crowded with churches, castles, and public edifices. The land was equally under the influence of this singular mirage. Huge masses of rocks and summits of mountains were reared to an enormous elevation,

³³ This notion of a "waiting-places" for disembodied humans may also be derived from Taylor's funeral sermon, as when he writes: "Now between these two states [of the soul and the body] stands the state of separation, in which the operations of the soul are of a middle nature, that is, not so spiritual as in the resurrection, and not so animal and natural as in the state of conjunction."

³⁴ These allusions don't work: the first quote, for example, comes from the angel Abdiel's argument that Satan's fight with God is hopelessly ridiculous. Since Satan has sinned, even an inferior angel like Abdiel can defeat him; as a result, God does *not* have to "[raise] incessant armies," but can merely send hosts of angels to fight Satan and his horde.

distorted into singular shapes, and often seemed to be detached from the rest of the land, and freely suspended in the air.³⁵

Another explorer, Horatio Austin, wrote how the ice “metamorphosed” into “the appearance of a vast city, such as we have read of in fairy tale; even the far-famed Stamboul, with her magnificent mosques...never looked half so splendid as did this phantom city of the realms of ice.”³⁶ Both Scoresby and Austin dilate at length on the fantastic appearances of the ice, only to explain them as tricks of “unequal refraction” that can be navigated around with the aid of science and experience.

The different varieties of optical illusions were collectively known as “arctic mirages.” “We are accustomed,” Henry Wood Elliott, a water-colorist of arctic scenes, wrote in 1897, “to associate an occurrence of a real mirage with dry, arid, desert countries, where the thirsty and sun-burned traveller is mocked by illusions of clear lakes and a green oasis just ahead. In truth, the mirage of an Alaskan tundra in midwinter is fully as remarkable, and quite as tantalizing.”³⁷ Arctic mirages confounded observers with their effects, as the play of light on objects could create distortion, magnification, displacement, and, even, when combined with atmospheric phenomena like fog, the appearance of animation. Scientists argued that these images were created

³⁵ Scoresby, William. *Journal of a Voyage to the Northern Whale-Fishery; Including Researches and Discoveries on the Eastern Coast of West Greenland, Made in the Summer of 1822, in the ship Baffin of Liverpool* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1823), 96-97.

³⁶ Austin, Horatio. *Arctic Miscellanies: A Souvenir of the Late Polar Search. By the Officers and Seamen of the Expedition* (London: Colburn, 1852), 78.

³⁷ Elliott, Henry Wood. *Our Arctic Province: Alaska and the Seal Islands* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1897), 421.

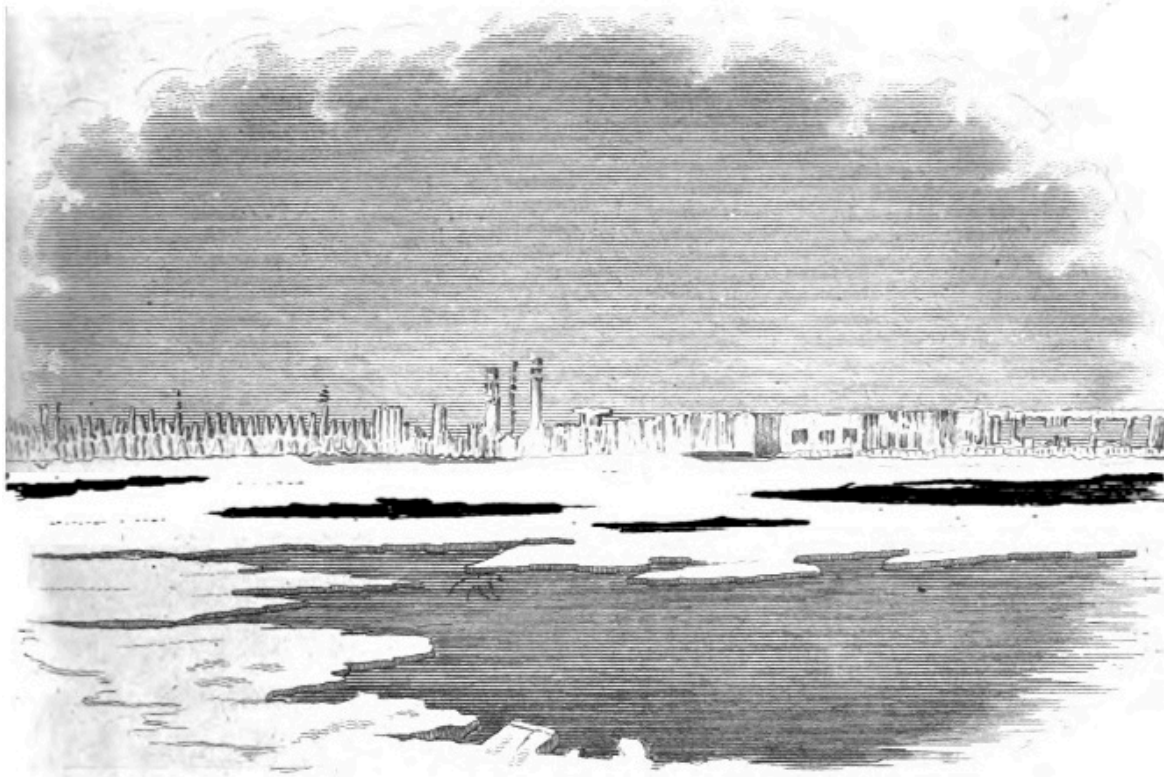


Fig. 1.- June 10^a.

Figure 5.2: William Scoresby. "Optical Phenomena of Unequal Refraction," from *A Journal to the Northern Whale-Fishery* (1823). The image depicts a city of ice.

by pockets of air, charged with unequal densities of moisture, "forming various strata of different degrees of refractive power. Hence objects seen through such media are variously distorted—images are multiplied—the most fantastic forms are exhibited in an endless and ever varying succession."³⁸ And like Gaffett and his crew, explorers reported seeing animals and human-like figures resolve themselves out of the air. In the arctic tale, these optical wonders go-hand-in-hand with accounts of hardship and survival amidst extreme weather, disease, famine, and

³⁸ "Polar Regions," *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia: The First American Edition*. Vol. 16. Ed. David Brewster (Philadelphia: Joseph and Edward Parker, 1832), 18.

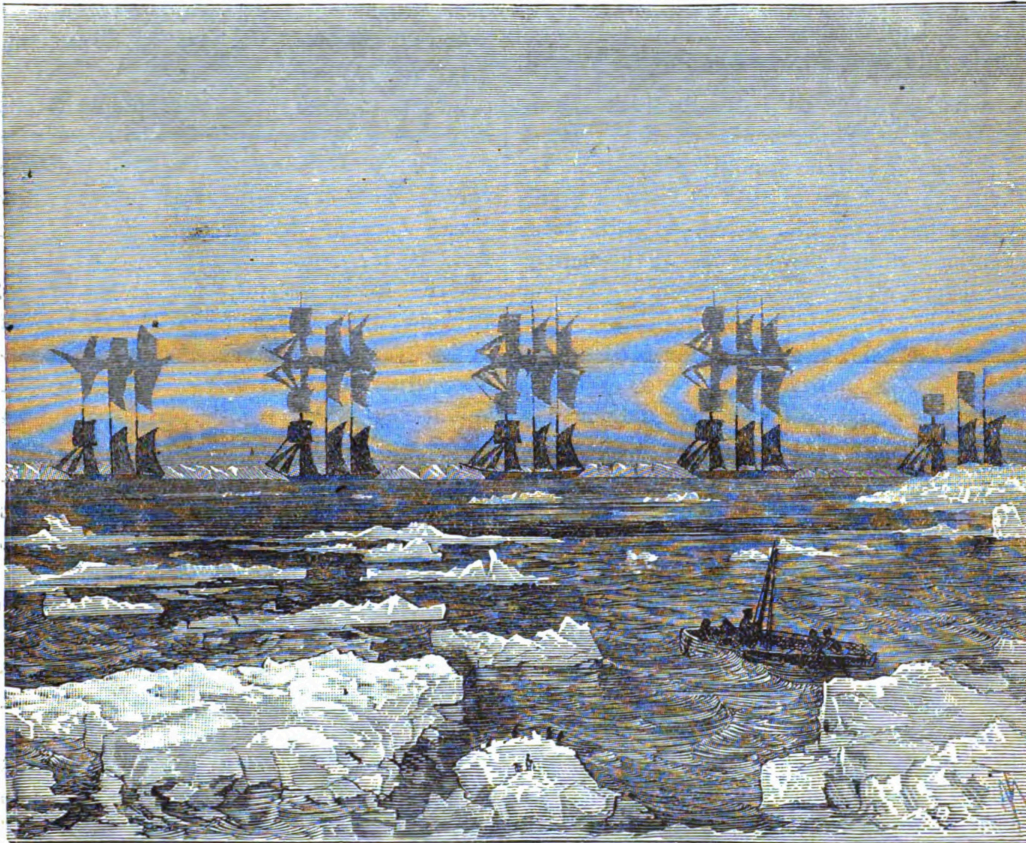
boredom. Small objects assume magnificent proportions. Entire land masses, as far away as “thirty or seventy-five miles” could sometimes seem “lifted up and transported to the very beach of the island itself” (Elliot 421). Thus, in 1819, the “inexperienced navigator in the north” John Ross “suffered himself to be deceived by the Arctic mirage” on his first arctic expedition, as he “concluded that Smith Sound was closed to the north by a line of lofty mountains, though these mountains were mere creatures of his imagination, unsubstantial pageants built of water-blink and shadow. To Ross, however, they seemed real...”³⁹ In addition to magnified and displaced images, Arctic travelers frequently recorded the inversion and suspension of images, generally above the objects themselves, but not always (see Figure 4.3). Ships were seen “suspended high in the air, and their hulls often so magnified as to resemble huge edifices.” Scoresby “one day perceived in the air the reversed representation of a ship which he recognized as the *Fame*, commanded by his father. He afterwards discovered that it had been lying moored in a creek about ten leagues from the point where the mirage had played with his imagination.”⁴⁰

Though these accounts were usually written by naturalists and scientists who had been brought on board to record new and useful knowledge, their explanations do not fully disenchant the spectacle of the mirage. Specifically, they fail to explain the ways the mirages were described.⁴¹ For example, one author writes that “[t]he general telescopic appearance of these arctic coasts, when under the influence of unequal refraction, is frequently that of an extensive

³⁹ Stewart, Henry. *The Ocean Wave: Narratives of Some of the Greatest Voyages, Seamen, Discoveries, Shipwrecks, and Mutinies of the World* (London: John Hogg, 1883), 293.

⁴⁰ *The Arctic: A History of Its Discovery, Its Plants, Animals, and Natural Phenomena* (Edinburgh: George Tod, 1876), 31. See, in particular, “Chapter II: The Arctic Heavens: Atmospheric and Meteoric Phenomena,” 22-40.

⁴¹ By contrast, consider how Pablo Picasso responded to seeing “the first camouflaged truck” pass down the Boulevard Raspail during the First World War. “It was at night,” Gertrude Stein writes, “we had heard of camouflage but we had not seen it and Picasso amazed looked at it and then cried out, yes it is we who made it, that is cubism.” Stein, Gertrude. *Picasso* (London: Courier Corporation, 1938). Also see Taussig, Michael. *What Color is the Sacred?* (Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009).



THE MIRAGE AS SEEN IN THE ARCTIC REGION.

Figure 5.3: "The Mirage as seen in the Arctic Regions," from *Four Centuries of Progress*, 1893.

ancient city, abounding with the ruins of castles, obelisks, churches, and mountains, with other large and conspicuous buildings."⁴² Why do these writers persistently describe the topographic features of glaciers, when magnified by refraction, as ruined civilizations? While some images were obviously reflections of nearby objects, the descriptions that these tales give of displaced images are unquestionably the product of the power of suggestion, like shapes found in clouds or a Rorschach image. "Among all the meteorological phenomena in the economy of nature," another author wrote, "none excite more astonishment, and are more difficult of comprehension

⁴² "The Arctic Regions," *The Friend: A Religious and Literary Journal*. 3, no. 34 (June 7, 1830): 266.

by the unscientific observer, than the aerial spectra, or optical illusion...”⁴³ This sense of “astonishment” and incomprehension is produced through naming, and cannot be explained in scientific terms, but rather in the conceptual vocabulary of psychology and medicine. What Gaffett and the crew see and call a town blurs the line between illusion and hallucination. Their superstition is founded upon an impossible interpretation of images refracted by ice, snow, and fog, which merely suggest familiar objects because of a chance resemblance of form. It is through the literary imposition of familiar names onto the images of an unfamiliar landscape that the arctic becomes enchanted.

Viewed in this light, Gaffett’s story resolves into a pair of epistemological problems. In both Littlepage’s naïve reading and Gaffett’s superstitious tale, enchantment is given full license by a disengaged imagination when it is closed off from the senses. The disengaged imagination is an unoriginal imagination: Littlepage, like arctic authors, relies on literary clichés in his attempts to describe their experiences. Prospero’s “insubstantial pageant” is a favorite reference for these writers. Gaffett’s physical confinement on a remote island thus mirrors his and Littlepage’s mutual confinement in an arctic cabin and the captain’s confinement in Dunnet Landing. Just as Gaffett believes he has found something more valuable than the North Pole itself, the Maine sea captain believes that he has found the key to heaven. Just as institutions of compulsory confinement like the military and asylum transformed nostalgia into a disease of confinement, nostalgia is here figured as a confinement within the imagination produced by a poverty of sensory experience.⁴⁴ Without the memory of the senses required to attach moving images to moving objects, Littlepage is unable to read prose or images, and winds up placing faith in dislocated, exaggerated images and words. The episode thus suggests that mere reading

⁴³ “Optical Illusions,” *Bradford’s Journal: A Miscellany of Literature, Science, and Art* 3, no. 20 (Sept. 17, 1842): 315.

⁴⁴ See Chapter 2.

cannot dissolve compulsive modes of behavior by itself. The kinds of hallucinations possible in the arctic demonstrate the need for a more finessed mode that relates reading and the senses so as to avoid the environment's ability to engender hallucination and fixation. The individual is more susceptible to nostalgia in inverse proportion to the potential that this place offers for attachment.

Jewett's narrator appears to have read some arctic tales, or at least know how to read this kind of story, when she asks, "'Weren't they all starving, and wasn't it a mirage or something of that sort?'" (397). If this question points to scientific and medical understandings of the arctic mirage and the hallucinations attendant to diseases of nutritional deficit like scurvy, it discretely withholds the full force of the question. After all, a warm open polar sea, known as a *polynya* in Russian, was used to justify the arctic search for new trade routes and lands, like the one recounted in Elisha Kent Kane's *Open Polar Sea*.⁴⁵ More significantly, the narrator only hints at her reading of the story: that Littlepage's belief in an island where humans wait in a limbo between life and death and between body and soul is a retelling of the allegory of Plato's cave. For what the tellers of the tale fail to recognize is that the shadows that these men see are their own shadows, reflected against the shifting fog. Indeed, these shadows mimic the number of men present, their movements, gestures, even the opening and closing of their mouths. What Littlepage cannot recognize is that his allegorical reading of the story as rational proof of the afterlife has transformed the story into an allegory for his life, as he is caught within a framework of romantic discovery that is completely unreceptive to this new, alien world, which it can only describe in the familiar language of home (see Figure 4.4). The irony of this allegory is that it is precisely by stubbornly clinging to this "certainty" of the existence of the afterlife that Littlepage ceases to be at home in the world. Shipwrecked in the arctic and at home, he was first wrecked

⁴⁵ Kane, Elisha Kent. *Open Polar Sea in Connection with the Search after Sir John Franklin and his Companions* (New York: Baker, Godwin, 1853).



Figure 5.4: Frank Boott Goodrich. "Mirage at Behring's Straits," from *The History of the Sea, A Graphic Description of Maritime Adventures, Achievements, Explorations, Discoveries and Inventions* [...], 1877.

by shipping itself. Only the narrator and reader can hear the ironic resonance of his remark about one of Mrs. Begg's three husbands who died at sea, "Oh yes, shipping is a very great loss." If he has already used this remark once before to describe the "sense o' proportion" that shipping had once afforded the sailor, this repetition is one more sign that he, in fact, has no sense of proportion, no receptivity to new objects, and that the "community" that he says "narrows down and grows dreadful ignorant when it is shut up to its own affairs, and gets no knowledge of the outside world except from a cheap, unprincipled newspaper" does not describe Dunnet Landing at all, but Littlepage himself, confined to the world without referents that shipping and the arctic tale have made for him. "'T wa'n't a right-feeling part of the world, anyway" (40).

In reaffirming the centrality of the Littlepage episode to the structure of the novel, I want to ask the question of why these chapters have proven recalcitrant to recent criticism, even as they have long helped generate the impression that the novel is by and large nostalgic for a lost way of life. Most critics have treated Captain Littlepage's post-lapsarian laments about the decline of the shipping industry as the epicenter of a nostalgia that permeates the novel in the form of a desire for "a historically prior period of cosmopolitan mobility." For one critic, "the extraordinarily powerful sense of regional nostalgia that structures the *Pointed Firs* can best be understood as operating at the intersection of Renato Rosaldo's concept of imperialist nostalgia and what Matthew Frye Jacobson has described as 'imperial amnesia'; Jewett's fiction is said to "maintain a strong element of romantic nostalgia for the heyday of Maine shipbuilding and commercial fishing before tourism transformed the coastal economy," even if this nostalgia is tempered "with an unsentimental portrait of the real hardships of the seafaring community." Likewise, for Eric Sundquist, Dunnet Landing is every bit as spectral as Littlepage's arctic, "a ghost world of spinsters, widows, and bereft sea captains." And for Hsuan Hsu, the novel's "nostalgia for a 'prelapsarian' and homogeneous region that 'excludes historical change'" is a general feature of the genre of local color, which through identifying with discrete regions, "often takes the form of nostalgia for past modes of production."⁴⁶ And for still other critics, particularly feminists, deflecting charges of nostalgia was precisely a way of demonstrating that the book deserved to be included in the American literary canon.

⁴⁶ Gillman, Susan. "Regionalism and Nationalism in Jewett's *Country of the Pointed Firs*," in *New Essays on the Country of the Pointed Firs*. Ed. June Howard (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), 101-118; Gleason, Patrick, "Sarah Orne Jewett's 'The Foreigner' and the Transamerican Routes of New England Regionalism," *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers* 28, no. 1 (2011): 42; Duneer, Anita. "Sarah Orne Jewett and (Maritime) Literary Tradition: Coastal and Narrative Navigations of the 'Country of the Pointed Firs,'" *American Literary Realism* 39, no. 3 (Spring 2007): 223. Sundquist, Eric. "Realism and Regionalism," in *The Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Ed. Emory Elliot (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988), 509; Hsu, Hsuan. "Literature and Regional Production," *American Literary History* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 36-69.

My reading rejects this general view of nostalgia in favor of an understanding of nostalgia as biopolitical narrative form. Far from being representative of an atmospheric nostalgia, pathological nostalgia is the centerpiece of Jewett's critique of the antebellum shipping industry. In contrast to James' characters, Littlepage is not trapped in a vicious feedback loop by a sentimental genre that compels him to refuse to accept the loss of a home even when this home cannot be restored; nor does his genre fail to give him the aesthetic resources needed to escape his nostalgia for a lost home by recognizing that this desire is not natural, but naturalized. Rather, Jewett rejects this realist revision of the medical narrative of nostalgia. In contrast to *The Bostonians*, where the refusal of loss makes it impossible for sentimental readers to acquire agency, except through the external convulsions of historical events, here reading alone is not enough to make a character compulsive. Rather, Jewett constructs a new narrative in which the aesthetic impoverishment that can lead to pathological nostalgia proceeds not from bad genres, but from reading habits that are uninformed by sensory experience. As in Wordsworth, the primary cause that sets this narrative chain in motion is the sovereign desire of the economic relation.

To this narrative form, in which economic confinement and aesthetic impoverishment combine to produce the confinement of desire within "queer" heads, Jewett opposes a radically different form of nostalgia that works to cure sovereign compulsive desire not through the shock therapeutics of realist historicism, but through the gradual education of the senses. This narrative indexes a major historical shift away from the cultivation of realist vision and toward the cultivation of the body's capacity for spontaneous expression. Writers like Jewett and Hamlin Garland who broke away from the realist version of local color, as well as popular practitioners of the actor's training method of Delsartism, which included the founders of American modern

dance, Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn, signal the emergence of this new aesthetic, which find in nostalgia new therapeutic value and new aesthetic principles.

THE EDUCATION OF THE SENSES

The Country of the Pointed Firs dramatizes as literally as possible the Canadian poet Bliss Carman's thesis that the great difficulty and desire of the novelist is "[t]o be a local colorist without being local-colored, to be at once in and apart from his work."⁴⁷ The novel's plot, minimal as it is, answers a question central to the genre, namely, how much separation is necessary to produce local color. The protagonist, an unnamed woman writer who is a lot like Jewett, comes on vacation to the small coastal village of Dunnet Landing not as a naïve tourist, but as a "lover" who has already fallen for the village during a brief stopover on "a yachting cruise" (377). The third-person narration in the opening chapter registers her initial alienation from the community, as it switches to the first-person as soon as she sits down to lunch with her landlord, Mrs. Todd. While the narrator is quickly immersed in Mrs. Todd's affairs, she also seeks the isolation of a schoolhouse so she can complete "a long piece of writing, sadly belated now, which I was bound to do" (380). She apparently needs this detachment so she can chart her growing intimacy with Mrs. Todd and her friends and family. This withdrawal takes on added significance as part of the novel's general claim that writing requires some detachment if the immediacy of experience is to be reproduced on the page. We can witness this detachment everywhere in the novel; the more affecting a scene is, the more particular the narrator is about noting the details of the scene. The shifting distances in Jewett's novel suggest that we should

⁴⁷ Carman, Bliss. "The Verses of Miss Gertrude Hall," *The Chap-Book*, 1, no. 8 (1894): 186.

understand local color's turn toward impressionism in the 1890s as an effort to translate the immediacy of experience into a therapeutic immediacy available to the reader.

When we combine the narrator's literary obligation (writing she "was bound to do") with her efforts to "catch these lovely summer cadences" with her pen, it's reasonable to conclude that this is a professional writer engaged in a hunt for local color. In making a writer's hunt for local color the subject matter of a local color novel, Jewett makes her kind of writing visible in order to disrupt the economic circuit of desire that was thought to animate the genre and the transformation of geographic places into stores of collectable objects for tourists. It's just as sensible to suppose that the novel we're holding in our hands is something the narrator writes during the course of her stay, a premise that would go a long way toward explaining why her writing is only alluded to after the fifth chapter. Jewett's response to the call for a local color aesthetic is thus to expose the writing of local color to public scrutiny. Instead of the typical hunt for local color, a hunt to find and prepare material for a story, the novel makes this background research a major part of the story, with the implication that her local color will not be divorced from its material contexts of production and its moments of discovery, that it will not be displayed like an embalmed trophy of an encounter, but will find a new means to express this immediacy through a closer syncopation of the search for and writing of local color. To be ethical, the writing of immediacy must emphasize how the consumer desire to preserve the immediacy of experience gets it wrong by assigning a greater value to experience than to writing. This deeply naturalized assumption needs to be overturned by showing that writing local color does not simply record experience, but teaches how the subject can encounter it.

In other words, in order to expose the fallacy of this assumption, the novel splits up the hunt for local color into two quests: a quest for a suitably removed place to write local color and

a quest for growing intimacy with the Dunnet locals. Both of these quests are fundamentally about a search for relation, rather than for objects themselves, and consequently they help generate a mode of description that attempts to capture the ongoing, improvisational nature of how local color was actually made, rather than how it was defined when it appeared in story form. Indeed, the narrator never arrives at a finalized sense of the specificity of a place, and never achieves the kind of site-specificity that supposedly characterized successful local color writing. Instead, the novel's details are geared toward demonstrating how the narrator's reading ability is deformed and altered as new objects come before her attention. While the novel emphasizes the narrator's hyper-fidelity to the contingencies of the present as they crowd in on the her sensorium, this attention is episodic and not cumulative.

In lieu of a finished portrait of Dunnet Landing, then, we have an impressionistic education that builds through the narrator's feeling and the body. The growth of intimacy doubles as education for the narrator, who by the end of the novel no longer feels like "a besieged miser of time" when she is distracted from her writing, but instead has learned to cherish her time in Dunnet Landing, much "as a miser spends his coins" (20, 208). She even comes to long for her first few weeks in the village, before she had started writing, "when nothing happened except the growth of herbs and the course of the sun (208). The two quests come together at the end of the novel as a transformed sense of relation to one's sensory experience and, we can infer, one's writing. This transformation is implicitly therapeutic for both the individual and the institution of local color itself.

When the necessarily incomplete and unsystematic character of all description is foregrounded, education and therapy gain in urgency because they offer the possibility of producing better ways of putting objects under description. For local color, as we have already

seen, the aspiration of a therapeutic education is to put people into persistent relations with people and objects in the hopes of coming into indirect contact with truth through sustained moments of presence. Thus, while the ongoingness of Jewett's local color points back to the conditions of its own serial publication, it is careful to distinguish itself as an open-ended, uncompelled form of serialization – an open-endedness by choice. Likewise, the narrator is caught up in a reworked version of the *bildungsroman*. The most common temporal markers (e.g. “in the course of time,” “in the course of a few weeks’ experience”) double as markers of the narrator’s education (e.g. learning to recognize where Mrs. Todd is in her garden based on the smell of the particular herb she tramples, or “the signs of invasion” that precede a visit by someone like Mrs. Fosdick; or the “signs of a change” leading to a trip).⁴⁸ The narrator reflects: “Once I had not even known where to go for a walk; now there were many delightful things to be done and done again, as if I were in London” (208).

The attention to relation within the novel should be understood as a response to a growing sense of disconnection. When taken together with the criticism of local color as a “mechanical” or clichéd genre, Jewett’s efforts to seamlessly integrate research and writing suggest that the ordinary conditions of literary production widened the gap between description and lived experience. The ability to represent one’s experience to oneself was already considered at the time to be an indispensable part of a therapeutic cure, as well as an important part of an education. S. Weir Mitchell came to believe that “word-sketching” was more successful at rehabilitating women patients than was the rest cure that he has since become infamous for. Mitchell, like many doctors, linked aesthetic skill to therapeutic recuperation in recommending that patients learn “the habit of taking sketches in words which, glanced at afterward, swiftly

⁴⁸ Jewett, 421, 446.

recall the scene” as if it were present.⁴⁹ While “word-sketching” closed the gap between how one lived and how one wrote, we find in local color’s impressionist turn the more difficult effort to represent objects of experience in such a way as to make them accessible for a mass audience.

The narrator undertakes a similar therapy in learning how to write in a way that reproduces the immediate experience she’s already having during her vacation. The first month-and-a-half of the summer, which is compressed into the novel’s first three chapters (a mere seven pages or so) constitutes an education in how to pay attention to how things appear along the way, and how to write about them in a manner befitting their indirect arrival to her senses. Indeed, the first problem she confronts is that the gradually collapsing distance between the narrator and the locals impedes her ability to write. Early on, while trying to write in her bedroom in Mrs. Todd’s house, she is distracted “when [she] had listened,—it was impossible not to listen, with cottonless ears” to a “particularly spirited and personal conversation” occurring outside (12). Like Ulysses before the siren’s song, sense impressions like these irresistibly force themselves upon the narrator, refocusing her attention and stopping her from writing. Even when she withdraws to the schoolhouse for a quieter place to work, Captain Littlepage seeks her out with his Miltonic tale of ghostly figures in the arctic. Like her narrator, Jewett recalled being distracted while she was working up this section in Martinsville, Maine, as “neither thought nor good books can keep me from watching a little golden bee.”⁵⁰

Through the help of Mrs. Almira Todd, in whose cottage she rents a room, the narrator finds her “energies and even interest” more and more bestowed on the people and objects around her. Her attention is involuntarily drawn out of her, but because she is in the process of learning about the locale and has the example of her landlord, this process is constructive. Her growing

⁴⁹ Mitchell, S. Weir. *Nurse and Patient, and Camp Cure* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1877), 69. It is interesting to note that Jewett actually wrote to Mitchell and spoke favorably of his therapeutic regimes.

⁵⁰ Jewett, Sarah Orne. *The Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett*. Ed. Annie Fields (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1911), 115.

ability to act is indexed by her increasing ability to understand how the details of the environment around her relate to the people who live there. The novel is in fact carefully organized around accumulating and scaffolding relations of this kind: each successive trip the narrator takes with Mrs. Todd leads to an interview with an individual and finally to an account of that person's history. The narrator subsequently learns what it means to have a vital sense of historical relation with a place. She does not act independently of Mrs. Todd in the first three major movements of the novel – the trips to Green Island to visit Mrs. Todd's family, to Shell-heap Island to see the ruins of the monastic Joanna Todd's house, and upcountry to the Bowden family reunion. Rather, these trips make space for the narrator's slow, therapeutic practice of attention. Attention, the most important area of inquiry for psychologists in the last half of the nineteenth-century, helped delineate what counted as acts of consciousness, as a unified process of sensation, thought, and action. By developing powers of attention, the subject was thought to increase the clarity and intensity of the object for the perceiver and could learn how to inhibit all other mental processes through focus on a single object.⁵¹ Attention's literary appropriation suggests that attention was also used to engender in subjects the perceptiveness and confidence that make volitional acts not only possible, but also pleasurable.

Hence, the culminating mark of her recuperation, resulting from the experience and perspective gained from these trips, occurs in the final quarter of the novel when she is able to do something as seemingly simple as watch a fishing vessel with the same interest as an ancient, taciturn fisherman nearby. A dull day that would have once posed a problem to her is transformed into the novel's climax: a visit to the home of the least friendly inhabitant of the town, the fisherman Elijah Tilley. A lobster smack drifting aimlessly in the slack water becomes a source of

⁵¹ William James, F.H. Bradley, and G.F. Stout were only a few of the best-known academics who participated in debates about attention in journals like *Mind*, *Brain*, and *The American Journal of Psychology* in the last two decades of the century.

contemplation: “I watched her for a minute or two; she was the old Miranda, owned by some of the Caplins, and I knew her by an odd shaped patch of newish duck that was set into the peak of her dingy mainsail. Her vagaries offered such an exciting subject for conversation that my heart rejoiced at the sound of a hoarse voice behind me” (140). This new ability to attend to details, which is likewise founded on her new vocabulary of detail and relation, coalesces into a scene of watching that invites speech without requesting it. The old fisherman notices the pose the narrator has assumed toward the boat, and because her visual orientation approaches that of the fisherman’s, she is able to broach a friendship where her own words would have certainly failed.

The visit to Tilley’s home is the first and only action the narrator takes on her own. Tilley is unable to talk about anything but his late wife. His wife’s objects are the constant reference point of his conversation, yet he can’t explain what they mean to him. While previous trips in the novel had led to stories, fellow-feeling, and preparations for trips, this visit requires a different form of participation. It is in this house that the narrator, a writer who has trouble writing, has her one creative inspiration. Through the objects in the room, she reconstructs the character and life of Elijah Tilley’s wife:

The visible tribute of his careful housekeeping, and the clean bright room which had once enshrined his wife, and now enshrined her memory, was very moving to me; he had no thought for any one else or for any other place. *I began to see her myself in her home*,— a delicate-looking, faded little woman, who leaned upon his rough strength and affectionate heart, who was always watching for his boat out of this very window, and who always opened the door and welcomed him when he came home (148, my emphasis).

As the narrator begins to imagine Sarah Tilley, she narrates a history that cannot be supplied by the content of Elijah Tilley’s words, but can only be derived from the delivery, the tone and feeling of his words – things that the narrator can now recognize because of her new education. With this image in mind, the narrator’s interest is intensified despite the fact that Tilley’s storytelling has failed. After looking at the objects of the “best room,” she writes:

The best room seemed to me a much sadder and more empty place than the kitchen; its conventionalities lacked the simple perfection of the humbler room and failed on the side of poor ambition; it was only when one remembered what patient saving, and what high respect for society in the abstract go to such furnishing that the little parlor was interesting at all. I could imagine the great day of certain purchases, the bewildering shops of the next large town, the aspiring anxious woman, the clumsy sea-tanned man in his best clothes, so eager to be pleased, but at ease only when they were safe back in the sail-boat again, going down the bay with their precious freight, the hoarded money all spent and nothing to think of but tiller and sail. I looked at the unworn carpet, the glass vases on the mantel-piece with their prim bunches of bleached swamp grass and dusty marsh rosemary, *and I could read the history of Mrs. Tilley's best room from its very beginning* (148-149, my emphasis).

The narrator invents a story worthy of the stories she has heard over the summer – one that emerges out of the objects around her, and one as emotionally resonant as if they were her own cherished possessions. The resistance that the objects initially present to the narrator, signaled by the chopiness of the first sentence's two semicolons, gives way to a lyrical description of how Elijah Tilley and the ghostly Sarah Tilley *might* have acted as they acquired their prized possessions. This imaginative capacity thus differentiates the narrator from her former self: reading a history out of gaps and silences is tantamount to accepting the inevitability of loss in one's own life. This is the power of therapeutic nostalgia to reconstruct the history of a silenced past through the ecstatic presence of objects.

I believe that in scenes like this that Jewett's later fiction posits a radically creative possibility. For Jewett, therapeutic nostalgia makes imperative that traditions can only gain a separate life from the people and places that created them if they are both deeply felt and understood. "In our reverie which imagines while remembering, our past takes on substance again," writes Gaston Bachelard.⁵² The work of renovating social and political life begins with forming a nostalgic attachment to traditions and histories that cannot be perpetuated otherwise. Because the elderly rural folk inhabiting her fiction are on the brink of dying, and because the

⁵² Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Reverie: Childhood, Language, and the Cosmos*. Trans. Daniel Russell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969 [1960]), 119.

majority of their children have moved to cities, factory towns, or died at sea, it is the responsibility of tourists from cities to embrace these traditions as their own. The elegiac tone of the novel's closing, which is often confused with nostalgia, derives from the fact that the narrator understands this need but also mourns in advance the loss of these people. To preserve and to disseminate a tradition requires evocative storytelling capable of sending others into reverie while they read or witness someone reminiscing. If ecstasy is the revolutionary moment of therapeutic nostalgia, whereby desire becomes indirect, then reverie is the mood where attention becomes creative and sensory history is written.

This scene of ecstatic communion with Elijah Tilley and his things is the novel's counterpoint to Captain Littlepage. While Littlepage is a loose page torn out of a book by his pathological nostalgia, this page did in fact make it into the novel. A different episode, however, did not. Indeed, it seems likely that this episode would have served a similar purpose to the scene with Elijah Tilley, as it also models the narrator's newfound ability to form and inhabit new relations. This ecstatic scene is not simply important because it is with Mrs. Todd; it also demonstrates the relationship between indirect immediacy and loss.

In an unpublished section of *Pointed Firs*, the narrator describes being baffled for most of the summer by "a strange little picture of a bandit chief" hung on the wall in the room she had rented from Mrs. Todd, the elderly herbalist and pillar of the Dunnet Landing community. After more than two months of nightly conversations, after learning the stories behind seemingly every object and herb of her landlord's house and garden, the fact that she *cannot* explain this engraved portrait is the very thing that makes it so mysterious. At once a sign that things typically have proper places in the Maine village's symbolic economy, and a revelation of the progress of the

narrator's education, of the fact that she has learned how Mrs. Todd inhabits her home, the portrait is simultaneously a test of her new capacity for friendship. In the world of Dunnet Landing, objects that are not readily made a part of daily conversation signal the presence of grief.

To recognize this grief, however, to appreciate it, requires a finesse that visual observation and narrative detail – the tourist's stock in trade – do not afford. The picture is a challenge: its "frame" may look "as if it were a piece of old Russian work that had wandered home in some sailors [*sic*] chest," but Mrs. Todd had only been at sea once, to Cardiff; "the engraving was of the kind which might have been the frontispiece of an old magazine," but the bandit chief does not resemble at all the daguerreotype of Mrs. Todd's late husband that the narrator has seen.⁵³ Learning how to ask Mrs. Todd who this mysterious masked man is means learning to observe and mobilize overlooked, mute signs: gestures, pauses, delays, subtle changes in expression – all the forms of communication that people with busy lives generally do not heed, even though, the novel argues, they are the most telltale signs of feeling. Acquiring this new receptivity requires the gradual buildup of affective and sensory connection, called friendship when we talk of people and animals, and communion when plants and matter are involved. The narrator's mounting intimacy with Mrs. Todd gives to her vision a receptivity to things that renews the possibility of a sympathy that had been rendered unworkable by tourism's commodification of Romanticism and local color's overproduction of visual detail. Consequently, the narrator comes away with the ability to appreciate which traditions matter for her friend, and how they might be carried on after she dies. Her vacation has a doubly therapeutic legacy: the act of acquiring this facility catalyzes the narrator's emotions and senses just as much as this felt knowledge of tradition sustains them. This is the new circuit between the vacation and the vacation story, where experience and aesthetic reinforce one another. This is the

⁵³ MS Am 1743.17, Houghton.

circuit of therapeutic nostalgia, which moves over the ground of histories both visible and invisible, but always intensely felt.

When the narrator asks where she got the picture, Mrs. Todd blushes and changes the subject, saying that she has to go take care of an old woman who is near-death after her “third shock.” The conversation dies, and the pair lingers until there is nothing more to say. And yet it is the lingering that is telling: though Mrs. Todd’s “countenance wore its usual impassive look,” the narrator “felt Mrs. Todd to be strangely moved.” Rather than pursue this observation for curiosity’s sake, however, the narrator waits. Several hours pass before Mrs. Todd, preparing for her visit, “came back and stood squarely before the little picture – she was now inviting my further interest – she presently gave a resolute little sigh not to the picture but to me.” It is through this silent performance of her education in another person and another community’s conventions that the narrator learns that the picture is of the love of Mrs. Todd’s life, the man she would have married had his parents allowed it, who subsequently moved away and became a famous judge. Attention to signs that were once invisible produces a pleasure that counterweights the desire that might invade this moment to find out the man’s identity and the tragedy of the doomed romance, a desire that would violate the present-day needs of Mrs. Todd (for privacy, for resolution, etc.) in exchange for knowing the secrets of her past. While Jewett elsewhere remarks on the fact that such elaborate conventions are the product of the “restricted and narrowly limited life” that survive in once-isolated New England communities, it is precisely these conventions, for their “formal recognitions of the claims of society” and their “appeal for the existence of something that gave pleasure,” that Jewett’s novel argues that city-dwellers need to draw from.⁵⁴ History that is the product of curiosity is doubly destructive, as it damages both historical objects invested with feeling and reduces the individual’s capacity to intuit these

⁵⁴ Jewett, “From a Mournful Villager,” in *Country By-Ways* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1881).

investments. Consequently, the novel models an alternative model for historical understanding that produces “interest,” “expectancy,” “intentness,” and “alert watchfulness” – all the qualities the narrator observes in the characters of the village. Like Sylvia and her heron, the narrator has to draw interest from the people and things of the slow seaside village before she can assimilate its living history. Stilling the senses thus does not mean bringing one’s body to a standstill, but rather achieving an equilibrium of motion between one’s own body and the circulating lives of people and things around oneself. In 1890s America, the name for this equilibrium was “repose.”

Nostalgia is how Jewett’s novel gives scope and content to local color’s claim that representing the invisible side of things will produce more conscientious consumers through the pleasures of mediated immediacy. Just as the narrator recognizes that it is grief that links the portrait and Mrs. Todd, the novel attempts to engender in its readers an animating attention that ultimately undermines the dominance of the visual by transforming it into a sentimental object. This animation can be picked up through attention to the material traces of old customs and practices, which evince the “whole-souled concentration of energy” that had once produced them.⁵⁵ Identifying affective attachments runs in step with forming one’s own attachments. Nostalgia is the name for this structure of visual attention to objects, to the values that hold objects and people together. This is how Jewett’s texts use the conventions of local color. When attention is focused on the way non-visual factors (affect, sensation, evolution, etc.) animate or fail to animate what can be seen, the individual develops a sense of how seeing is always contingent on the conditions for seeing. Visual attention in Jewett’s novel is put in the service of acquiring this kind of perspective, which is predicated upon a formal awareness of the catalyzing role of affect and the necessary complementarity between the visual and the entire sensorium. The bandit chief episode represents a template for reading how images function in the novel. Her

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

friendship with Mrs. Todd makes the narrator experience her own vision as the embodiment of her own life history, just as the things she looks at take on new value. Thus the novel argues that the instrumental rationality of imperialist nostalgia can be counterbalanced by a therapeutic structure of feeling. Through synthesizing these two positions, a perspectival, therapeutic nostalgia is created.

The status of the image is so crucial here because the broadest aim of Jewett's writing is to create distance between individuals and the images they encounter in the new mass media of photographs, lithographs, illustrated magazines, advertisements, and books. Attachment here does not collapse distance but allows individuals to differentiate themselves from the things they consume and the people they know. It helps people to break habits and imagine elastic futures, futures that are dependent upon an educated sensorium. Thus, this therapeutic value Jewett's writing attributes to practices of sensing is directly related to the new affective structure of nostalgia. Nostalgic attention is a practice of observation that draws upon what psychologists believed to be the individual's conscious and instinctive responses to pleasurable stimuli. While conscious attention was considered by psychologists of the time to be personally transformative because of the focus and inhibition it requires, the body always serves as the locus of instinctive attention, because its drives were considered more responsive to pleasure. The difference between voluntary and involuntary attention lies in this," one psychologist wrote, "that in the former the straining, the turning of the powers of the mind in a certain direction is present before the stimulus, while in the latter this straining is produced only by the stimulus itself."⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Höffding, Harald. *Outlines of Psychology*. Trans. Mary Lowndes (London and New York: Macmillan, 1891), 316. This definition made involuntary attention dangerous ground, because the spectacles of mass culture could easily come to dominate over any conscious actions on the part of the spectator (think of the importance of theater scenes in naturalist novels, or amusement in Stephen Crane). As such it was a pressing problem to find out how to resume conscious control of visual stimuli.

While psychologists imagined how attention functions in normative subjects, artists like Jewett redescribe a new kind of attention that even emotionally incapacitated, desensitized individuals can practice while on vacation. The incapacities of the neurasthenic can be unlearned in the spaces where affective and sensory histories are most present.⁵⁷ While this structure could in theory be put into practice anywhere, long-inhabited spaces seem to take precedence because they provide the pleasure of learning one's own past. "When one really knows a village like this and its surroundings," the narrator remarks in a rare editorial comment, "it is like becoming acquainted with a single person" (3). What spaces and peoples might provide favorable circumstances for therapeutic nostalgia points to the novel's latent theories of race and ethnicity.

THE NON-STRENUOUS LIFE

We must change ourselves, from a race that admires jerk and snap for their own sakes, and looks down upon low voices and quiet ways as dull, to one that, on the contrary, has calm for its ideal, and for their own sakes loves harmony, dignity, and ease.

– William James, "The Gospel of Relaxation" (1895)⁵⁸

Jewett's references comparing Almira Todd to classical Greek figures help us understand the place of the novel within the therapeutic culture of the 1890s (also called expressive physical

⁵⁷ Jewett's novel participates in a redescription of neurasthenia as a socially useful disease. Coined by New York physician George Beard in 1869, neurasthenia first named "the disease of the unreliable subject." While neurasthenia was diagnosed as a "malady of overpressure" resulting in "a will incapable of resisting the stimuli of the modern world," this nosology was replaced around 1890 by "the malady of impaired energy and resistance to the performance principle." In Anson Rabinbach's reading, the resistance to work characteristic of neurasthenia is redefined as having a socially productive function. The body's path of least effort is no longer seen as pathological but becomes an unconscious attempt to reestablish a harmonic rhythm between the labor of the body and the demands placed on the body. In the process the individual resists work, rationality and novelty, the products of a civilization that is destroying rhythmic labor. The neurasthenic businessman of Jewett's "The King of Folly Island" (1888) experiences an epiphany when he discovers his country doppelganger is a self-interested hermit who has ruined his family's lives by confining them to a remote island: "a whole new future of human interests spread out before his eyes from which a veil had suddenly been withdrawn, and Frankfort felt like another man, or as if there had been a revivifying of his old, uninterested, self-occupied nature."

⁵⁸ James, "The Gospel of Relaxation," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: And to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* New York: Holt, 1899), 199-228.

culture) and the place of race within the novel. Grieving, Mrs. Todd is like “Antigone alone on the Theban plain”; dispensing herbs and wisdom, she is “a huge sibyl,” or an “idyl of Theocritus”; standing atop a rock, looking out toward her mother’s island, she is “grand and architectural, like a *caryatide*”; complimenting her mother, she “stand[s] before us like a large figure of Victory”; finally, in refusing to say goodbye, she appears from afar to be “strangely self-possessed and mysterious.”⁵⁹ Nearly all scholars have aligned these allusions with a familiar argument about the nineteenth century’s construction of the countryside as the locus of tradition and stable identity, as an example of “the invention of tradition” and “a site of memory.”⁶⁰ In this argument, the national past acquires much of its power when it seems to belong not to history but to the deep past of nature and myth. When folk like Mrs. Todd come to seem like autochthonous individuals sprung out of the ground, Athena-like and fully-formed, they are paradoxically at their most traditional.

Bill Brown has complicated this argument by demonstrating a paradox at work in the novel: the more the Maine folk come to seem like dated and tagged objects on exhibit in their life-worlds, the more they anticipate modernist primitivism. For Brown, Mrs. Todd’s Greekness does not simply invent tradition, in all its mythic and natural versions, but instantiates an emergent “object-based epistemology.” The “Cultural authority” of classical allusion helps legitimate this methodology and transform the Maine folk into “an object of literary and anthropological knowledge.” By making the folk appear to be just as attached to their homes as Native Americans were alleged to be, the novel generates the preconditions for modernist primitivism and nativism. For example, the formally beautiful Anisazi artifacts that Tom Outland finds in Cather’s *The Professor’s House* (1925) are already anticipated in the new prestige accorded to the “queer

⁵⁹ *PF*, 78, 46, 93, 211.

⁶⁰ Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983); Nora, Pierre. *Realms of Memory* Vols. 1-3 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1996-98).

gouges and stone hammers” that Joanna Todd collects on Shellheap Island.⁶¹ Thus, in this accounting, invented traditions help authorize the formation of the social sciences and generate the possibility of modernism. Thus, Mrs. Todd’s comparison to a caryatid – a supporting column carved in the shape of a female figure like the Elgin marbles – attaches her to her environment through the use of a new modernist epistemology. Literally and symbolically a pillar of her community, she helps found the human sciences on ethnonational myth.

Greekness does not just connect an emergent materialist epistemology with the deep past, however. It also served a therapeutic purpose. When William James endorsed the method known as Delsartism in an 1895 talk to teachers, “The Gospel of Relaxation,” he explicitly referred to an exercise routine called Delsartism that connected the physical poses found in Greek statues and non-western ritual and dance to a therapy for the expression of emotion. In the 1890s, Delsartism was both popular and legitimized by authorities.⁶² “Becoming Greek” represented a proto-modernism that entailed practicing new ways of dressing and moving that promised, as in the James-Lange theory of emotion, new habits of feeling. *The Pointed Firs* is a novel heavily invested in Delsartism.⁶³ Named after François Delsarte, who invented an expression-based

⁶¹ Brown, Bill. *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2003).

⁶² In England, for example, celebrity pupils who lined up to take Delsarte courses included William Gladstone, William Holman Hunt, James McNeill Whistler, Robert Bulwer-Lytton, Robert Browning, Frances Hodgson Burnett, and William Morris; in America in 1889, a writer for *Werner’s Voice Magazine*, the house journal of Edgar Werner’s Delsarte publishing company, asked, “Who is there in this enlightened age that does not chat of Delsarte?” Regarding the credibility of the program: when Annie Payson Call was accused of negligence in 1890 when two of her students suffered nervous breakdowns, she was able to call to her defense James Jackson Putnam, New England’s best-known specialist in nervous diseases (and later the leading American promoter of Freud), William Wesselhoeft, one of Boston’s leading homeopathic physicians, and Clarence J. Blake, a noted Harvard otologist. See Andrick 2012, 128.

⁶³ It’s incredibly likely that Jewett knew of the Delsarte movement; it’s also quite possible that she would have taken some of Annie Payson Call’s classes outside Boston or in her Boston studio. In 1891, both Jewett and Call presented at and participated in the Deerfield Summer School of History and Romance, a one month series of lectures and courses which brought together professors of history and folklore, activists, and artists, and sought to juxtapose the “romantic phases” of the New England past against the “realistic tendencies...of the present day.” Additionally, Jewett’s “constant companion,” the French writer, Marie-Therese de Solms Blanc, wrote positively of attending the studio of Call to see her in action: “Miss Call, stretched at full length on the floor, or standing in attitudes of perfect

performance method for actors and singers in 1840s France, Delsartism was brought over to England and America, where it was also used as a therapeutic physical practice for nervous men and women.

Known variously as psycho-physical culture, self-expression, nerve training, and aesthetic or harmonic gymnastics, Delsarte exercises taught people that the most effective way of avoiding or overcoming nervous disorders like neurasthenia, neuralgia, and hysteria was to learn the art of “natural” movement. Practitioners pointed to the predominance of straight lines, punctual time tables, and restrictive clothing (e.g. corsets, high collars, high heels) as evidence that Western rationality had led individuals astray from nature, which was said to be defined by its curves, spirals, and seasonal rhythms, as can be seen in the undulating jellyfishes and sea anemones of a contemporaneous work like biologist Ernst Haeckel’s *Art Forms in Nature*.⁶⁴ In response to what one leading exponent, Annie Payson Call, termed “Americanitis,” Delsartians turned to classical antiquity and non-western religion and dance to derive examples of how natural, “graceful” movement could be incorporated successfully into daily life. In fact, the *de facto* uniform of the Delsarte student was the Greek toga, the wearing of which was seen as the first step in the acquisition of unconstrained movement. One of the best-known Delsarte exercises was the ‘statue pose,’ in which toga-clad students would mimic the stances of statues like the Apollo Belvedere or a female caryatide (see Figure 4.5). In valorizing classical and non-western art as the aesthetically beautiful representation of natural form, Delsartism provided a theory and a program for training expression through movement that proved to be important for

grace, did indeed produce the restful effect of the abandonment of all effort and all volition.” *The Condition of Women in the United States*. Trans. Abby Langdon Alger (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895), 155-56.

⁶⁴ Haeckel, Ernst. *Art Forms in Nature: The Prints of Ernst Haeckel* (New York: Prestel, 2008 [1899]).



**CARYTIDE, A.
(Vatican, Rome.)**

Figure 5.5. Genevieve Stebbins. "Carytide, A. (Vatican, Rome.)," from *Delsarte System of Expression, with 32 Illustrations from Greek Art* (6th edition, 1902).

Jewett, as well as for many other artists, including the founders of American modern dance, Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn.⁶⁵

In advocating instead for a non-strenuous life founded on the rational training of the body's capacities for "relaxation" and "repose," Delsartism suggested that a return to nature could regenerate the emotions and nerves by producing a "vital centre" of energy and a more harmonious relation between how the individual encountered sensory stimuli and responded to these stimuli. "Relaxation means recuperating dynamic power through repose; and in all graceful action there must be, at all times, an expressed consciousness of *force in reserve*, and not a relaxed easiness...The repose is of the soul, and not a physical repose." By learning new modes of walking, breathing, and gesturing, and by making these movements into unconscious muscle memory, it was thought that the individual could be sustained "with a healthy, joyous efficiency" that defied "disease, despair and insanity."⁶⁶ In response to the "modern age of unrest" and "overwrought nerves," instructors sought to teach individuals to develop new pathways for the expression of thoughts and feelings, and to change their established habits of nearly everything, including speech, gesture, dress, the decoration of house, and aesthetic criticism. By building favorable conditions around oneself, by "decomposing" movement into small segments of motion, which went beyond the "crude mechanism" of "daily work," psycho-physical training claimed that "the rhythms which give calm and dignity, control to the nerves, expressive

⁶⁵ Shawn, Ted. *Every Little Movement: A Book about Delsarte* (Princeton: Princeton Book Co., 1976). Performance theorists and historians of dance have been most attentive to the impact of Delsartism on an emergent modernism. For a brilliant study, see Walker, Julia. *Expressionism and Modernism in the American Theatre: Bodies, Voices, Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005).

⁶⁶ Stebbins, Genevieve. *Dynamic Breathing and Harmonic Gymnastics: A Complete System of Psychical, Aesthetic and Physical Culture* (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1893), 60. Delsartism would have a profound impact on the teaching of oratory, as well as the emergence of physical education in the beginning of the twentieth century, and was taught in high schools schools and seminaries, and entered the curriculum at Wellesley, Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Harvard, Tufts, Princeton, Cornell, and Oberlin. As Suzanne Shelton writes, many daughters from middle- and upper class homes took up the practice of Delsartian movements, poses, and gestures. See Shelton, Suzanne. *Divine Dancer: A Biography of Ruth St. Denis* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981). See also *A Delsartean Scrap-book*.

movements, good manners, and natural sentiment” will lead “the whole muscular framework to act in perfect harmony.”⁶⁷

Read in relation to Delsartism, Jewett’s Greek allusions can be viewed as honorifics testifying to Mrs. Todd’s expression of the all-important quality of self-possession. Her equilibrium of body and mind is a testament to her homeopathic relation to nature, and her free and harmonious expression of her emotions and “self-forgetful,” automatic expression of

natural motion, and then coordinating these movements into more complex motions graceful movement (defined as “economy of force”) were precisely the qualities that Delsartian students aspired to develop through the *study* of expression. The mastery of expression thus not only promised the elimination of the “awkwardness” of nervous, rationalized movement (i.e. “physical extravagance – a waste of force”), but also the acquisition of grace.⁶⁸ When the narrator takes part in the Bowden family’s procession to the grove where the reunion events are to take place, she imagines herself a part of “a company of ancient Greeks going to celebrate a victory, or to worship the god of harvests in the grove above,” and suggests that “we ought to be carrying green branches and singing as we went.” In imagining a New England mythically and evolutionarily connected to the “instincts of a far, forgotten childhood,” in couching her description in terms that bring to mind Frazer’s descriptions of May Day celebrations of “home” and “life” in *The Golden Bough*, the narrator is modeling how the ritual relation of the provincials to nature produces in the city-dweller a “regeneration of the body.”⁶⁹

Thus, if *The Country of the Pointed Firs* combines the invention of tradition with a new materialist epistemology to legitimize the ethnographic gaze for the social sciences, it also legitimizes provincial traditions as a reserve for the therapeutic training of movement and

⁶⁷ Anonymous. *A Delsartean Scrap-Book*, 9.

⁶⁸ Call, Annie Payson. *Power Through Repose* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891), 13.

⁶⁹ This was the title of Call’s first published work in 1885.

feeling. Indeed, as Jewett writes, the provincial's "inward force does not waste itself upon those petty excitements of every day that belong to cities," but rather shines its "transfiguring powers" at its appointed times (163, 156).⁷⁰ At this point, far into the novel's therapy, Mrs. Todd, "self-possessed and mysterious," comes to represent more than the promise of Delsartian therapeutics for the nervous city-dweller, however; by inviting the narrator to the Bowden family reunion, she teaches the narrator how to imaginatively acquire the central qualities of the therapeutic self through adherence to aesthetically beautiful natural rhythms and shapes, through the promotion of muscular, mental, and emotional flexibility. It is only following this moment that the narrator begins to become "by habit unconsciously flexible," "*self-possessed* for the expression of the moment" (to borrow language from Delsarteans), qualities that, as we've seen, culminate in the narrator's newfound ability to broker a therapeutic friendship with the melancholic, unconsolated widower, Elijah Tilley.⁷¹

"A White Heron," the Captain Littlepage episode, and the wider connection of the novel to the therapeutic expressive culture of the 1890s help specify how Jewett's fiction remoralizes nostalgia. *Pointed Firs* rejects many of the moral assumptions that have been used to construct nostalgia, starting with the notion that the orderly circulation of love is only possible through possession. In rejecting the analogy between dispossession and desire, dispossession loses its negative valence and assumes a positive status as a potentially ecstatic mode of experience that helps to form new attachments through non-sovereign encounters with the world. Similarly, a therapeutic nostalgia becomes available when one rejects the tendency to pathologize solitude and withdrawal from the world as anti-social, narcissistic behaviors, and instead considers their potential for good. It becomes available when one seeks not to use the poetics of the compulsive

⁷⁰ See Frazer, James. *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion* Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1890), 75.

⁷¹ *A Delsartean Scrap-Book*

subject for a cure, but to cure the compulsion that underwrites this poetics, which was composed to keep individuals from escaping beyond the boundaries of the institution, from privileging personal concerns over institutional and national ones, and to make them productive by eliminating the possibility of solitude. In Jewett, the exile's nostalgia can lead home, but it means finding a place of refuge, a cloistered space where confinement can be liberating, and where home no longer means a place.

Yet the place that serves as a refuge where therapeutic practice can be practiced is also precisely the provincial home that Romantics and sentimental writers had sought to preserve. The provincial home comes to provide felicitous circumstances for therapeutic nostalgia's cultivation of "power through repose" of the self and thereby offers an antidote to the incessant search for the experience of new thrills typical of foreign travel, the society life of resort hotels, and the intense shocks of the amusement park.⁷² Yet if Jewett's therapeutic nostalgia rejects the poetics of possession, it retains a poetics that prizes the provincial attachment to the material world over the world of commercial images. Mrs. Todd and Captain Littlepage stand as the limits of this poetics, but there is a further opposition within the novel's materialism, represented by the juxtaposition of Mrs. Todd and Elijah Tilley. If Mrs. Todd is subject to an "archaic grief" and Elijah Tilley is unconsolated by the loss of his wife, what distinguishes them is precisely mobility; Mrs. Todd's mobility is ramified in her balanced emotion and speech, Tilley's immobility in his near-silent melancholic fixation. Mrs. Todd is the representative figure of Jewett's transcendental materialism and a sign that the therapeutic mode of nostalgia, even when spiritualized, will depend on the figure of the "primitive." When Duncan, St. Denis, and Shawn drew upon Delsartism to reject the rigid and unnatural movements of classical ballet, they invented a new

⁷² On amusement, recreation, and leisure, see Brown, Bill. *The Material Unconscious: American Amusement, Stephen Crane, and the Economies of Play* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1995).

form of dance that privileged unrestricted movement, liberating clothing, and a newly spiritualized connection with the ground. Barbara Morgan's beautiful photo shows Martha Graham, a second-generation member of the American Modern Dance movement, assuming a pose in *American Provincials* (1935) that is both grounded and sacralizing, that opens up a space of confinement into a cloistered space for ecstatic communion. If this is the future of modernist nostalgia, it is also what links modernists like Graham and Willa Cather, the subject of my coda, to Jewett and to the therapeutic culture of the 1890s.



Figure 5.6. Barbara Morgan, "Martha Graham, American Provincials," 1935. Gelatin silver print.

VI

AFTER THE ROMANCE IS OVER (NOSTALGIA AND LOVE)

In the final section of *The Professor's House*, the Professor becomes an eight-year old child again. On the face of it, this reversion seems like a sacrificial exchange: "Tom Outland had not come back again through the garden door (as he had so often in dreams!), but another boy had: the boy the Professor had long ago left behind him in Kansas, in the Solomon Valley—the original, unmodified Godfrey St. Peter."¹ Considering that this is the last time that the novel explicitly mentions Tom, it seems logical that the Professor's reconnection with his "primitive" self also entails the loss of his romantic attachment to Tom. In this reading, the loss of Tom is only the last in a series of attachments that the Professor breaks due to his increasing isolation from the world. After all, the Professor's newfound communion with his "first nature" makes his

¹ Cather, Willa. *The Professor's House* (New York: Vintage, 1990 [1925]), 239.

² Cather, Willa. "Literary Experimentation," in *Willa Cather in Person: Interviews, Speeches, and Letters*. Ed. Brent

wife, family, career, and written work all seem like “accidents,” like the chance products of his “adolescence...when he was always consciously or unconsciously conjugating the verb ‘to love’” (240). The new Professor, attuned to his pre-pubescent self, falls “out of all domestic and social relations, out of his place in the human family, indeed,” leading rapidly and apparently inexorably to the conviction that he is going to die, to a nearly successful quasi-suicide, and finally to the grim conclusion that, in his accidental survival, he has “let something go...something very precious, that he could not have consciously relinquished” (258). The Professor at the end would appear to be someone with no intense affective attachments whatsoever, someone who is only “outward bound” to others, as in the master-servant relationship modeled in his relationship with Augusta, the family sewing-woman.

This does make for a satisfying, if depressing, reading. Yet it’s not the method of reading endorsed by the novel. Rather, the novel argues that the explicit mention of a subject is not always the best place to look for signs of an intense affective relationship, just as a silence on an obviously important subject is not always the worst place. Indeed, at the same time as he becomes attuned to his past self, the Professor is also engaged in annotating “the diary that Tom had kept on the mesa, in which he had noted down the details of each day’s work among the ruins.” The beauty that he finds in Tom’s utilitarian diary, in “the things it did not say,” suggests this alternate method of reading:

If words had cost money, Tom couldn’t have used them more sparingly. The adjectives were purely descriptive, relating to form and colour, and were used to present the objects under consideration, not the young explorer’s emotions. Yet through this austerity one felt the kindling imagination, the ardour and excitement of the boy, like the vibration in a voice when the speaker strives to conceal his emotion by using only conventional phrases (238).

Thus, a paradox: affective residues are actually *more* detectable in the economical, formal description of objects. And they are noticeable not as content, but in the way this content is

delivered, as when the speaker's voice quavers under the pressure of concealing her emotions. Affective intensity disrupts conventional language by distorting it, and it is recognizable through such distortions.

These residues are observable in the Professor's reversion and the subsequent four-chapter silence about Tom Outland that ends the novel, a silence that is immediately preceded by Tom Outland's first-person narrative, a narrative that Cather described in a 1938 letter as an experiment in inserting a *nouvelle* within the *roman*. In that letter, she also writes that she was trying to capture the effect of Dutch interior paintings, which invariably featured a "square window" that opens out onto "masts of ships, or a stretch of grey," thereby providing the spectator with a "feeling of the sea" and "a sense of the fleets of Dutch ships":

In my book I tried to make Professor St. Peter's house rather overcrowded and stuffy with new things; American proprieties, clothes, furs, petty ambitions, quivering jealousies—until one got rather stifled. Then I wanted to open the square window and let in the fresh air that blew off the Blue Mesa, and the fine disregard of trivialities which was in Tom Outland's face and in his behavior.²

In the depressing reading, the effects of this window would appear to be (fore)closed as soon as the Professor becomes a child again. I believe instead that the novel uses free indirect narration to keep this window open by opening up a space between what the Professor thinks and what Tom Outland's narrative does to him (i.e. dictate the course his life follows). Reversion therefore does not represent the sacrifice of Tom Outland in favor of a return to an earlier self; rather, it represents an arguably closer form of attachment to Outland.

Consider how the Professor's new self is described:

The Kansas boy who had come back to St. Peter this summer was not a scholar. He was a primitive. He was only interested in earth and woods and water. Wherever sun sunned and rain rained and snow snowed, wherever life sprouted and decayed, places were alike to him. He was not nearly so cultivated as Tom's old cliff-dwellers must have been—and

² Cather, Willa. "Literary Experimentation," in *Willa Cather in Person: Interviews, Speeches, and Letters*. Ed. Brent Bohlke (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1986)

yet he was terribly wise. He seemed to be at the root of the matter; Desire under all desires, Truth under all truths. He seemed to know, among other things, that he was solitary and must remain so; he had never married, never been a father. He was earth, and would return to earth. When white clouds blew over the lake like bellying sails, when the seven pine-trees turns red in the declining sun, he felt satisfaction and said to himself merely: 'That is right.' Coming upon a curly root that thrust itself across his path, he said: 'That is it.' When the maple-leaves along the street began to turn yellow and waxy, and were soft to the touch,—like the skin on old faces,—he said: 'That is true; it is time.' All these recognitions gave him a kind of sad pleasure (241).

Godfrey's childhood self is characterized by day-dreaming, half-awake loafing, a new sense of conviction in the primacy of the senses, and an attendant subordination of language to deictic utterances. These familiar characteristics of the primitive/child make it easy to draw conclusions now (about modernist primitivism, et al.), but I believe this would be to jump the gun. For the moment, let's put this passage side-by-side with Tom Outland's description of his journey along the trail to the mesa. Just as Godfrey has lost his attachment to his family and career in becoming a child, Tom has just lost the Anisazi relics that he has collected over the summer:

Every inch of that trail was dear to me, every delicate curve about the old *piñon roots*, every chancy track along the face of the cliffs, and the deep windings back into shrubbery and safety. The wild-currant bushes were in *bloom*, and where the path climbed the side of a narrow ravine, the scent of them in the sun was so heavy that it made me *soft*, made me want to lie down and sleep. *I wanted to see and touch everything, like home-sick children when they come home.*

When I pulled out on top of the mesa, the *rays of sunlight fell slantingly through the little twisted piñons*,—the light was all in between them, as *red as a daylight fire*, they *fairly swam in it* (216-17).

The Kansas boy who had come back to St. Peter this summer was not a scholar. He was a primitive. He was only interested in earth and woods and water....He seemed to be at the root of the matter; Desire under all desires, Truth under all truths....He was earth, and would return to earth. When white clouds blew over the lake like bellying sails, when the seven *pine-trees turns red in the declining sun*, he felt satisfaction and said to himself merely: 'That is right.' Coming upon *a curly root* that thrust itself across his path, he said: 'That is it.' When the maple-leaves along the street *began to turn yellow and waxy*, and were *soft to the touch*,—like the skin on old faces,—he said: 'That is true; it is time.' All these recognitions gave him a kind of sad pleasure (241).

My italics emphasize the places where the Professor's narrative repeats the objects (roots, the life-cycle of plants, sunlight on pine-trees, textures) of Tom's narrative. This comparison is meant to defamiliarize the easy assumption that the Professor has in fact become some vague kind of primitive; rather, I believe that his deictic remarks, in falling on the same objects, represent rereadings of Tom's passage, making explicit things that were formerly only implicit. Tom's unaccented description of the appearance of a sunset on the piñon trees, the curving of their roots, and the bloom of the wild-currant bushes retroactively becomes the *accents* of Godfrey's childhood.

Many other correspondences could be drawn out, but what they all add up to is the fact that the Professor's narrative does not simply recapitulate his childhood, but recapitulates Tom's narrative. For in describing Tom as the second great "romance" of the Professor's life, I believe the novel suggests that Tom makes it possible for the Professor to inhabit *the genre* of the romance, to structure his life according to an adventure narrative like the one told in Tom's narrative. There's not space enough to work out this insight here, nor is it necessary. For the moment we're attending to occurs after the romance is over, after the Professor's scholarly adventure amidst domesticity has run its course, after his fifteen years "on the trail of his [Spanish] adventurers" (16). After the romance, Godfrey is in the same position as Tom after Tom loses his relics. Just as the mesa becomes to Tom "no longer an adventure, but a religious emotion," so too does *Tom* become the occasion for Godfrey's own ecstatic religious experience, in the literal sense of standing outside oneself (226-27).

The difference between the two situations is that the Professor repeats this emotion, whereas Tom doesn't. This is what makes the Professor a nostalgic. What makes Godfrey notable is that his acceptance of nostalgic attachment has brought him worldly success. If Lake

Michigan had “made pictures in him when he was unwilling and unconscious, when his eyes were merely open and wide,” then I think the novel argues that the compulsive nostalgic attachment manifests itself in such pictures during one’s youth, and that we should see this desire at work again when, in his student years, “the design of [the Professor’s] book” is unveiled across the horizon while he’s in a boat off the coast of Spain (21). By accepting this design as “inevitable...it had seen him through”; that is, the Professor accepts the product of his nostalgic desire without questioning it (89). And when Tom Outland “brought him a kind of second youth,” he gives the Professor a new lease on nostalgia by allowing him to draw from Tom’s own youth (234). So when the Professor becomes a child again, he is not simply following a compulsion that returns him to the primal scene of *his* childhood nostalgia, but he is also returning to another childhood, the youth of Tom Outland.

This is the local significance of the silences of the last four chapters: two childhoods coming together through one person’s nostalgia. The historical significance of these silences involves how they gather together a new constellation of concepts around nostalgia and the home – childhood, the primitive, religion/faith, emotion, and queer desire – and how they mark the arrival of a recognizably modern mode of nostalgia as retrospective historical emotion. Yet there is an ethical significance too, one located in this meditation on nostalgia as another way of loving, and another way of dying. For if nostalgia remains a compulsive desire in Cather’s novel, a form of attachment that the Professor never knows he inhabits, these concepts also confer on his nostalgia a new capacity to produce “religious emotion.” This emotion is visible in St. Peter’s “sad pleasure,” which is almost certainly an allusion to one of the most frequent intertexts of the novel, Walter Pater’s *The Renaissance*. At the base of all religions, Pater writes in a beautiful passage, lies a “universal pagan sentiment”:

This pagan sentiment measures the sadness with which the human mind is filled whenever its thoughts wander far from what is here, and now. It is beset by notions of irresistible natural powers, for the most part ranged against man, but the secret also of his luck, making the earth golden and the grape fiery for him...It is with a rush of homesickness that the thought of death presents itself. He would remain at home for ever on the earth if he could: as it loses its colour, and the senses fail, he clings ever closer to it; but since the mouldering of bones and flesh must go on to the end, he is careful for charms and talismans that may chance to have some friendly power in them when the inevitable shipwreck comes.³

For Cather, writing a half-century later, this nostalgia becomes the principle of her anti-modernism, of a mode of writing that attempts to linger in the feelings produced by the backward pull of desire (nostalgic, queer, or otherwise).⁴ Here, again, are Cather's well-known words in her preface to *Not Under Forty*, which I hope now resonate anew:

The world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts, and persons and prejudices recalled in these sketches slid back into yesterday's seven thousand years. Thomas Mann, to be sure, belongs immensely to the forward-goers, and they are concerned only with his forwardness. But he also goes back a long way, and his backwardness is more gratifying to the backward. It is for the backward, and by one of their number, that these sketches were written.⁵

After nostalgia brings him into a closer intimacy with Tom Outland, the Professor very nearly kills himself. The critics who have produced the most spectacular queer and materialist readings of the novel haven't had much to say about this moment, as they have focused on the second of the novel's three sections, "Tom Outland's Story." Yet this incident is in fact crucial for an understanding of the novel's problematization of queer desire and acquisitive desire alike. For Godfrey St. Peter's quasi-suicide has everything to do with what it meant to be nostalgic in 1925.

Does Godfrey St. Peter very nearly commit *suicide*? On the face of it, it's hard to say. The professor falls asleep in the old house he refuses to leave, on the couch in the cramped,

³ Pater, Walter. *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. (London: Macmillan, 1873), 171-72.

⁴ See Love, Heather. *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007).

⁵ Cather, Willa. *Not Under Forty* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988), v.

poorly ventilated room he had until recently used as a study to write; the window he always props open for fresh air blows shut this time, and the leaky gas stove he has hung onto begins to asphyxiate him. Here's what the novel says:

The long-anticipated coincidence had happened, he realized. The storm had blown the stove out and the window shut. The thing to do was to get up and open the window. But suppose he did not get up—? How far was a man required to exert himself against accident? How would such a case be decided under English law? He hadn't lifted his hand against himself—was he required to lift it for himself?⁶

Shortly afterwards, St. Peter loses consciousness and it is only by a chance event that he survives, as the family's sewing-woman happens to hear him fall (a fall she interprets as his effort to turn off the stove), and she rushes in to save him. The passage represents a particularly difficult instance of free indirect discourse. If free indirect discourse, as Barbara Johnson and Lauren Berlant have argued, represents the "partial-merging with a character's consciousness," what does it mean to narrate the consciousness of a man who is only partially roused from his sleep by the smell of gas and who is already in the process of losing consciousness? How can the reader, as Berlant says, "transact a different, more open relation of unfolding to what she is reading, judging, being, and thinking she understands" when what she is merging with seems to be a radical abdication of the will, a kind of suicide that does not involve acting upon the desire to kill oneself, but rather letting oneself die through a passivity posed by one terrifying question.⁷ "But suppose he did not get up—?"

In "How is Weakness of the Will Possible?" a 1969 essay that catalyzed new interest among analytic philosophers on Aristotle's concept of *akrasia*, Donald Davidson lights upon a scenario that is both strikingly similar and far less worrisome:

I have just relaxed in my bed after a hard day's work when it occurs to me that I have not brushed my teeth. Concern for my health bids me rise and brush; sensual indulgence

⁶ Cather, Willa. *The Professor's House* (New York: Vintage, 1990 [1925]), 252.

⁷ Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2011).

suggests I forget my teeth for once. I weigh the alternatives in the light of the reasons: on the one hand, my teeth are strong, and at my age decay is slow. It won't matter much if I don't brush them. On the other hand, if I get up, it will spoil my calm and may result in a bad night's sleep. Everything considered, I judge I would do better to stay in bed. Yet my feeling that I ought to brush my teeth is too strong for me: wearily I leave my bed and brush my teeth.⁸

This question of why individuals sometimes act against their better judgment has been on the minds of many theorists lately. This is what Davidson terms the weakness of the will, though there are very different ways of approaching this question, as the contrasting examples of Henry James and Sarah Orne Jewett have shown. Davidson's example invokes duty and responsibility in order to show that the familiar argument that associates weakness with pleasurable emotions intense enough to overwhelm the will is too narrow; once we recognize that even duty can be a weakness, he argues, the problem expands. Cather expands this problem once again by recasting it on more troubling ethical terrain. To understand the stakes that the novel gives to this problem, we first need to understand that within the logic of the novel, the gas isn't what threatens to kill Godfrey. Rather, the professor nearly dies of nostalgia.

Christopher Nealon has described Godfrey St. Peter as "a history professor who willfully resists the pressures of modern American capitalism and favors, instead, a nostalgia for French and Spanish culture."⁹ I think Nealon is only partly right: he's right because it's hard not to read St. Peter as the exemplary figure of nostalgia in a novel that is everywhere concerned with the backward pull of desire. With his rampant erudition and love of France and Spain, it's also easy to see him as nostalgic for the Old World. However, I think this claim misses a crucial aspect of the professor's desire. What he misses is St. Peter's compulsive fixation on his own childhood, a

⁸ Davidson, Donald. "How is Weakness of the Will Possible?" in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001), 33. See Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000).

⁹ Nealon, Christopher. "Feeling and Affiliation in Willa Cather," in *Foundlings: Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion before Stonewall* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2001).

fixation that is obviously related to the eight-year old boy he becomes after his adolescent and adult lives are shedded. Here is how the novel describes the homesickness the professor experienced when his family moved from the shores of Lake Michigan to the fields of Kansas when he was eight:

St. Peter nearly died of it. Never could he forget the few moments on the train when that sudden, innocent blue across the sand dunes was dying from his sight. It was like sinking for the third time. No later anguish, and he had had his share, went so deep or seemed so final. Even in his long, happy student years with the Thierault family in France, that stretch of blue water was the one thing he was home-sick for... 'No,' he used to tell the [Thierault] boys, who were always asking him about *le Michigan*, "It is altogether different...I don't know, *il est toujours plus naïf*." (21)

This is a classic version of nostalgia as pathological homesickness, as the longing to return home. The professor maintains this compulsive attachment throughout the novel, even choosing his academic job based on its proximity to the lake. It is an understanding of nostalgia that we find in Walter Benjamin too, when he writes while in exile in Paris in the 1930s that he chose to write his memoir, *Berlin Childhood Around 1900* as a way to "inoculate" himself against "feelings of homesickness," "to keep my yearning in bounds through insight into the necessary and irretrievable loss of the societal past."¹⁰

In both Cather and Benjamin, we find a complex attempt to rework pathological attachment to the past. If, for Benjamin, dialectical historicism and memoir offer the single remaining hope of escaping from the compulsive desire of nostalgia prompted by his exile from fascist Germany, it offers no such messianic possibility for the professor. Rather, it's the other way around: nostalgia is what allows the professor to write history. The novel meticulously depicts how the conditions of living in history allow for the writing of history – which in the professor's case means his eight-volume history of *The Spanish Adventurers of North America*.

¹⁰ Benjamin, Walter. *Berlin Childhood Around 1900*. Trans. Howard Eiland (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2006).

Yet it uses a curious term to discuss how individuals encounter this historicity: “inconvenience.” As opposed to the bourgeois modern conveniences that St. Peter’s family outfit their new house with, St. Peter remains attached to his old house precisely because of its inconveniences – its wallpapers and furniture that have come to look hideous with the passage of time, its narrow, steep staircases, bad bathrooms and, above all, its cramped, poorly ventilated third-floor study. There is a consolation to living in the inconvenient state of obsolescence, however, and that is that it provides Godfrey with a prophylactic barrier against his family, caught up as they are in staying up to date with the contemporary. And yet it is precisely these inconveniences that the professor almost dies of: not from the leaky gas stove itself, but rather from his attachment to these inconveniences as the very things that give him the privacy to write. What the professor nearly dies of is his isolating, insulating compulsive desire to remain attached to the past.

I believe that in Cather’s writings, we’re supposed to see compulsive insulation as the necessary precondition for the production of art. Many of the major settings of the novel – the professor’s study, the boat off the coast of Spain where he first envisions his project, Lake Michigan, where he goes swimming in his childhood terrain, and the Anisazi cliff-dweller mesa where Tom Outland experiences the “religious emotion” that sets him on the path of inventing the Outland vacuum engine – are all places where isolation creates poetic forms of fixated desire. The novel’s linkage between isolation, compulsion, and invention – figured by the cliff-dwellers’ buildings and relics, the professor’s history, and an architect’s blueprint that gets botched due to the interference of university administrators – suggest a way that we can reformulate Davidson’s weakness of the will. When considered in relation to the foregoing discussion, modernist art can be said to be defined by the effort to inhabit a relation of nostalgic attachment, in the face of the obstacles of modernization. So, while the professor’s near-suicide, his passive acceptance of the

arrival of death, would typically be judged to be a prime example of the weakness of the will, in Davidson's formulation, it also forces us to raise new questions about alternative kinds of life where the opposition between desire and will would no longer matter.

This is one way of saying that the depathologization of compulsive nostalgia, which signals the emergence of a recognizably modern form of nostalgia for many, does not necessarily entail changing its narrative form, but rather giving it a new moral valence. It means accepting compulsive attachments. Yet the implications of this acceptance, as the novel shows, are profound, and are not generally talked about in today's world of nostalgia. Indeed, the professor's near-suicide occurs after he has written his history, after he's even finished editing the journal of the boy, Tom Outland, who had given St. Peter what the novel calls "a second youth," and after he's come to the conviction that he was nearing the end of his life. Hence, the novel poses a problem: if monomaniacal desire is harmful to one's ability to abide in the social and domestic spheres, but beneficial to singular pursuits such as art and science, can nostalgia really be considered a disease of the will, as it had been for the previous two centuries and more? The novel thus uses the professor's passive suicide – in which he would let himself die of a series of refusals to adapt to the present – to expand the ethical terrain of the weakness of the will. When fixated desire is found to be productive, when this desire has been satisfied to the best of an individual's abilities, and when any adaptation to the present would require such a tremendous effort as to incur intense pain, is death something to be avoided? To put this another way, is there life after the weakness of the will?¹¹

¹¹ I believe that this question may resonate interestingly with discussions of queer negativity like those raised by Lee Edelman. *No Future* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2006).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Auerbach, Nina. *Communities of Women: An Idea in Fiction* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1978).

Anderson, Warwick. *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2006).

Anonymous. "45th Congress, 2nd Session, House of Representatives, Report No. 96: Expedition to the Polar Seas," in *Index to the Reports of Committees of the House of Representatives for the First and Second Sessions of the Forty-Fifth Congress, 1877-'78* Vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878).

Anonymous. "An Act to Reinforce the American Army," *The Remembrancer, or, Impartial Repository of Public Events for the Year 1777* (London: J. Almon, 1778).

Anonymous. "Appendix B: Return of Deaf and Dumb, Blind, Insane and Idiotic Persons in the Several Counties of the State of Ohio, in the Year 1856," in *Message and Reports made to the General Assembly and Governor of the State of Ohio for the Year 1856 Part II* (Columbus: Richard Nevins, 1857).

Anonymous. *The Arctic: A History of Its Discovery, Its Plants, Animals, and Natural Phenomena* (Edinburgh: George Tod, 1876).

Anonymous. "The Arctic Regions," *The Friend: A Religious and Literary Journal*. 3, no. 34 (June 7, 1830).

Anonymous. "Art. I.—History, Description, and Statistics of the Bloomingdale Asylum for the Insane, State of New York, America. By Pliny Earle, M.D., Physician to the Institution. New York, 1848," *The Journal of Psychological Medicine and Mental Pathology* 2, no. 6 (April 1849).

Anonymous "ART 1. *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; on Military Operations; and on the Climate of the West-Indies*. By Benjamin Moseley, M.D. &c. 4th Edition, 8vo. p. 670. London, 1803" in *The Medical Repository, and Review of American Publications on Medicine, Surgery, and the Auxiliary Branches of Science*. Edited by Samuel Latham Mitchill and Edward Miller. Vol. 3 (New York: T.&J. Swords, 1806).

Anonymous. "Art. III.—*Traité sur l'Alienation Mentale, et sur les Hospices des Alienés*. PAR JOSEPH GUISLAIN, Medecin à Gand. *Ouvrage couronné et publié par la Commission de Surveillance Médicale dans la Province de Norde-Hollande, Séant à Amsterdam*," *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* 31, no. 99 (April 1829): 358.

Anonymous. *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Trustees of the State Lunatic Hospital, at Worcester* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1850).

Anonymous. "Extracts from Journals, Foreign and Domestic," *London Medical Gazette, or Journal of Practical Medicine* 67, no. 3 (March 14, 1829).

Anonymous. "General Notes," *Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club* 7, no. 2 (April 1882).

Anonymous. "The History of Europe," *The Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1777* (London: J. Dodsley, 1778).

Anonymous. "Incendiarism in Mental Affections and Diseases: a Contribution to Legal Medicine, for Jurists and Physicians. By Dr. Willers Jessen. Kiel: E. Homann. 1860," *American Journal of Insanity* 18, no. 2 (October 1861).

Anonymous. *The Maryland Medical and Surgical Journal, and Official Organ of the Medical Department of the Army and Navy of the United States*

Anonymous. "On Feigned and Factitious Diseases, Chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen. By Hector Gavin, M.D. &c." *The Medico-Chirurgical Review, and Journal of Practical Medicine* 95, no. 1, (Jan. 1844).

Anonymous. "Optical Illusions," *Bradford's Journal: A Miscellany of Literature, Science, and Art* 3, no. 20 (Sept. 17, 1842).

Anonymous. "Polar Regions," *The Edinburgh Encyclopedia: The First American Edition*. Vol. 16. Ed. David Brewster (Philadelphia: Joseph and Edward Parker, 1832).

Anonymous. *Proverbs; or, the Manual of Wisdom, being an Alphabetical Arrangement of the best English, Spanish, French, Italian, and other Proverbs* (London: Tabart and Co., 1804).

Anonymous. "Quarterly Periscope of Practical Medicine; being the Spirit of the Medical Journals, Foreign and Domestic; with Commentaries," *The Medico-Chirurgical Review* 4, no. 7 (January 1826).

Anonymous. "Review of *Constitution du Corps Helvetique, Extrait du Guide Voyageur, en Suisse*. Paris. Buisson," *Critical Review* 5 (1792).

Anonymous. *The Sixth Annual Report of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States* (Washington: Davis and Force, 1823).

Anonymous. "State Medicine. Report of the Lunatic Asylum of St Petersburg for ten years subsequent to 1819, (Journal der Praktischen Heilkunde, April 1831.)," *The Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* 36, no. 109 (October 1831).

Anonymous. "The Tyrolese Carrier," *The Welcome Guest*. No. 57 (May 28, 1859).
Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998).

- . *The Life of the Mind* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978).
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000).
- Arnold, Thomas. *Observations on the Nature, Kinds, Causes, and Preventions of Insanity, Lunacy, or Madness* (Leicester: G. Ireland, G. Robinson, T. Cadell, 1782).
- Austin, Horatio. *Arctic Miscellanies: A Souvenir of the Late Polar Search. By the Officers and Seamen of the Expedition* (London: Colburn, 1852).
- Austin, Linda. *Nostalgia in Transition, 1780-1917* (Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2007).
- Babb, Lawrence. *The Elizabethan Malady* (Lansing: Michigan State Press, 1951).
- Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Reverie: Childhood, Language, and the Cosmos*. Trans. Daniel Russell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969 [1960]).
- Bacon, Edwin. *Boston: A Guide Book* (Boston: Ginn, 1903).
- Bartholow, Roberts. "Sanitary Memoirs of the War," in *Sanitary Memoirs of the War of the Rebellion. Collected and Published by the United States Sanitary Commission*. Ed. Austin Flint (New York: U.S. Sanitary Commission, 1867),
- Baumeister, Carl. "Letters of Major Baurmeister during the Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-1778 II," Trans. Bernhard Uhlendorf and Edna Vosper, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 60, no. 1 (Jan. 1936).
- Beard, George Miller. *American Nervousness, Its Causes and Consequences: A Supplement to Nervous Exhaustion (Neurasthenia)* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1881).
- Beck, Theodric and William Dunlop. *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence* (London: John Anderson, 1825).
- Becker, John. *The Sexagenary, or Reminiscences of the American Revolution* (Albany: W.C. Little and O. Steele, 1833).
- Bell, Richard. *We Shall Be No More: Suicide and Self-Government in the Newly United States* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2012).
- Benjamin, Walter. *Berlin Childhood Around 1900*. Trans. Howard Eiland (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2006).
- Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2011).

Bertholon, Pierre. *De L'Électricité du Corps Humain dans L'Etat de Santé et de Maladie; ouvrage couronné par l'Académie de Lyon, dans lequel on trait de l'Électricité de l'Atmosphère, de son influence & de ses effets sur l'économie animale. &c. &c.* (Lyon: Bernuset, 1780).

Berton, Pierre. *The Arctic Grail: The Quest for the North West Passage and the North Pole, 1818-1909* (New York: Penguin, 1988).

Bewell, Alan. *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1999).

Biopolitics, A Reader. Eds. Timothy Campbell and Adam Sitze (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2013).

Blair, William. *The Soldier's Friend: or, the Means of Preserving the Health of Military Men; addressed to the Officers of the British Army* (London: Longman, Vernon and Hood, Murray and Highley, Hookham and Carpenter, 1798).

Blanc, Marie-Therese de Solms. *The Condition of Women in the United States*. Trans. Abby Langdon Alger (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895).

Boym, Svetlana. *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).

Brand, Charles. *Journal of a Voyage to Peru: A Passage Across the Cordillera of the Andes, in the Winter of 1827, Performed on Foot in the Snow; And A Journey Across the Pampas* (London: Henry Colburn, 1828).

Brion and D'Yvoiry. *Essai de Médecine Théorique et Pratique. Ouvrage Périodique, Dédié Aux Amis De L'Humanité*. Vol. 2 (Geneva, 1784).

Bronfen, Elisabeth. *The Knotted Subject: Hysteria and its Discontents* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1998).

Brown, Bill. *The Material Unconscious: American Amusement, Stephen Crane, and the Economics of Play* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997).

———. *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2003).

Brown, Gillian. *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992).

Brown-Séguard, Charles-Édouard. *Lectures on the Diagnosis and Treatment of Functional Nervous Affections* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1868).

Browne, Jonah. *Institutions in Physick, Collected from the Writings of the Most Eminent Physicians* (London: Printed by W.R. for Jonah Browne, 1714).

Bunke, Simon. *Heimweh: Studien zur Kultur- und Literaturgeschichte einer todlichen Krankheit* (2009).

Calhoun, J. Theodore. "Nostalgia as a Disease of Field Service." *The Medical and Surgical Reporter: A Weekly Journal* (Feb. 27, 1864).

Call, Annie Payson. *Power Through Repose* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891).

Campbell, Hugh. *Nervous Exhaustion and the Diseases Induced by it, with observations on the Origin and Nature of Nervous Force* (London, Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1873).

Carlson, E.T. "Benjamin Rush on Revolutionary War Hygiene," in *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* (1979): 614-35.

Carman, Bliss. "The Verses of Miss Gertrude Hall," *The Chap-Book*, 1, no. 8 (1894).

Carpenter, William. "On the Unconscious Action of the Brain," *Popular Science* (Sept. 1872).

Casey, Edward. "The World of Nostalgia," *Man and World* 20 (1987).

Casparis, John. "The Swiss Mercenary System: Labor-Emigration from the Semiperiphery," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 5, no.4 (1982).

Cassin, Barbara. *Nostalgia: When Are We Ever At Home?* Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2016).

Castle, Terry. "Haunted by Olive Chancellor," in *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1993), 150-185.

Catalogue of the Medical Library, Belonging to the Pennsylvania Hospital (1806).

Cather, Willa. *Not Under Forty* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988).

———. *The Professor's House* (New York: Vintage, 1990 [1925]).

———. *Willa Cather in Person: Interviews, Speeches, and Letters*. Ed. L. Brent Bohlke (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1986).

Cavell, Stanley. *The Senses of Walden* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1972).

Coffin, Victor. *The Province of Quebec and the Early American Revolution: A Study in English-American Colonial History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1896).

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria, or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. Vol. 2 (London: Rest Fenner, 1817).

- . “On the Slave Trade,” in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: The Watchman*. Vol. 2. Ed. Lewis Patton (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1970).
- Coontz, Stephanie. *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).
- Covel, John. “Office of the Physicians of the City Prison,” *Second Annual Report of the Governors of the Alms House, New York, for the Year 1850* (New York: Wm. C. Bryant, 1851).
- Crawford, John. *Cursus Medicinae or a Complete Theory of Physic* (London: W. Taylor, 1724).
- Cronon, William. *Nature’s Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992).
- Cullen, William. *Synopsis Nosologiae Methodicae* (Edinburgh, 1769).
- Dames, Nicholas. *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810-1870* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001).
- Dandrey, Patrick. “La Maladie de L’Exil: De La Souffrance du Regret à la Pathologie de la Nostalgie,” in Clayton Santos Guimarães, Cristina Marinho et Nuno Pinto Ribeiro (orgs.), *Law and Compassion, Drama and Pity. The Search for a common Ground (Direito e Compaxaio, Teatro e Piedade. A Procura de um lugar comum)*, Porto, CETUP (Centro de Estudos Teatrais da Universidade do Porto), « Teatro do Mundo. 9 », 2014, p. 349-386.
- Darwin, Charles. *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, including an Autobiographical Chapter Vol I*. Ed. Francis Darwin (New York: Appleton, 1919).
- Darwin, Erasmus. *Zoonomia; Or, the Laws of Organic Life Vol. 2* (London: J. Johnson, 1796).
- Davidson, Donald. “How is Weakness of the Will Possible?” in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001).
- Davis, Fred. *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia* (New York: Free Press, 1979).
- De Boismont, A. Brierre. *Hallucinations: Or, the Rational History of Apparitions, Visions, Dreams, Ecstasy, Magnetism, and Somnambulism* (Philadelphia, Lindsay and Blakiston, 1853).
- Dean, Eric. *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1997).
- Denis, Adrián López. “Melancholia, Slavery, and Racial Pathology in Eighteenth-Century Cuba,” *Science in Context* 18, no. 2 (June 2005): 179-199.
- Descourtilz, Michel-Étienne. *Voyage d’un Naturaliste... Vol. 3* (Paris: Dufart, 1809).

Dika, Vera. *Recycled Culture in Contemporary Art and Film: The Uses of Nostalgia* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003).

Dodman, Thomas. *Homesick Epoch: Dying of Nostalgia in Post-Revolutionary France* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2011).

Dulles, Joseph Heatly. "Extracts from the Diary of Joseph Heatly Dulles. Contributed by Charles W. Dulles, M.D.," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 35, no. 3 (1911).

Duncan, Andrew. *Annals of Medicine, for the Year 1799. Exhibiting a Concise View of the latest and Most Important Discoveries in Medicine and Medical Philosophy*. Vol. 4 (Edinburgh: J. Pillans, 1800).

Duneer, Anita. "Sarah Orne Jewett and (Maritime) Literary Tradition: Coastal and Narrative Navigations of the 'Country of the Pointed Firs,'" *American Literary Realism* 39, no. 3 (Spring 2007).

Dutcher, William. "Educational Leaflet No. 7: The Snowy Heron," *Bird-Lore: An Illustrated Bi-Monthly Magazine Dedicated to the Study and Protection of Birds, Official Organ of the Audubon Society* 6, no. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1904).

Dwyer, Michael. *Back to the Fifties: Nostalgia, Hollywood Film, and Popular Music of the Seventies and Eighties* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2015).

Earle, Pliny. *A Visit to Thirteen Asylums for the Insane in Europe; to which are added a brief notice of similar institutions in transatlantic countries and in the United States, and an essay, on the causes, duration, termination and moral treatment of insanity. With Copious Statistics* (Philadelphia: J. Dobson, 1841).

Edelman, Lee. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2006).

Elliott, Henry Wood. *Our Arctic Province: Alaska and the Seal Islands* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1897).

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Boston Hymn," *The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc.* Vol. 7. Ed. Frank Moore (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864).

"Everybody's Just Wild About Nostalgia," *Life Magazine*, February 18, 1971.

Falconer, William. *Remarks on the Influence of Climate, Situation, Nature of Country, Population, Nature of Food, and Way of Life* (London: C. Dilly, 1781).

Favier, Pierre. *Quaestio Medica...An Pothopadridalgia, seu anxio Patriam repetendi desiderio vulgo maladie du Pays; promptus ad Patriam reditus, sit cateris omnibus remediis praeferendus* (Avignon: Franciscus Mallard, 1713).

Fisher, Philip. *Still the New World: Literature in a Culture of Creative Destruction* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999).

Fleissner, Jennifer. *Women, Compulsion, Modernity: The Moment of American Naturalism* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2005).

Földényi, László. *Melancholy* Trans. Tim Wilkinson (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2016 [1984]).

Foucault, Michel. *L'Archéologie du Savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969).

Foucault, Michel. "Linguistiques et sciences sociales," in *Dits et Écrits (1954-1988), tome I: 1954-1975* Eds. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (Paris: Gallimard), 821-842.

Frazer, James. *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion* Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1890).

Frederickson, George. *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

Garland, Hugh. "Eulogy delivered at Petersburg, VA., July 12, 1845" in *Monument to the Memory of General Andrew Jackson: containing twenty-five Eulogies and Sermons delivered on the occasion of his death...* (Philadelphia: James A. Bill, 1848).

Gavin, Hector. *On Feigned and Factitious Diseases, Chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen, on the means used to simulate or produce them, and on the best modes of discovering impostors: being the prize essay in the class of military surgery, in the University of Edinburgh, Session, 1835-36, with Additions* (London: John Churchill, 1843).

Geddes, Alexander. *An Apology for Slavery; or, Six Cogent Arguments against the Immediate Abolition of the Slave-Trade* (London: J. Johnson, 1792).

Gillman, Susan. "Regionalism and Nationalism in Jewett's *Country of the Pointed Firs*," in *New Essays on the Country of the Pointed Firs*. Ed. June Howard (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994).

Gilmore, Paul. *Aesthetic Materialism: Electricity and American Romanticism* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009).

Gleason, Patrick, "Sarah Orne Jewett's 'The Foreigner' and the Transamerican Routes of New England Regionalism," *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers* 28, no. 1 (2011).

Goldsmith, Oliver. *The Traveller, or a Prospect of Society. A Poem Inscribed to the Rev. Mr. Henry Goldsmith* (London: J. Newbury, 1765).

Goldstein, Jan. *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth-Century* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987).

Gomez, Michael. *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Goodman, Kevis. "Reading Motion: Coleridge's 'Free Spirit' and its Medical Background," *European Romantic Review* 26, no. 3 (2015): 349-56.

———. "'Uncertain Disease': Nostalgia, Pathologies of Motion, Practices of Reading," *Studies in Romanticism* 49, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 197-227.

Gowland, Angus. "The Problem of Early Modern Melancholy," *Past & Present* 191, no.1 (2006): 77-120.

Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich. *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2003).

Hacking, Ian. *Mad Travelers: Reflections on the Reality of Transient Mental Illness* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002).

———. *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990).

Haeckel, Ernst. *Art Forms in Nature: The Prints of Ernst Haeckel* (New York: Prestel, 2008).

Hamilton, Robert. "History of a remarkable Case of Nostalgia affecting a native of wales, and occurring in Britain. By Dr Robert Hamilton physician at Ipswich," in *Medical Commentaries, for the Year M,DCC,LXXXVI. Exhibiting A Concise View of the Latest and Most Important Discoveries in Medicine and Medical Philosophy*. Ed. Andrew Duncan. Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: C. Elliot and Co., 1786), 343-348.

Hammond, William. *Treatise on Hygiene, with Special Reference to the Military Service* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1863).

Heidegger, Martin. "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

Herrliberger, David. *Schweitzerischer Ehrentempel, in welchem die wahren bildnisse teils verstorbener, teils annoch lebender Beruhmter Manner geistlich und weltlichen Standes, sowol aus den XIII. Als zugewandten Orten...* (Basel: Daniel Ectenstein, 1748).

Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983).

Hofer, Johannes. *Dissertatio Medica De NOΣΤΑΛΓΙΑ, Oder heimwehe* (Basil: Jacobi Bertschii, 1688).

—. “*Texts and Documents: Medical Dissertation on Nostalgia by Johannes Hofer, 1688,*” Trans. Carolyn Kiser Anspach. *Institute of the History of Medicine Bulletin* No. 2 (1934): 376-391.

Hoffman, Frederick. *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro* (New York: MacMillan, 1896).

Holbrook, John. *Military Tactics: Adapted to the Different Corps in the United States, according to the Latest Improvements* (Middletown: E&H Clark, 1826),

Hooke, Robert. *Micrographia: Or some Physiological Descriptions of Minute Bodies made by Magnifying Glasses with Observations and Inquiries thereupon* (London: James Allestry, 1667).

Howarth, William. “Imagined Territory: Writing the Wetlands,” *New Literary History* 30, no. 3 (1999): 509-539.

Howells, William Dean. *Criticism & Fiction* (New York: Harper, 1891).

Howgate, Henry. *Polar Colonization: Memorial to Congress and Action of Scientific and Commercial Associations* (Washington, D.C.: Beresford, 1878).

Hoyer, Johann Georg. “Observatio XIX. DN. D. JOANNIS GEORGII HOYERI. *De Nostalgia,*” in *Acta Physico-Medica Academiae Caesare Leopoldino-Carolinae Naturae Curiosorum exhibentio Ephemerides sive Observationes Historias et Experimenta Celeberrimis Germaniae et Exterarum Regionum Viris habita & cummincate, singulari studio collecta*. Vol 3 (Nuremberg: W.M. Endter and J.A. Engelbrecht, 1733).

Hsu, Hsuan. “Literature and Regional Production,” *American Literary History* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 36-69.

Huston, John. *Let There Be Light* (1946). DVD.

Hutcheon, Linda. “Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern,” *Methods for the Study of Literature as Cultural Memory, Studies in Comparative Literature* 30 (2000): 189-207.

Illbruck, Helmut. *Nostalgia: Origins and Ends of an Unenlightened Disease* (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 2012).

Images of the Earth: Essays in the History of the Environmental Sciences. Eds. L.J. Jordanova and Roy S. Porter (Chalfont St. Giles: British Society for the History of Science, 1979).

Irving, Washington. *Life of George Washington* Vol. 2 (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1856).

James, Henry. "11. — *Azarian: an Episode*. By Harriet Elizabeth Prescott, Author of 'The Amber Gods,' etc. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1864. 16mp. pp. 251," *The North American Review* 100, no. 206 (Jan. 1865): 270.

———. *The American Scene* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1907).

———. "The Art of Fiction," in *The Art of Fiction* (Boston: Cupples, Upham, 1885).

———. *England at War: An Essay* (London: Central Committee for National Patriotic Organisations, 1915).

———. *Hawthorne* (London: Macmillan, 1879).

———. *The Notebooks of Henry James*. Eds. F.O. Matthiessen and Kenneth B. Murdock (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981), 67

———. *Portraits of Places* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1883).

———. *Partial Portraits* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888).

James, Henry. *Within the Rim and Other Essays 1914-15* (London: W. Collins, 1920)

James, Susan. *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press: 1997).

James, William. James, "The Gospel of Relaxation," in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: And to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* New York: Holt, 1899), 199-228.

———. *The Principles of Psychology* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1891).

Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1991).

Jamieson, Robert. "Lectures on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity, Delivered in the Medical School of King's College, Aberdeen. By Robert Jamieson, M.D. Lecturer on Medical Jurisprudence in the University. Lecture II," 46, no. 1185 *London Medical Gazette, or, Journal of Practical Medicine* (Aug. 16, 1850).

Jankèlevitch, Vladimir. *L'Irreversible et Nostalgie* (Paris: Flammarion, 1974).

Jankovic, Vladimir. *Confronting the Climate: British Airs and the Making of Environmental Medicine* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Jarvis, Edward. "What shall we do with the Insane of the Western Country?" in *Report Relative to an Asylum for Lunatics, by the Joint Committee of Council and Assembly, to which was*

referred that part of the Governor's Message Related Thereto (Trenton: Sherman and Harron, 1841).

Jewett, Sarah Orne. "A White Heron," in *A White Heron and Other Stories* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1886).

———. *Country By-Ways* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1881).

———. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1896).

———. *The Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett*. Ed. Annie Fields (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1911).

———. *The Story of the Normans: Told Chiefly in Relation to their Conquest of England* (New York: G.P. Putnam's, 1889).

Job, Herbert. "The Extermination of the Egret for Women's Hats," *Country Life in America* 7, no. 6 (April 1905): 629.

Kane, Elisha Kent. *Arctic Explorations: The Second Grinnell Expedition in Search of Sir John Franklin, 1853, '54, '55, illustrated by upwards of three hundred engravings, from Sketches by the Author* Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Childs & Peterson, 1856).

———. *Open Polar Sea in Connection with the Search after Sir John Franklin and his Companions* (New York: Baker, Godwin, 1853).

Kaplan Amy. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2005).

Kern, Stephen. *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1983).

King, Lester. "Some Problems of Causality in Eighteenth Century Medicine," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 37 (1963): 15-24.

Kupfferschmid, Johannes. *Dissertatio Chirurgico-Media de Morbis Praeliantium quos quidem in victoriosa Bernatum Expeditione Bellica Anno MDCCXII passim inter milites praeliantes, numeroseque sauciatos observare licuit* (Basil: E. and J.R. Thurnisiorum, 1715).

Lamb, Jonathan. *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680-1840* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2001).

———. "'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', a Ballad of the Scurvy," in *Pathologies of Travel*. Eds. Richard Wrigley and George Revill (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2000), 157-174.

———. "Scorbutic Nostalgia." *Journal for Maritime Research* 15, no.1 (2013): 27-36

Lasch, Christopher. *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1991).

Leach, William. *Lands of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1994).

Lears, T.J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1983).

———. *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2011).

Lee, Pamela. *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006).

Love, Heather. *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007).

Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press 2015).

Lutz, Tom. *American Nervousness 1903: An Anecdotal History* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991).

Malebranche, Nicolas. *Malbranch's Search after Truth. Or a Treatise of the Nature of the Humane Mind And of its Management for avoiding Error in the Sciences* (London: Printed for J. Dunton, 1694).

Mallipeddi, Ramesh. "‘A Fixed Melancholy’: Migration, Memory, and the Middle Passage." *The Eighteenth-Century* 55, no. 2-3 (2014): 235-253.

Matt, Susan. *Homesickness: A History* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012).

Mattoso, Katia M. De Queirós. *To Be a Slave in Brazil: 1550-1888*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1987).

McCallum, Pierre. *Travels in Trinidad during the Months of February, March, and April, 1803, in a Series of Letters, Addressed to a Member of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain* (Liverpool: W. Jones, 1805).

McClellan, Edwin. *Naval Digest containing Digests of Selected Decisions the Secretary of the Navy and Opinions of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy 1916* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916).

McFarland, Dennis. *Nostalgia* (New York: Vintage, 2015).

McKillop, Alan. "Local Attachment and Cosmopolitanism—The Eighteenth-Century Pattern," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*. Eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965): 191-218.

Marc, Charles-Chretien-Henri. "Article VIII. Medical Jurisprudence. Translated from the French. Insanity," *The Western Quarterly Reporter of Medical, Surgical, and Natural Science* 2 (1823).

The Medical and Surgical History of the War of Rebellion. Ed. Joseph Janvier Woodward (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1879).

Meier, Kathryn. *Nature's Civil War: Common Soldiers and the Environment in 1862 Virginia* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2013).

Melville, Herman. *Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1866).

Millar, John. *Observations concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society* (Dublin: T. Ewing, 1771).

Mitchell, S. Weir. *Nurse and Patient, and Camp Cure* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1877).

Mitchill, Samuel. "Extracts from a Report, made by Samuel L. Mitchill, M.D. Surgeon-General of the Militia of New York, to his Excellency Dewitt Clinton, Commander in Chief, &c. pursuant to his command; and laid by the Governor before the Legislature.—New-York, October 30, 1818," in *The Medical Repository of Original Essays and Intelligence relative to Physic, Surgery, Chemistry, and Natural History; with a Critical Analysis of Recent Publications on these Departments of Knowledge and their Auxiliary Branches* 5, no. 1 (1820).

Mohr, James. *Doctors and the Law: Medical Jurisprudence in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993).

Montgomery, James. *The West Indies, and Other Poems* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1809).

Moseley, Benjamin. *A Treatise on Tropical Diseases; on Military Operations; and on the Climate of the West-Indies* (London: T. Cadell, 1792).

Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Birth to Presence* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1994).

Nealon, Christopher. *Foundlings: Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion before Stonewall* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2001).

Nora, Pierre. *Realms of Memory* Vols. 1-3 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1996-98).

Oakes, James. *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007).

Lisa O’Sullivan, “Place, Loss, and Longing: Clinical Nostalgia and the Boundaries of Identity in 19th Century France” (Queens College, PhD Diss 2007).

Pater, Walter. *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. (London: Macmillan, 1873).

Pérez, Jr., Louis. *To Die in Cuba: Suicide and Society* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005).

Pillbox (Edward William John Hopley). “Nostalgia,” from *Chirurgico-Comico* (1837).

Polwhele, Richard. *The Influence of Local Attachment with respect to home, a Poem, in Seven Books* (London: Johnson, Dilly, and Cadell and Davies, 1798).

Porter, Robert. *Nervous Debility and its Treatment, with a Series of Cases* (Louisville: John P. Morton, 1879).

Proctor, William. “Art. 1.—On the Diseases of the United States’ Army on the Rio Grande. By William G. Proctor, M.D. of Louisville, Ky. (An Inaugural Dissertation submitted to the Trustees and Medical Faculty of the University of Louisville for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine, March 8th, 1848.)” *The Western Journal of Medicine and Surgery* 1, no. 6 (June 1848): 461-490.

Psychiatric Unit Operational Procedures, Revised Edition 1954; Neuropsychiatry Branch; Professional Division, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Department of the Navy. Prepared under ONR Contrast No. N7onr-450 11, NR 154 091 (1954).

Pulteney, Richard. *A General View of the Writings of Linnaeus* (London: T. Payne, and B. White, 1781).

Rabinbach, Anson. *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992).

Ray, Isaac. *A Treatise on the Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1853).

Reynolds, David S. *Mightier than the Sword: ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin’ and the Battle for America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

Rice-Davis, Charles. “‘La Maladie des Suisses’: Les Origines de la Nostalgie,” *Dix-Huitième Siècle* no. 47 (2015): 39-53.

Roberts, Jennifer. *Mirror-Travels: Robert Smithson and History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004).

Robinson, Michael. *The Coldest Crucible: Arctic Exploration and American Culture* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2006).

Robin Veith and Matthew Weiner, "The Wheel," *Mad Men*, season 1, episode 13, directed by Matthew Weiner, aired October 18, 2007 (Santa Monica, CA: Lions Gate, 2008), DVD.

Rosaldo, Renato. *Culture & Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon).

Rogers, Samuel. *The Pleasures of Memory. The Fifth Edition. With Some Other Poems* (London: T. Cadell, 1793).

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques and Albrecht von Haller. "Nostalgie," in *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Universel Raisonné des Connoissances Humaines*. Vol. 30 (Yverdon 1774), 519.

Roth, Arnold. "Nostalgia is Goodstalgia," *National Lampoon* (November 1970): 17-18.

Roth, Michael "Dying of the Past: Medical Nostalgia in Nineteenth-Century France," *Hist. Mem.* (1991): 5-29.

Rush, Benjamin. "Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers, Addressed to the Officers of the Army of the United States," *The Pennsylvania Packet* (April 22, 1777), 1

———. "A Discourse delivered before the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Feb. 6th, 1787. On the Objects of their Institution," in *Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia* Vol 1-Part 1 (Philadelphia: T. Dobson, 1793

———. *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical* (Philadelphia: Thomas and William Bradford, 1806).

———. *Medical Inquiries and Observations Vol. I* (Philadelphia: J. Conrad, 1805).

———. *Medical Inquiries and Observations Vol. IV, upon the Diseases of the Mind* (Philadelphia: Kimber & Richardson, 1812).

Scott, W.E.D., "A Summary of Observations on the Birds of the Gulf Coast of Florida," *The Auk: A Quarterly Journal of Ornithology* 6, no. 1 (Jan. 1889).

Scheuchzer, Jean-Jacques. *AEPOΓPAΦIAΣ Helveticæ Partem I* (Zurich: Ex Officina Gessneriana, 1723).

Schiller, Friedrich. "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry," in *Friedrich Schiller: Essays*. Eds. Walter Hinderer and Daniel Dahlstrom (New York: Continuum, 1993): 179-260.

Schroeder, Jonathan. "The Painting of Modern Light: Local Color before Regionalism," *American Literature* 86, no. 3 (2014): 551-581.

Schuster, David. *Neurasthenic Nation: America's Search for Health, Happiness, and Comfort, 1869-1920* (New Brunswick, Rutgers Univ. Press, 2011).

Scoresby, William. *Journal of a Voyage to the Northern Whale-Fishery; Including Researches and Discoveries on the Eastern Coast of West Greenland, Made in the Summer of 1822, in the ship Baffin of Liverpool* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1823).

Sedgwick, Ellery. "Horace Scudder and Sarah Orne Jewett: Market Forces in Publishing in the 1890s," *American Periodicals* 2 (Fall 1992): 79-88.

Sedidikes, C. Wildschut et al. "Nostalgia fosters self-continuity: uncovering the mechanism (social connectedness) and consequence (eudaimonic well-being)," *Emotion* (January 11, 2016; advance online publication): 1-17.

Seel, Martin. *Aesthetics of Appearing*. Trans. John Farrell (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2004).

Seltzer, Mark. *Bodies and Machines* (London: Routledge, 1992).

Seremetakis, C. Nadia. *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1996).

Shawn, Ted. *Every Little Movement: A Book about Delsarte* (Princeton: Princeton Book Co., 1976).

Shelton, Suzanne. *Divine Dancer: A Biography of Ruth St. Denis* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981).

Silva, Cristobal. "Nostalgia and the Good Life," *The Eighteenth Century* 55, no. 1 (2014): 123-128.

Smith, Caleb. "Editor's Introduction," in *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*. Ed. Caleb Smith (New York: Random House, 2016).

Smith, Caleb. *The Oracle and the Curse* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2013).

Smithson, Robert. "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. Ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1996), 157-171

Snyder, Terri. *The Power to Die: Slavery and Suicide in British North America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2015).

Starobinski, Jean. "The Idea of Nostalgia," *Daedalus* Trans. William Kemp no. 14, (1966): 81-103.

Stebbins, Genevieve. *Dynamic Breathing and Harmonic Gymnastics: A Complete System of Psysical, Aesthetic and Physical Culture* (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1893).

- Stein, Gertrude. *Picasso* (London: Courier Corporation, 1938).
- Stewart, Henry. *The Ocean Wave: Narratives of Some of the Greatest Voyages, Seamen, Discoveries, Shipwrecks, and Mutinies of the World* (London: John Hogg, 1883).
- Stewart, Kathleen. "Nostalgia – A Polemic," *Cultural Anthropology* 3:3 (Aug. 1988): 227-241.
- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1984).
- Stolberg, Friedrich Leopold. *Travels through Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Sicily*. Trans. Thomas Holcroft. Vol. 1 (London: C.G. and J. Robinson, 1798).
- Sundquist, Eric. "Realism and Regionalism," in *The Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Ed. Emory Elliot (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988).
- Taussig, Michael. *What Color is the Sacred?* (Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009).
- Taylor, Jeremy. "A Funeral Sermon, Preached at the Obsequies of the Right Honourable and most Vertuous Lady, the Lady Frances, Countess of Carbery, Who deceased October the 9th 1650. at her House Golden-Grove in Caermarthen-Shire," in *ἐνιαυτός, A Course of Sermons for All the Sundays of the year. Fitted to the great Necessities, and for the supplying the Wants of Preaching in many parts of this Nation. With a Supplement of Ten Sermons Preached since his Majesties Restauration. Whereunto is adjoynded, A Discourse of the Divine Institution, Necessity, Sacredness, and Separation of the Office Ministerial*. (London: E. Tyler, 1668).
- Thacher, James. *A Military Journal during the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783, describing interesting events and transactions of this period, with numerous historical facts and anecdotes, from the original manuscript* (Boston: Richardson and Lord, 1823)
- Thaxter, Celia. "The Badge of Cruelty — Protection for Birds," *Cottage Hearth: A Magazine of Home Arts and Home Culture* 11, no. 6 (June 1885): 186.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden: A Fully Annotated Edition*. Ed. Jeffrey Cramer (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004).
- Thrailkill, Jane. *Affecting Fictions: Mind, Body, and Emotion in American Literary Realism* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007).
- Tomes, Nancy. *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999).
- Torrey, Jesse. *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery, in the United States: with Reflections on the Practicability of Restoring the Moral Rights of the Slave, without impairing the Legal Privileges of the Possessor; and a Project of a Colonial Asylum for Free Persons of Colour: Including*

Memoirs of Facts on the Interior Traffic in Slaves, and on Kidnapping (Philadelphia: Published by the Author, 1817).

Trilling, Lionel. *The Opposing Self: Nine Essays in Criticism* (New York: Viking Press, 1955).

Trotter, Thomas. *Observations on the Scurvy, with a Review of the Opinions Lately Advanced on the Disease* (London: T. Longman and J. Watts, 1792).

Walker, Julia. *Expressionism and Modernism in the American Theatre: Bodies, Voices, Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005).

Warner, John Harley. *Against the Spirit of the System: The French Impulse in Nineteenth-Century American Medicine* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2003).

Warren, Charles. *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of some of the Principal Difficulties encountered in its Exploration, and the Results obtained, with a Narrative of an Expedition through the Jordan Valley and a Visit to the Samaritans* (London: R. Bentley, 1876).

Wenzel, Jennifer. "Remembering the Past's Future: Anti-Imperialist Nostalgia and Some Versions of the Third World," *Cultural Critique* 62 (Winter 2006): 1-32.

Westermann, William. "Between Slavery and Freedom," *The American Historical Review* 30, no. 2 (Jan. 1945): 213-227.

Wharton and Stillé. *A Treatise on Medical Jurisprudence* (Philadelphia: Kay & Brother, 1855).

Whitridge, J.B. "An Essay on the Epidemic, Which Prevailed in the Northern Division of the Army of the United States, During the Autumn of 1812; and Winter of 1812-13. Addressed to Wm. M. Ross, M.D. Hospital Surgeon of the United States Army," in *Transactions of the Physico-Medical Society, of New York* Vol. 1 (New York: Collins & Co., 1817).

Wiebe, Robert. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1966).

Willis, Thomas. *Two discourses concerning the soul of brutes which is that of the vital and sensitive of man which is that of the vital and sensitive of man...* Trans. S. Pordage (London: Thomas Dring, C. Harper, and J. Leigh, 1683).

Willis, Thomas. *Dr Willis's Practice of Physick, Being the whole Works of that Renowned and Famous Physician: Containing These Eleven Several Treatises...* (London: Thomas Dring, C. Harper, and J. Leigh, 1685).

Winterbottom, Thomas. *An Account of the Native Africans in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone; to which is added, an account of the Present State of Medicine among them.* Vol. 2 (London: C. Whittingham, 1803).

Wordsworth, William. *Lyrical Ballads, with Other Poems. In Two Volumes* (London: T.N. Longman and O. Rees, 1800).

Valentini, Michael. *Praxis Medicinae Infallibilis, e principiis mechanicis dispensationi publicae aequae ac domesticae applicatae & Archiatrorum Felicissimorum consiliis illustrata* (Frankfurt: Dominicum a Sande, 1711).

Zimmer, Oliver. "In Search of Natural Identity: Alpine Landscape and the Reconstruction of the Swiss Nation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no. 4 (Oct. 1998): 637-55.

Zimmerman, Johann. *A Treatise on Experience in Physic*. Vol. 2 (London: J. Wilkie, 1778).

Žižek, Slavoj. *Enjoy Your Symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out* (New York: Routledge, 2001).