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# Beloved Savages and Other Outsiders: Genre and Gender Transgressions in the Travel Writings of Herman Melville, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Warren Stoddard

Kelvin Ray Beliele

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Beloved Savages and Other Outsiders: Genre and Gender Transgressions in the Travel  
Writings of Herman Melville, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Warren Stoddard

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B.A., English, University of Oklahoma, 1975  
M. A., English Language and Literature, University of New Mexico, 2001

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

August, 2009

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BELOVED SAVAGES AND OTHER OUTSIDERS: GENRE AND GENDER  
TRANSGRESSIONS IN THE TRAVEL WRITINGS OF HERMAN MELVILLE,  
BAYARD TAYLOR, AND CHARLES WARREN STODDARD

**DEDICATION**

In Joyful Memory of  
Roy Raymond Male, Jr. (1919-2005)

“buddy-buddy, locker-room camaraderie”

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by

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ABSTRACT

My dissertation is a study of the travel writings of three nineteenth-century American authors, Herman Melville, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Warren Stoddard. I argue that these writers evinced a rebellion encompassing literary as well as political and social subversion. In order to succeed in their rebellion, they relied upon genre transgression, the violation of the traditions and conventions of a particular genre, to convey defiant social opinions. They were demonstrative in voicing their critiques of American sexual, religious, and racial dogmas in their travel fiction and poetry.

These three authors violated genre boundaries in most of their works, but especially their travel narratives, several of which have come to be called “travel fiction,” texts that are loosely autobiographical. In order to convey my arguments, I have viewed these works, in part, in the context of literary hybridity, the combination of elements from separate genres or literary styles to create a new combined genre; heteroglossia, an inherent human trait of using dissimilar media and vocabularies; and intertextuality, the introduction of a peripheral text into the main narrative of a text.

In addition to their disregard for the boundaries of genre, these authors displayed genuine affection for males and an appreciation of the male physique in ways that would “homosexual,” “gay,” or “queer” in current American society. Consequently, each of

these men disregarded religious and moral constraints against same-sex affection and non-aggressive physical contact. As a result of their unconventional beliefs, they wrote against form, violating boundaries of gender and genre, mixing genres in their writing, and disregarding the usual Euro-American gender barriers.

In my study of the texts of these writers, I apply the idea “queer,” the sexual and gender outsider, and “post-colonial,” the examination of disparate cultures in the context of Western imperialism. An important aspect of these authors’ writings is what occurs in their texts at the intersection of queer and postcolonialism. I demonstrate that Melville’s, Taylor’s, and Stoddard’s genre bending in their travel writings is a reflection of their rebellion against the sexual and imperialist beliefs of the nineteenth century.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

This dissertation is a study of the travel writings of three nineteenth-century authors, Herman Melville (1819-1891), Bayard Taylor (1825-1878), and Charles Warren Stoddard (1843-1909). These three wrote in several genres in their careers, including fiction, poetry, criticism, drama, and travel narratives. All three writers, originally from the northeastern United States, were writing, at least in part, during the Romantic era in American literature (approximately 1820-1865). Although they were writing well within Romantic traditions, their writings, particularly their fiction, contained elements of what would later be known as Realism and Naturalism. They were well known, and much of their writing was well received by critics and the general reader. All three of them had significant connections with editors and writers. More importantly, they were literary and social rebels, consistently testing genre boundaries and expectations while seeming to adhere to social and literary conventions. In a broad sense all three were “queer,” not necessarily homosexual, but because they contested and even violated their own era’s boundaries of gender and gender roles. Individually, they often blurred the lines between male and female roles and expectations, ignored proscribed gender roles, and expressed physical affection for other males.

Melville was well connected in the New York publishing world. He contributed to numerous periodicals, including the Literary World and Yankee Doodle. Although descended from a powerful New York family, the Gansevoorts, he never knew wealth. He worked most of his adult life, often in menial positions, to support himself, his family,

and his writing. As a young man, he was hired to sail on commercial ships, and when he was older, he worked at various government jobs.

Most of Taylor's travel writings first appeared in Horace Greeley's the New York Tribune beginning in 1848. Among his professional and personal acquaintances were William Cullen Bryant, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, William Dean Howells, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. In addition to Taylor's literary and journalistic accomplishments, he was a member of the United States diplomatic corps. He served as attaché to Russia from 1862 to 1863 and as American minister to Germany; he arrived in Berlin in May 1878 and died there in December of the same year.

Stoddard wrote regularly for the Overland Monthly, a San Francisco periodical edited by Bret Harte, and for Ave Maria, a Roman Catholic publication. Stoddard worked as a private secretary for Mark Twain for a short while, late 1873 and early 1874, during one of Twain's lecture tours in Europe. According to Carl Stroven, in the preface to A Life of Charles Warren Stoddard (1939), "Charles Warren Stoddard is a minor American author, who, although he wrote much, rests what reputation he has upon one book—South-Sea Idyls, published in 1873—a volume of sketches that recounts his experiences during four visits to the South Seas. This book has become one of the 'classics' of that region and takes its place second to Typee and Omoo" (Stroven ii). William Dean Howells, in the highly laudatory "Introductory Letter" for the 1892 edition of South-Sea Idyls, praised Stoddard highly: "no one need ever write of the South Seas again," and "the whole English-reading world will recognize in your work the classic it should have known before" (South vi).

All three writers remained in the canon for a short while into the twentieth century; their works were included in high-school and college anthology textbooks. However, by mid-century, Taylor and Stoddard were virtually forgotten. They were dropped from anthologies, and their books were out of print. Recently, beginning in the 1980s, Taylor and Stoddard (and to some extent Melville), through postcolonial and queer studies, are being recovered; most of their works are now readily available in paperback through major booksellers. Their short fiction is being anthologized again, and panel sessions at national conferences regularly include their works.

I argue that these writers evince a rebellion that encompasses literary as well as political and social subversion. Certainly, they are undermining the strict binary notions of gender and sexuality of the nineteenth century. They are also questioning the ideas of America's religious and moral superiority. Beyond what seems to be cultural unrest, these writers are also experimenting with the definitions and boundaries of literary genres, particularly the travel narrative which, by its very nature, can be very flexible. Justin D. Edwards suggests, in Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature, 1840-1930 (2001), that travel writing is extremely flexible, even capable of being divided into sub-genres. He writes that "American travel may be seen as a purely democratic mode of literary production that came to accommodate numerous textual frameworks: popular and personal experiences written in an epistolary style, intellectual and belletristic techniques to depict literary travels, travel narratives that were written in place of guidebooks, and so on" (5).

As well as these sub-genres of voyage literature which are usually prose narratives, American travel writings can also be poetry, most notably Melville's Clarel, A

Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land (1876), Taylor's Poems of the Orient (1854), and Stoddard's "The Two Cleopatras" (1867) and "In the Desert" (1867). Also, travel writing can include straightforward reporting. Taylor generally wrote his reports as standard newspaper columns, in an objective voice, with very little interjection of authorial asides or personal commentary. Travel writing can also include what Edwards calls "adventure travel" (7), highly personal narratives involving the author's experiences in remote and often uncivilized locales.

The travel narrative lends itself to vignettes and ambiguous endings because of the transient nature of the traveler and the relationships with any place or persons visited; these relationships can contribute to the splintering of the narrative and its persona. When traveling alone, one has the general guarantee of anonymity, a stranger among strangers. One can hide behind various personae and use language to evade the scrutiny of the reader. In other words, one can tell the story in code. Thus, in relating a narrative, a writer can experiment with identities and definitions; the boundaries of genre forms and one's idea of self become fluid and mutable. Ambivalence can be expressed and examined. Thus, serious traveling, rather than superficial and careless tourism, is an act of re-creating and redefining one's self and going home a changed person, albeit sometimes only slightly changed, by the experience.

Edwards, in addition to differentiating among the types of travelers, links these different groups together: "The similarity of the discourses in texts by tourists, travelers, and adventurers also reveals the interconnectness (and artificiality) of the three literary modes" (8). The travel writing subgenres are self-consciously constructed by the authors and are as arbitrary and artificial as any fiction narrative. The artificiality and liminal

nature of travel writings, in a place somewhere between absolute fact and complete fiction, are the only dependable certainties of the genre. Thus, the travel writer begins with permission to transgress and blur boundaries, to mix polemic with landscape descriptions, and to offer sociological and theological observations.

The subgenre of adventure writing, according to Edwards, includes Melville's and Stoddard's adventures in the South Pacific. Also, concerning Stoddard, Robert Aldrich, in Colonialism and Homosexuality (2003), states that "the mixture of travel, sex, and political observation in his work makes him representative of those who went overseas to find adventure and themselves" (135). I would also add that some of Taylor's adventures in the Middle East, or Orient as he called the region, would easily fit into this subgenre, particularly when he is in the hostile desert climate among "savages" who speak no English. These three writers, by utilizing disparate narrative voices, textured styles, and genre mixing, deliberately violate genre boundaries. The gaps in their narratives are not the result of careless craftsmanship, but rather these breaks are intentional fissures created by the authors' unconventional sexual and political beliefs.

One explanation of their subversion and defiance concerning genre and form is included in Mikail Bakhtin's heteroglossia, an inherent human trait of using dissimilar media and vocabularies to communicate. Bakhtin, in The Dialogic Imagination (1981), recognizes the difficulty with which the critic and the author approach the novel:

Of all the major genres, only the novel is younger than writing and the book: it alone is organically receptive to new forms of mute perception, that is, to reading. But of critical importance here is the fact that the novel has no canon of its own, as do other genres, only individual examples of the novel are historically active,

not a generic canon as such. Studying other genres is analogous to studying dead languages; studying the novel, on the other hand, is like studying languages that are not only alive, but still young. (3)

Hence, the novel, by its very nature, is a self-conscious, organic genre, which contains self-conflicting and internally contradictory elements. Although Bakhtin applies the idea of a multi-voiced quality specifically to the novel, I contend that “many tonguedness” applies not only to the novel but also to other genres. As a rhetorical strategy, pre-meditated heteroglossia allows and expects, even demands, unorthodox perceptions on the part of the writer/traveler, guiding the willing reader away from a narrow interpretation of a text into a broader and more subtly textured elucidation. Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard used this method of heteroglossic diversion in their non-fiction travel books. These three writers were exceptionally demonstrative in voicing their critiques of American political, religious, racial, and sexual dogmas. I believe that Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard necessarily depend upon genre subversion in their travel writings in order to convey revolutionary social opinions.

The term “non-fiction personal account” can encompass a large and fluid body of work. A general expectation of autobiographical writing is that it be real and true; it should present the facts, with no embellishments. In contrast, a memoir can be non-factual, full of thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and even “what-ifs.” The travel book is included in this sphere of true accounts, a narrative often interspersed with social commentary, philosophical ponderings, and flagrant asides that violate any sense of thesis or chronology. Indeed, travel writing is by its very nature a self-indulgent luxury, always self-referential and self-contained. Travel writers often refer to their practice of

reviewing their journal pages, especially before the advent of portable writing machines, thus making their endeavor intertextual in itself. They are expected to draw conclusions based on their personal and emotional responses to their experiences.

Because of its fluid and highly personal nature, travel writing can serve a multitude of social and literary purposes. Within the context of postcolonial theory, travel writing can be considered along a continuum measuring the author's imperial or anti-imperial attitudes. I argue that the three writers in this study traversed this continuum due to their shifting ideas concerning the alleged moral truth of America's dominance and right to that dominance. In other words, it would seem that sometimes they believed in the moral superiority of America while at others they believed in the equality of all cultures, and occasionally they advocated the superiority of other cultures. Often their political stances can be seen as adhering to postcolonial beliefs, albeit from the vantage point of the privileged upper-middle-class white male. In addition to these writers' travel writings, I will also discuss the travel tropes and cultural contact zones within their non-travel writings, i.e., fiction and poetry. Here, as in the rest of my dissertation, I use the term "postcolonial" not in the sense of "post British Empire," but rather in the broader sense of a contact, and certainly not first contact, between members of the Western-identified culture and members of what have come to be known as Third World, communities unaligned with any of the dominant powers, or even Fourth World, communities which are ignorant of the existence of these powers. Travel narratives of the interaction of "civilized" and "savage" are, by nature, open to analysis through a post-colonial view and a specific type of reading.

Mary Louise Pratt, in Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (1992),

establishes guidelines for reading travel narratives. She employs three terms to explain her argument, terms that I will use in reference to Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard. The “contact zone” is “the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict” (6); “anti-conquest” consists of the “strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony” (7); and finally, “autoethnography” includes “instances in which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer’s own terms” and “involves partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror” (7).

For Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard, the contact zone consists of a locus where the writer’s projected narrative voice confronts and accepts, to some degree, the “inferior” individual’s mixed nature of the foreign and the familiar. This involves two movements on the part of the narrator; one is moving toward the newly acknowledged “brother,” and the second is a joint endeavor of the narrator and his new companion away from their societies. The narrator is eliminating the barrier between himself and the “savage” and establishing a new, although temporary, barrier that isolates him and his partner. It is in this isolation that the two men share themselves and their cultures, a new bicultural zone.

While Pratt claims that subordinated groups have appropriated from the dominant culture, I argue that the travel writer can just as easily appropriate and assimilate within the conquered culture while proclaiming the equality and even the superiority of the conquered’s culture. Accordingly, Mrinalini Sinha, in Colonial Masculinity: The “Manly

Englishman” and the “Effeminate Bengali” in the Late Nineteenth Century (1995), argues that no clear distinction lies between the two positions that have come to be known as “colonizer” and “colonized”:

the categories of the coloniser and colonised are not fixed or self-evident categories. Although these categories may appear to have represented ‘natural’ differences of race or national origin, there was nothing natural or fixed about them. There was a constant need, therefore, to define and redefine the coloniser and the colonised. Moreover, since the coloniser and colonised were themselves historically constructed categories, the relations between the two were neither fixed nor given for all time. (1)

Within “gay” travel narratives the protagonist includes himself in the “native way,” often using first person plural in describing the natives, particularly when the local customs are more comfortable and pleasurable than his “civilized” ways. The laxity of some nineteenth-century cultures, especially those that had so far escaped the influence of Puritan beliefs, was especially alluring to certain Western men. Of this profound cultural difference and attraction, Robert Aldrich has said, “A significant number of European [and Euro-American] homosexuals overseas displayed an ambivalent attitude towards imperialism, or took an avowedly critical stance on European rule. Their renegade position as sexual heretics at home had led them to sexual opportunities in foreign countries, yet cast them in an ambiguous position” (367).

Certainly, cultural and sexual renegades readily affirm their leanings toward pagan ways and less restrictive ideas of physicality. Yet, their seeming disregard for mores aligns with Pratt’s thoughts on travel writing conventions that began in the

mid- and late-eighteenth century: “Stylistic debates as to relative values of ‘embellishment’ and ‘naked truth’ often reflected tensions between the man of science and the man of sensibility, or between the lettered and popular writer. An eroticized vocabulary of nakedness, embellishment, dress, and undress introduced the desires of readers into the discussion” (Pratt 87). Because of this new dimension of desire in travel, writers could display their desire—or their erotic nature—through the “truth” of the natives’ (especially Polynesians) nudity and unabashed physicality, especially in warmer climates where clothing is often superfluous. Thus, the sensuality, muscularity, and sexuality of the natives can be perceived, by both writer and reader, as cultural and not erotic.

Pratt maintains that the travel writer is attempting to combine “man of science” with “man of letters” personae and at the same time act as a purveyor and protector of Euroimperialism. Although she is speaking specifically of the Euro-American travel writer of the late 1700s, I would extend her ideas to include writers, especially British and American, of the nineteenth century. Pratt asserts that the characteristics of the sentimental movement in literature, of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, extended to include the travel writer and his readers: “Though he is positioned at the center of a discursive field rather than on the periphery, and though he is composed of a whole body rather than a disembodied eye, the sentimental protagonist, too, is constructed as a non-interventionist European presence. Things happen to him and he endures and survives” (78).

Thus, the travel writer, according to Pratt, is a passive observer, the object rather than the subject in his dealings with the locals. Generally, this proves true for Melville,

Taylor, and Stoddard. The protagonists appear as innocents in a strange world, and their success lies in their ability to endure and survive their adventures. Love, romance, and physical attraction are among the things that “happen” to the travel-writing protagonist. Pratt argues that “the ‘cultural harmony through romance’ always breaks down. Whether love turns out to be requited or not, whether the colonized love is female or male, outcomes seem to be roughly the same: the lovers are separated, the European is reabsorbed by Europe, and the non-European dies an early death” (97). This is especially true of Stoddard who almost seemed to will the deaths of those he loved. For Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard, the native proves kinder and more human, sometimes more sexual, than the American imperialist. Their travel narratives, therefore, are thinly disguised affirmations of Melville’s, Taylor’s, and Stoddard’s (and their narrators) homosexual or “non-heterosexual” beliefs. Again, they are voicing their discontent and disagreement with their culture’s rigid gender beliefs.

It is necessary at this point to discuss certain terms used in this dissertation, most expressly the terms “gay” and “queer.” Often these words are used interchangeably in current parlance, usually meaning “homosexual.” However, strong political and ideological differences do exist. According to John C. Hawley, in Postcolonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections (2001), “gay” and “queer” have distinct historical and political definitions: “strictly gay and lesbian discourse more typically stresses the essentialist nature of sexuality over the socially constructionist nature embodied in queer theory” (3). Annamarie Jagose explains: “Whereas essentialists regard identity as natural, fixed, and innate, constructionists assume identity is fluid, the effect of social conditioning and available cultural models for understanding oneself” (8). Also, the term “homosexual”

has generally been abandoned in most political discourse of the twenty-first century; it is seen as archaic and too rigidly focused on physical behavior. “Homosexual,” coined in 1859, “homosocial,” coming into common usage in the 1980s, and “gay,” used extensively from the late 1960s, are separate but related terms within queer theory. Robert K. Martin, in his 1986 study of Melville, Hero, Captain, and Stranger, discusses these terms. He argues that “homosocial relationships were encouraged [in nineteenth-century society] as a way of preventing heterosexual ones.... The same phenomenon is true of all-male institutions such as boarding schools, colleges, or the military: the exclusion of women, and to some extent, the encouragement of emotional attachments between men were designed to eliminate sexuality” (12).

Nonetheless, Martin expresses great discomfort with the word “homosocial” used to describe sexual identities: “the term, a linguistic monster, seems to me best reserved, if at all, for institutions and situations. Thus prisoners remain heterosexual or homosexual, according to their principal sexual orientation, regardless of the sexual activity they may engage in while in a homosocial environment” (13). Additionally, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire (1985) also distances the term homosocial from homosexual because they exist within a discriminatory paradox: “‘Homosocial’ is a word occasionally used in history and the social sciences, where it describes social bonds between persons of the same sex; it is a neologism, obviously formed by analogy with ‘homosexual,’ and just as obviously meant to be distinguished from ‘homosexual.’ In fact, it is applied to such activities as ‘male bonding,’ which may, in our society, be characterized by intense homophobia, fear and hatred of homosexuality” (1).

In general, queer theory protests any binary, most notably that of heterosexual versus homosexual, as simply too rigid to be realistic. I maintain that this is particularly true within the context of the similar worldviews of Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard; they objected to external definitions of personal matters. Furthermore, the term “gay” is currently used much too freely and indiscriminately, especially in historical contexts. As Martin explains, “It would be possible, of course, to use the term ‘gay’ to describe Melville or his characters, but here the sense of anachronism seems to me far too strong. I believe that the term ‘gay’ as it is now used refers to a whole complex of behavior and attitudes” (Hero 13). Clearly, the range of modern gay sensibilities did not exist for the nineteenth-century writer. Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard were writing primarily of social and emotional, rather than sexual, intimacy.

Thus, within an amorphous queer context, I will pay attention to the genre b(1)ending as well as the gender bending of these three writers. When they shift the boundaries of genres, they most clearly express their objection to the Western paradigm. Nineteenth-century travel writers, as a whole, experienced “exotic” pleasures sometimes that were too unusual and forbidden (i.e., immoral or illegal) for the general reader. In those cases, they devised a form of virtual encryption for the knowledgeable audience.

Historically, the inherent homophobia of Puritan America has forced gay and lesbian authors—and authors who do not conveniently fit within gender stereotypes—to write circumspectly. These writers must either deny their true beliefs and feelings or encode them in such a way that only insiders can understand. The three authors addressed in this dissertation created various ways of coding their messages in order to retain credibility among editors, publishers, and readers while at the same time conveying

their true subversive messages. For example, the use of puns, double entendre, and current slang can be examples of the signifying of this encoded writing. Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard wrote allegorically; they wrote satirically; they employed gender-bending techniques; and they left gaping holes in their narratives. I maintain that these lapses in their narratives were not due to carelessness or incompetence as writers, but were as intentional as these authors' deliberate creation of disparate narrative voices and styles.

Despite the heavily censorial nature of nineteenth-century American society, these three writers, among others, knew that the sexuality of non-American non-white males could find safe and socially condoned expression in the travel narrative as a description of the "other." The racism of the white Westerner is allowed in gendered terms in these proto-gay writings. The non-white native, at least in the abstract, is seen, often simultaneously, as effeminate, when, in Western terms, he is passive toward the white outsider, and hypermasculine when he resists the white outsider's presence. The author as the detached voice of the observer is sharing knowledge of an exotic culture that the reader usually has no other means of obtaining. However, Lee Wallace argues in Sexual Encounters: Pacific Texts, Modern Sexualities (2003) that the imperial gaze of the Euro-American traveler becomes toxic as a mutually eroticized observation: "the possibility of the sentient gaze always haunts the scene of encounter, countermending the ideological certainties and sexual privileges concentrated in invisibility" (80). The native's visible knowledge of the physical and sexual potential of the colonizing traveler arouses the travel writer's self-conscious anxiety about his own positioning in a gender and sexual continuum. Sometimes the native sees the colonizing traveler as sexually attractive also, as a potential sexual partner, not just an unwelcome outsider. Sometimes

the native is a willing and eager participant in the so-called conquest, satisfying his own desires.

For the queer or “gender-guerilla” (decidedly not a nineteenth-century term) travel writer, this mutually aroused gaze can be a place of relief and comfort; the traveler has found an emotionally familiar community, or at least a comrade, in an unfamiliar geographical terrain. This sultry gaze creates a sexual and textual haze for the queer male travel writer. Within the narrative mist of the Exotic Other, he can clearly state his appreciation of the emotional and physical attractiveness to those non-white men he has encountered in his travels. And, for his reader and publisher, he can create a safe distance from his relationship with his friend/companion by the use of terms like “exotic” and “heathen.”

Nonetheless, twenty-first century readers and writers must be careful not to shift their own values and definitions onto another era. I am quite aware that projecting the standards of one’s own time onto works of another era remains a major problem in “queering” any text, particularly a text by an author who is not admittedly homosexual, gay, or queer in his outlook. James Creech in Closet Writing/Gay Reading: the Case of Melville’s Pierre (1993) cautions the reader and critic against applying current values and definitions to history:

[O]ne must be very prudent in attributing homosexual content to what are only stock effusions in nineteenth-century writing; but just as obviously, one must be careful not to mistake for mere rhetoric the intensely sexual longings which can be smuggled into expression using the very same language as a cover. (65)

Indeed, holding hands, hugging, and social kissing are allowed nineteenth-century men without any of the social or moral suspicion that are prevalent today. Additionally, at this point, I must explain that any statements that I might make about these writers' homosexuality are mere speculation. Consequently, I will not attempt to psychoanalyze or reach any conclusions about their sexuality.

That said, the queer travel narrative, which each of these three men wrote, can easily be positioned at the intersection of post-colonialism and queer theory. Jagose has offered that "queer maintains a relation of resistance to whatever constitutes the normal" (99). "Queer," then, is a contrary and eccentric attitude, a rebellion against the conventional and traditional, especially in terms of gender and sexuality: "the central tenet of queer theory is a resistance to the normativity which demands the binary proposition, hetero/homo" (Hawley 3). Like Hawley, I argue that the connection of postcolonial and queer in travel writings occurs because both stances emphasize the relationship, and its variants, between the dominant society and those who do not fit within that society's mainstream: "In the quest for the obliteration of binarisms (such as the bipolar gender system), such openness to multiplicity and challenge to any gay unitary identity may position queer theorists surprisingly near non-Western postcolonial theorists" (Hawley 14). The writers addressed within this dissertation can be seen as outsiders pledging allegiance to those who are further outside than they are.

As for my methodology in this dissertation, I will engage in a close reading of each of the texts included within my study. I will apply the elements of queer theory and postcolonial theory to each of them. I will also closely scrutinize these works for the authors' violations of genre rules and how these violations relate to their gender and

colonization stances. I will endeavor to study the important critical and biographical works associated with these three authors. As far as the actual organization of my dissertation is concerned, I will investigate these authors chronologically beginning with Melville and concluding with Stoddard.

In chapter one, I discuss Melville's sea narratives, Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life (1846), Omoo (1847), and Mardi (1849), Moby-Dick (1851), and some of Melville's other texts, including the long poem Clarel, focusing on Melville's uncertainty and dissatisfaction with American society, especially his religious uncertainties. I visit Taylor's fascination with the Middle East and the Muslim man, particularly in The Lands of the Saracen (1855) and Poems of the Orient (1851-1854) in chapter two. However, I concentrate most on Taylor's domestic travel fiction, i.e., his four novels Hannah Thurston: A Story of American Life (1863), The Story of Kennett (1866), John Godfrey's Fortunes: Related by Himself. A Story of American Life (1870) and Joseph and His Friend: A Story of Pennsylvania (1871) and certain of his short stories because they contain the clear examples of his transgressive nature. I then examine in chapter three Stoddard's South Pacific narratives, especially South-Sea Idyls (1905), his novel For the Pleasure of His Company: An Affair of the Misty City: Thrice Told (1903), his autobiography A Troubled Heart and How It Was Comforted at Last (1885), and others of his travel writing, including Mashallah! A Flight into Egypt (1880).

In my study of all these texts, I apply the idea of "queer" as the sexual and gender outsider, regardless of any actual sexual behavior but rather concentrating on emotional and intellectual relationships, encompassing far more variations than the term "homosexual" ever has. I use the term "post-colonial" as an examination of disparate

cultures in the context of Western imperialism. Thus, I will demonstrate that the violations of genre conventions in the travel writings of Herman Melville, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Warren Stoddard are a reflection of their rebellion against the sexual and political beliefs of the nineteenth century.

## Chapter 2

### Herman Melville: A State Bordering on Delirium

Herman Melville wrote extensively of the South Pacific and the islanders, particularly what he perceived as the positive aspects of their culture in contrast to Western culture. Certainly, he wrote of these differences— and his admiration of the “heathens”— in his travel books of the region, Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life (1846), Omoo (1847), and Mardi and a Voyage Thither (1849), as well as in his romance Moby-Dick (1851). His admiration of the South Pacific islanders’ bodies and their open sexuality is one of the main ways in which Melville demonstrates his subversive intentions, in clear disagreement with the conventions of sexual and gender roles in American society. Melville’s “pansexuality” and definite homoerotic feelings are among the reasons for his “genre-breaking.” Justin D. Edwards sees Melville’s apparent stylistic and narrative eccentricities as intentional political statements, directly linked to his sexual rebellion: “This imagery is foregrounded in Melville’s Typee by drawing attention to the ‘erotic paradise’ and the ‘noble savage’ as positive alternatives to American industrial capitalism. Melville uses homoeroticism to question Euro-American superiority and to critique imperial infiltrations into the cultures of the South Pacific” (12).

In addition to his continuing disrespect for Western religious and political practices, Melville was also guilty of disregarding the demarcation lines of genre. Indeed, he worked intently, sometimes gleefully, against type, creating a body of work which is diverse and complex. In some instances, it seems that he randomly compiled lists and patchwork narratives which have come to be regarded as novels, reaching their zenith in what has proven to be his masterpiece, Moby-Dick. Melville’s genre

transgressions were intentional and systematic: he was more than merely relating his experiences. He was on a mission to explain his dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in his nineteenth-century America. Melville's disappointments extend beyond politics to all areas of his life. His sense of futility permeates his work; his crisis of faith only increases, and so too do his genre transgressions, escalating to a genre annihilation that equals his idea of physical and spiritual annihilation. Melville's disregard for genre traditions and their boundaries is a sign of his belief that the universe disregards moral and spiritual restrictions.

His first book, Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life, has traditionally been referred to as a travel narrative. The narrator Tommo's account contains a hodgepodge of styles and tropes associated with several disparate genres: travel book, captivity narrative, initiation story, romance, and, even, cookbook. Typee, at various points in the narrative, can be seen as belonging to each of these genres. The text is complex and heavily textured. By using disparate narrative voices and styles, Melville deliberately violates genre boundaries. He artfully creates ambiguity and vagueness within the guise of a seemingly prosaic rendering of his journeys. John Bryant has offered his own "warning" about Typee: "One might call Typee a romance because it exists somewhere between personal essay and fiction. But even that formal designation pales. One might just as well call it just a piece of writing" (xi). Thus, this piece of writing also proves to be a narrative against colonization, a warning against the exploitation of the environment, and a tract against the profit-driven interaction between cultures. Later books explore similar themes, most notably Redburn: His First Voyage (1849), but Typee set the tone for Melville's political statements. Above all, Typee remains a testament to Melville's views

of how spirituality and sexuality can create painful limitations and joyful unions.

Melville's genre- and gender-bending are reasons for the continual attacks on the credibility of Typee. Melville's shifting among genre styles—breaking the laws of the first and violating traditional sexual and religious mores—has led to confusion among his readers. Typee has been subjected, with good reason, to intense scrutiny since its first publication. Indeed, Melville's contemporary reviewers and critics pondered the “facts.” They argued, what was for them, a central point: how credible was Melville's travel narrative?

Indeed, Melville's idea of truth was vaguely subversive and possibly blasphemous. In a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, dated June 1851 (a few months before the publication of Moby-Dick): “Truth is the silliest thing under the sun. Try to get a living by the Truth— and go to the Soup Societies. Heavens! Let any clergyman try to preach the Truth from its very stronghold, the pulpit, and they would ride him out of his church on his own pulpit bannister” (Letters 127). This seemingly cavalier attitude to truth would certainly be one reason to doubt that Melville is telling the truth or that he is capable of knowing the truth, especially as mandated by social and religious dogma. In defending the “human and virtuous” Typees, who are “not free from the guilt of cannibalism,” Melville intrudes into Tommo's narrative: “Truth, who loves to be centrally located, is again between the two extremes” (205) of outsiders' opinions on cannibalism. Melville is arguing that truth is not extreme, and it may even reposition itself, proving to be elusive and possibly transitory. Truth, in Melville's vision, is not fixed or permanent: “a thing may be incredible and still be true; sometimes it is incredible because it is true. And many infidels but disbelieve the least incredible things; and many

bigots reject the most obvious” (Mardi 296). As a travel writer, Melville has stated: “stay-at-homes say travelers lie. Yet a voyage to Ethiopia would cure them of that; for few skeptics are travelers; few travelers liars, though the proverb respecting them lies (Mardi 298). David Morse has offered his own conclusion about Melville’s truthfulness: “Melville, alas, makes it all too apparent that the delight of travel books is that they allow the boundary between fact and fiction to be deliciously blurred” (Morse 14).

In his pursuit of spiritual and moral truth, Melville denigrates the behavior and motives of Protestant missionaries to Hawaii, questioning if the “Polynesian savage” has been made happier by civilization: “Let the once smiling and populous Hawaiian island, with their now diseased, starving, and dying natives, answer the question. The missionaries may seek to disguise the matter as they will, but the facts are incontrovertible; and the devoutest Christian who visits that group with an unbiased mind, must go away mournfully asking— ‘Are these, alas! the fruits of twenty-five years of enlightening’ (Typee 124). His condemnation of the missionaries continues. In Omoo he complains of the missionary workers: “the earliest labourers in the work, although strictly conscientious were, as a class, ignorant, and, in many cases, deplorably bigoted; such traits have, in some degree, characterized the pioneers of all faiths” (172). He also ponders the current state of the islanders: “ the Tahitians are far worse off now, than formerly; and although their circumstances, upon the whole, are bettered by the presence of the missionaries, the benefits conferred by the latter become utterly insignificant when confronted with the vast preponderance of evil brought about by other means” (180).

In addition to his negative opinions of the Christian missionaries, he criticizes the actions of the Pacific Island naval officers, especially Captain David Porter whose forces

were given a “warlike reception, about the year 1814, when that brave and accomplished officer endeavored to subjugate the clan merely to gratify the mortal hatred of his allies the Nukuhevas and Happers” (Typee 26). After Porter conquers the Typees, he and his men leave the area: “The invaders, on their march back to the sea, consoled themselves for their repulse by setting fire to every house and temple in their route; and a long line of smoking ruins defaced the once-smiling bosom of the valley, and proclaimed to his pagan inhabitants the spirit that reigned in the breast of Christian soldiers” (Typee 26). Later, Tommo further defends the Typees’ aggressive defense of their land: “I can sympathize in the spirit which prompts the Typee warrior to guard all that passes to his valley with the point of his levelled spear” (Typee 205). Melville believes that missionaries and the military have performed their “duties” against the best interests of the islanders, in conspicuous exploits of glaring self-promotion and American imperialism.

Beyond his general disapproval of Westerners’ treatment of the islanders, Melville also condemns specific practices onboard both government and private ships. For example, he singles out flogging, punishment by lashing or whipping, as a deplorable act that he defends in Omoo as a necessary evil: “I do not wish to be understood as applauding the flogging system practiced in men-of-war. As long, however, as navies are needed, there is no substitute for it. War being the greatest of evils, all its accessories necessarily partake of the same character; and this is about all that can be said in defence of flogging” (99). In White-Jacket he no longer defends any aspect of flogging. In a lengthy digression from the narrative of the character White-Jacket and his journeys, Melville steps from behind the text to voice his political stance, strongly condemning flogging as unlawful, unnecessary, and immoral: “You see a human being stripped like a

slave; scourged worse than a hound. And for what? For things not essentially criminal, but only made so by arbitrary laws” (White-Jacket 139). Regarding Melville’s response to flogging, Newton Arvin states that “it is not hard to understand why incidents like these, along with others less painful but exasperating enough, should have inspired in him a lasting detestation of naval discipline that went hand in hand with his detestation of war itself” (Arvin 74). Robert Milder suggests that Melville’s discussion of flogging is indicative of far more inclusive matters: “White-Jacket focuses polemically on flogging in the U.S. Navy, but its wider subject, announced by its metaphoric subtitle [The World in a Man-of-War], is the nature of power relations within a martially oriented class society” (Milder 28). However, years later in Billy Budd, Melville would defend the right of a captain to punish sailors, even by execution. This is indicative of his conflicts over the power of the military and one’s duty to obey the law.

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Because Melville could not be trusted to endorse the conventions of Christian faith and American nationalism, he definitely could not be trusted with social beliefs that were dependent upon American Protestantism, i.e., gender roles, sexuality, and sexual behavior. Certainly, Melville wrote as a malcontent, doubting the prevailing beliefs about gender roles and affectionate relationships; he was a man who loved men, deeply and passionately, and he violated the sexual standards of his time. Beyond the homosocial world of ships and sailors, Melville wrote of all-male environments in which males do not desire female company. He demonstrates this time and again with his narrator’s strong affection for and attachment to other males, and their apparent contentment without any romantic or sexual involvement with women. Melville equated

his feelings for other men with his strong spiritual feelings; he believed that spirituality and sexuality could not be separated, that they create and define each other. This ideal of spiritual sex was one of the reasons that he persistently violated and rejected genre boundaries. He wrote extensively of this combination of body and spirit, optimistically and confidently in Moby-Dick, or the Whale (1851) in the joyous and relaxed relationship of Ishmael and Queequeg, in their open affection and good-natured intimacy.

Nowhere does Melville as succinctly and clearly describe the homosocial society than in “The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids” (1855). In the first half of this diptych, set in London, he describes a world where bachelors enjoy a paradise where they apparently do not desire any female companionship. This group of quiet, civil men differs greatly in their ages, professions, and temperaments; the only thing bringing them together, it would seem, is their bachelorhood. Thus, they are gathered rather secretively in an out of the way chamber, much like a speak-easy or an early version of a gay bar. Within the story, none of these men, similar to serious monks, seeks the company of women. Melville’s first-person narrator uses language that compares this hideaway and its inhabitants to the priesthood with words like “monastic,” “cloisters,” and “monkish souls”; Melville compares these men to Knights Templar, in that their celibacy unites them. They all leave their companions to go home alone.

In the United States ambivalent sexuality evokes strong, deeply felt responses; even celibate individuals, such as the bachelors in their club, can evoke anger and hostility. Likewise, bisexuality or any indication of pansexuality is condemned as somehow disingenuous and irreverent. Although Melville was married, his deep

affection for and intimacy with other males cannot be denied. He had lifelong attractions and attachments to men, particularly Richard Tobias Greene (whose daguerreotype, it is believed, Melville always carried with him), Jack Chace, and, among others, Nathaniel Hawthorne. In “Hawthorne and His Mosses” (1850), Melville (adopting the persona of a southern reader) exclaims: “this Hawthorne has dropped germinous seeds into my soul. He expands and deepens down, the more I contemplate him; and further, and further, shoots his strong New England roots into the hot soil of my Southern soil” (Portable 417). Certainly, this may be nineteenth-century effusive language, but it could very well be an example of Melville’s satirical and ironic word play in sharing his strong feelings for Hawthorne.

In “Monody” (Timoleon, Etc. 1891) Melville compares the object of the verse, most probably Hawthorne, to a vine.

To have known him, to have loved him

After lonesome long;

And then to be estranged in life,

And neither in the wrong;

And now for death to set his seal—

Ease me, a little ease, my song!

By wintry hills his hermit-mound

The sheeted snow-drifts drape,

And houseless there the snow-bird flits

Beneath the fir-trees’ crape;

Glazed now with ice the cloistral vine

That hid the shyest grape.

According to Howard P. Vincent: “The allusion to the vine in the closing lines of this poem indicated that the poem is addressed to the memory of Nathaniel Hawthorne” (Vincent 474). Stanton Garner agrees that “Monody” was written about Hawthorne: “There is disagreement about whether or not Herman’s impeccable poem ‘Monody’ commemorates Hawthorne, and even about the depth of their friendship, but there are strong reasons to believe that it does. It is a simple, eloquent expression of loss” (334).

Furthermore, Garner states that the relationship between Melville and Hawthorne was strained and eventually severed due to some unknown reason: “The lapse in their relationship is a perplexing mystery, the solution to which is complex and, in all likelihood, ultimately unknowable. Herman wrote that neither was to blame, but it is probably true that both were, with the greater burden of guilt resting on Hawthorne because he was in the best position to extend his hand” (59). Nonetheless, Melville expressed a great and abiding affection for Hawthorne, and he mourned the loss of the friendship, that continues to intrigue Melville scholars, especially those who are “queering” him.

Regardless of the extent of Melville’s physical (or sexual) intimacy, his friendships with men led him to ponder his spiritual beliefs and feelings. Certainly, his contemporary critics, especially of Typee, questioned Melville’s religion, and they doubted the sincerity of his attacks on Christian missionaries. In Typee, Melville continually criticizes the Christian missionaries. Furthermore, he exhibits a pantheism or pagan belief in an everyday God of nature and routine, as he proclaimed in an 1851 letter

to Nathaniel Hawthorne: “As soon as you say Me, a God, a Nature, so soon you jump off from your stool and hang from the beam. Yes, that word is the hangman. Take God out of the dictionary, and you would have Him in the street” (Letters 125, emphasis in original).

It is this element of “street God” which Melville writes of, a God without bounds, yet a God which can be understood and controlled by Man. For Melville, God permeates everything, and it is this pantheism which leads the world of Melville into the vortex; when God is everywhere, everything (and nothing) is sacred. This God of everythingness and nothingness is also the God of sexuality, the street God become sensual and pansexual. Spirituality and sexuality cannot be separated; they create and define each other. Unfortunately, Melville’s sensual, pansexual God is in direct opposition to the God of the dominant religious hierarchy, a God of rigid anthropomorphic patriarchy. He repeats his image of God in the market place in Redburn. Because very few of the seamen “think of entering these chapels, though they might pass them twenty times in the day, some of the clergy, of a Sunday, address them in the open air, from the corners of the quay, or wherever they can procure an audience” (Redburn 169). He continues, praising this practice: “Is not this as it ought to be? since the true calling of the reverend clergy is like their divine Master’s;—not to bring the righteous but sinners to repentance” and “even so should Protestant pulpits be founded in the market-places, and at street corners, where the men of God might be heard by all of His children” (Redburn 170).

Melville seemingly advocated a spontaneous experience of God and the universe without presumptive descriptions or analyses. However, the conflict between the spontaneous and the prescribed expressions of spiritual belief perpetually troubled him;

his characters, especially Tommo, endure the conflict as well. For instance, the lack of doctrine among the Typee confounds Tommo: "I am free to confess with regard to the theology of the valley. I doubt whether the inhabitants themselves could do so. They are either too lazy or too sensible to worry themselves about abstract points of religious belief. Whilst I was among them they never held any synods or councils to settle the principles of their faith by agitating them" (Typee 171). Melville seems to be pantheistic, leaning toward Eastern philosophy with a Buddhism sensibility. Yet, he remains Christian, at least in name. When speaking of "Christianity" or "Christians," he regularly includes himself and his protagonists among the faithful as, for example, Ishmael in Father Mapple's chapel in Moby-Dick and Clarel and the other pilgrims in Clarel. Thus, in the social constructs of religious beliefs and practices, as in the social constructs of gender roles and behavior, Melville stood outside the mainstream, straining the confines of genre in order to maintain his unorthodox beliefs while making a living from his writing. Often, unfortunately, he did not succeed in the endeavor.

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Melville was most conflicted in two areas which spark controversy, sexuality and religion. Because of his deep conflicts, he experimented throughout his career with signs and symbolism to convey his unorthodox beliefs. For Melville, sexuality and religion were closely related, entwined within a foundational value system that defines the concept of "cultural context." It is precisely due to his uncertainties that Melville created texts which, while reflecting his ambivalences, illuminated his attempts to resolve his anxieties.

Typee has typically been spoken of as a travel book, couched in the conventions

of the genre. This proves to be an ideal arena for Melville to voice his dissent. Typee, at least on the surface, serves these purposes. Melville is reporting on his visit to an exotic locale, his time spent with members of an alien society, and his return home. He immediately positions his narrative of the South Seas as adding to a very small body of work: “all that we know about them is from a few general narratives. Among these, there are two that claim particular notice. Porter’s ‘Journal of the Cruise of the U.S. frigate Essex, in the Pacific, during the late War,’ is said to contain some interesting particulars concerning the islanders. This is a work, however, which I have never happened to meet with; and Stewart, the chaplain of the American sloop of war Vincennes, has likewise devoted a portion of his book, ‘A Visit to the South Seas,’ to the same subject” (Typee 6). In placing his work within the genre, Melville indirectly declares that he has not been influenced by Porter because he has not “met with” Porter’s work.

Thus, he is maintaining that Typee is original and unaffected while announcing his familiarity with the travel genre specifically and often literary works in general. By making these literary allusions, and name-dropping cross-references— “Trajan’s columns,” “India ink,” and “Egyptian sarcophagus,”— Melville establishes his narrative voice. Tommo, the protagonist and narrator, is both the educated, civilized gentleman and the irreverent, foot-loose sailor. This combination serves Melville well: he can place himself in the cultural world of the reader while allowing for outsider criticisms of American cultural standards. T. Walter Herbert, Jr., indicates that Melville, like his characters, was comfortable being a liminal, self-contradictory individual: “[Melville] is delicately holding in abeyance the issue whether the term ‘civilization’ applies to himself or to human society at all. The narrative voice that addresses us in Typee is characterized

throughout by this kind of subtle ambivalent balancing, and the tensions apparent in that voice are related to the uncertain identity of its apparent source, the man who is both a cultured gentleman and a beachcomber. Yet Melville was assuredly both” (Herbert155). The gentleman and the beachcomber pulled Melville in separate directions, the settled, family-man householder and the transient, homosocial shape shifter. Consequently, his writing shows the traits of the differences in his personality and in his perspectives of his world. Although he endeavored to conform to the travel writing formulae, he and his subjects were too large for the genre, and so the narrative bursts forth in many directions, into many genre styles.

Most travel books are written in an epistolary style, transcribed from journals or letters. The two books that Tommo cites, United States Navy Captain David Porter’s Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean (1815) and Reverend Charles Samuel Stewart’s A Visit to the South Seas (1831), are well within the tradition. Porter wrote in militaristic language: “Finding that it was absolutely necessary to bring the Typees to terms, or endanger our good understanding with the other tribes, I resolved to bring about a negotiation with them and to back it with a force sufficient to intimidate them” (Porter 385). Porter’s tone is that of the conqueror toward the defeated: “Unhappy and heroic people! the victims of your own courage and mistaken pride” (Porter 403).

In Typee, Melville echoes this statement, albeit in sharp disagreement with Porter: “Ill-fated people! I shudder when I think of the change a few years will produce in the paradisiacal abode; and probably when the most destructive vices, and the worst attendances on civilization, shall have driven all peace and happiness from the valley” (Typee 195). Melville sees the Polynesian practices as a legitimate religion to be treated

as such; Stewart persists in his elitist assurance that Presbyterianism is the one true religion. In fact, Herbert argues that Stewart sees his own religion as creating the civilized world: “But there was a firm consensus on the central judgment that we find Stewart setting forth, that Christian truth is not an ornament of civilization, but describes the spiritual processes that bring civilization into being” (Herbert 57). Melville’s irreverent attitude is merely another example of his untrustworthiness in articulating suitable religious opinions. Thus, he willfully violates the traditions, and it would seem the sanctity, of the travel book. Furthermore, in introducing humor as well as religious and political satire—especially at the expense of missionaries and other upright, good-intentioned Americans—he apparently violates the trust of some readers.

Tommo cares little if he violates any trust or if he offends others. However, he does care if someone offends him, especially if he loses the attention which he believes that he deserves. The arrival of Marnoo, the “stranger,” provokes a strong reaction in him: “When I observed the striking devotion of the natives to him, and their temporary withdrawal of all attention from myself, I felt not a little piqued. The glory of Tommo is departed, thought I, and the sooner he removes from the valley the better. These were my feelings at the moment, and they were prompted by that glorious principle inherent in all heroic natures—the strong-rooted determination to have the biggest share of the pudding or go without any of it” (137). Thus, most of Tommo’s behavior is motivated by his own pleasure. He is immature and possesses no self-knowledge. He is a perplexing combination of Puritanical prudery and self-seeking Epicureanism. He is morally rigid and judgmental, but he seeks physical comfort and the path of least resistance. He has no sense of responsibility, and he rarely considers anyone’s welfare beyond his own.

Emotionally, Tommo is an adolescent, with resentment toward authority and social order. He ardently objects to American society when he believes it to be unduly restrictive. He is an imperialist but also a vocal critic of Western, Protestant society. According to Mitchell Breitwieser, Typee's topic is Tommo's self-conception: "a resentment of vested interests is a vested interest" (397). Tommo's vested interest is pointing out the flaws in American expansionism. This is the tradition of America, for an individual to contain both patriotism and criticism. This is what makes "Tommo an opponent of America, but it also proves he is typically American" (399).

Tommo demonstrates his ambivalence toward nearly all potential definitions of "self"—sexuality, Christianity, and his sense of the states of being "American" and "Typee." Tommo, as a voice or face of Melville, is much more fluid than those he quotes or those whom he follows. Simultaneously, he is more rigid than those he admires, particularly Toby and Marnoo, one of the Typees. Tommo aspires to have the inner strength which allows an outward disinterest in the judgments of others. In other words, he wants to be free of societal limits. While he depends on his "cultural" boundaries and limits, he questions and tests those limits. Again, he honors the traditions of America but resents their confining elements.

To this day, borders within American culture remain elusive and highly flexible, the limits always being subject to question. Gloria Anzaldúa, although writing as a lesbian Chicana mestiza, addresses the nature of boundaries in Borderlands/La Frontera (1987): "A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its

inhabitants. Los atravesados live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the ‘normal’” (3). Thus, in America, the outsider and the “normal” reside together, with the outsider (regardless of the reason for the “outsidedness”) “passing” as “normal.” Tommo, as an outsider from the borderlands and a reluctant colonizer, is attracted to Toby and Marnoo as much for their cultural liminality as their physical and social charisma. He envies the apparent freedom and mobility of these two men; they can cross borders with very little trouble. Tommo is too unsettled and uncertain to travel alone; he needs external guidance. The unpredictable yet reliable Toby proves to be the definition and support he craves. Consequently, Tommo seems happiest when he has a man on whom to rely— a man who makes the decisions and leads the way.

Melville has created a vision of paradise: the gay adolescent dream of being alone in a secluded, preferably pastoral, setting with the beloved— away from intrusive and restrictive societal mores and laws. Tommo has Toby to himself while they are in the hills, a partner, best friend, and collaborator. He is able to escape the rules of society and not face the fear of isolation. This time is particularly exciting for Tommo because he finds Toby extremely attractive: “even the appearance of Toby calculated to draw me towards him” (Typee 32). The interlude between the homosocial life aboard the whaler and the heterosocial life among the Typee is the peaceful heart of the text. Being with Tommo, the beast Toby is tamed. He sleeps peacefully, becomes reasonable and calm, and uses his natural instincts in wending his way through the jungle. Likewise, when Tommo is with Toby, he becomes courageous, confident, and calm. Tommo literally

follows Toby to the end of the world. During the time that they are lost in the jungle, Toby and Tommo eat, sleep, and bathe together.

However, their relationship changes with the entrance of Kory-Kory, the Typee equivalent of Toby, who hand feeds, bathes, and carries Tommo nearly everywhere because of Tommo's leg problem— a reptile bite in a place with no reptiles. The phlebitis is a plot device intensifying the interaction between Tommo and Toby, and of Tommo and Kory-Kory. The male-male relationships revolve about Tommo's injury and his prolonged disability.

Tommo's vague medical condition comes and goes, sometimes exacerbated by the cold, damp weather. At other times, he uses his leg to get his way. He relies upon the men who are certain and who can lead— and can be blamed when things go wrong, or, more precisely, when things do not please Tommo. When he is dissatisfied and uncomfortable, his physical condition, rather than his emotional position, flares up. Tommo is too emotionally flat, too guarded and repressed, to allow much emotional response. That is one reason he is so immediately and strongly drawn to Toby. Toby shows emotion: "He was active, ready, and obliging, of dauntless courage, and singularly open and fearless in the expression of his feelings" (Typee 31). He is both hot and cold, with a temper: "He was a strange wayward being, moody, fitful, and melancholy—at times almost morose. He had a quick and fiery temper too, which, when thoroughly aroused, transported him into a state bordering on delirium" (Typee 32). Tommo admires and envies Toby's volatile nature.

Toby is also attractive because he is secretive. He has no past, and he keeps the details of his life from the other sailors. The name Toby is an alias that he uses among

his shipmates: “for his real name he would never tell us” (Typee 31). Toby, definitely the Mysterious Stranger, is the wanderer, one of “that class of rovers you sometimes meet at sea, who never reveal their origin, never allude to home, and go rambling over the world as if pursued by some mysterious fate they cannot possibly elude” (Typee 32). Robert K. Martin has linked the unlimited movement of this roving and rambling with uncontrolled sexuality: “It seems quite likely that Melville’s reference to Toby as a ‘rover’ includes at least an association with a free sensuality. Anyone so clearly separated from the values of ‘home’ is necessarily liberated from associated concepts of domesticity, hence freed to the kind of unlimited masculinity that Victorian theorists saw manifested in masturbation” (Martin Hero 29). Masturbation, a sexual act often condemned as sinful, can quickly lead even further away from acceptable social interaction, easily condemning one to darker, more dangerous acts.

Homosexual or bisexual behavior is seen as one of the worst of the unbridled sexual acts, so dreadful, in fact, that it is often described in the nineteenth century as “unspeakable.” Thus, the “mysterious fate” which seems to pursue Toby is the societal censure of his unspeakable sexuality. Toby has already moved beyond the scope of acceptable Victorian sexuality even before Tommo meets him. Toby’s very appearance is indication enough that he is beyond the boundaries of Tommo’s world. Toby is already the Other, treated as “the different” by his shipmates. Toby, “endowed with a remarkably prepossessing exterior” (Typee 32), is tough and wiry, “singularly small and slightly made, with great flexibility of limb” (Typee 32). This intriguing loner is a lovable, misunderstood bad boy. He is also the racial Other: “His naturally dark complexion had been deepened by exposure to the tropical sun, and a mass of jetty locks

clustered about his temples, and threw a darker shade into his large black eyes” (Typee 32). With Typee, Melville establishes his trope of the attraction between the white American narrator and the exotic dark man. Tommo continually relies upon a series of dark men to comfort, protect, and save him.

In the beginning, Tommo longs for someone to join him in his escape from the Dolly: “In such an event what a solace would a companion be!” (Typee 33). In spite of their striking differences, Tommo and Toby immediately become friends, out of “a certain congeniality of sentiment between us” (Typee 32). Toby proves to be “ripe for the enterprise” (Typee 33). Because they already like each other, Toby and Tommo develop a mutual understanding beyond the usual camaraderie of shipmates: “We then ratified our engagement with an affectionate wedding of palms, and to elude suspicion repaired each to his hammock” (Typee 33). Certainly, Tommo and Toby are eluding suspicion because of their plot to escape. Also, due to their newly formed “marriage,” they sleep separately to prevent anyone discovering the true nature of their relationship. The wedding of palms can be read as two men shaking hands to close on a deal, their plan to escape. However, this wedding of palms also can be seen as two men sharing more than a handshake, similar to the sailors holding hands while squeezing whale sperm in Moby-Dick.

Extending his discourse on Toby’s anti-social behavior further, Tommo illustrates his friend’s attitudes toward clothing and proper attire. While preparing for shore leave, Toby reveals his socially astute and flexible nature in his manner of dress: “he for one preserved his go-ashore traps for the Spanish main, where the tie of a sailor’s neckerchief might make some difference; but as for a parcel of unbreeched heathen, he wouldn’t go to

the bottom of his chest for any of them, and was half disposed to appear among them in buff himself” (Typee 35). Toby shows none of the propriety and modesty which hobble Tommo. For all his self-restraint, Tommo can also be restless, quick to rebel against what he sees as oppression. When he convinces himself that the demanding discipline of the captain is becoming too difficult and restrictive, he jumps ship to find a better environment, i.e., more leisure and fewer constraints. Tommo is one of Melville’s less responsible, more self-centered characters. He is torn between solipsistic desires and societal responsibilities.

The responsibilities, or at least the predictability and comfort, of being a “family man” draw Tommo to Fayaway and Kory-Kory. The three become inseparable, sharing emotional and physical intimacy which Tommo experiences with no one else, except Toby. Unlike Toby, Kory-Kory is a respectable member of society, and Fayaway is securely defined in her role in the community. They are not mysterious rovers. Tommo seeks a reliable world, with a sense of family and home, and he finds it in Typee society: “A regular system of polygamy exists among the islanders; but of a most extraordinary nature,— a plurality of husbands, instead of wives; and this solitary fact speaks volumes for the gentle disposition of the male population” (Typee 191). Tommo continues with his praise of this polyandry: “The girls are first wooed and won, at a very tender age, by some stripling in the household in which they reside. This, however, is a mere frolic of the affections, and no formal engagement is contracted. By the time this first love has a little subsided, a second suitor presents himself, of graver years, and carries both boy and girl away to his own habitation. This disinterested and generous-hearted fellow now weds the young couple— marrying damsel and lover at the same time— and all three

thenceforth live together as harmoniously as so many turtles” (Typee 191). The partners in this three-way marriage live happily ever after, crawling all over one another, the reader is led to believe, like a pile of turtles. Perhaps this was one of Melville’s own fantasies, the final realization of a bisexual romance (in all senses of the word).

However, before this felicitous turtle domesticity occurs, Tommo indulges himself in watching Kory-Kory “producing light à la Typee.” This occurs after Toby has disappeared; Kory-Kory and Tommo can safely be alone, even sexually intimate, without fear of being discovered and possibly interrupted by Toby and his temper. Kory-Kory performs for Tommo in a masturbation/voyeurism fantasy. Kory-Kory straddles a large stick that is placed at a forty-five degree angle, and he “mounts astride of it like an urchin about to gallop off upon a cane, grasping the smaller [stick] firmly in both hands, he rubs its pointed end slowly up and down the extend of a few inches on the principal stick” (Typee 111).

Melville sustains this mood: “At first Kory-Kory goes to work quite leisurely, but gradually quickens his pace, and waxing warm in the employment, drives the stick furiously along the smoking channel, plying his hands to and fro with amazing rapidity, the perspiration starting from every pore. As he approaches the climax, of his effort, he pants and gasps for breath, and his eyes almost start from their sockets with the violence of his exertions. This is the critical stage of the operation: all his previous labors are vain if he cannot sustain the rapidity of the movement until the reluctant spark is produced” (Typee 111). After a “delicate wreath of smoke curls spirally into the air,” Kory-Kory, “almost breathless, dismounts from his steed” (Typee 111). Later, in the “cookbook” section of Typee, Tommo returns to the image of Kory-Kory and his stick in the process

of making pœe-pœe (poi): “This hobby-horse and the pestle and mortar were in great requisition during the time I remained in the house of Marheyo, and Kory-Kory had frequent occasion to show his skill in their use” (116).

As an argument against Tommo’s homo- or bisexuality, critics often cite his infatuation with Fayaway. Melville seems to be writing what is expected—based on other texts, or perhaps an instinctual reflex to established sexual mores. Fayaway seems to be an image, a symbol or some kind of vague characterization; she is not a personage in the narrative. She is not allowed to speak: she has no dialogue. What small amount of conversation she is allowed by the narrative is given in summary. She is virtually silent, barely human, and somewhat unreal. Martin has indicated that Fayaway illustrates Melville’s uncertainty about sexuality and gender: “It is a sign of the tentative nature of Melville’s exploration of sexual issues here that a good deal of attention is given to Fayaway (the only other novel prior to Pierre with important women characters is the allegorical Mardi). This is not to say that Fayaway is a false character, merely that she is not drawn with the same passionate conviction as the male characters and that she does not fill a place in Melville’s symbolic universe” (Martin Hero 36). Granted, the female characters of Typee are actually background, acting as a sort of chorus, echoing and reinforcing the action of the males. The true dramatic tension occurs among the males. In Melville’s version of the Typee, the men hold the power. Thus Tommo’s struggle to escape is within the arena of male not female control.

The world of male action controls the shifting genres of Typee. Within Tommo’s travel narrative, another equally important genre asserts itself, the initiation or coming of age story. Aside from Richard Dana’s Two Years before the Mast (1840), the travel

narratives which influenced Melville were accounts written by older, experienced men, usually at the peak or near the end of their careers as professional travelers. Porter was a naval captain; Stewart had years of experience as a missionary. Tommo, however, is young. John Bryant has offered a conciliatory or perhaps inflammatory statement concerning Melville's and his character's sexualities: "Some assume Melville was in fact homosexual. But the known facts of Melville's life discount this assumption: indeed, the very nature of his creativity discourages the easy label of homosexual or heterosexual. He is best called 'pansexual'" (Bryant xx). Because Melville was pansexual and pantheistic, he was able to contain/embrace different viewpoints while remaining an observer. He was sexual; he loved sexuality and the idea of the physical body as sexual. The joy he takes in looking at and appreciating the human form is apparent.

This joy is communicated to the reader in muted, sometimes encoded terms. For instance, Tommo does not explain the extent, or depth, of his relationship with Toby, especially their physical relationship. Although Tommo and Toby appear to be intimate confidants— best friends, and lovers in some sense— Toby remains the Mysterious Stranger. Tommo is too emotionally lazy and self-absorbed to allow any significant amount of emotional or intellectual familiarity with anyone. In the final meeting of Tommo and Toby, in the Sequel, Toby's story is filtered through Tommo. Tommo never relates Toby's experiences after leaving the Typee, and he uses indirect quotes, keeping Toby a voiceless memory. It is almost as if, in the Sequel, Tommo has conjured Toby up for emotional companionship. And Toby is still the emotional partner in this relationship. He expresses his long-held guilt about Tommo; he has had nightmares because he left Tommo behind with the Typee. Tommo remains the emotionally flat

center of attention. After years of separation from his dear friend, Tommo is still the cold observer, rather blandly reporting the emotions of others.

However, on occasion, Tommo does show his feelings. For instance, he expresses extreme jealousy—bordering on anger and insult—when Marnoo, a character whom Tommo admires and respects, ignores him. He expects Marnoo to hold him in high esteem—or at least to pay attention to him. At their first encounter, Marnoo ignores Tommo: “But without deigning to notice the civility, or even the mere incontrovertible fact of my existence, the stranger passed on, utterly regardless of me” (Typee 136). Tommo describes Marnoo and his own feelings in a set of gender-blurring images: “His cheek was of a feminine softness, and his face was free from the least blemish of tattooing” and “Had the belle of the season, in the pride of her beauty and power, been cut in a place of public resort by some supercilious exquisite, she could not have felt greater indignation than I did at this unexpected slight” (Typee 136). Tommo has called Marnoo “feminine” and compared himself to a “belle.” Tommo is like a feisty debutante who has been ignored by her favorite beau, in this case a soft and feminine man.

In contrast to the femininity of Marnoo’s demeanor, Tommo emphasizes the beauty of Marnoo’s masculine body: “His unclad limbs were beautifully formed; whilst the elegant outline of his figure, together with his beardless cheeks, might have entitled him to the distinction of standing for the statue of the Polynesian Apollo” (Typee 135). Melville is not alone in his comparison of the islanders to Apollo; the travel book is a strongly Euro-American genre, enforcing the Western cultural traditions. In relating his response to a Nukaheva festival, Stewart uses similar comparisons to classical Greek personages: “The principal dancer was uncommonly handsome, both in face and figure—

of great roundness of limb—and though not large, admirably proportioned. The use of the papa [a skin-lightening juice], and seclusion from the sun, had rendered him almost as fair as any one of our number, making his whole style more that of an Adonis than of an Apollo” (Stewart 259). He also compares Piaroro, “a chief of rank from the neighboring tribe of the Hapas” in classical European terms: “with a general contour of figure and roundness and polish of limb that would do grace to an Apollo” (Stewart 228). Yet, this Piaroro is still the Other in his appearance: “his whole face and head, chest and shoulders are, from this cause [tattooing], as black as ever an Othello is pictured to be” (Stewart 228). Thus, these American writers fall back upon familiar European conventions in their narratives of the South Pacific Islanders.

Although Melville/Tommo recognizes the islanders as Other, he does not see them as alien. He understands them as humans with different customs but similar in many ways to white Americans. Marnoo is very close, in some ways, to being a European. Unlike the other Polynesians (whether depicted by Porter, Melville, or Stewart), Marnoo has lived with white men, learned English, and done business with Americans and Englishmen. He is accustomed to Western men like Tommo, and more than likely accustomed to the type of fascination which Tommo displays toward him. Marnoo is sophisticated and cosmopolitan compared to the other islanders, and as compared to Tommo. His liminal existence as taboo is repulsive and attractive to Tommo. Tommo explains the term “taboo”: “Though the country is possessed by various tribes, whose mutual hostilities almost wholly preclude any intercourse between them; yet there are instances where a person having ratified friendly relations with some individual belonging to the valley, whose inmates are at war with his own, may, under

particular restrictions, venture with impunity into the country of his friend where, under other circumstances he would have been treated as an enemy. In this light are personal friendships regarded among them, and the individual so protected is said to be ‘taboo,’ and his person, to a certain extent, is held as sacred. Thus the stranger informed me he had access to all the valleys in the island” (139-140). Tommo can identify with someone in the position of an ambassador like Marnoo: one can escape oppression, but one also runs the risk of losing identity and any sense of belonging to a community.

Marnoo is an example of Melville’s acceptance of differences and, at least momentarily, of Tommo’s resolution of his captive state. He accepts Marnoo as someone to envy, court, and emulate. The traditional captivity narrative consistently positions the captor as an alien, with no empathy or attempt at understanding extended toward the temporary and hostile relationship between the captor and the captive. Tommo looks past racial barriers to see individuals, especially the young men, as possible mirrors of himself. He could easily be like Marnoo. In an extension of this fluid compassion and humanity, the relationships of the sailors on the Pequod in Moby-Dick, particularly that of Ishmael and Queequeg, will be Melville’s ultimate statement of interracial intimacy, marriages that last until death. Marnoo is just as static in his identity as Tommo is. Because Marnoo is taboo, he cannot return to any state he might have inhabited before his transition to taboo.

Beyond his political flexibility, Marnoo is also sexually liminal. He is male and female simultaneously, crossing gender as well as national borders, a veritable shape shifter. Androgyny, often considered insidious and evil, is an intrinsic aspect of pansexuality. Sexual activity without gendered behavior is a type of anarchy, destroying

classifications that previously were believed to be natural and inviolable.

If Marnoo can travel as a nearly invisible ambassador, with questionable sex and gender identity, then what is there to save Tommo from becoming invisible, even absorbed, by the Typee and the other tribes on the islands? Tommo is on the verge of becoming invisible, assimilated, and eventually consumed by the Typee. Above all, Tommo fears absorption— by the merchant marine, the Typee, or anything which will compromise his strong sense of self and individual agency.

When Tommo is motivated by the fear of losing his self to cannibalism and tattooing, Typee changes from a travel book to a captivity narrative. In the captivity narrative, the physical body gains a newly intense and focused attention. The captive's perspective on physicality changes with the heightened awareness of one's own body and the bodies of one's captors. Selfhood and mobility become tantamount to identity and personal autonomy. Tommo, like most captives, has experienced a compromise in his sense of self and identity. He has injured his body, he is unable to travel, and escape is impossible. The bodies of the captors are strong, vibrant, and able to contain Tommo. He is panicked by nearly all aspects of his surroundings, but especially by the stultifying effect that the Typee and American societies share—the power of community in mandating conformity and exacting obedience to authority.

Tommo's panic at yielding to alien authority creates a fissure in his personal world: he is no longer able to function without his preconceived idea of self. "Toby went halfway; he ate and slept, then made a run for it. Melville went further, but he has Tommo draw the line at tattooing. Chapter Thirty marks the turning point" (Bryant xxi). Indeed, this is the dissolution of the travel book, and Typee then clearly becomes a

captivity narrative. As a result of this major shift in genres, Chapter 31 proves to be more “sadly discursive” than the previous chapters. Tommo laments, “I must still further entreat the reader’s patience, as I am about to string together, without any attempt at order, a few odds and ends of things not hitherto mentioned, but which are either curious in themselves or peculiar to the Typees” (226). The reality of his situation causes Tommo to panic. As a result of this panic, he changes the subject of his narrative in an attempt to escape, at least momentarily, the increasing possibility of monumental losses. He cannot concentrate on one subject, but flits from one to another. Being the observant, highly sensitive person that he is, Tommo cannot allow his mind to rest.

When the possibility of being tattooed becomes a probability, Tommo’s life is one of absolute wretchedness: “Not a day passed but I was persecuted by the solicitations of some of the natives to subject myself to the odious operation of tattooing” (231). His wretchedness increases as Tommo becomes more deeply involved in the Typee society: “I had grown familiar with the narrow limits to which my wanderings had been confined; and I began bitterly to feel the state of captivity in which I was held” (231). For Jennifer Putzi, Tommo’s captive state extends beyond his mere physical imprisonment. It threatens the very center of his being:

As Tommo’s observations of the Typee demonstrate, tattooing opens the body up for interpretation. Robbed of his whiteness and his masculinity by tattooing, Tommo would have two choices: to become like the queen of Nuku Hiva, a grotesque figure who attempts to control the display and interpretation of her tattoos, or to become like Fayaway, sexually and textually available to the first man who comes along (27, emphasis Putzi’s).

The Typee become more comfortable with Tommo, accepting him as a member of their community, at least peripherally. Consequently, Tommo must resist the pressure to be tattooed. Although peripherally he is a Typee, he admits that he could possibly being eaten by the Typee. Of course, in reality, the Typee are not cannibals, but Tommo is overcome by his terror. Threats of tattoos and cannibalism drive Tommo to attempt to escape. Yet, because he is so frightened, his problems with his leg return: “It was during the period I was in this unhappy frame of mind that the painful malady under which I had been laboring— after having almost completely subsided— began again to show itself, and with symptoms as violent as ever” (Typee 232). Only here, when the Typee restrict his movements, does he respond as a captive. In addition, the initiation story intensifies: the young protagonist sees the world as it truly is. He no longer is looking at it as he did when the narrative began; he is seeing it as realistic adult who must face the world in an adult manner—an adult captive facing severe adult consequences, unlike the boy playing at sailor.

As a travel-adventure writer, Tommo has been a privileged tourist, taking the “peep” of the title, remaining an uninvolved observer. Now, however, Tommo has become a part of the community, dependent upon it for his survival. If Tommo were to be tattooed, he would not be the fluid visitor. He would be marked and claimed, just as his sailor uniform marks and claims him. Clothing can be changed, as Melville is quick to tell us in Typee and his other sea narratives. Yet, tattoos, particularly on the face, would mark Tommo permanently. He would be fixed in a place and time, identified with and by his markings and their creators. There could be no more running off to become a different man.

Unfortunately, running away is what Tommo does best: he escapes his stifling life to join the crew of a ship. This is the perennial adolescent dream of running away to sea and becoming part of a world where one belongs and is appreciated. In the initiation story, the youthful protagonist gains experience and insight in the world, sometimes even adult wisdom. Tommo, however, gains no wisdom. He jumps ship out of restlessness and failure to commit. In the course of the story, he changes from cussing the ship's captain and praising the Typee to praising the ship's captain and cussing the Typee. His sense of loyalty remains based on his level of comfort and pleasure.

Eventually he returns to the familiarity of the American ship and to the safety of his home. Yet, Tommo and Toby never belong, not on the Dolly, not with the Typees, and not in the civilized society to which they return; they do not fit into their expected roles. Tommo is hyper-conscious of the presence of others and his relationship to them. Toby, on the other hand, remains the mysterious rover that he was before their adventure. He is still indifferent to the rules of others, relaxed and comfortable in himself and the world. Yet for all their differences in temperament, Tommo and Toby are close friends, possibly different versions of Melville. Their reunion in the sequel is cloaked in a vague language of familiarity when Toby tells how he has missed Tommo and feels guilty for leaving Tommo: “\* \* \* Oh! said he to me at our meeting, what sleepless nights were mine. Often I started from my hammock, dreaming you were before me, and upbraiding me for leaving you on the island” (Typee 271). Melville uses the three asterisks to separate Toby's narrative from the statement that Toby makes to Tommo. However, they seem to move not only in time, but in mood, prefacing Toby's admission of his great longing and guilt.

Immediately following this short bit of dialogue from Toby, Melville has inserted a line of asterisks or ellipses (ostensibly another indication of a shift in time and tense). However, these asterisks can also be seen as omitting action that the narrator does not want the audience to know, perhaps a new and deeper level of intimacy. Thus, by adding to the mystery of Toby, Melville violates another literary convention of his era, that of supplying a note of summary and conclusion. The final lines of the book leave an open ending, leading to a possible narrative of reconciliation and the future adventures of Toby and Tommo: “a strange meeting was in store for us, one which made Toby’s heart all the lighter” (Typee 271). The ambiguity of that statement raises more questions than it answers. Is Toby’s heart lighter because he is with Tommo again? Why is the meeting strange? Or does the final meeting occur beyond the narrative, somewhere in the space between the asterisks and ellipses...?

In Typee, Melville employs a type of heteroglossia as a response to the restraints of genre, just as Tommo has managed his escapes as a response to social restraints. Both the author and his character share the uneasiness of being the colonizer while being aware of the possibility of becoming the colonized, whether a wage slave as Melville was most of his life or literally a physical captive like Tommo. Regarding his financial situation, Melville wrote to Hawthorne in 1851: “I am so pulled hither and thither by circumstances.... Dollars damn me; and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar.... What I feel most moved to write, that is banned,—it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the other way I cannot. So the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches” (Letters 128.) Melville continues his dissatisfaction with American sexual and religious roles in Omoo and Mardi and extends his “studies” of

non-Westerners (Queequeg and other men) into his metaphysical novel Moby-Dick or, The Whale.

In Melville's second book Omoo, Tommo again is the narrator. However, this Tommo is different; he is much calmer and less self-absorbed than in Typee. Unfortunately, because of his calmness and maturity, this "new" Tommo lacks the curiosity he had in Typee. Aside from a lengthy digression in the middle of the book, the text is a rather straightforward travelogue. Omoo has the loose and free structure of narrative of Typee and most of Melville's later works. Melville through Tommo has retained the sense of inhabiting the borderlands. Even as Tommo returns to his own world of Western ships and white sailors, his appearance is not as it should be. He looks more like one of the "heathens" of the islands than an American sailor: "my own appearance was calculated to excite curiosity. A robe of the native cloth was thrown over my shoulders, my hair and beard were uncut, and I betrayed other evidences of my recent adventures" (2). This is not accidental, but, as Tommo says, it is indeed calculated. He plans and works at being on the fringe, being different. He sustains this defiant attitude. However, later, on shore, he inadvertently frightens two white women, the missionary's wife and daughter. He worries about their perception of him: "to be taken for anything but a cavalier, by the ringleted one [the daughter], was absolutely unendurable" (154). He wants to remove his hat "to show my good-breeding," but he is wearing a turban: "there was no taking it off and putting it on again with anything like dignity" (155). He tries to bow, but "my loose frock was so voluminous that I doubted whether any spinal curvature would be perceptible" (155). Finally, he greets the women in English with disastrous although comic results: "Hysterics and hartshorn! who would have thought it?"

The young lady screamed, and the old one came near fainting” (155). Tommo is unclear whether the woman’s response is because he looks like a heathen, because he is known as a convict, or another reason altogether (possibly they are shocked that a man with his appearance can speak English). Nonetheless, Tommo finds pleasure in his ability to arouse such reactions.

In addition to his appearance, Tommo has feelings of conflicted loyalty that leave him straddling the threshold between worlds: “Safe aboard of a ship— so long my earnest prayer— with home and friends once more in prospect, I nevertheless felt weighed down by a melancholy that could not be shaken off. It was the thought of never more seeing those who, notwithstanding their desire to retain me a captive, had, upon the whole, treaded me kindly. I was leaving them forever” (3). Much of Melville’s narrative voice, not only in *Typee* but also throughout his writing career, is prompted by the melancholy surrounding the greetings and farewells associated with travel.

In *Omoo*, Melville often abandons the narrative for asides or “episodes” as he calls them, explaining the geography, history, and local customs of the Tahitians among other social and political subjects. He has several motives for his disregard for a chronological narrative. One reason for these episodes is Tommo’s sense of the passage of time while onboard the *Julia*: “we seemed always in the same place, and every day was the former lived over again” (30). He continues this idea of time being simultaneously unimportant and static. From the islanders he gains the view that time is irrelevant, something that does not affect beliefs and feelings. They all seem to have known Captain Cook, the great explorer (and imperialist colonizer). However, Captain Cook last visited Tahiti in the late 1770s and Melville was there in the early 1840s (1842-1844). Thus,

nearly seventy years after Cook's visit, the natives generally maintain that they knew Cook: "It is a curious fact that all these people, young and old, will tell you that they have enjoyed the honour of a personal acquaintance with the great navigator; and if you listen to them, they will go on and tell anecdotes without end" (110). When Tommo declares this as untrue, with the facts refuting their claims, he realizes that they have a different concept of time than he does: "As for the anachronism of the thing, they seem to have no idea of it; days and years are all the same to them" (110). Being in this place that is conducive to his cultural shapeshifting, Tommo begins to ignore time and space in his narrative, slipping in his viewpoint as fluidly as he slips from life on American soil to life onboard to life among the islanders.

Tommo's digressions occur as he responds to unpleasant changes in his circumstances; the narrative detours are a means of emotional self-defense. For Tommo, the most significant disruptions in the narrative occur after threats to his physical being. It is almost as if he needs these mental asides to endure the memory of the painful circumstances. The narrative of Omoo clearly begins to disintegrate shortly after Tommo and his companions are taken ashore for mutiny and secured in stocks in a British jail. In the chapter "Proceedings of the French at Tahiti," the narrative voice, definitely Melville's, in a clear departure from the tone of the preceding chapters, delivers a sharp harangue against the French in their domination of Tahiti and their determination to convert the islanders to French Roman Catholicism: "they might have settled upon some one of the thousand unconverted isles of the Pacific, rather than have forced themselves thus upon a people already professedly Christians" (117). Additionally, in his discussion of the French, Melville also agrees with the prevalent nineteenth-century belief that

minority races, or ethnic groupings, were destined to extermination: “most of the islanders still refuse to submit to the French; and what turn events may hereafter take, it is hard to predict. At any rate, these disorders must accelerate the final extinction of their race” (116).

Within the actual chronological story of Omoo, Tommo and Doctor Long Ghost are incarcerated by the English consul for dereliction of duty in an English jail on the island, called the Calabooza Beretanee by the natives. In this structure, Captain Bob, the islander in charge of Tommo and the other captives, locks them into stocks. It is significant that only the feet are secured. Any type of structure restrains Tommo, leaving him literally prostrate in his physical and mental confinement. Tommo is unable to walk, suffering great pain in his legs, especially his ankles. Reminiscent of his first night of leg pain with Toby in Typee, Tommo is unable to sleep, attempting to reach out to his friend, in this case Doctor Long Ghost, who is sleeping soundly and peacefully while Tommo is restless and wide awake due to his pain. Thus, Doctor Long Ghost, like Toby, is unaware of Tommo’s pain, unresponsive even after Tommo “gave the doctor a pinch” (108).

Another reason for the digressions in Omoo is Tommo’s unhappy relationship with one of the islanders. Shortly after coming ashore in Polynesia, “not many days’ sail from Tahiti, and seldom visited by shipping” (143), Tommo is befriended by a native: “Kooloo was a candidate for my friendship; and being a comely youth, quite a buck in his way, I accepted his overtures” (145). Unfortunately, Kooloo leaves Tommo for another sailor: “As for Kooloo, after sponging me well, he one morning played the part of a retrograde lover; informing me that his affections had undergone a change; he had fallen in love at first sight with a smart sailor, who had just stepped ashore quite flush from a

lucky whaling cruiser” (146). Tommo becomes distracted, due to the emotional intensity of the experience and the pain of relating it, and shifts his attention from the narrative into a series of philosophical and sociopolitical passages.

These digressions, in turn, are abandoned to circle back to Tommo’s continuing pain at Kooloo’s betrayal. In Typee, the digressions and abandonment of the straight narrative begin because Tommo fears becoming permanently identified with the Typee through tattooing or possible cannibalism; in Omoo, however, the long section of digressions and “genre hopping” begins when Tommo fears losing not his individuality but rather his identification with the natives through his love for Kooloo.

If the separation from Kooloo is the overarching reason for Tommo’s persistent break in the narrative, then attending “the principal native church,” the Royal Mission Chapel of Papoar, is the immediate catalyst for the rift in Tommo’s chronology. Attending the service prompts Tommo to move away from the sermon—a dismissal of the French with their wicked priests and wicked idols, and praise of the generous English with their wealth and luxurious belongings—to a general history and background of the Tahitians. The digression is replete with several footnotes which are asides and digressions in themselves. As the series of digressions expands, the footnotes become a veritable bibliography of earlier South Pacific travel narratives, embedded within the text.

In some footnotes, he refers the readers to other texts about Tahiti and other Pacific island groupings, often drawing upon these texts to reinforce his own opinions about the natives and their relationship with whites. Melville quotes James Wilson, from A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean: “The excellent Captain Wilson, who took the first missionaries out to Tahiti, affirms that the people of that island had, in

many things, “more refined ideas of decency than ourselves” (176). Wilson himself, establishing a vein of thought which Melville and others have continued through the years, expands upon this statement, arguing that the colonizers are the source of all indecent and immodest behavior: “one, long a resident, scruples not to declare, that he never saw any appetite, hunger and thirst excepted, gratified in public. It is true, that for the sake of gaining our extraordinary curiosities, and to please our brutes, they have appeared immodest in the extreme. Yet they lay the charge wholly at our door, and say that Englishmen are ashamed of nothing, and that we have led them to public acts of indecency never before practiced among themselves” (342).

Regardless of his political statements, Tommo, in the body of his narrative, continually bemoans his loss of Kooloo. For instance, in his discussion of the Tahitians’ dress, Tommo again voices his jealousy and remorse: “The young sailor for whom Kooloo deserted me, presented him with a shaggy old pea-jacket; and with this buttoned up to his chin, under a tropical sun, he promenaded the Broom Road, quite elated” (169). Tommo does return to the narrative and, except for a few short digressions, one about the cattle of Polynesia and another concerning several white men who have made their permanent homes in Polynesia, follows a chronology for the remainder of the book. Finally, Tommo leaves his friend and intimate companion Doctor Long Ghost: “I shook the doctor long and heartily by the hand. I have never seen or heard of him since” (299). However, unlike other men whom Tommo and other Melville protagonists have left, Doctor Long Ghost leaves no permanent impression on Tommo emotionally; Tommo does not seek him out and does not return to him in later narratives.

As usual, Melville’s protagonist sets off into the great deep, moving on, beyond

everything and everyone. When Melville cannot resolve his characters' or his own dilemmas, he runs away, to another geographical setting, to another thought, to a new relationship, or to the anonymous void of eternity.

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Melville's third book Mardi seems, at first, to be a sequel to Typee and Omoo, with the narrator, (ostensibly Melville) aboard ship. Yet, Melville was eager to move on, to change his style and content and to have the critics see him as someone new, someone who was more than, as he would tell Nathaniel Hawthorne in a letter in June 1851 (Letters 130), a "man who lived among the cannibals," and, I might add, more than the homoerotic adventurer as many late twentieth and early twenty-first century critics would have us believe. Instead, he sought to showcase Mardi as a different type of endeavor, unlike his previous books, as he told his English publisher John Murray in a letter of January 28, 1849: "Unless you should deem it very desirable do not put me down on the title page as 'the author of Typee and Omoo.' I wish to separate 'Mardi' as much as possible from those books.'" (Letters 76).

Yet, Mardi is similar to Typee in one aspect of its early plot development. The narrator Taji wants to leave his current situation. Like Tommo, Taji regrets the decision he made. After a few weeks aboard the Arcturion, he becomes disenchanted with the prospect of possibly being onboard for years, and finds a companion (although not a soul mate as Toby had been) to help him jump ship. In Mardi, Taji, the protagonist, and Jarl, an old sailor, are emotionally close: "for Jarl I had a wonderful liking; for he loved me; from the first had cleaved to me" (13). Taji expounds on this affection, extending the bond to include all sailors: "It is sometimes the case, that an old mariner like him will

conceive a very strong attachment for some young sailor, his shipmate; an attachment so devoted, as to be wholly inexplicable, unless originating in that heart-loneliness which overtakes most seamen as they grow aged; impelling them to fasten upon some chance object of regard” (14). In this instance, because Jarl is older, his sexuality and physicality are diffused into a safe, non-threatening presence of a loving father image. Any idea of sexual attraction between the older and younger men is softened, making it questionable.

This relationship between the older experienced sailor and the young recruit is a foreshadowing of Melville’s incomplete novella Billy Budd and Claggart’s relationship with Budd. Claggart’s inexplicable devotion, unlike Jarl’s, is because Claggart is both attracted and repulsed by Budd’s beauty and presence; thus, he works at destroying the object of his regard, denying his heart-loneliness. Also, like Budd’s shipmates on the Rights-of-Man who washed and mended Budd’s clothing, Jarl is Taji’s “laundress and tailor.” In the midst of the section on his strong affectionate friendship with Jarl, Taji clearly announces, in spite of what the other sailors often perceive as his drawing-room demeanor, his rugged masculinity: “Not,—let me hurry to say,— that I put hand in tar bucket with a squeamish air, or ascended the rigging with a Chesterfieldian mince. I showed as brown a chest, and as hard a hand, as the tarriest tar of them all” (14). Thus, Melville clearly states his complexities and conflicts. After Taji has established himself as “just one of the guys,” he is able to continue with the narrative of his escape, with Jarl, from the Arcturion.

Shortly after leaving the Arcturion, Taji and Jarl meet the Parki, a ship that Jarl claims is haunted. Yet, the ship does contain living beings, Samoa and his wife Annatoo. Here begin the digressions, the tales within a tale. Samoa tells his story, the history of the

Parki. Melville extends Samoa's narrative, stretching it forward and beyond Taji's observations: "With a few random reflections, in substance, it will be found in the six following chapters" (67). The ship was overtaken by Cholos "half-breed Spaniards, from the Main; one half Spaniard, the other half quartered between the wild Indian and the devil" (69). The Cholos and the ship's crew eventually battle to the death; only Samoa and Annatoo survive. Annatoo is a disruptive and violent thief, arguing and fighting with the men, stealing everything that she can. Neal L. Tolchin argues that Annatoo is more than a sad yet comic character. She is symbolic, a foreshadowing of things to come: "The emphasis given to her pilfering of the Parki's supplies and to the destructive consequences of her thievery obscures what she more powerfully signifies: the disorderly energy that is about to take over the narrative" (65). Certainly, Annatoo can be indicative of the unreasonable and unpredictable aspects of life; she is swept overboard in a storm. However, it can also be argued that she is the feminine presence which disrupts the all-male atmosphere of commercial and military ships. Women, by adding complex and unexpected dimensions of gender and sexuality, distract and confuse the men onboard. This theme is visited by other writers, notably American literary naturalists, Jack London's The Sea-Wolf (1904) and Eugene O'Neill's The Hairy Ape (1921).

After Taji and Jarl encounter the Mardi, the narrative becomes a quest narrative, a series of folk tales, and a collection of Taji's political, religious, and cultural observances. Therefore, with Mardi, Melville again positions himself, his protagonist, and his narrative among the shadows along the cultural and literary boundaries. In Mardi, Melville has folded poetry into his prose, his novelistic tone overtaking his travelogue. He also tests those boundaries, embarking on a quest that includes a parody of the travel narrative that

is similar to that of Lemuel Gulliver, complete with little people, gods, mermaids, a kidnapping, and a trio of goddesses who pursue Taji, the protagonist, as he pursues the kidnapped Yillah, a mysterious, almost ghostly, young woman who eventually proves to be not a heroine worthy of rescue but a sorceress with a history of evil acts.

Mardi is the most complex and also the most loosely structured of what have come to be known as Melville's South Seas trilogy. Several of the chapters consist of tales told by the native characters with the narrator Taji sitting by as a silent audience, becoming invisible, absent from the interior stories and from the general narrative of the book.. Often, Taji, who has been declared a god by the Mardi, speaks of himself in the third person, especially in narrative sections without dialogue. This distancing of the protagonist from his own experiences increases the layering of the texts, removing the journey from Melville's experience and lending it a vocabulary and mood of allegorical legend.

As Taji and his native companions move from island to island in their search for Yillah, the quest narrative begins to disintegrate, replaced by the characters' tales, digressions from Taji's story. Mardi circles about the futility of life and of the inevitability of death, both confirmed in the frustration of the vague and elusive ending: Yillah is nowhere and everywhere. She may not exist at all, or she may be a shape-shifting changeling like many of Melville's other characters. The substance, or lack thereof, of Yillah is an aspect of Melville's nihilism. Like the Pequod and its inhabitants in Moby-Dick and Edgar Allan Poe's Arthur Pym, Yillah is lost in a whirlpool: "Conflicting currents met, and wrestled; and one dark arch led to channels, seaward tending. Round and round, a gleaming form slow circled in the deepest eddies:

—white, and vaguely Yillah” (653). Thus, what Taji thought to be Yillah is only vaguely so. Everything in Mardi seems to be vaguely so, seen through a series of mists and fogs; the characters tend to transform in their moods and intentions, and the landscape changes, altering its shape and substance.

Taji, after his final encounter with Hautia, the queen goddess of the island Flozella, in which he loses all hope of finding Yillah, experiences his own death and transcendence: “Taji lives no more. So dead, he has no ghost. I am his spirit’s phantom’s phantom” (656). As he proclaims this, Aleema’s three sons are gaining on him, revenge for their father’s death giving them energy and persistence in their pursuit of Taji. Not only has Yillah eluded Taji but now he himself is being pursued himself, in the non-conclusive conclusion: “Churned in foam, that outer ocean lashed the clouds; and straight in my white wake, headlong dashed a shallop, three fixed specters leaning o’er its prow; three arrows poising. And thus, pursuers and pursued flew on, over an endless sea” (654). The journey has no destination. No rewards exist. Taji is left alone on a sea of uncertainty and danger.

Continuing his statement of existential nihilism, Melville uses Moby-Dick to declare his opinions and feelings on a myriad of subjects. In the beginning section of Etymology, Melville first instructs the reader on how to pronounce the word “whale,” and gives a list of different words for “whale.” In the Extracts section Melville places his text in the historical library of whale information. Certainly, the whale and whaling are at the center of the novel, but he also discusses religion (especially Fundamentalist Protestantism and its place among other religions), philosophy, and the ultimate issues of life and death. From the first page, Ishmael has expressed his spiritual state: “a damp,

drizzly November in my soul” (23). Before Ishmael has boarded the Pequod, he sees his planned travel as his destiny: “doubtless, my going on this whaling voyage, formed part of the grand programme of Providence that was drawn up a long time ago. It came in as a sort of brief interlude and solo between more extensive performances. I take it that this part of the bill must have run something like this: ‘Grand Contested Election for the Presidency of the United States. Whaling Voyage by One Ishmael. Bloody Battle in Affganistan.’ Though I cannot tell why it was exactly that those stage managers, the Fates, put me down for this shabby part of a whaling voyage” (29).

Thus, in the first few chapters of Moby-Dick, the digressions begin, and they continue. On the walls of the chapel in New Bedford are several plaques “Sacred to the Memory of” various sailors who were killed at sea. Father Mapple leads the congregation in singing a hymn; the lyrics are printed within the text of Ishmael’s narrative. Immediately following the singing, Father Mapple reads from the Bible the story of Job, the text of his sermon. Thus, the narrative is complex and layered, moving from Ishmael, circling about as the Pequod and Moby-Dick do in their elaborate chase.

In Moby-Dick, Melville, through his protagonist Ishmael, finds the relationship that seems to have eluded him in his other works. Ishmael finds Queequeg, the tattooed cannibal, and they are together, albeit on the ship Pequod until they are separated by death. As with Toby and Tommo, Ishmael and Queequeg join in a form of marriage: “he pressed his forehead against mine, clasped me round the waist, and said that henceforth we were married; meaning in his country’s phrase, that we were bosom friends; he would gladly die for me, if need should be” (84). Immediately, Melville turns from the ideal of this interracial, same-sex marriage with an explanation and disclaimer; the word marriage

has a cultural and linguistic distinction, meaning friendship among Queequeg's people. Yet, a few pages later, in the same scene, Ishmael exclaims: "there is no place like a bed for confidential disclosures between friends. Man and wife, they say, there open the very bottom of their souls to each other: and some old couples often lie and chat over old times till nearly morning. Thus, then in our hearts' honeymoon, lay I and Queequeg—a cosy, loving pair" (Moby-Dick 86). Certainly, this can be seen as metaphorical and symbolic, a love that transcends the physical, but, even in Melville's time, terms like "honeymoon" and "cosy" referred, as well, to the physical and sexual.

As soon as Ishmael and Queequeg are settled into their warmth and affection, Ishmael steps away from his comforting relationship to remind the reader that outside those bedclothes is a world that is cold and unfriendly. The warmth of affection is transitory and illusive: "Then there you lie like the one warm spark in the heart of an arctic crystal" (87). Not only is the world cold, but it is also dark: "as if darkness were indeed the proper element of our essences" (87). Almost immediately, the first notable digression intrudes upon the narrative of the journey of the Pequod, the story of Queequeg's life, pieced together not during the first telling but much later: "Though at the time I but ill comprehended not a few of his words, yet subsequent disclosures, when I had become familiar with his broken phraseology, now enable me to present the whole story" (88). This story continues into a realm of legend and fantasy similar to Mardi. In describing Queequeg's home island, Ishmael refuses to place Queequeg in any realistic geographical setting: "Queequeg was a native of Kokovoko, an island far away to the West and South. It is not down in any map; true places never are" (88). From here, Melville quickly moves away from the narrative of Ishmael's whaling journey.

Amid disjointed descriptions of ships, the whaling business, and the anatomy of whales, Ishmael ponders the whiteness of Moby-Dick and the vastness of the sea compared to the finite nature of man. He wanders into philosophical musings on the nature of good, evil, and nothingness. However, Ishmael soon gives way as narrator to an omniscient voice, a narrator with information beyond what Ishmael could know. In several instances, Melville takes the reader where Ishmael does not go. Moby-Dick is too large for Ishmael's voice; it has grown beyond his capabilities of story telling. The sprawling narrative of Moby-Dick continually grows, spreading beyond Ishmael (and Melville), seemingly uncontrollable.

Almost as if the structure of the romance or novel is unable to contain the greatness of the story of Ahab and Moby-Dick, the prose narrative, in Chapter 37 entitled "Sunset," gives way to the form of a play, with dialogue and stage directions, shortly before Ishmael's first encounter with the whale. In this short drama, Ahab, Starbuck, and Stubb give monologues, revealing themselves to the reader but not to the other characters, including Ishmael. Ishmael's "I" narrator has been abandoned for the larger conversations of madness, evil, and nihilism. The first scene of this play is set: "The cabin; by the stern windows; Ahab sitting alone; and gazing out" (225). Ahab gives a monologue that reveals his self-knowledge and his danger to the other sailors: "They think me mad—Starbuck does; but I'm demoniac, I am madness maddened! That wild madness that's only calm to comprehend itself!" (226). Ahab is aware that he is like a demon, possessed of evil. Starbuck admits to defeat in his differences with Ahab: "I plainly see my miserable office,—to obey, rebelling; and worse yet, to hate with touch of pity!" (228). Starbuck is duty-bound to obey Ahab even when he disagrees with his

obsessive pursuit of the white whale. Stubb, in his speech, is resigned: “a laugh’s the wisest, easiest answer to all that’s queer; and come what will, one comfort’s always left—that unfailing comfort is, it’s all predestinated” (230-1). Lawrence Thompson, in Melville’s Quarrel with God (1952), has stated that Ishmael and Ahab are aspects of Melville himself: “In Moby-Dick, it might be said that Melville projected one aspect of himself into his narrator Ishmael, and then projected another contrasting aspect of self into his hero, Captain Ahab” (151). Beyond these aspects of Thompson’s argument, other characters are also parts of Melville; Starbuck is mindful of his duty, a conscientious employee and sailor who obeys his superior, and Stubb encounters whatever happens with a passive and nihilistic acceptance.

The arguments of these philosophical and moral viewpoints and the confrontations of the characters are never resolved. Again, as in Mardi and Melville’s other works, the characters are left alone. Most of them, including Moby-Dick, are dead. Ishmael is the sole survivor of the Pequod; the Fates have ordained a chain of events that save his life. Floating on Queequeg’s empty coffin, he is saved by the “devious-cruising Rachel, that in her retracing search after her missing children, only found another orphan” (724). Ishmael, like Tommo, is left adrift on the sea and in life, always at the mercy of circumstance and the Fates, and both books end with grief and vengeance. Finally, then, Moby-Dick stands as the ultimate example of Melville’s transgressions, violations of genre boundaries, disregard for American political and religious beliefs, and the ultimate statement of his “No! in thunder.”

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In contrast to Melville’s sea narratives, Clarel (1876), his book-length epic poem,

ostensibly the story of a pilgrimage in the Holy Land, is set in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Clarel, like Melville's earlier prose narratives, is the story of a quest; during Holy Week a group of pilgrims are searching for the true Faith, the Risen Christ, and spiritual peace. Like other of Melville's quest narratives, Clarel and his fellow travelers fail.

Melville layered voices in his texts, with narrators and protagonists who are shape-shifters, regularly changing their affiliations and loyalties. With Clarel he uses similar devices to convey yet cloak his religious doubts. He was writing through the "voice" of a Protestant pilgrim in order to exorcise his own religious and spiritual skepticism; however, he never did relieve himself of his doubt. Instead, he only grew in his belief that all is consumed in negativity and nihilism; humans are incapable of true communication. Isolation and loneliness are the true human legacy. Melville's concept of nihilism is most strongly evidenced in Moby-Dick and Billy Budd. No genuine community is possible; Melville's characters are doomed to frustration, sorrow, and regret. Innovation and retrospection, whether in literature or in one's life, cannot remedy the situation. Ultimately, in Melville's philosophy, we humans are trapped in the rigid and unforgiving limits of our nature.

In Clarel, the line length and rhyme are part of the masking and disguise, the hiding of the true voice and message. Walter E. Bezanson has stated: The choice of an iambic tetrameter, rhyming at irregular intervals, was odd for a poem of such length.... It is an essential part of the poem that the verse form is constricting and bounded, that the basic movements are tight, hard, constrained.... The tragedy of man, as Melville now viewed it, was one of constriction" (Clarel lxvi). Beyond the emotional and spiritual constrictions, is Clarel's (and Melville's) inability to express true self and feelings, a

sexual confinement within societal constraints.

Clarel is a version of Melville's younger self on a journey to find his heart and soul. He fails in this quest, just as Melville failed in resolving his confusions and uncertainties surrounding spirituality and sexuality. Because this work is a reflection of Melville's profound inner struggles over the elemental aspects of his religion and sexuality, the voices of Clarel are complex and disparate. For example, Clarel is a work of strong contradictions, a story of the desert replete with sea imagery; several of the pilgrims have been sailors, travelers who never seem to find a home port. Couched in nautical imagery, Melville's continuing sexual conflicts and religious doubts prevail throughout Clarel.

Most scholars agree that the character Vine in Clarel (1876) was fashioned after Nathaniel Hawthorne, who died in 1864. In both Clarel and the shorter elegiac poem "Monody" Melville writes of his deep affection, respect, and longing for Hawthorne, using "vine" as a symbol of Hawthorne's support of Melville and Melville's respect for and dependence upon Hawthorne. Vine and Clarel, during their travels, rest by the banks of the Jordan River, and Vine delivers a philosophical speech. Clarel is not listening to Vine, but rather thinking what it would be like for Vine to love him as he loves Vine:

"So pure, so virginal in shrine  
Of true unworldliness looked Vine.  
Ah, clear sweet ether of the soul  
(Mused Clarel), holding him in view,  
Prior advances unreturned  
Not here he recked of, while he yearned—

O, now but for communion true  
And close; let go each alien theme;  
Give me thyself!

But Vine, at will  
Dwelling upon his wayward dream,  
Nor as suspecting Clarel's thrill  
Of personal longing, rambled still." (Clarel 237)

Clarel is expressing unrequited feelings; even after "previous advances unreturned," Vine fails to acknowledge Clarel's feelings, continuing in his "wayward dream," in his musings. Clarel does not join Vine's monologue but instead

Divided mind knew Clarel here;  
The heart's desire did interfere.  
Thought he, How pleasant in another  
Such sallies, or in thee, if said  
After confidings that should wed  
Our souls in one; — Ah! call me brother!—  
So feminine his passionate mood  
Which, long as hungering unfed,  
All else rejected or withstood (238).

Clarel does not want physical or sexual intimacy; instead, he desires spiritual and emotional closeness, like that of brothers, which Vine, enthralled by his own ideas, is incapable of giving. This journey toward love and affection is a futile one, a quest that ends with no resolution, like the other quests in Melville's works. In this sense, the Holy

Land for Melville is yet another wasteland, similar to the deep abyss of his sea narratives; the deserts of the Middle East prove to be as hostile and as indecipherable as the deep seas. The various pilgrims to the Holy Land prove to be less than saintly in their human relationships, conflicted, often tortured individuals who continue into a vague and uncertain future.

Finally, the character Clarel is abandoned by the other pilgrims, left alone in Jerusalem surrounded by Jews and Muslims; confused and overwhelmed, he disappears. As with his other books, Melville has left the protagonist abandoned, with no companions, friends, or lovers, but alone to face the abyss of existence: Clarel has lost Vine, his beloved Ruth, the Lyoness, and all the others whom he has met on his pilgrimage. The unnamed narrator of Clarel is left to ponder his protagonist's fate. This narrator is not omniscient, but rather an on-looker, some sort of invisible fellow traveler, with limited knowledge and vision, as Bezanson has stated in the introduction to Clarel: "During the 'scenes' he not only manipulates the movement but often gives the sense of sitting invisibly among his characters, carefully noting the give and take, recording the gestures, speculating on their dynamics" (lxix). Also, Bezanson states, "The narrator lacks interest in keeping himself consistently in, or consistently out of, the narrative, but is in general arbiter of the point of view" (lxx). Clarel ends with uncertainty that extends beyond Clarel to the narrator: "If Luther's day expand to Darwin's year,/ Shall that exclude the hope—foreclose the fear?" (522). Finally, for Melville, the feud between heaven and hell is only aggravated by science. He no longer believes in anything; he is left with doubt, somewhere between the abyss of his sea narratives and the wilderness of the "holy" land.

Melville and his traveling protagonists remain in an irresolvable liminal state; having refuted traditional values, they cannot proceed into a new dimension. Finally, the travel book proves too confining for Melville's tumultuous and restless curiosity. He disregards the conventions of genre, writing rebelliously in his prose, and violating boundaries even more by putting his last travel narrative in an unconventional epic poem. Thus, he subverts the genre in order to examine and convey his social and philosophical queries.

## Chapter 3

### Bayard Taylor: Public and Private Contact Zones

Bayard Taylor, the writer and the man, and his large body of work are difficult to characterize definitively. Throughout his careers as journalist, poet, novelist, playwright, and diplomat, Taylor invested much of his time and energy in his self-conscious, nearly obsessive, attention to what others thought of him and what they thought of his public faces. He was an awkward social climber with a constant eye on his public reputation. Paul C. Wermuth has assessed Taylor's attitude and manner toward his place in society: "He had a colossal ego, for instance, and an overweening ambition to succeed and make his mark. He was not beyond whining self-pity at times, or petulance, or pettiness. He had a desperate need for recognition" (Selected Letters 25). Taylor played many roles as a writer. As a well-traveled journalist, he continually endeavored to create and preserve his place in the world; he was best known in his own time as a travel writer. He wrote four novels and a collection of short stories, Beauty and the Beast: and Tales of Home (1872). Additionally, he wrote seven volumes of poetry, five plays, and three books for juvenile readers.

The phrase "genteel tradition," coined by George Santayana in 1911, describes the coterie of writers whose beliefs comprised a philosophical and literary viewpoint that extolled British Romantic poets and a life of refined and idealistic (some would say repressed and stilted) intellectual and artistic introspection. The genteel tradition relied strongly upon conventional attitudes toward poetry. In addition, the genteel writers turned away from their own time and place, displaying reactionary and rigid views of poetry and poetry writing. They looked to Britain and Europe and to earlier writers,

many already dead, for their artistic inspiration. Matthew Teorey explains: “Rigidly conforming to Victorian standards of taste, they argued that ‘good’ literature had only two functions: to transport readers from the real world to one of ideal truth and beauty and to teach ‘proper’ manners to members of the middle and upper classes” (413). Most nineteenth-century American poets, including the “Schoolroom” or “Fireside” poets Longfellow, Bryant, Lowell, Holmes, and Whittier, were of the genteel tradition, with highly elevated moral, intellectual, and social standards. Taylor admired and respected the traditional poets of his era: “There are but few who make me feel so thrillingly their glowing thoughts as Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell (all Americans, you know), and these I love” (Hansen-Taylor 25).

In the December 29, 1846, issue of his newspaper The Phoenixville Pioneer, Taylor published the William Cullen Bryant poem “Oh Mother of a Mighty Race” (Hansen-Taylor 80). Furthermore, he said of Bryant and “Thanatopsis,” “For my part, my admiration knows no bounds. There is an all-pervading love of nature, a calm and quiet but still deep sense of everything beautiful. And then the high and lofty feeling which mingles with the whole! It seems to me that when I read his poetry that our hearts are united” (Hansen-Taylor 25).

Taylor’s characters share his admiration for earlier poets. Maxwell Woodbury in Hannah Thurston: A Story of American Life (1864), speaking of the past, his losses, and regrets, says to Hannah that he knows the world “to be far worse than you, or any other pure woman suspects, and still keep my faith in the Good that shall one day be triumphant, I can smile at my young ignorance, but there is still a glory around it. Do you know Wordsworth’s Ode?” Hannah responds, “Yes—‘the light that never was on

sea or land” (Hannah 185). The “ode” to which Woodbury refers is “Suggested by a Picture of Peele Caste, in a Storm, Painted by Sir George Beaumont” (1805). In addition, genteel writers virtually worshipped poets who, according to some critics and observers, were no longer relevant to American society. Richard Cary lists Tennyson, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, Landor, and Swinburne as “British writers venerated by Taylor and his three friends [Richard Henry Stoddard, Edmund Clarence Stedman, and Thomas Bailey Aldrich]” (2).

Although most of Taylor’s writings were travel narratives, his most personal and vocal statements about literature, society, and sexuality were in his novels. As a fiction writer in the genteel tradition, he wrote of daily life in America; his narratives often concerned personal relationships, including intimate male friendships. His male characters’ relationships were emotional and physical, but not sexual, reflecting his own close relationships with other males; the genteel writers saw themselves as removed from the baser human needs and desires, including anything overtly sexual. Taylor’s infatuation with the genteel tradition would seem at odds with his same-sex relationships. However, his own relationships were infused with a sentimental viewpoint; he portrayed men admiring and respecting each other from a respectable physical distance. Even when his characters kiss or embrace, the contact is that of brothers or comrades-in-arms, not passionate lovers or sexual partners.

The lack of sexual activity within Taylor’s novels was a direct result of the genteel tradition’s view of physical and sexual behavior as bestial and the business of the lower classes: “one feature of Taylor’s novels, as well as of other Genteel novels, is the curious absence of sexual activity, or its concealment beneath a fog of idealistic

abstraction. Women are divided into two types, ‘nice’ women and ‘bad’ ones; and passion is attributed only to lower-class people who, having no education, may indulge themselves animalistically” (Wermuth Bayard 22). In addition to genteel notions, nineteenth-century beliefs, and publishing constraints, determined the boundaries of any portrayal of sexuality or physicality.

Thus, sexual attraction, regardless of its nature, was often transformed into vague and even ethereal emotional responses: “For the Genteel poets the most passionate emotional experience is likely to be rendered as an idyllic afternoon on the grass, a deep look into a friend’s eyes, or an understanding of brotherhood, rather vaguely defined” (Martin Homosexual 90). Accordingly, Taylor dealt with his unrest about gender and sexual matters differently in different genres, depending upon his audience. In his fiction, especially his novels, he concerned himself with the emotional relationships of white American men, introducing his male characters’ relationships within a fissure in the textual fabric, against the background of a broken narrative. For example, Joseph Asten and Philip Held of Joseph and His Friend (1870) meet as passengers during a train derailment. Thus, in seeming digressions or asides, Taylor is able to state his generally liberal ideas toward sexual, particularly homoerotic, relationships and behavior. Within the medium of fiction, his characters and narrators can voice, albeit cryptically at times, his response with prevailing gender and sexuality roles.

Taylor may have perceived in himself what we would now call bisexual or homosexual desire—or “adhesiveness” to use Walt Whitman’s word. In an 1866 letter, Taylor tells Whitman of what he believes to be shared feelings:

I have had the first edition of your “Leaves of Grass” among my books, since its first appearance, and have read it many times. I may say, frankly, that there are two things in it which I find nowhere else in literature, though I find them in my own nature. I mean the awe and wonder and reverence and beauty of Life, as expressed in the human body, with the physical attraction and delight of mere contact which it inspires, and that tender and noble love of man for man which once certainly existed, but now almost seems to have gone out of the experience of the race. (Wermuth Letters 294)

Beyond their correspondence by letter, Taylor and Whitman knew each other socially and professionally; they were both frequent visitors to Pfaff’s beer cellar on Broadway (Smyth 138). However (as I shall discuss later), Taylor’s attitude toward Whitman, at least publicly, changed dramatically over the years.

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Taylor created an authorial voice that was more detached or distanced than usual, particularly in such “non-fiction” as travel narratives. In general, travel writing is seen as a type of memoir or autobiography. Even when it is considered journalism, there is great latitude allowed for first person and emotional responses. However, some of Taylor’s distancing, particularly the lack of physicality, depends upon the genteel tradition within which Taylor wrote. Still, he placed the ultimate importance in a relationship on its emotional and ethereal aspects rather than on the physical or sexual. “Off the record” he often socialized with men of similar feelings, especially George H. Boker and Richard Henry Stoddard, who remained his intimate lifelong friends. In an 1862 letter to Stoddard, Taylor writes, “Whenever I write trash, I want one man to tell me of it—and

that man is yourself. You and I, I think, will always understand each other completely” (Wermuth Selected 199). For awhile, in 1858, Taylor and Stoddard, together with their wives and children, lived in Taylor’s house in New York City. In The Life, Travels, and Literary Career of Bayard Taylor, published the year after Taylor’s death, Russell H. Conwell included Stoddard as an “intimate friend” of Taylor’s and that the two “maintained the most confidential relations to the day of his death” (299). Conwell, a Baptist minister, founder of Temple University, and a contributor to the New York Tribune, sometimes accompanied Taylor on his travels. Taylor’s widow Marie Hansen-Taylor in The Life and Letters of Bayard Taylor (1884) alludes, albeit in a heavily-veiled manner, to Taylor’s relationships with other men: “His letters have already shown how sensitive he was to the affection of his intimate literary friends, but they only rarely hint at the full pleasure which he took in their companionship” (283). One can only speculate as to exactly how intimate and confidential the relationship was or how much pleasure Taylor experienced with other men.

Later in his life, regardless of his emotional attachments, his continuing struggles to support his mansion Cedarcroft in his hometown of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, precluded nearly everything else. As a result of that preoccupation, his eye for sales and profit was always circumscribed any encoding or self-revelatory writing. He was a man who fondly and exuberantly loved men and women, but destroyed himself with work in an attempt to keep up social appearances. Conwell has stated that Taylor worked himself to death:

To supply the demand for present publications, perform the duties which devolved upon him in his high office, and keep steadily advancing with the

greater work, required more strength than one frame could supply. He felt the strain, and sometimes thought it best to leave everything in the line of labor, and rest. The need of such a course did not, however, seem imperative until he was too near his end to ward off the blow. (315-316)

His self-conscious attention to social expectations caused him to separate and compartmentalize his worlds and his perceptions of those worlds. He created distinct personae for his writing and for his life. Broadly speaking, Taylor lived and wrote in two separate spheres, especially in his prose, travel narratives and domestic fiction. The domestic sphere of Taylor's novels and much of his poetry is populated by strong and opinionated women who often save their men from death and danger, especially moral danger.

The sphere of his travel narratives is homosocial, a world in which men, sometimes as a group, sometimes the narrator Taylor with one companion, spend months alone together without any substantially prolonged interaction with women. This world extends to certain of Taylor's poems, particularly Poems of the Orient. Traditional Islam's segregation of men and women easily lends itself to a world where men and boys interact within a physically intimate, though not necessarily sexual, sphere.

In these travel narratives, generally written for publication in the New York Tribune and collected into book form later, Taylor wrote as the objective journalist, allowing very little room for personal interjections, viewing the peoples he visited nearly as scientific experiments. He was writing in the position of a cultural reporter, giving the folks back home descriptions of exotic landscapes and peoples that few of the Tribune's readers would ever have a chance to witness firsthand.

Taylor's first book, Views A-Foot (1846), written in his early twenties and based upon a walking tour of Europe, was a commercial and critical success, eventually going into twenty editions. Taylor wrote fourteen books of travel. They were popular and well received, with varying degrees of commercial and critical success. One reason for the popularity of his travel books was that his readers had come to trust him through his newspaper columns. His Tribune readers now had collections in book form rather than loose newspaper clippings. Unfortunately, his travel narratives, written in the straight, journalistic style of his time, do not display any of the flexibility or experimentation of his novels.

Larzer Ziff has blamed Taylor's detachment from his travel writings on publishing expediencies: "Eldorado established the format for all the travel books that were to follow: a heavy reliance on the letters he had already published to which were added previously unpublished observations from his journal. Further to this formula, then established, the book was published very soon after the last newspaper letter had appeared in order to capitalize on a notoriety that was bound to fade quickly without such reinforcement" (129). Albert H. Smyth shares Ziff's assessment: "The crudities of style and the infirmities of construction in 'Hannah Thurston' and 'John Godfrey' are to be ascribed to the tearing speed at which they were written; and necessity's sharp pinch was the promoter of that speed" (163). Furthermore, Ziff concludes that Taylor's travel writings settled into "an essentially superficial series of reportorial observations" (130). Additionally, Wermuth argues that Taylor had little enthusiasm or talent for writing travel books:

[Taylor's travel books] were one of his chief sources of support and fame, but his

attitude toward them much of the time was casual, sloppy, even contemptuous.

They were very uneven, the weakest ones being Greece and Russia and Egypt and Iceland. He did not break new ground in the travel genre; he followed standard models. He followed taste rather than formed it, and he would not occupy a very large place in the history of the genre were it not for the great popularity his books enjoyed in his own era. (Wermuth Bayard 74)

Taylor invariably reports what at face value can be judged as facts. When he does insert his own voice, allowing his journalistic filter to slip, he often makes veiled allusions to the sexual practices of the natives from Lapland to the Sahara. His euphemistic references to lewd or licentious behaviors merely excites the reader's interest and imagination, opening a narrative rift that allows for salacious supposition. According to Robert K. Martin, a gay critic and arguably the founder of queer literary criticism, "Taylor's travel narrative permitted him to describe Turkish baths, hashish smoking, dancing girls, drunken brawls, and pretty Arab boys without fear of censorship; he was merely reporting exotic customs. The travel books thus served a function not unlike some early forms of pornography: under the guise of science they offered erotic titillation" (Martin Homosexual 98).

For instance, in The Lands of the Saracen; or Pictures of Palestine, Asia Minor, Sicily, and Spain (1855), Taylor reports that the Dead Sea is stagnant and salty. He figuratively bestows this water's unpleasant physical condition with a vague moral impurity, especially in comparing it with the water of the Jordan River. Taylor and his companions had barely endured the Dead Sea water, but the river water is pleasant and refreshing, especially at the

ford of the Pilgrims, the supposed locality of the passage of the Israelites and the baptism of Christ. The plain near it is still blackened by the camp-fires of the ten thousand pilgrims who went down from Jerusalem three weeks ago, to bathe. We tied our horses to the trees, and prepared to follow their example, which was necessary, if only to wash off the iniquitous slime of the Dead Sea. (Lands 68)

What sin and wickedness does Taylor believe lurks in the waters of the Dead Sea? How has he been tainted by his short time in the brackish water? He refuses to share that knowledge with the reader. Moreover, in washing in the holy Jordan, Taylor still does not feel clean, physically or morally. However, he does think that bathing in the water has helped: “I succeeded in obtaining a complete and most refreshing immersion. The foul of Gomorrah was not entirely washed away, but I rode off with as great a sense of relief as if the baptism had been a moral one, as well, and had purified me from sin” (68). What sin has Taylor committed? What iniquity has he suffered? Traditionally, at least in popular twentieth-century conceptions, Gomorrah and her sister city Sodom stand for the sin of homosexuality. Although several modern theologians interpret the Sodom and Gomorrah story in Genesis as a lesson in hospitality and observing God’s laws, the story has come to be a warning against homosexual acts, and hence the word “sodomy” is defined as anal sex between men, rarely including many other “unnatural acts” of earlier interpretations (Spencer 58-63). Has Taylor been contaminated by sodomy? Are his fellow travelers also contaminated? Yet, he remains frustratingly silent about these lands and their inhabitants, who are not only exotic but probably as sinful as Taylor himself, according to Protestant doctrine.

In contrast with the conspicuous moral and stylistic rigidity of his travel logs,

Taylor's other writings display a remarkable social flexibility. Especially within the "creative" genres of poetry and fiction, Taylor sanctioned erotic and homosocial relationships between males; he wrote lovingly and admiringly of "Mohammedans" in the Middle East. His Middle Eastern men are educated and articulate, sometimes religious leaders. He writes poetry surrounding the religious and artistic aspects of Muslim men, both Arab and Persian, admiring their integrity and respecting their religious devotion.

While Taylor venerates the wisdom and moral purity of the religious men in his poetry, he eroticizes individual Muslims and "dusky-skinned boys." These characters are the exotic erotic; they are often illiterate, thus more enchanting to the Western man of letters. The Middle Easterner stands as the erotic center of Taylor's poetry and travel writing. The short poem "The Persian Boy" clearly reveals Taylor's romantic and physical attraction to the men of Iran and the surrounding areas:

When first, young Persian, I beheld thine eyes,  
And felt the wonder of thy beauty grow  
Within my brain, as some fair planet's glow  
Deepens, and fills the summer evening skies,  
From under thy dark lashes shone on me  
Thy rich, voluptuous soul of Eastern land  
Impassioned, tender, calm, serenely sad. (Poems 78)

This attraction compels Taylor to shift his allegiance from Western ideology long enough to admit that Eastern beliefs are potentially as valid as European Christian conventions. Joseph Boone has argued that Western men travel to Arabic countries to fulfill fantasies

that often are based on racial and heterosexist stereotypes that are manifest in actual Arabic men:

Many heterosexually identified men have traveled to the Arabic Orient in pursuit of erotic fulfillment as well, but even these adventurers have had to confront the specter of male-male sex that lurks in their fantasies of a decadent and lawless East; such assumptions about male sexual desire, masculinity, and heterosexuality that are specific to Western culture. (Boone 45)

Taylor's illumination of his characters' spiritual life underscores their exotic difference from his American audience. Nonetheless, he is writing of these characters out of his own agnosticism and a profound distrust of most Christian sects. He consistently displays a high respect for Islam and its traditions and doctrines; the personae of his Poems of the Orient are Muslims with differing ideas of Islam or "Mohammedan" doctrine. Taylor's stance toward Islam is complex, even contradictory, another manifestation of his endeavors to understand and come to terms with himself. Islam has a set of definite rules, and Taylor's Muslim characters strongly believe in those rules. Moreover, Taylor is sympathetic to the characters' beliefs. At the same time, the East is dark and sensuous, full of intrigue and pleasure. The Muslim man, in Taylor's poetry, is highly conscientious. He always reflects on his religion for guidance in his decisions yet is often torn between pleasure and duty.

For example, at the beginning of the poem "The Temptation of Hassan Ben Khaled" (1854), the title character and narrator, a poet, is singing in the streets of Cairo: "woe to him whose life casts dirt upon/The prophets word! When all his days are done,/Him shall the Evil Angel trample down/Out of the sight of God" (Poems 55).

However, he gives way to pride and falls to temptation, one night, drinking, carousing, and while with a young woman “I fell/ Upon her bosom” and “kisses, each one sweeter than before,/Until their fiery dew so long was quaffed, I drank delirium in the infectious draught.” Finally he is left alone “Dizzy with passion, in mine ears the blood/Tingled and hummed in a tumultuous flood” (Poems 60). However, he repents when he realizes the extent of his sin: “straightway through my heart/There rang a double pang,—the bitter smart/of evil knowledge, and the unhealthy lust/of sinful pleasure” (Poems 61). He learns from his mistakes and realizes that his God is merciful and loving, not vengeful as he had preached before: “Pardon, not Wrath, is God’s best attribute” (Poems 61).

In his poetry, Taylor’s religious characters, like Taylor himself, are conflicted men attempting to integrate the different aspects of their cultures into autonomous personalities. Taylor was a self-styled pagan or pantheist, even while adhering, at least superficially, to basic Christian tenets. Nonetheless, he strongly and repeatedly found fault with American Protestantism, particularly its hypocrisy and harshly judgmental stances against outsiders. He often sided with those outsiders against Western traditions. His Muslim characters are seeking to find peace with themselves, something that Taylor was never able to do. As Charles Warren Stoddard wrote of Taylor: “I fear his life, notwithstanding the honors that fell to his lot, was a disappointment to him and left his heart unsatisfied” (Genteel Pagan 48). Like Melville, Taylor speaks of his artistic and financial disappointment in several of his letters, regretting that the market does not encourage him to write what he wants but instead what he must to earn an income.

Although he believed that poetry was his true calling, he wrote reviews and opinion articles “of the ‘hack’ order, for money which I needed,” as he tells Paul

Hamilton Hayne, a poet and fiction writer, in 1871 (Selected 371). Also, in 1871, in a letter to Jervis McEntee, a landscape painter and friend, he writes of his fatigue and discouragement surrounding his writing career, calling Travels in Arabia (1871) “a piece of labor which I have undertaken for money, and for money alone” (Selected 369, emphasis Taylor’s).<sup>1</sup> He continues to describe his disappointment: “It is true, we have fallen on evil times. I think it will be ten years before either Literature or Art will be as popular and profitable as they were ten years ago” (Selected 369-70). Later in the same letter, he tells of his financial worries: “I think it prudent, however, to revise and recast my plan of life, to cut loose from all extra expenditures, adopt some simpler and more convenient form of living, and secure myself (if I can) against the necessity of writing for bread. While the necessity lasts, I must submit; but I am weary, after so many years of hard work, and crave the power of saving my strength and enthusiasm for the literary plans which are really a part of my life” (Selected 370). This struggle between literary and hack writing accounts for much of the shifts in narrative style and voice in his works.

Taylor’s characters are not only fluid and often transgressive, but Taylor’s depiction of them and their predicaments also violates rules, moving between melodrama and elements that could be called local color and realism, even the beginnings of naturalism. For instance, he wrote sympathetically yet realistically of prostitutes and other lower class outcasts, viewing them as victims of their social and economic environments. He often gave them virtues and complexity of character, unlike the flat characterizations that most of his contemporary writers allowed them. In this respect Taylor resembles Whitman; they both wrote of the lower class and others who were outside mainstream American life. Due to the subversive and secretive nature of those

whose behavior is outlawed, i.e., “adhesives,” “confirmed bachelors,” “spinsters,” prostitutes, and other sexual outcasts, these individuals often frequent the same areas and know each other.

Taylor’s novels reflect the cultural fragmentation of America in the watershed era of the 1860s. This was a period of monumental changes, including the effects of Darwinism and his theories, the growing dependence on capitalism and urbanization, and, of course, the Civil War. For several of Taylor’s characters, the move from a rural setting to an urban setting, particularly New York City, creates a contact zone similar to those of colonizers and the colonized. Taylor’s novels, definitely his domestic travel fiction, express many of the concerns surrounding the growth and expansion of the United States. The characters travel within the United States, sometimes within their own states, learning about themselves and the “cultural differences” among regions of the United States.

In Hannah Thurston, the mysterious stranger is the male protagonist Maxwell Woodbury, who is a world traveler in contrast to Hannah and the other villagers who have rarely traveled outside their own region. He lived in New York for a while and in Calcutta for a decade, but his travel is safely in the past when he returns to Ptolemy, New York. As a child he spent most summers there, and he buys Lakeside, a house he often visited: “In the dreams of home which haunted him in lonely hours, on the banks of the Hoogly or the breezy heights of Darjeeling, Lakeside always first arose, and repeated itself most frequently and distinctly” (37). Woodbury has come home: “There seemed to be no other spot in the world to which he had a natural right to return” (38). Like Taylor, Woodbury has a home, after all his travels, where he plans to settle and raise a family.

John Godfrey, the first person narrator, poet, and journalist of John Godfrey's Fortunes (1864), leaves his small town in Pennsylvania to move to New York. He is not a tourist, traveler, or colonizer, but a young man traveling to pursue a career. However, he does not succeed as a poet and journalist in New York and returns to his hometown to settle into marital bliss with Isabel Haworth. It is at her insistence that he writes his book.

The Story of Kennett (1866), Taylor's third novel, is an historical novel firmly set in Kennett Square in the late eighteenth century with all of its travel within the close vicinity of a few farming villages. The Story of Kennett does, however, contain a series of mysteries; who is the character Gilbert Potter's father? This novel, even more so than Taylor's others, is dependent upon secrets and circumstance. The mystery is solved and several of the characters come into sizeable inheritances. In Joseph and His Friend (1870), Joseph Asten meets his friend Philip Held on a train returning to his farm from Philadelphia where Joseph has visited his fiancée Julia Blessing. Philip is the traveler who has been "mining and geologizing in Nevada and the Rocky Mountains for three or four years" (94). Later in the novel Joseph makes a short business trip to the Allegheny Valley to investigate the Amaranth oil fields in which his friends have invested.

Taylor's characters who travel to the big city are not victorious in their attempts to "conquer" the city but are defeated, returning home to the safety and predictability of the village. Indeed, Taylor and his characters emphasize the differences between the ideas of "country" and "city." In Joseph and His Friend, in the chapter "A City Wedding," Mr. Blessing declares, "My son-in-law, Mr. Asten, is a noble specimen of the agricultural population,—the free American yeomanry; my daughter, if I may be allowed to say it in the presence of so many bright eyes and blooming cheeks, is a representative child of the

city, which is the embodiment of the nation's action and enterprise. The union of the two is the movement of our life" (120).

Taylor, in what can be seen as a movement toward modernism, combined the sentimental novel with political satire, abandoning the antebellum literature of moralizing romance and sentiment. Taylor's literary technique of combining wit and the heart, however, would seem to be prompted more by discontent than innovation. The eponymous character in the novel John Godfrey's Fortunes is reading over the critical notices and reviews of his first book of poetry a few years after its publication. He laments the state of literary criticism during his career:

I was struck with the vague, mechanical stamp by which they are all characterized. I sought in vain for a single line which showed the discrimination of an enlightened critic. The fact is, we had no criticism, worthy of the name, at the time. Our literature was petted, and its diffuse, superficial sentiment was perhaps even more admired than its first attempts at a profounder study of its own appropriate themes and a noble assertion of its autonomy. [...] All our gentle, languishing echoes found spell-bound listeners, whom no one— with, perhaps, the single exception of Poe— had the will to disenchant. (John 227-228)

This is not merely the displeased, impatient voice of a character in the novel, but that of his creator, Bayard Taylor, the nineteenth-century Renaissance man dissatisfied with the constraints of literary conventions and expectations. Late in his own career, Taylor, like John Godfrey, despaired of the state of literature and his place therein: "I have no doubt that I am considered a successful author and a person of easy fortune, etc. Here you see the truth, and let it encourage you! I know that I am doing good literary work, now—but

it is not of the kind demanded by the prevailing fashion. I want to live 20 years longer, to see all these fashions dead, and the sound work acknowledged” (Selected 414).

In Taylor’s novels, three aspects of this youthfulness and receptivity are manifest: first, the juxtaposition of dissimilar tones and styles, creating a textured, often uneven, narrative; next, the amalgam of “texts,” not only different narrative voices but also a variety of non-narrative components; and, finally, the exploration of gender and sexuality roles (and possible alternatives to prevailing standards) within nineteenth-century America. Taylor experimented with the dynamic fluidity of the novel, often retaining a few romantic elements while introducing realism. Furthermore, he introduced elements of proto-naturalism in his depiction of the physical drudgery and psychic despair of his lower-class characters, especially in his scenes of Manhattan (set in the late 1850s):

Gooseberry Alley was but a few blocks distant. It was a close, dirty place, debouching on Sullivan Street, and barely wide enough for a single car to be backed into. The houses of brick had evidently been built all at once, and in such a cheap way that they seemed to be already tumbling down for a lack of cohesive material. A multitude of young children were playing with potato parings or stirring up the foul gutter in the centre of the alley with rotting cabbage-stalks.”

(John 299-300)

Yet, even here, Taylor relies upon the standards of romance to resolve his characters’ predicaments. The character Jane Berry is a woman who has been coerced into prostitution: “I’m from the country; I didn’t go into that house of my own will, and I couldn’t get out after I found what it was” (John 363). Consequently, Godfrey saves her physically from the burning brothel, and Isabel Haworth, John’s future wife, saves her

financially and socially. Jane's inherently good nature saves her morally; she refuses John's attempts to reunite her with Bob Simmons: "Perhaps a time may come,—I don't know,—it's better not to promise anything. I may work and get myself a good name: people may forget, if they've heard evil reports of me; but he can't forget. Tell him I thank him from my heart, and will pray for him on my knees every night" (John 489). In the end, Godfrey has become reconciled with his uncle and receives his inheritance (a convention of Taylor's for solving relationship and career problems). He has settled into an idyllic existence on Staten Island with Isabel and their son Charles Swansford Godfrey.

Thus, even as Taylor wrote on different levels, with various styles and tones within the framework of the standard, plotted novel, he was writing within the romantic and genteel traditions. Generally, editors and readers of Taylor's era expected the novel to have a tidy conclusion with clearly defined moral and emotional resolutions for the characters. Taylor's novels met these standards, and they were successes.

Regardless of the positive reception of his novels and his short fiction, Taylor owed his popularity and reputation to his journalism, not his fiction. His first book, Views A-Foot, written in his early twenties and based upon a walking tour of Europe, was a commercial and critical success, eventually going into twenty edition. He followed it with several other travel books, with varying degrees of commercial and critical success. Although his travel books were well received, they show very little innovation in style or content. Similarly, his poetry generally proves to be typically conventional, tending toward iambic pentameter and other standard rhythms, with themes such as the battle of good and evil, the triumph of true love, and the glory of nature. For example,

the preface of The Poet's Journal (1862), entitled "The Return of the Goddess" and an invocation to Taylor's muse, is written in a form of the ballad stanza, a conventional, customarily "elevated" form used to write of venerable topics:

Not as in youth, with steps outspeeding morn,  
And cheeks all bright, from rapture of the way,  
But in strange mood, half cheerful, half forlorn,  
She comes to me to-day .

Likewise, The Story of Kennett (1866), the novel that Taylor called his "most objective," is a fictionalized history of Taylor's hometown, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. With scenes of humor and slapstick, it adheres to the comparatively flat style and tone of the travel books and does not contain the socio-political satire of his other novels. However, it was popular, according to Taylor's letter to John B. Phillips, a close friend from Kennett Square: "more than six thousand copies have been ordered in advance of publication." Taylor's wife claimed that "'The Story of Kennett' was received, not only by a larger public, but also by a more unanimous press" (Hansen-Taylor 451, 452) than his previous two novels. Paul C. Wermuth, in Bayard Taylor indicates that "some six thousand copies of Kennett were ordered in advance of publication" (88).

In contrast to the "correct" nature of most of his writings, Taylor employed gentle satire in his three topical novels, Hannah Thurston, John Godfrey, and Joseph and His Friend. The satirized individuals are nearly always minor characters whose appearance in the narratives is fleeting. After the episodes of the satire, interspersed with the "serious" plot development, the narrative unfailingly reverts, particularly in the final chapters, to the sentimental-novel formula with its conventions of tying up loose ends of

plot and characterization and following the major characters' fates into a near future.

In fact, the title of the final chapter of Joseph and His Friend is "All are Happy." Likewise, in John Godfrey's Fortunes, John (or Taylor) is dependent upon literary tradition, stating in the final passage, "And now, carefully disposed of so many of the personages of my history, after the manner of an English novelist of the last century, my readers may demand that I should be equally considerate of the remainder" (John 509). This insistence on the happy ending is in direct opposition to the satirical passages in the texts. In the dedication to Hannah Thurston, similarly, Taylor presupposes the importance of the satire over the plot:

I perceived peculiarities of development in American life which have escaped the notice of novelists, yet which are strikingly adapted to the purposes of fiction, both in the originality and occasionally grotesqueness of their external manifestation, and the deeper questions which lie beneath the surface. I do not, therefore, rest the interest of the book on its slender plot, but on the fidelity with which it represents certain types of character and phases of society. (4)

From the beginning of Hannah Thurston, Taylor lampoons several of the dominant social movements of the 1850s and their members. For example, the three sewing circles of Ptolemy, New York, are raising money for their causes: The Ladies' Sewing-Circle for the Children of the Mission at Jutuapore, India; the women of the Cimmerian church for the repair of the dilapidated parsonage; and the Sewing-Circle for the Anti-Slavery Fair (which includes Hannah and her mother Gulielma) to support The Slavery Annihilator.

Although Taylor did not know William Lloyd Garrison, he supported Garrison and spoke out against slavery in his lectures. While in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1862,

Taylor wrote his friend Richard H. Stoddard: “Curse the Abolitionists as much as you please, but it has come to this—Slavery must die. We [Taylor and his family] look on the struggle here, as from a great balloon, above the smoke and the stir of the combatants, and see only the great facts. That is all I have to say” (Letters 187, emphasis Taylor’s). Not only are the Thurstons abolitionists, but they are also Quakers. Taylor was raised a Quaker and proves to be much more lenient toward the Quakers in his satirical depictions than toward other religious groups and their members. His Quaker characters, most notably Mrs. Thurston, are admirable and respected. This seeming admiration and respect could, however, be wariness in confronting the religion that had been a strong, if resented, influence in Taylor’s life and which helped to shape his views of religion and spirituality in his writings.

Regardless of his attitude toward Quakers, Taylor shows no sympathy (or empathy) toward other Protestant denominations. His criticism of religious groups led him to digressions and abandonment of narrative in order to satirize their obstinate allegiance to dogma. These asides can be seen as genre transgressions because they subvert the chronological narrative, injecting philosophical and social discourse into the plots of the novels.

John Godfrey’s uncle, Amos Woolley, incessantly goads John toward religion, toward converting to the “right” denomination, an unspecified Pentecostal group. Indeed, when John, at his mother’s deathbed, first meets his uncle, the older man begins his personal inquisition against John’s lack of proper religious beliefs:

“I am afraid, John,” he finally said, “that the Lord is about to chasten you. It is some comfort to know that your mother seems to be in a proper frame of mind.

Her ways were never the same as mine, but it is not too late, even at the eleventh hour, to accept the grace which is freely offered. It is not for me to judge, but I am hopeful that she will be saved. I trust that you will not delay to choose the safe and narrow path.” (John 72)

After John’s mother dies, he goes to live with his Uncle Amos and Aunt Peggy, who take him to a revival which, with its loud and frenzied physical activity, terrifies John.

Indeed, Taylor satirizes the congregants who are clustered around the “anxious seat” praying, weeping, moaning, jumping up and down, and rolling about on the floor. John ardently professes his continuing belief as a Lutheran and leaves the service early. After returning home, he leaves his uncle’s house within a matter of a few days. Similarly, the Reverend Mr. Chaffinch in Joseph and His Friend resembles Amos Wooley: “You shut your eyes to the blackness of your own sinful heart, and are too proud to acknowledge the vileness and depravity of man’s nature; but without this acknowledgment your morality (as you call it) is corrupt, your good works (as you suppose them to be) will avail you naught. You are outside the pale of Grace” (Joseph 209).

This harsh, deterministic religiosity, with its doctrine of original sin, was pervasive. The evangelist Brother Mellowby compellingly illustrates this “hell-fire and damnation” stance:

Sinners, there is your bed! In the burning lake— in the bottomless seas of fire,— where the Evil that now flatters you with honeyed kisses shall sting and gnaw and torture forever,— where the fallen angels themselves shall laugh at your agonies, and the burning remorse of millions of ages shall not avail to open the gates of the pit! For you will be forever sinking— down— DOWN— DOWN, in the eternity of

Hell! (John 116)

Godfrey, by contrast, is a Lutheran, and therefore more tolerant than the Calvinists; he admits that it is more out of the habits of childhood (and because the Lutheran hymns remind him of his dead mother) than out of any religious conviction. After his harrowing ordeal at the revival, John retreats into his literal “upper room” where he experiences his epiphany:

I was satisfied that God’s omnipotent love, not his wrath, overhung and embraced me; that my heart, though often erring and clouded, never consciously lusted after Evil. I longed for its purification, not for its change. I should not shrink from Death, if he approached, through fear of the Hereafter: I might receive a low seat in Paradise, but I certainly had done nothing—and would not, with God’s help—to deserve the awful punishment which Brother Mellowby had described. (John 123)

This belief in the mercy and benevolence of God does not exclude the need for reform: “‘I think,’ said Phillip, ‘the world needs a new code of ethics. We must cure the unfortunate tendencies of some qualities that seem good, and extract the good from others that seem evil. But it would need more than a Luther for such a Reformation’” (Joseph 343). In this and similar passages, Taylor transgressed orthodox religious boundaries and had no compunctions about offending those who held conventional beliefs.

He also did not hesitate to voice his admiration of customs outside Christianity. As he wrote Charles A. Dana, “Great is Brahma! Here I am in India, floating around the streets of Bombay in palanquins, and worshipping strange gods in the caves of Elephanta. [...] By Vishnu, there is nothing so wonderful as travel!” (Schultz 34). In a letter written

in the last year of his life, Taylor stated a few of his personal beliefs: “The very wisdom and the wonder of the Universe and its laws prove conclusively to me that, the intuitions of power and knowledge in ourselves, which one cannot fulfill here, assure us of continued being. [...] If I depended on Theology alone, I should have little comfort. If the Divine Law, manifest in manner, be good, we shall live on—we must: if there is no future for us, a Devil, not God, governs the universe!” (Selected 500).

In Taylor’s novels, his religious dissonance is apparent, especially in Hannah Thurston, in which he spoofs several varieties of religious and moral reform. The temperance movement was one of Taylor’s special targets. He aligned it with the Calvinists in their uncompromising censures against alcohol and other “unvirtuous” habits. Taylor heartily dismissed their rigidity: “My delight is in enjoyment, not in renunciation. Give me sunny weather, good digestion, a crimson velvet dressing gown, a good Havana, a glass of Rhenish vintage and a sonnet of Shakespeare’s or Milton’s ‘Comus,’ and I can be tolerably happy in the bosom of my family” (Schultz 69). The Annual Temperance Convention of Atauga County, which he depicted in one of his novels, abounds in religious zeal:

This little community, too poor or economical to own a temperance banner, took a political one, which they had used in the campaign of the previous year. Upon it were the names of the candidates for President and Vice-President. “Pierce and King.” A very little alteration turned the word “Pierce” into “Prince” and the word “WATER” being prefixed, the inscription became: “Water,— Prince and King.’ Those from other neighborhoods, who were not in the secret, greatly admired the simplicity and force of the expression.” (Hannah 235)

The Convention employs music and verse to convey the message: “Byron Baxter, who was an overgrown, knock-kneed youth of nineteen, with long hair, parted in the middle, advanced to the front of the platform, bowed and then suddenly started back, with both hands extended before him, in an attitude of horror. In a loud voice, he commenced to recite:

‘Oh, take the maddening bowl away!

Remove the poisonous cup!

My soul is sick; its burning ray

Hath drunk my spirit up.

Take, take it from my loathing lip

Ere madness fires my brain:

Oh, take it hence, not let me sip

Its liquid death again!’ (Hannah 238)

Taylor also satirized spiritualism in Hannah Thurston. In his treatment of esoteric gatherings, Taylor writes of a séance conducted by a dishonest medium. Arbutus Wilson, Maxwell Woodbury’s hired man, admits to fooling the medium, thus catching him in his deception:

I suspicioned they’d git Ageliny’s spirut to playin’ on the pyanna, like th’ other time I was there. Think I, I’ve a notion how it’s done [...] I run one arm up the chimbley, when nobody was lookin’, and rubbed my hand full o’ soft sut [...] I slips up to the pyanna– I knowed if they’d heered me they’d think I was the spirut– and rubbed my suttly hand very quietly over the black keys. I didn’t dare t

bear on , but, thinks I, some'll come off, and he'll be sure to git it on his hands.

Do you see it, Mr. Max? When the light come back, there he was, solemn enough, with a black eye.” (Hannah 127-128)

The medium has held his head in his hands during his communication with the spirit of the dead child Angelina. Consequently, he appears to have a black eye from the soot. This type of satire is amusing but hardly a substantial attack on the satirized character or his behavior. However, within these passages, Taylor is presenting his criticisms in the context of humor, shifting the focus from the overall plot to his religious and social skepticism, creating rifts in the narrative. By doing so, he is firmly situating himself as socially transgressive, reluctant to conform to mainstream opinion and willing to risk criticism for his unpopular beliefs.

In his personal life, he was clearly vocal about his disagreement with certain religious attitudes. In an 1859 letter to his wife Marie, Taylor ridiculed religious zealots, gleefully mocking them:

After the lecture, I was accosted at the hotel by a damp, cheesy, lugubrious youth, with long hair who wanted an autograph. [...] “Here,” said he, holding [a book] open, “I have written something quite spontaneously, this evening, and I want you to write under it.” This is what he had written, word for word: “To B.T. Once it was my highest ambition to follow in your footsteps, but now I have determined to devote myself to a far greater and better work— namely, the preaching of the everlasting Gospel.” !!! I hesitated a moment, then wrote an Arabic sentence, with “From the Koran” in large letters, gave it to him and hustled him out of the room. You should have seen his face, about that time. (Selected 152)

Although some of Taylor's characters attend church and profess religious loyalties, they are undereducated, working class, and rural, i.e., Mrs. Thurston (Hannah Thurston's mother), Amos Wooley (John Godfrey's uncle), and Leopold "Bolty" Himpel (John Godfrey's friend and one-time bed partner). These characters are prone to emotional rather than intellectual responses to religion and the Scriptures, giving way to mental and spiritual myopia. They are followers of conventions, failing to be eccentric individuals whom Taylor respected. As Taylor wrote his wife Marie from Salt Lake City in 1870:

I met Cannon and Smith, two of the Apostles, who went with me to Brigham Young's house. The old Sultan was exceedingly courteous and agreeable. I talked about three-quarters of an hour with him and the others. He is a man of great power and shrewdness, and not without culture. [...] There were a great many points about which I agree with them. They are advanced liberals in religion, earnest, intelligent men, who are better than most of those in orthodox churches. (Selected 349)

Taylor's enthusiasm for the Mormons, however, quickly fades: "I have already acquired a new insight into the whole Mormon movement, and do not find much except the manifestations usual in sects which have been persecuted. In fact, Mormonism is nothing but Orthodoxy carried a little further" (Selected 349). Taylor distrusted orthodoxy and, furthermore, he was intolerant of all forms of unthinking adherence to unorthodox beliefs. He not only ridiculed members of social reform movements, but also expressed himself on other fashionable behavior of his day.

In Hannah Thurston, Mr. and Mrs. Whitlow (wit low?), members of the Anti-Slavery Society, visit Ptolemy with their daughters, Phillis Wheatley Whitlow, aged

thirteen, and her sister Mary Wollstonecraft Whitlow, aged nine, named respectively after an eighteen-century “Negro” poet and a prominent feminist writer of the same era. Taylor includes these sisters, it seems, to play on their names and satirize their unruly, disobedient behavior: “They amused themselves at first by pulling up the early radishes, to see how long their roots were, but after a while were attracted by the tulips, and returned to the house with handfuls of the finest” (Hannah 190). Furthermore, Mrs. Merryfield’s “reserve of jams and marmalades was so drawn upon that she foresaw its exhaustion before the summer’s fruit could enable her to replenish it. Mary Wollstonecraft and Phillis Wheatley were especially destructive, in this respect, and very frankly raised a clamor for ‘preserves’” (Hannah 191). Generally, Taylor placed distasteful characters, like Phillis Wheatley Whitlow, in danger; Julia Blessing Asten of Joseph and His Friend is a villainous character whose death is not sympathetically described, and is met by most of the other characters with relief, if not obvious delight.

Taylor readily, and somewhat didactically, assigned moral implications to his characters and their social relations. In this manner, he revealed his quandary, positioned between romanticism and realism, and between the demands of adhering to the norms and of being true to one’s self. Is one to heed social dictates or express individuality? Taylor offers no clear answer. Instead, he offers paradox and contradiction, especially in the social roles of his characters. For example, John Godfrey, like his creator, prides himself on his self-reliance: “In the course of time a quiet, friendly understanding sprang up between us [Godfrey and Bill Carruthers, a school desk mate]; perhaps we recognized a similar need of exertion and self-reliance” (John 32). Later, after meeting Amanda Bratton, he is imbued with confidence: “My ambition began to find its proper soil of

self-reliance, and to put forth its roots. A new force was at work in my frame, giving strength and elasticity to my muscles. [...] I no longer shrank from the coming encounter with the world, but longed for the test of courage and the measure of strength” (John 167). Godfrey’s self-reliance, unlike Emerson’s, is an ironic development; this latter-day transcendentalist’s self-reliance only gets him into trouble. He finds that he must rely on his friends and family. Redemption for John Godfrey is a result of society, not self-reliance. Initially, he strives to be a self-made man, leaving his small farming village, settling into the New York literary and social circles. Godfrey, the only first-person narrator in Taylor’s novels, satirizes the writers and journalists, whom he emulates and wishes to join.

Throughout his fiction, Taylor also satirized the cultural orthodoxies of the day in what may be fairly regarded as an early version of modern culture wars. He was quick to condemn what he saw as superficial or disingenuous. Godfrey and his musician friend Swansford— clearly an intimate friend— satirize the popular music of their day: “He sat down to the piano, played a hideous, flashy accompaniment, and sang, with extravagant voice and gesture, one of the sentimental songs to which we had been treated” (John 207-208). Godfrey and Swanson, outraged at the “insane, idiotic stuff that people go into ecstasies about,” agree to write musical parodies. Swansford is probably a combination of Taylor’s close friends and newspaper friends Richard H. Stoddard and Fitz James O’Brien, dramatic editor of the New York Saturday Press. According to Albert H. Smyth, “Stoddard, Taylor and O’Brien were frequently amiable rivals in the rapid making of burlesque rhymes” (Smyth 140). However, Smyth goes on to say that “There are memories of Fitz-James O’Brien in Mr. Brandagee” (165), a newspaper editor in John

Godfrey's Fortune. However, Richard Henry Stoddard reminisces in his Recollections: Personal and Literary (1903) that Swansford was probably based on Fitz-James O'Brien: "It was a neck-and-neck race between Bayard Taylor and Fitz James O'Brien, who divided the honors pretty equally" (Stoddard 248).

As Godfrey and Swansford continue writing, Swansford brags: "Why not give them the absurdest satire, which they shall suck down as pure sentiment? I'll laugh at them, and they'll pay me for it! Come, Godfrey, give me some nonsense which will pass for a fashionable song; I'm in the humor for a bit of devilry to-night" (John 208).

Godfrey does indeed quickly pencil out some words for Swansford's music:

Away, my soul! This withered hand

No more may sing of joy:

The roses redden o'er the land

Which autumn gales destroy;

But when my hopes shall shine as fair

As bowers beneath the hill,

I'll bid the tempest hear my prayer,

And dream you love me still!

The sky is dark: no stars intrude

To bind the brow of day,

Oh, why should love, so wildly wooed

Refuse to turn away?

The lark is loud, the wind is high,

And Fate must have her will:

Ah, nought is left me but to die,

And dream you love me still! (John 208)

Godfrey's lyrics are an additional layer of narrative, a joke not only on "foolish" fans of popular music, but also on readers of sentimental novels. Parody, according to Bakhtin, is an important form of representing the direct word of another while conveying an image of the form parodied because "there never was a single strictly straightforward genre, no single type of direct discourse... that did not have its own parodying and travesty double" (Bakhtin 53). Thus, Taylor's parodies are signals of the artifice of genre and the inherent connections among any forms of language and expression.

Godfrey's narrative is a mixture of romantic fantasies based on his upper-aspiring nature and a broad satire of the habitués of Mrs. Yorkton's salon. Mrs. Yorkton is a poet writing under the name of Adeliza Choate, who experiences histrionic, suitably romantic fits of altered consciousness under the influence of her Muse:

I prance up and down the room as if I was possessed, and as the lines come to me  
I dash them on the black-board, one after another, and chant them in a loud voice.  
Sometimes I cover all four of the boards— both sides— before the Inspiration  
leaves me. The frail Body is overcome by the excitement of the Soul, and at night  
my husband often finds me lying on the floor in the middle of the room panting—  
panting!" (John 275)

In the artistic circles of lower Manhattan, Godfrey encounters a Walt Whitman-like character: "Classical subjects are dead— obsolete— antediluvian" cried [Smithers]. "Take the fireman in his red flannel shirt, with the sleeves rolled up to his shoulders,— the clam-

fisher, bare-legged on the sea-shore,— the woodchopper— the street-sweeper: where will you find anything more heroic?” In his excitement and dedication to his artistic ideals, he continues, “Life’s the thing! A strong-backed ’long-shore-man, with his hairy and sunburnt arms, and the tobacco-juice in the corners of his mouth, is worth all your saints!” (John 278). Sometime between 1866 and his later series of Tribune articles, Taylor changed his attitude toward Whitman, definitely souring toward his earlier idol, though the reason is not clear.

Taylor’s play The Echo Club, based on gatherings of Taylor and his friends, parodies several poets of their time, including Whitman: “Everywhere, everywhere, following me;/Taking me by the buttonhole, pulling off my boots, hustling me with the elbows;... Plunging naked at my side into the sleep, irascible surges;/Everywhere listening to my yawp and glad whenever they hear it;/Everywhere saying, say it, Walt, we believe it;/Everywhere, everywhere” (Echo 184). Here, as elsewhere, his parody is gentle and affectionate. However, he also parodies other writers whom he did not resent— Keats, Tennyson, the Brownings, and Longfellow. Gary Schmidgall suggests one reason for the split between Taylor and Whitman: “Taylor, unfortunately, got sucked into what Whitman called the ‘finesse, finish, polish’ of ‘the New York clique’ and eventually turned against his idol” (301).

Regardless of his changing opinions of Whitman, Taylor still shared Whitman’s admiration of the forthright and strong working man, a heroic type in Taylor’s fiction. Smithers voices his attitude toward the uneducated, unsophisticated man who is a talented craftsman with a strong moral and ethical nature. For example, Bill Carruthers, John Godfrey’s school companion, is of this admirable type: “His features were plain,

and by no means intellectual, and I saw that his hands were large and hard, showing that he was used to labor. I afterwards learned that he was actually a carpenter, and that he paid for his winter's instruction by the summer's earnings at his trade. He was patient, plodding, and conscientious in his studies. His progress, indeed, was slow, but what he once acquired was never lost" (John 32). Taylor's protagonists are initially drawn to these men, and return, in some form, to these simple relationships. These friendships, often crossing economic, educational, and, therefore, social lines, are based upon a type of ethereal, or spiritual, kinship. In these instances, Taylor's characters are socially transgressive, and Taylor condones, indeed extols, their behavior.

Eventually, John Godfrey, for all his professed intellectual superiority and artistic refinement, depends upon the moral and spiritual strength of a bricklayer and a prostitute for his own redemption. When Godfrey becomes unemployed and homeless, he turns to Bob Simmons, his childhood friend, and Bob's wife Jane for their financial and emotional support. For once, Taylor has betrayed the genteel tradition by allowing lower-class characters to redeem the artistic Brahmin: "After the morbid intellectual atmosphere I had breathed for the last few months, there was something as fresh and bracing as mountain breezes in the simple, rude commingling of purely moral and physical elements in [Simmons's nature]" (John 442).

Godfrey realizes the sincerity of these uneducated, disenfranchised individuals. Because of his newly achieved sense of classlessness, he travels home to make amends with his estranged relatives, abandoning his chances of being the famous New York City poet of his dreams. Godfrey is not Taylor's only character who returns from the city to the village. Both Maxwell Woodbury in Hannah Thurston and Joseph Asten in Joseph

and His Friend return to the small towns of their boyhoods, which resemble the Kennett Square of Taylor's childhood. Even for Woodbury, the world traveler, the return is an emotional, even spiritual comfort: "For the first time in twenty years, Woodbury felt the almost forgotten sensation of home steal through his heart. Quickly and silently he recognized each familiar object, and the far-off days of the past swept into the nearness of yesterday" (Hannah 33). The purity of country life, in all of Taylor's novels, proves superior to the corruption of city life. However, sometimes he does have a good opinion of some of the aspects of the city. For example, in John Godfrey's Fortune, he admires the charitable nature of New Yorkers: "this noble trait of generosity belongs to the city of my adoption. With all its faults, its people are unstinted givers; and no appeal, supported by responsible authority, is ever made to them in vain" (John 302).

The pastoral simplicity and inherent goodness of these villages generally appeal to the protagonists of Taylor's novels. Joseph, however, is motivated by more than rural purity. He returns to his hometown because Philip, the friend of the title, has come to town to run the forge. Balancing the sentimental love story of Joseph and His Friend, the blissful male friendship balanced against the unhappy, heterosexual marriage—is Taylor's satirical view of politicians, especially Julia Blessing's father: "his face, since high stocks were no longer in fashion, had lost its rigid lift, and expressed the chronic cordiality of a popular politician. There was a redness about the rims of his eyes, and a fulness of the under lid, which also denoted political habits" (Joseph 76).

At Julia's and Joseph's wedding, Mr. Blessing makes a short speech: "'On this happy occasion,' he said, 'the elements of national power and prosperity are represented. My son-in-law, Mr. Asten, is a noble specimen of the agricultural population,—the free

American yeomanry; my daughter, if I may be allowed to say it in the presence of so many bright eyes and blooming cheeks, is a representative of the city, which is the embodiment of the nation's action and enterprise. The union of the two is the movement of our life'" (Joseph 120). The ironically-named Mr. Blessing, however, is a devious investor who persuades Joseph to invest in worthless oil wells. The Blessing family is concerned with material possessions and the superficial appearances of success and well-being.

Julia Blessing, like her greedy, insincere father, is a materialistic, grasping wife who berates her husband Joseph—and bewails her fate—because she is not wealthy and powerful. After an emotional argument with Joseph, Julia kills herself with arsenic. Her death, first thought to be suicide, is ruled an accidental overdose. However, the reader cannot be sure. Ambiguities exist about her death. For example, she wants to control Joseph, expecting him to allow her many extravagances and forgive her deception: “there were boxes and packages of furniture already on hand, purchased without Joseph's knowledge and with entire faith in the virtues of the Amaranth [oil fields]” (243). After Julia's father's oil-field-stocks fraud is discovered, she is faced with the mounting expenses and Joseph's reaction to her spending habits. Shortly afterwards, Julia kills herself. Additionally, she is jealous of the friendship between Lucy and Joseph, especially after she overhears Joseph proclaiming his love for Lucy and regretting his marriage to Julia. Indeed, Julia had motive, especially in the rage and shame of her unhinged state. Textual evidence exists to indicate that Julia's death was intentional and not an accidental overdose of arsenic.

Arsenic was used cosmetically in the nineteenth century to “improve” the

complexion. The characters believe that Julia carelessly ingests more than her usual allotted dosage and accidentally dies. Nevertheless, Joseph is a suspect, going on trial for Julia's murder. Here the novel veers off into a mystery/detective novel; the main characters—Philip Held and his sister Madeline, Elwood Withers, and Lucy Henderson—investigate how Julia obtained the arsenic. The evidence accumulates, at last clearing Joseph of any guilt. During the trial, however, Taylor introduces a parodic view of a blustering, pompous prosecuting attorney, Mr. Spenham: “If the case deepens in enormity as it advances, we may be shocked, but we have no reason to be surprised. The growth of free-love sentiments, among those who tear themselves loose from the guidance of religious influences, naturally leads to crime; and the extent to which this evil has been secretly developed is not suspected by the public” (Joseph 318).

Beyond his satire, Taylor plays with the **hybrid** nature of the novel, introducing letters, newspaper articles, poems, songs, and other “texts” to further the plot. One aspect of his layered textuality is the introduction of “secondary texts” to the novels. Taylor uses letters rather than dialogue or narrative to advance the plot, especially the friendship of Joseph and Philip while Joseph is away on business. Uncle Amos Wooley's final confession and apology to John Godfrey comes in the form of a letter, full of Biblical quotes. Among the texts in John Godfrey's Fortunes is a diary entry shared with the reader. Yet the diary exists “off stage,” alongside the text of the novel, an appendix of sorts, adding a dimension of immediacy and credibility to the narrative:

I also purchased a blank diary, with headings for every day of the year, and kept it in the breastpocket of my coat, with fear and trembling, lest it should be left lying where my uncle might find it and read it. For a month or two the entries were

very regular, then more and more fragmentary, and before summer they ceased all together. The little volume, with its well-worn cover and embrowned paper, is now lying before me. (John 99-100)

Taylor does not stop at the occasional reference to other authors or secondary texts. He also refers, somewhat blatantly, to himself and his life beyond his fiction. For example, among the publications in Mrs. Thurston's living room is the New York Tribune. Taylor was working for the Tribune at the time he wrote Hannah Thurston. This introduction of the Tribune is perhaps an inside joke, nodding at the artificiality or self-referentiality of the novel and its arbitrary style and content. An image presents itself: Has Mrs. Thurston been reading Taylor's articles in the New York Tribune? In John Godfrey's Fortunes, Godfrey also purchases a copy of the Saturday Evening Post; a few of Taylor's poems were printed in the Post.

John Godfrey, during his distress, seeks solace in literature: "Having now more time at my disposal I had resumed my German studies, and the lines of Faust returned to my mind" (John 413-414). Again, the passage in the novel is self-referential; Taylor was working on his own verse translation of Goethe's Faust at the time he wrote John Godfrey's Fortunes. Granted, the passage in John Godfrey's Fortunes is not the final version of Taylor's translation, but it remains a cross-reference to Taylor's other works. Taylor makes this further allusion to his personal life in Hannah Thurston: "Woodbury had picked up in the country paper, published at Tiberius, a little poem by Stoddard, of which these lines clung to his memory and would not be banished":

The laden summer will give me  
What it never gave before,

Or take from me what a thousand

Summers can give no more! (Hannah 459)

This “little poem,” was written in fact by Richard Henry Stoddard and included as “Many’s the time I’ve sighed for summer” in his collection of poetry Songs of Summer (1856). Stoddard was the author of such works as “Arcadian Idyl,” The Book of the East (1867), and “To B.T.” for his good friend Bayard Taylor. Furthermore, Stoddard, like Philip Held, worked in a foundry. Thus, Taylor not only promotes himself in his fiction, but also the work of his associates, eerily presenting himself as a background character. In this way, he combines autobiography and novel; he also turns the narrative of the novel, for a brief moment, into a commercial for Stoddard’s poetry and a reminder of his connections with important personages.

John Godfrey’s Fortunes, more than the other novels, lends itself to the layering of texts, presenting texts beyond the narrative. Swansford has succumbed to a suitably romantic and genteel disease—nameless and probably unknown—that descends quickly, leaving him weak but highly lucid and in no pain. In the passage of Godfrey’s and Swansford’s reconciliation after Godfrey’s “dark days,” the text becomes multi-layered. First, Swansford quotes Keats: “Godfrey, was n’t [sic] Keats who said, ‘I feel the daisies already growing over me?’” (John 452). This line is said to be one of John Keats’s final statements when he was dying of tuberculosis, as attributed to Keats by Joseph Severn, the British portraitist. It is also quoted as “flowers already growing over me” (Birkenhead142). Then Godfrey introduces disparate, though essentially related texts—lyrics to a song, a footnote containing a laundry list, and, on the reverse of the laundry list, a few bars of music. Taylor was figuratively stepping away from the delicate,

unspoken aspects of the relationship of Godfrey and Swansford. When the intimacy of Godfrey and Swansford increases, promising or threatening to move into an intensely physical space dangerously close to sexual behavior, the narrative begins to disintegrate. As a result of the narrative thread fraying, Taylor has virtually abandoned the novel format to pursue other genres and to mix them within this loosely connected prose, possibly in an attempt to distract himself, his characters, and his readers from the growing sexual atmosphere. He has entered into the realm of Bakhtin's heteroglossia, a language that moves beyond polyglossia, incorporating the use of dissimilar forms and vocabularies yet disregarding all structures.

John Godfrey's Fortunes offers diverse examples of textuality. This diversity, however, reaches its zenith in Taylor's final novel, Joseph and His Friend (1870). The "mystery" of Julia Blessing's death (and her purchase and possession of the arsenic) introduces more aspects of the question "What is a text?". One of the clues to the arsenic sale is a ledger entry:

He took a volume from a drawer, and beginning at the last entry, they went slowly backward over the names, the apothecary saying: "This is confidential; I rely upon your seeing without remembering."

They had not gone back more than two or three weeks before Philip came upon a name that made his heart stand still. There was a record in a single line:— "Miss Henderson. Arsenic." (Joseph 293)

Another clue is embodied in a scrap of paper. Joseph's aunt Rachel Miller finds what proves to be the evidence which secures Joseph's acquittal for murder: "it is but a scrap, with half a name on it. I found it behind and mostly under the lower drawer in the same

box” (Joseph 299). Thus, the characters, and the reader, are presented with an embedded text: “When they looked at the paper, it seemed, truly, to be a worthless fragment. It had the character, also, of an apothecary’s label, but the only letters remaining were those formed the end of the name, apparently—ers, and a short distance under them—Sts.” (Joseph 299). These fragments of words are the name and address of the apothecary who sold the arsenic to Julia. This virtually non-existent text proves to be the redeeming factor in Joseph’s trial; Philip and Madeline, with the help of a hired detective, are able to prove Julia’s purchase of the arsenic and her duplicity in forging Lucy’s signature to the apothecary’s ledger. Taylor does not explain why Julia would forge Lucy’s signature, though perhaps it was to conceal the fact that her beautiful complexion was not natural but the result of drugs. Regardless of Julia’s motives, the mystery and the murder trial are quickly resolved to the satisfaction of the characters and to no one’s detriment.

In Joseph and His Friend, Taylor again relies upon a kind of romantic shorthand to explain and determine the characters’ fates and also the ultimate tone of the novel: “The world is a failure, God’s wonderful system is imperfect, if there is not now living a noble woman to bless me with her love, strengthen me with her self-sacrifice, purify me with her sweeter and clearer faith!” (361). This noble woman is a wise, gentle woman, passionate and not materialistic. She is intelligent yet instinctive. Isabel Haworth and Madeline Held are two such women, in opposition to Julia Blessing. They are content in their role as a reflection of the male. These women are genteel women, uninterested in suffragist activities or feminist concerns.

Although Taylor strongly supported traditional gender roles and ridiculed the women’s rights movement in Hannah Thurston, he proved to be self-contradictory and

complex when he defended male intimacy and love. This attitude, however, can be attributed to the characteristic notions of gender according to the genteel tradition and its insistence upon highly refined physical and emotional sensibilities. According to Robert K. Martin, “Taylor expressed his opposition to women’s rights, an opposition founded on the fear that the emancipation of women would bring about a decline in femininity. Taylor was thus consistently the spokesman for feminine values, even in his relationships with men” (Homosexual 107). As Woodbury tells a group of women, “I should be glad if this feminine love of color and odor were more common among men” (Hannah 98). Hannah Thurston, thematically devoted to female equality, male superiority, and the women’s movement, ends with a happy marriage.

Before that wedding, Woodbury and Hannah Thurston disagree about a woman’s place in a marriage and in society. Woodbury gives Hannah a copy of The Princess by “Tennyson, who was Woodbury’s favorite among living English poets” (359). ““The Princess,” which, if it has a particular moral, has one which you may possibly reject” (361). Tennyson’s poem tells of the courtship and marriage of the Princess Ida who strongly believes in equality of the sexes. The romance between Maxwell Woodbury and Hannah Thurston is modeled on The Princess. Taylor compares Hannah to Ida. Like Hannah, Ida abandons her belief in women’s rights at the end, submitting to her husband, in a form of separate yet equal partnership. As the male narrator says of his wife: “seeing either sex alone/ Is half itself, and in true marriage lies /Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfills/ Defect in each, and always thought in thought,/ Purpose in purpose, will in will/ they grow,/ The single pure and perfect animal” (Princess 93). Hannah, in a return to femininity, calmly demurs to Maxwell in their marriage, apparently abandoning her

feminist ways, settling into her quiet home with her husband. Similarly, John Godfrey's Fortunes and The Story of Kennett end with weddings, presumably happy marriages, and contented family life.

In contrast to his satirical and often frivolous treatment of male-female love, Taylor takes his male characters and their relationships with other men very seriously. Even though he may have presumed some of the gender divisions, he remained outside the tradition in his non-Calvinist attitude toward physicality and its resultant affection. John Tomsich explains Taylor's unorthodox attitude toward physicality: "The languidness of the East was an antidote to the 'fiends of gold and work,' but it also represented a sensuousness that was new to American letters. The poets of Longfellow's generation were more apprehensive than appreciative of sensual experience, but the genteel poets had their sympathies with Walter Pater" (44). Certainly, Joseph and His Friend is a virtual treatise on emotional and spiritual male bonding.

A recurrent theme radiates throughout Taylor's work, especially in his appreciation of male beauty, both philosophically and physically. John Godfrey tells the hostess of a dance: "it gives me pleasure to see beauty, Mrs. Deering, whether in woman or man, and I do not understand why custom requires that one sex should help it with all possible accessories and the other disguise it" (John 337). Undeniably, Taylor's male narrators comment on male physical attributes: "Although [Fortune's] mulberry coat was somewhat faded, it had a jaunty cut, and if his breeches were worn and stained, the short, muscular thighs and strong knees they covered told of a practiced horseman" (Story 7). Likewise, Gilbert Potter, the protagonist of The Story of Kennett, is an attractive man: "His short jacket and knee-breeches of gray velveteen cover a chest broad rather than

deep, and reveal the fine, narrow loins and muscular thighs of a frame matured and hardened by labor” (17). Taylor’s men have physiques that reflect their moral qualities.

Being handsome and muscular is a trait of the admirable, virtuous characters. John Godfrey’s cousin Penrose is a prime example with his “clear, deep voice, so good-humored in tone” (52). Also, he is very attractive: “His shirt was unbuttoned and the collar thrown back, revealing a noble neck and breast, and his slender, symmetrical legs shone in the moonlight like golden-tinted marble. His lips were parted in the sensuous delight of the balmy air-bath, and his eyes shone like dark fire in the shadow of his brows. I thought I had never seen any human being so beautiful” (52.) Philip Held, Joseph’s friend of the title of Joseph and His Friend is an attractive man: “His fair complexion was bronzed from exposure, and his hands, graceful without being effeminate, were those of an idle gentleman. His hair, golden in tint, thrust its short locks as it pleased about a smooth, frank forehead; his eyes were dark gray, and the mouth, partly hidden by a mustache, at once firm and full. He was moderately handsome” (90-91). Joseph sees even more in Philip’s handsome face: “The more he studied the face, the more he was conscious of its attraction” (91). The characters with unattractive personalities have equally unattractive bodies. For example, the difficult music publisher who refuses to buy John Godfrey’s music, “was a small man, with lively gray eyes, a hooked nose, and a shrivelled throat” (John 188). Similarly, Godfrey dislikes the theater critic Mr. Brandagee who has an unappealing personality and an unattractive appearance: “[t]he man’s face interested me profoundly. It was not handsome, it could hardly be called intellectual, it was very irregular: I could almost say it was disagreeable” (John 261). Thus, for Taylor, beauty is a reflection of deeper integrity; therefore, the attraction

of male to male is not merely physical, but encompasses intellectual and spiritual appeal as well.

Joseph and Philip enjoy an immediate friendship that extends beyond the physical: “Joseph leaned his head back on the supporting arm, while the train moved away with them, he felt a new power, a new support had come into his life. The face upon which he looked was no longer strange; the hand which had rested on his heart was warm with kindred blood. Involuntarily he extended his own; it was taken and held, the dark-gray, courageous eyes turned to him with a silent assurance which he felt needed no words” (94).

In the prologue to Joseph and His Friend, Taylor explains that “to those ... who believe in the truth and tenderness of man’s love for man, as of man’s love for woman, ... no explanation of this volume is necessary. Others will not read it” (Joseph n.p.). He expands this statement in an 1871 letter to Paul Hamilton Hayne: “I am very glad to find that you guess so well the intention of my “Joseph.” The book cannot be called popular (judging by its sales), but I have not expected popularity. As a study of characters, circumstances and elements of American country life, it can only interest a moderate number. It has already been roundly abused by certain critics. The truth is, I cannot— moreover, I will not— write what would satisfy the public taste these days” (Duffy 42). Joseph’s tenderness for Philip, beyond his tenderness for Julia, becomes a distressing tension for Joseph. Even as Joseph and Julia leave on their honeymoon, Joseph’s thoughts are on Philip whom he already misses: “as they sped away from the city through the mellow October landscapes, Philip’s earnest, dark gray eyes, warm with more than brotherly love, haunted his memory, and he knew that Philip’s faithful thoughts followed

him” (Joseph 122).

After the “Not Guilty!” verdict in Julia’s murder trial, Joseph and his friends return home. There they celebrate the verdict: “Joseph and his guests sat on the veranda, in the still, mild air. He drew his chair near to Philip’s, their hands closed upon each other, and they were entirely happy in the tender and perfect manly love which united them” (Joseph 340). Taylor may have acquired the term “manly love” from Whitman’s poetry, particularly the “Calamus” section of Leaves of Grass.<sup>2</sup> For instance, in “I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing,” Whitman uses the term in describing a twig from the live-oak and the moss that he twined around it. The twig with the moss “remains to me a curious token, it makes me think of manly love” (James Miller 93). In “For You O Democracy” Whitman proclaims “I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other’s necks/By the love of comrades/By the manly love of comrades” (James Miller 87). In the final scene of Joseph and His Friend, as Philip watches Madeline and Joseph together, he says to himself: “My life had settled down so peacefully into what seemed a permanent form; with Madeline to make a home and brighten it for me, and Joseph to give me the precious intimacy of a man’s love, different from a woman’s, yet so pure and perfect!” (361). This pure and perfect relationship, true to the standards of the genteel tradition, is untainted by any sexual behavior.

Joseph and Philip are similar to other “male couples” of Taylor’s fiction, e.g., the oddly incestuous relationship in Taylor’s short story “Twin-Love,” included in Beauty and the Beast (1871). The identical twins Jonathan and David are physically and emotionally intimate: “David and Jonathan grew as one boy: the taste and temper of one was repeated in the other, the voice and features. Sleeping or waking, grieved or joyous,

well or ill, they lived a single life” (174). The twins’ names are from the Old Testament, the love story of King David and his friend Jonathan: “the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam. 18:1). After Jonathan is killed by Israel’s enemies the Philistines, David eulogizes Jonathan: “my brother Jonathan: very pleasant has thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (2 Sam. 1:26).

Taylor’s twins caress and kiss each other, even as grown men. As a concession to social expectations, and because of a promise the twins made to their dying father, Jonathan marries a woman named Ruth. Just as the names Jonathan and David are connected with Biblical references, the name Ruth is also. In the book of Ruth, after her husband dies, Ruth chooses to remain with her mother-in-law rather than return to her own people: “And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge” (Ruth 1:16). Thus, Taylor is writing of what have become known as same-sex relationships. The marriage of Jonathan and Ruth, however, proves to be a painful distraction from the true relationship of the twins. After Ruth dies, the two men return to their former, exclusive relationship: “the marks left by their divided lives have long since vanished from their faces; the middle-aged men, whose hairs have turned gray, still walk hand in hand, still sleep upon the same pillow, still have their common wardrobe, as when they were boys” (Beauty 192). However, John Tomsich, a bit primly and perhaps homophobically, cautions the reader: “‘Twin Love’ can be viewed as a carefully drawn expression of and defense against homosexuality. There is no reason to believe that Taylor intended it—or was even capable of seeing it—as such” (162). He also argues

that Taylor, in keeping with the genteel tradition, wrote in a decidedly homosocial climate: “Whether Taylor himself was consciously attracted to homosexuality is unimportant. Genteel literature is marked by a persistent homosexual strain that is scarcely surprising in view of the strictures against the portrayal of heterosexual experience. Of course the strain is disguised and almost unconscious” (162).<sup>3</sup> Indeed, this homosexual strain was more than disguised; it was literally unthinkable. The nineteenth-century mind and eye, in a sense, were not yet trained to see or perceive certain types of behavior and sexuality. Only later was homosexuality being named and addressed as a clear social phenomenon. Likewise, incest between male relatives, a further type of homosexual behavior, was invisible, inconceivable to those who were capable of seeing only heterosexual desires and experiences.

The incest theme, albeit in a more distant relationship, is also present in John Godfrey’s Fortunes. John and his good friend Penrose are cousins, and their friendship, indeed their love, extends for the life of the novel. Penrose also serves a notable thematic function. He not only is a primary emotional relationship for Godfrey, but he also is an intimate boyhood friend, a confidant and confessor. One night when Godfrey is crying about his mother’s financial problems in the bed that he shares with Penrose at boarding school, Penrose comforts him: “He drew me towards him as if I had been a child, and laid my head against his shoulder. ‘Don’t be afraid,’ he then whispered” (65). Again, Tomsich offers that the Taylor allowed physical closeness between relatives: “When the nature of attraction between males became problematical, as in “Twin Love” and John Godfrey’s Fortunes, he was able to sanctify physical intimacy by confining it within the bonds of kinship. Brothers and cousins kiss each other, share the same beds, and refer

without the least bit of impropriety to the “magnetism” that binds them together” (161).

Taylor uses the motif of the “loyal and honest boyhood friend” in both Joseph and His Friend and John Godfrey’s Fortunes. The plot development that allows these characters to appear in the protagonists’ hour of need, leans heavily on coincidence and contrivance. In John Godfrey’s Fortunes, one night in the street Bob Simmons happens upon John Godfrey, who is feeling abandoned and betrayed by the world, taking him home, offering him a place to stay. John, in a sentimental but decidedly ungentle response, literally leans upon Bob: “I laid my head upon his shoulder with the grateful sense of reliance and protecting strength which, I imagine, must be the bliss of a woman’s heart when she first feels herself clasped by the arms of the man she loves” (John 440). This subversive scene attests to the encoding and hybridity which often appear in Taylor’s narratives. His males are ambivalent in the emotional attachments to other males and to females, even their own wives. These tenuous relationships are indicative of Taylor’s own uncertainty about the gender roles of his society. American males of the nineteenth century were open to highly emotive responses and physical intimacy, their sense of masculine friendship and affection unhampered by the later stigma of “homosexuality.”

In any event, Taylor’s comparison of the male narrator to a woman in love moves beyond the romantic tradition into a region of male intimacy. This male intimacy in Taylor’s novels also violates unstated conventions of masculine narrative, leading some critics to admit to discomfort (and homophobic over-reaction). According to Wermuth, “the suggestions of homosexuality in the book [Joseph and His Friend] can hardly be overlooked. Certainly, the relationship between Joseph and his friend has such

overtones. Scenes of their embracing and kissing each other make the reader somewhat uncomfortable. Yet it is by no means certain that the book should be interpreted this way” (Bayard 97). Indeed, in direct contradiction to Wermuth’s response is the gay reader’s relief and excitement at knowing that Taylor was among a small group of nineteenth-century writers who could express sentiments of gay love. Granted, Taylor has not intimated how the friendship between Joseph Asten and Phillip Held should be viewed, but these men have a level of attraction and communication which is unusual, even by Victorian standards: “They took each other’s hands. The day was fading, the landscape was silent, and only the twitter of nesting birds was heard in the boughs above them. Each gave way to the impulse of his manly love, rarer, alas!, but as tender as the love of woman, and they drew nearer and kissed each other” (Joseph 217). These characters rely upon each other not so much sexually, if at all, but emotionally and spiritually in a world in which men and women are strictly and routinely separated. Thus, even in gender issues, Taylor’s ambiguity serves as a desultory nod to the prevalent beliefs (often for the sake of financial profit) tempered by a belief in individuality and eccentricity.

After writing four critically and financially successful novels, Taylor abandoned the genre. He would later write a few short pieces of fiction for periodicals, but he never returned to the novel. Instead, he wrote plays, his drama moving further into mysticism and esoteric spirituality; and his poetry became more clearly rooted in political and social themes. Therefore, his novels prove the most ambitious and textured, addressing the paradigm shifts of the Civil War and its aftermath. Romance and satire, heteroglossia and textuality: Bayard Taylor investigated and stretched the boundaries of the popular

novel, tempering it with satire, parody and social commentary, introducing diverse texts within the plotted narratives, and employing a distrustful approach toward gender and sexuality roles in nineteenth century America. Taylor worked to fuse plot and character with other elements not necessarily integral to the novel; in so doing, he was able to enrich and vitalize the genre.

Taylor's legacy lies not in his travelogs, which earned what fame he enjoyed, and not in his poetry, which he saw as his greatest strength and talent. Instead, his best writing was in his brilliantly textured novels; in them, he was able to relax and experiment with the fluid nature of the genre and with his own complex nature. Cloaking his plots in satire and quasi-sentimental mechanics, he was able to express his political, religious, and sexual statements, revealing himself as an eccentric and unconventional man with subversive ideas.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In May 1850 Herman Melville, writing to Richard Henry Dana, Jr. about White Jacket and Redburn, complained of the same problem: “did I not write these books of mine almost entirely for ‘lucre’—by the job, as a woodsawyer saws wood” (Davis 106).

<sup>2</sup> The first use of the phrase “manly love” has been attributed to the German writer Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825-1895), a pioneer in sexual studies and one of the first to call for equality for same-sex love. Ulrichs’s pamphlet Forschungen über das Rätsel der mannmännlichen Liebe or Research on the Riddle of Man-Manly Love, a collection of earlier tracts, was published in 1880. He had used the term “manly love” as early as 1864.

<sup>3</sup> That Taylor could not have been homosexual because he was incapable of comprehending the concept of homosexuality seems reductive and obstinately naïve on Tomsich’s part. The term “homosexual” was coined by Karoly Maria Benkert in 1869. Taylor could have been familiar with the word and possibly Benkert’s work. Also, Taylor’s contemporaries, as well as countless others through history, were not “unconscious” of the “homosexual strain.” They fully understood and wrote of their same-sex romantic love and physical attraction. Examples abound. For example, see Homosexuals in History and The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage.

## Chapter 4

### Giving and Taking:

#### Charles Warren Stoddard as Reluctant Adventurer

Charles Warren Stoddard wrote from the position of an uneasy outsider, creating narrative personae who had inner tensions about belonging to a group of sympathetic peers while remaining a distinct individual. He wrote regularly for the Overland Monthly, a San Francisco periodical edited by his friend and mentor Bret Harte, and for Ave Maria, a Roman Catholic publication. His reputation rests upon a handful of books, his travel narratives, South-Sea Idyls (1873) and The Island of Tranquil Delights (1904), his conversion memoir A Troubled Heart and How It Was Comforted at Last (1885), and his only novel For the Pleasure of His Company: An Affair of the Misty City: Thrice Told (1903). In these books, he writes of characters who struggle to be individuals yet strive, usually unsuccessfully, to belong to a larger group.

Through his writings, whether travel narratives, fiction, journals, or poetry, Stoddard violated genre boundaries, sometimes as a stylistic or artistic endeavor, but more often due to his ambivalence and wariness. He employed shifting voices and substantial breaks in his narratives. Stoddard's genre transgressions were the product of his conflicted feelings and beliefs in three specific thematic areas: race, religion, and sex (or gender).

For Stoddard, unlike Melville and Taylor, his travel narratives are not accounts of his first contact with any of the natives he meets during his travels. Instead, he is returning to people and places he loves. He saw the South Pacific islands, especially his beloved Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands and his "savages," as a safe escape, a second

home; he sought peace and comfort in the islands, solace with the inhabitants. He first visited Hawaii when he went to help his parents with their business there during the late 1860s; when the family business could not support him, and he could not afford the ship fare home, he remained in Hawaii for a few years, writing for local publications and for periodicals in San Francisco. During this stay in Hawaii, he was subsidized in part by Austin Whiting, a San Francisco attorney, a type of head of the household at the “Bachelor’s Bungalow,” where Stoddard shared the house with a few younger men, including Charles Dearing. Dearing was among a line of men whom Stoddard called his “Kids,” attractive, generally wild and unruly, sometimes having brushes with the law, often alcoholic, young men who were ultimately unattainable for Stoddard but with whom he disastrously fell in love (Austen 96-97). Thus, Stoddard’s first period of time spent with the “savages” and “infidels” was actually spent among other white Americans in relative comfort similar to his home in San Francisco. Furthermore, the natives of color, the colonists, were accustomed to living in close proximity to the white colonizers.

In addition to his political and racial beliefs, Stoddard held ideas of religion that are a type of imperialism and certainly an articulation of superiority. As a zealous convert to Roman Catholicism, he conveys his conviction that Catholicism was superior to the Protestant faith. Frequently, he bemoans the unhappy world of the Protestant: “I do not know what hope the Protestant has in the future of the departed soul” (Troubled 185) and “the majority of Protestants are quite unsettled as to exactly what they believe and what disbelieve. How miserable must be this state of uncertainty; how cheerless the thought of a future life; how bitter the pang of death!” (Troubled 186). In contrast to his sharing political ideas with the majority of Americans, his assertion of Catholic belief

was courageous in the face of hostile and often violent opposition to the faith by Protestant Americans (more on this in the discussion of A Troubled Heart).

Thus, he voiced several aspects of his personality—including his zeal for travel, his drive to be seen as a serious and important writer, and his love for men—within the context of his deeply held Roman Catholic beliefs. Stoddard viewed his world and his writing through the lens of a religious man who had definite opinions of race, sex, and spirituality and struggled all his life to come to terms with his feelings while conveying yet masking them in his writings. Throughout his writings, he voices his inner conflicts and his ambivalent view of being taken in three main thematic areas, religion, race, and sex (or gender).

“Being taken” is one of the great themes of Stoddard’s writing. The fear of losing himself to any outside force motivated Stoddard throughout much of his life, in his occupations, his personal relationships, and his writing. However, he yearned to belong while he strongly resisted any involvement that could jeopardize his individuality. Consequently, the mixture of attraction and repulsion, the intricacies of give and take, directed his life and his writings. Sometimes Stoddard wrote of his fear and panic at the thought of being physically taken, or kidnapped, by strangers. He describes this fear in his first experiences with Roman Catholic priests: “The fear I had of the dark-robed priests whom I saw daily moving about in the shadow of the chapel, over the way, grew apace. I solemnly believed that if I were to wander upon the other side of the street, alone and unprotected, one of those grave figures would suddenly pounce upon me, bear me away into the gloom of the grove, and the world would never again see me, or know aught of the tortures to which I had been duly subjected” (Troubled 19). Ironically, these

priests whom he so greatly feared in his youth became the few individuals for whom he truly felt trust and affection after his conversion.

Stoddard had an almost overwhelming excitement and fear at the prospect of being taken, in all senses of the word. Especially in his travel narratives of the Middle East and the Arab world he writes of himself as an outsider, enthralled by the power and mystery of the natives. Arab men are sensual and at times threatening, not offering the comfort (an important word and concept for Stoddard) of the Pacific Islanders. Rather, the Arab and Muslim men are masculine aggressors as opposed to the feminine and passive Polynesians with whom Stoddard feels so relaxed. Arab men pose a dual threat to Stoddard; he risks losing himself and his beliefs, especially his Christian religion, and he also is in danger of being overpowered and taken sexually, of being raped.

While aboard a ship leaving Alexandria, Egypt, Stoddard recounts his being physically overpowered by “men and boys of every sort save only the right sort” (Mashallah! 52). However, he does not reveal what the “right sort” of men and boys might be, whether his classification is based upon race, body type, demeanor, intellect, or otherwise. He continues in vague and veiled language, describing some sort of physical, possibly sexual, assault: “they cornered me, prostrate and speechless, under the hail of their deep, delicious lingo,” and “most of the pirates spoke a line of English, and each claimed me as his own. I was seized bodily and torn from the arms of an agile Greek to be folded in the embraces of a dusky Arab. They might have parted my garments among them; they nearly did. They might have drawn and quartered me and taken me on shore in sections” (Mashallah! 52). He is saved from this apparent abduction and gang rape by Hubert, who is “not a Greek, and that was something in his favor; he was an Italian, and

that was considerably more” (Mashallah! 53). Italians, in Stoddard’s racial hierarchy, prove less barbaric than Greeks, more Western and European, thus more nearly like a white man from America or England. Although Hubert seemingly saves Stoddard’s life, he is soon left behind as Stoddard moves on to more adventures. Moving on for Stoddard was one way to avoid any entanglement in a genuine relationship. He could leave and not look back, avoiding the messiness of an adult relationship between equals.

Beyond any sexual or romantic form of being taken, Stoddard feared the loss of his identity as a citizen, as an American. This is especially true of his relations with the inhabitants of Hawaii and Tahiti. According to Justin D. Edwards, Stoddard in “Chumming with a Savage” had a “fear of losing affiliations with civilization and being consumed by Polynesian culture; indeed, the narrator is said to “escape” the island so that he can return to America and get “civilized” (46). Edwards continues by addressing a regular concern in travel narratives, the moral and ethical (not to mention legal) indifference of the twentieth-century “what happens in Las Vegas, stays in Las Vegas” attitude: “Stoddard could travel to Hawaii or Tahiti, satisfy his sexual desires, and leave regardless of the consequences. As a result, Stoddard’s textual rejections of civilization remain linguistic gestures, never to become manifest in material practice” (Edwards 46). Thus, Stoddard, like many Western travel writers, was always able to leave; the dangers, for Stoddard and other travelers and tourists, are rarely true dangers but simply part of the adventure.

“Taken” can also mean fooled or duped; Stoddard’s narrators freely admit to being taken, especially emotionally and financially. Often Stoddard’s protagonists are taken by young men in whom they have placed their trust. They lose money in the way

of loans or outright thefts to these young men. Mark Twain employed Stoddard as companion and secretary in late 1873 and early 1874 and was strongly supportive of Stoddard's work. Twain in his Autobiography relates another instance of Stoddard being taken while in London: "One night a young American got access to Stoddard at the Concert Rooms and told him a moving tale. He said he was living on the Surrey side, and for some strange reason his remittances had failed to arrive from home; he had no money, he was out of employment, and friendless; his girl-wife and his new baby were actually suffering for food; for the love of heaven could he lend him a sovereign until his remittances should resume? Stoddard was deeply touched, and gave him a sovereign on my account" (Twain 159-160). According to Twain's account, Stoddard continues to give the young man money over the course of the next few weeks. Finally, the young man is revealed as a fraud with neither a wife nor child, and Stoddard realizes that he has been taken again.<sup>1</sup>

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This simultaneous combination of reluctance and desire was a primary reason for Stoddard's genre transgressions, particularly his repeated breaks within the main structure of his texts. He routinely stepped away from the main narrative when he was approaching a subject that evoked a strong emotional response in him. This regular avoidance of the topic led to his writing in short and disconnected sections rather than any sustained narrative, whether in his travel narratives or in his fiction.

Stoddard wrote in episodes or vignettes, with arbitrary breaks in the narrative; this disregard for direct chronology in nearly all of his texts is a feature of his disregard for genre boundaries. Granted, some of his travel books are collections of earlier articles,

and the chapters in these books are not cohesively connected; they do not have a strong sense of any timeline. For example, The Island of Tranquil Delights includes travel narratives and sections that straddle the line between biographical travel and short fiction. Such is the nature of collections. However, in this collection Stoddard also disrupts the chronological travel narrative. This collection reads more like a book of short fiction than factual accounts of the narrator's experience.

Although set in Hawaii, "My Late Widow" with its murder and ghosts is fiction of the supernatural. "The Palaoa" is also a ghost story, set in a building that had once been a tomb for Hawaiian kings. The narrator sees the ghost of a man who is buried under the floor. In "Absent Beyond Seas," Stoddard uses the stylistic device of an omniscient third-person narrator telling the story of a mixed-race love affair. "A Drama in Dream-land" reads as a well-crafted short story. The narrator and Mr. Proteus have a strong aesthetic relationship. Proteus, returning to his hometown of Boston, dies of leprosy, or Hansen's disease, that he contracted while in Hawaii. The story combines several of Stoddard's themes into a tightly constructed and orderly text that is an excellent example of Stoddard's mixing of fact and fiction: his love of Hawaii, the life of an actor, the "sensitive and artistic" man, and, of course, leprosy.

Beyond his mixing of short prose genres, Stoddard further disregards the traditions of prose writing. He routinely abandons a narrative, moving the narrator, and the reader, away from a subject for emotional reasons; the subject is too close to the narrator's, or Stoddard's, feelings. Unlike Melville, he does not acknowledge his digression as he then returns to the main story. Instead, he continues into an internal monologue, often abandoning multiple threads of narrative.

From the beginning of South-Sea Idyls, the narrator is distracted, never clearly focusing on any topic. Instead, he interrupts the narrative with digressions and insertions of other texts and other narratives. In the opening section, “In the Cradle of the Deep,” he is overwhelmed by fear during a storm at sea, causing him to move away from his main narrative, interrupting himself numerous times. The ship Petrel on which he has been sailing for “forty days in the great desert of the sea—forty nights camped under cloud-canopies” (South 1) encounters bad weather. The passengers are gathered in the ship’s cabin. The narrator has some letters which he is reading, their texts inserted within the narrative. Simultaneously, one of the other characters begins to tell his own story: “Our particular bane that night was a crusty old sea-dog whose memory of wrecks and marine disasters of every conceivable nature was as complete as an encyclopedia” (4). Although Stoddard begins to relate the old sailor’s tale, he interrupts himself again (probably due to the unpleasant nature of the sailor’s yarn): “I had still one letter left, one bearing this suggestive legend: ‘To be read in the saddest hour.’ Now if there is a sadder hour in all time than the hour of hopeless and friendless death, I care not to know of it” (4-5). This letter, taking the reader further yet from the main narration, contains a poem: “A song was written therein, perhaps a song of triumph” (5). He finds that the words of the song are not uplifting as he had anticipated, but dark and somber: “Beyond the gathering and the strewing,/I shall be soon;/Beyond the ebbing and the flowing,/Beyond the coming and the going,/I shall be soon” (5). These lines are from the hymn “A Little While,” lyrics by Horatio Bonar, and the chorus is a direct appeal for God’s protection: “Love, rest, and home!/Sweet hope!/Lord, tarry not, but come” (Stedman 177). However, the song is about going home to heaven after the long struggles of this life.

Consequently, this letter, rather than being a comfort to the narrator, brings unpleasant images to his mind: “A night black with croaking ravens [like Poe’s raven], brooding over a slimy hulk, through whose warped timbers the sea oozed—that was the sort of picture that rose before me” (5). In his distress over these thoughts, he puts the letter away and returns to the sailor’s tale.

In a further means of tempering the narrative, Stoddard filters the sailor’s story through his own voice, summarizing the story of the Mouette’s destruction, refusing the sailor a voice of his own. When the dew and mist provide water for the passengers aboard the Mouette, Stoddard virtually invokes God and the angels: “A thousand prayers of gratitude seemed hardly to quiet the souls of the lingering ones for that great charity of Heaven,” and “There came a day when the hearts of God’s angels must have bled for the suffering ones” (11). Later, he curses nature: “O pitiless Nature! thy irrevocable laws argue sore sacrifice in the waste places of God’s universe!.... (14). After this potentially blasphemous and damning statement, the narrator returns to the main narrative, the passengers aboard the Petrel. However, when the passengers of the Petrel are certain that the ship is riding more easily than usual, the narrator returns to the story of the Mouette. This continual back and forth between the two narratives is similar to the back and forth during the parallel stories of the ships, and the uncertainty of their passengers’ emotional states. These two narratives prove different in their outcomes. The story of the Mouette ends in death and destruction, and the Mouette is a ghost ship endlessly sailing the seas. The Petrel weathers the storm and all the passengers reach their destination safe.

Thus, Stoddard’s travel writing, albeit relatively tame at times, can be included in the adventure subgenre. Stoddard often calls his travels “adventures.” In South-Sea

Idyls, he states, “In many volumes of adventure I had read of sea-perils: I was at last to learn the full interpretation of their picturesque horrors” (1). However, for Stoddard, the horrors prove to be more mental and emotional than physical. He rarely encountered physical horrors. Most of his physical adventures were exacerbated by his emotional responses. Austen has offered that Stoddard’s adventures were more sensual than those of most travelers: “Having read about the incomparably beautiful and amorous young men in Melville’s Omoo, Stoddard was determined to have his share of barbarian satisfaction” (Austen Genteel 48). Additionally, Stoddard emphasizes the distinction between travel and adventure in For the Pleasure of His Company: An Affair of the Misty City Thrice Told (1903). The character Little Mama encourages the protagonist Paul Clitheroe in his writing endeavors: “‘You my child, shall write the most bewitching book of travel.’ ‘And adventure?’ queried Clitheroe, growing interested. ‘And adventure, without doubt! O, there will be numerous “hair-breadth” escapes by flood and field, page after page of them world without end— amen!’” (Pleasure 169). Even in the often-overwrought world of Stoddard’s narratives, he is aware of the subgenre to which he aspires.

Furthermore, he is not writing in any historical void regarding his ideas of adventure writing. He begins The Island of Tranquil Delights with references to his predecessors in travel and adventure writing: “I was saturated with romance. I fed on the nectar and ambrosia that drop from the pens of Herman Melville, Jules Verne, Mayne Reid and the rest” (Island 13); he ends South-Sea Idyls with another reference: “the low, whitewashed ‘calabooses’ fairly steaming in the sun, wherein Herman got some chapters of ‘Omoo’ ... ‘O reader of ‘Omoo,’ think of ‘Motoo-Otoo’” (South 339). Thus, he is placing himself firmly within the traditions and precedents of Pacific-Islands travel

writing (and Melville's world of intimate male friendship). Robert Aldrich, in Colonialism and Homosexuality (2003), states that, for Stoddard, "the mixture of travel, sex, and political observation in his work makes him representative of those who went overseas to find adventure and themselves" (135). More than any attempts to find adventure, Stoddard's travels were to find himself, often a journey into his interior landscape as much as they were into physical landscapes.

He continually seemed to be going to something, whether it was love, money, career, fame, or spiritual peace, and he never arrived at any satisfactory destination, not in himself, his travels, or his writings. Stoddard himself has commented on his futile quest: "I was always sailing out of port in search of happiness—the kind of happiness one never finds in this life. The quest of the Holy Grail was not more fruitless. Here I longed for the other shore; there I grew restless and stole back betimes to the civilization that makes life a burden by overdoing it" (Island 14). This unhappy search is one reason for his aimless wanderings, in his life and in his writings.

Stoddard's complex racial beliefs were another reason for his unrest. His travel writings display a mixture of imperialist condescension and egalitarian optimism. Also, like so many of his era, he was conflicted in his views of imperialism and the colonized. According to Edwards, "Stoddard's travel sketches thus negotiate a paradoxical course between the condemnation of American civilization (for its colonization of same-sexuality) and the reinscription of imperial rhetoric" (46). Edwards continues, "Stoddard, in fact, was far from innocent when it came to participating in imperial discourses. His internalization of the ideologies that colonized homosexualities cannot be divorced from an internalization of the American rhetoric used to justify the colonization of Hawaii and

other South Sea islands” (43). Consequently, his strong attraction to men of other cultures contradicted his strong belief in nationalism and the imperial superiority of the United States.

Stoddard speaks of this ambivalence in The Island of Tranquil Delights (1904) in relating an encounter with the residents of Tahiti: “I was, as it were, to be carried away captive and offered as a living sacrifice for aught I knew upon the altar of their gods.... And I went as a helpless though willing hostage” (Island 30-31). Although Stoddard typically utilized the racial and social vocabulary of his day, he consistently displayed deep affection and respect for the dark-skinned peoples he encountered during his travels, identifying with what he sees as their carefree nature and their guilt-free physicality. More importantly, he finds in them something that he can rarely find with anyone of his own race, relaxed intimacy: “Stoddard also saw the heathenism and savagery of the South Seas in a positive light, for — as in South Sea Idyls— only they make it possible for him to find physical and emotional pleasure” (Aldrich 136).

In “Chumming with a Savage” in South-Sea Idyls, he supports the islanders’ wariness of the colonizers and missionaries: “They had once or twice been visited by the same sort of whitish-looking people, and they had found those colorless faces uncivil, and the bleached-out skins by no means to be trusted with those whom they considered their inferiors. They didn’t know that it is one of the Thirty-nine Articles of Civilization to bully one’s way through the world” (Idyls 54-55). Stoddard sees the white skin of the colonizer as a sign of aggression and deceit, a lack of integrity and vitality. These dissipated conquerors are no match for the moral and spiritual strength of the islanders.

He elaborates on his feelings of race and trust in “Taboo-A Fete-Day in Tahiti,” also included in South-Seas Idyls. While he is exploring the island, he becomes lost, in the dark in a “pathless forest.” Before long, he realizes that he is not alone:

I heard a sound as of stumbling feet before me. My first thought was of color! I would scarcely trust a White Man in that predicament. What well-disposed White would be prowling like a wild animal, alone in a forest at night? It occurred to me that I was white, or had passed as such; but I know and have always known that, inwardly, I am purple-blooded, and supple-limbed, and invisibly tattooed after the manner of my lost tribe! (Idyls 71-72)

In this passage, as he does elsewhere, Stoddard positions himself with the natives, claiming their lineage, their physical attributes, and, at least emotionally, their cultural custom of tattooing. Stepping aside from his position as a white observer of the savages, he is clearly aligning himself with them against their white conquerors. Not only is he violating accepted precepts of race and racial behavior, but he is also interjecting this racial treason in the midst of a rather conventional tale of being lost during an exploration of the dark forest, a narrative similar to those of myriads of other travel writers. Also, the idea of the encounter of the dangerous savage and the innocent white traveler is clichéd. Yet, here again, Stoddard fails to adhere to genre and social expectations; he behaves as a traitor of sorts, taking sides with the natives rather than the Europeans and Americans.

For all his reverence for the humanity of the islanders, he remains the white outsider, regardless of his rhetoric to the contrary. This separation of the white Westerner and the islanders is clearly demonstrated in much of Stoddard’s writing. In the chapter

“My South-Sea Show” in South-Sea Idyls, he writes of his “baby cannibals,” three young Tahitians whom he seems to have kidnapped for his own purposes and taken to a cold climate in America. Here, as in much of his South Seas writings, Stoddard talks of the boys’ “wooly heads” and uses terms such as “barbarians,” “heathens,” and “savages.” Yet, he has aligned himself with the islanders, at least in his American hostess’s estimation: “she said nothing, but took deliberate sips of coffee, and broke the dry toast between her fingers, while she looked at all four of us savages in a peculiar and ominous manner” (South 194). As usual, Stoddard has expressed his complexities.

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On November 2, 1867, at the age of twenty-four, Stoddard converted from Presbyterianism to Roman Catholicism. In much of his writing after his conversion he conveyed his conviction, especially in his writings for the periodical Ave Maria, that Catholicism was superior to the Protestant faith, or at least to most Protestant denominations. In his spiritual autobiography A Troubled Heart and How It Was Comforted at Last (1885), he approves of at least one Protestant denomination, which he does not name, while condemning most of the others. He survives a series of terrifying revival meetings with a man he calls the “Evangelist” while living with his Grandfather Stoddard, but enjoys his later stay with his maternal grandfather Freeman who rarely attends church: “My Grandfather S— was a Universalist; Grandfather F— was not; he was a Presbyterian or a Congregationalist or a Baptist or a Methodist, or something; but which of them all I have never been quite sure” (Troubled 45). Actually, the Stoddards were strict “God-fearing” Presbyterians, a type of Methodism in Stoddard’s opinion. This dichotomy of bland Universalism and some form of vague Protestantism helped him

to decide his religion: “Between the Unitarian and the various degrees of Methodism I found nothing in the whole range of Protestantism that did not seem to me characterless, colorless, almost formless,—the poorest conceivable substitute for worship in the true sense of the term” (Heart 61). He also finds the Episcopal faith empty: “I turned from the Episcopal Church, satisfied that it is feebly though expensively nourished by a severely, not to say frigidly polite community,—a community meagre in numbers, but of unquestionable taste” (Heart 64). He continues to investigate different religious and spiritual groups.

A mysterious woman suddenly appears in his life, and he naïvely becomes her friend. She instructs him in what he describes as “that dangerous doctrine known as ‘Spiritualism,’ in which so many noble natures have become hopelessly involved” (Troubled 72). Finally, he is able to escape her influence when he realizes that “she proved to a priestess among modern pagans, and an advocate of their unholy and lascivious rites” (Troubled 74). Another mysterious woman just as suddenly appears in his life after his brush with the occult and supernatural. This woman, however, directs him to the Catholic Church where he finds a sympathetic and understanding young priest who guides him through catechism: “I was taken into a small study walled with books, and was there, in the kindest spirit, carefully and freely questioned. Never before had I realized how little I knew of the great scheme salvation” (Troubled 105-6).

Although he converts to Catholicism and remains a practicing Catholic until his death, his pervasive loneliness and doubt never leave him. According to Carl Stroven’s A Life of Charles Warren Stoddard (1939), Stoddard confessed his persistent ennui and unhappiness in a letter to Father Daniel Hudson, C.S.C.: “I wonder if you are truly

happy? I am not; I cannot remember when I was for any length of time. Every thing bores me. I am out of my element and shall ever be so” (Stroven 213). He wrote of his religious conversion and his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in his spiritual memoir, A Troubled Heart and How It Was Comforted at Last (1885). By the end of that book, he has not found comfort or satisfactory companionship, not even, it seems, in the company of those who share his religious beliefs. Instead, he is burdened with a new sense of loneliness and solitude, expressing a devout Roman Catholic’s doubt of being included among the saints and the redeemed. Even after the confident and joyful voice of his narrative, he voices his doubt and self reproach, closing with a melodramatic yet genuine appeal to the reader: “you whose eyes are now fixed upon this line, I beseech you PRAY FOR ME!” (Heart 192). Thus, even within the context of his conversion and his religious life, Stoddard was still uncertain of his inclusion in a group, even the Roman Catholic faithful.

Furthermore, he was socially awkward and lonely long before he developed any adult social or sexual self-awareness: “I was a lonely child. Blessed with brother and a sister near my own age; nourished always in the tenderest paternal and maternal love; surrounded by troops of friends, whose affection was won without effort, and whose sympathy was shown in a thousand pretty, childish ways, I was still lonely, and often loneliest when least alone” (Heart 11). He continues in this melancholy vein, admitting to his own self-imposed separation from his friends: “It was my custom, when my heart was light and my spirit gay, to steal apart from my companions, and throwing myself upon the lawn, look upon them in their sports as from a dim distance. Their joy was to me like a song, to which I listened with a kind of rapture, but in which I seldom or never joined” (Heart 11-12). Stoddard sought group companionship yet refused to be taken by

any group: “In his boyhood, as in later life, he had always been more of a observer than a participant” (Austen Genteel 9). This was a strong underlying conflict for Stoddard, one that contributed to his violation of genre boundaries.

Not long after his conversion, Stoddard visited the leper colony in Molokai, Hawaii, where he met the Catholic missionary Father Damien (Joseph de Veuster), who helped care for leprosy patients there. Molokai was the leper colony where leprosy patients were quarantined for life. (This quarantine remained in place for all lepers until 1969 when the Hawaiian government abolished it.) Father Damien was an educated and spiritual version of the young toughs whom Stoddard admires. Stoddard’s book is a virtual paean to Saint Damien. At first, he describes Damien as an attractive working-class man: “His cassock was worn and faded, his hair tumbled like a schoolboy’s, his hands stained and hardened by toil, but the glow of health was in his face, the buoyancy of youth in his manner” (37). Beyond being a rustic and healthy young man, Father Damien, for Stoddard, is nearly a saint.<sup>2</sup> For instance, at one point in Stoddard’s narrative The Lepers of Molokai, he describes Father Damien covered by his domesticated birds like Saint Francis of Assisi: “he brought from his cottage into the churchyard a handful of corn, and scattering a little of it upon the ground, he gave a peculiar cry. In a moment his fowls flocked from all quarters: they seemed to descend out of the air in clouds; they lit upon his arms, and fed out of his hands; they fought for footing upon his shoulders and even upon his head; they covered him with caresses and with feathers. He stood knee-deep among as fine a flock of fowls as any a fancier would care to see; they were his pride, his playthings; and yet a brace of them he sacrificed upon the altar of friendship, and bade us go in peace. Such was Father Damien of Kalawao”

(29). Father Damien, Stoddard's Saint Francis, behaves like a true masculine and rural man; he slaughters the birds, his flock, as an offering to feed his guests. In the final words of The Lepers of Molokai, Stoddard makes a plea similar to his final plea of "Pray for me," in A Troubled Heart: "Oh! My friend! Forget me not, as I cannot cease to remember thee, when the fragrance of that flower shall gladden the paths of paradise" (122).

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Stoddard left Hawaii for a teaching position at Notre Dame University on December 12, 1884. However, this move proved to be unpleasant for Stoddard, and he left Notre Dame, possibly as the result of being terminated for his improper relations with male students, in mid-1886. Yet, by other accounts, Stoddard resigned his job in anger and disgust because he believed that the priests were hypocritical and inhumane in their interpretation of the Bible and Church doctrine. Still other sources indicate that Stoddard quit his teaching job due to his continuing poor health. It is clear that Stoddard had voiced his disagreement with religious and sexual dogma, and he moved on, more discouraged and uncertain of his direction. This break, of sorts, with the Roman Catholic Church contributed to his disregard for the bounds of religious writing. He continued to express his inner conflict and his faith in Roman Catholicism even when the Church routinely condemned his affection for young men, especially those who were "other," lower-class whites and dark-skinned heathens.

One of Stoddard's strongest conflicts, one that he never resolved, was the religious disparity he experienced when confronted with attractive men, particularly his "beloved savages." He shares philosophical beliefs with Melville and Taylor; all three

doubted the Christian dogma of their era(s) while, at least intellectually, praising the “heathenish” ways of non-Christians. Stoddard, however, maintained his own religious beliefs throughout his life, keeping close ties with the Roman Catholic Church and with priests and other faithful while on his travels. He displayed a passion and doggedness in his religious life. He wrote of being taken by the Spirit and by the Church. Often, his religious passion was ignited or encouraged by an attractive priest; thus, Stoddard, at least emotionally and in his romantic imagining, could be taken physically (sexually overpowered) and spiritually (possessed by the presence of saints or by the Spirit of the Lord) in the same instance, experiencing full ecstasy.

This sense of being taken body and soul has a long history within Roman Catholic beliefs. Saint Teresa of Ávila, also known as Teresa of Jesus, writes of this sensation in her autobiography The Life of Saint Teresa of Ávila by Herself (1565) in one of her visitations by angels, in which “appeared an angel in bodily form”:

In his hands I saw a great golden spear, and at the iron tip there appeared to be a point of fire. This he plunged into my heart several times so that it penetrated my entrails. When he pulled it out, I felt that he took them with it, and left me utterly consumed by the great love of God. The pain was so severe that it made me utter several moans (210).

In light of this sexual and religious symbiosis, Stoddard’s stance toward religion and religiosity resulted from his egalitarian attitude toward human physicality and sexual being, especially of those groups outside the Western-Christian sphere. The stark contrast between Stoddard’s adulation of “heathen savages” and his staunch adherence to his Roman Catholic faith can be baffling, causing some to see him as insincere or

hypocritical. By all accounts, after his conversion, he remained among the practicing faithful for the rest of his life: he attended mass and confession regularly and prayed his rosary almost daily. He simultaneously maintained that he was a pagan. Stoddard He wrote most sympathetically of the “heathenism” of South Sea Islanders as superior to the Christianity of the United States, often including himself as one of the heathens and savages.

In contrast to his sense of community with Polynesians, he writes with a detached and guarded respect for the Egyptian Muslims, particularly those of the university community: “The university is a power in the land, and while it is opposed to the fanaticism of the people, and even ridicules many of the barbarous practices of the dervishes, the students with one accord despise the dog of a Christian” (Mashallah! 104). He repeats this idea of the Christian as immoral and unethical throughout Mashallah! “Christian dogs, who have had their day in the cradle of their creed, are for the most part now looked upon as intruders though they travel first class and scatter money with foolish generosity as they go” (Mashallah! 65). “Cairo is slowly but surely going to the dogs—the Christian dogs, I mean!” (Mashallah! 79). In this manner, he seems to be turning his allegiance from his own religion, which he had professed so passionately and proudly earlier in the narrative, to the non-Christians. He also wrote religious books, including Saint Anthony: The Wonder Worker of Padua and his spiritual autobiography A Troubled Heart and How It Was Comforted at Last (1885) which related his conversion and subsequent pilgrimage to Rome and Jerusalem.

In A Troubled Heart, much of the power of his conversion is the result of Stoddard’s relationship with the handsome young priest who guides him toward Catholic

catechism: “Of all the ministers whom I had met, where had I found one worthy to be compared with this modest young priest? He immediately won my esteem, and I resolved to visit him as often as I might.... Alas! he was almost immediately removed to some distant country parish, and him I never saw again, nor heard of more” (Troubled 108). Stoddard has a “rare and beautiful friendship” with his “bosom-friend,” a “popular young Protestant minister” who is “a handsome bachelor, and ‘a great catch.’” This relationship is ruined by Stoddard’s conversion, an action that could not be overlooked or forgiven by the Protestant minister: “the day came when he felt that he must save me from taking the step I was meditating; and, after a long, wordy and heated argument, we parted in coldness; and the coldness, very naturally grew apace—it grew until I ultimately lost sight of him entirely” (Troubled 115).

In much of A Troubled Heart, Stoddard dwells on the insurmountable social and philosophical divisions between Protestants and Catholics. In his approach to the Catholic faith, Stoddard displays a mixture of his dramatic exuberance for and his reverent awe of what he considered exotic; from a young age he was excited nearly to the point of being physically overwhelmed by the colorful pageantry of the Roman Catholic Church: “thrilling voices soaring above the solemn swell of the organ,—it seemed to me that heaven must be in there,” in the “picturesque interior” with its “altar that inspired me with curious awe” (Troubled 15).

Stroven praises A Troubled Heart as among Stoddard’s best works: “There are pages of this little book that for beauty of expression are unsurpassed in any of his other prose volumes. However, it has depth of feeling, seriousness, and unity— qualities his work frequently lacks— that cause some readers to regard it as the finest of his works”

(233). Indeed, A Troubled Heart has more sincerity of tone and content, more structure and unity than his other works. This unity is a result of Stoddard's adroit ability to work within several genres simultaneously, all linked by his strong sense of self and his subject. A Troubled Heart, although a seemingly straightforward account of his religious conversion, is the best example of Stoddard's genre mixing. In this book Stoddard deftly combines the spiritual memoir and conversion narrative with the travel narrative as he embarks on religious pilgrimages to various locales in Europe and Asia. The book is a more structured and complete narrative than in any other of his works, and the homoerotic undertones of his relationships with priests and other mendicants adds to the power of the book.

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For Stoddard, race and sexuality were closely aligned, especially because of his strong attraction to men with dark skin. In South-Sea Idyls, he writes of his conflicted racial feelings toward the islanders and his "special friends," particularly Kána-aná, in the section "Chumming with a Savage." Stoddard is interested in the androgynous Kána-aná because he is non-Western, i.e., exotic and mysterious. Kána-aná is wearing "a snow-white garment, rather short all around, low in the neck, and with no sleeves whatever. There was no sex to the garment; it was the spontaneous offspring of a scant material and a large necessity. I'd seen plenty of that sort of thing, but never upon a model like this, so entirely tropical— almost Oriental" (Idyls 20). This young "model" has transcended the characteristics of the South Pacific islanders, invoking images of the even more exotic and possibly dangerous allure of the Far East and its gender delineations. Kána-aná, like

many of Stoddard's stateside friends, is young and attractive, described in sensual and gendered terms. This young man is feminine in Stoddard's eyes:

This sage inquirer was, perhaps, sixteen years of age. His eye was so earnest and so honest, I could return his look. I saw a round, full, rather girlish face; lips ripe and expressive, not quite so sensual as those of most of his race; not a bad nose, by any means; eyes perfectly glorious—regular almonds— with the mythical lashes 'that sweep,' etc., etc. The smile which presently transfigured his face was of the nature that flatters you into submission against your will (Idyls 21).

With Kána-aná, Stoddard is able to maintain his superiority in the relationship. He is older, he is the civilized white man, and he is the "butch" or the masculine and dominant partner. Although he is genuinely fond of Kána-aná, he is relying upon the prevalent and stereotypical roles of his time.

For a while Stoddard is content to spend his days and nights with Kána-aná in the simplicity of islander daily routine. However, he returns home to San Francisco because he believes that he will somehow be taken by the islands and their mood, "the strange and persuasive silence of that beloved place, which seemed slowly but surely weaving a spell of enchantment about me. I resolved to desert peremptorily" (South 32). Although it would seem that Stoddard's fear of being taken, even by a place where he feels comfortable and loved, motivates him to leave, he nonetheless insists that he needs to go home because he needs new shoes: "My boots were giving out; their best sides were the uppers, and their soles had left them. As I walked I could no longer disguise this pitiful fact. It was getting hard on me, especially in the gravel" (South 32). Stoddard has

stepped away from the narrative, denying that his motives for leaving have anything to do with being taken (by a person or a place).

In its entirety, “Chumming with a Savage” proves to be a series of narrative digressions and avoidances. After he returns to San Francisco, in the section entitled “How I Converted My Cannibal,” he is asked “queer questions” about Kána-aná. His friends wonder if Stoddard’s chum “might possibly have been a girl all the time” (South 36). He decides to send for Kána-aná to prove that he is not a girl. This would seem that Stoddard’s friends know of his attraction to boys and are amused that he might have a girlfriend in the islands. Rather than pursue the idea of Kána-aná’s gender, he instead says that “I thought that I should like to show him some American hospitality, and perhaps convert him before I sent him back again” (South 36). Again, Stoddard is relying upon religion to divert his, the other characters’, and the reader’s attention from the gender and sexual issues which he has raised.

Kána-aná becomes homesick, and his depression and physical ailments culminate in a kind of breakdown: “I was startled by a quick cry of joy from the lips of the young exile—a cry that was soon turned into a sharp, prolonged, and pitiful wail of sorrow and despair” (South 42). Kána-aná has seen, in an art gallery window, a landscape painting of “the valley of his birth—the cliff, the waterfall, the sea, copied faithfully” (South 42). Stoddard quickly arranges for Kána-aná to be sent home. Later, Stoddard learns that he had been torn between his native culture and Western life. The beloved Kána-aná dies from an inability to endure and survive his own introduction to an alien society, i.e., Stoddard’s highly sophisticated and artificial San Francisco. Stoddard is responsible, at least peripherally, for Kána-aná’s death: “Poor, longing soul! I would that you had never

left the life best suited to you— that liberty which alone could give expression to your wonderful capacities” (South 45). It would seem that Stoddard is warning against being taken, or taking someone, from one’s home and comfortable surroundings. This native beloved is one of Stoddard’s many young men who dies or disappears from his life. Nearly all of Stoddard’s narrative personae are incapable of sustaining a long-lasting relationship. Kána-aná is an extension of Stoddard, a mirror who cannot reconcile his strong inner conflicts concerning love and religion.

Stoddard’s other South Seas “kids” were similar to Kána-aná, slender and sometimes frail, described in feminine terms. In “On the Reef” from The Island of Tranquil Delights, the narrator happens upon an acquaintance from an earlier visit: “in the hollow of the shore, sheltered only by sand ridges, I saw a dark object stretched motionless at full length. Flotsam or jetsam, the prize was mine, and I hastened forward. It was a youth just out of his teens, a slim, sleek creature, unconscious, unclad, sprawled inartistically, absorbing sunshine and apparently steeped to the toes in it; it was Kane-Pihi, the man-fish, stark asleep” (Island 137). Stoddard continues the comparison of Kane-Pihi to reptiles and amphibians: “At last he turned, with a serpentine movement lifting his head like a lizard, swaying it slowly to and fro and looking listlessly upon the sand and the sea. When he espied me he coiled his limbs under him and was convulsed with riotous laughter” (Island 137). At first, Stoddard objectifies Kane-Pihi, calling him “a dark object” and “it.” Finally, he uses feminine terms to identify Kane-Pihi, “slim,” “sleek,” and “serpentine.” Thus, Stoddard is insisting upon placing the native men as inferior, as young and physically insubstantial.

However, Stoddard does write of one notable exception to the slender feminine

islanders, a “colossal youth” with the name Hua Manu or Bird’s Egg, a “gigantic youth, big enough to eat half of our ship’s crew.” He “threw up an arm like Jove’s, [and] clinched the deck-rail with lithe fingers” (South-Sea 137-8). Hua Manu is famous for gathering birds eggs and selling them. He offers eggs to Stoddard, and Stoddard responds in a manner and vocabulary that is homoerotically charged, even for Stoddard in all his alleged innocence: “Hua Manu.... You have freely given me your young affection and your eggs” (140), also, “we both sat in our canoe and silently sucked eggs for some moments” (142). For those of us who are queering texts in the twenty-first century, there is no doubt what Stoddard is rather boldly implying. In addition to Jove, Stoddard compares his friend to Hercules, Monte Cristo, and ultimately Jesus Christ. Stoddard writes of himself in the feminine: “I leaned over the stern-rail of the Great Western in the attitude of Juliet in the balcony scene, assuring that egg-boy that my heart was his” (139). Immediately after Stoddard gives Hua Manu his heart, the two men touch noses together, the equivalent, according to Stoddard, of Westerners kissing.

They virtually elope, just the two of them going off together to hunt pearls. Their canoe is capsized and Hua Manu saves Stoddard’s life in an unusual and grotesque scene. Stoddard, in his delirium due to dehydration and exposure, dreams that “like an infant I lay in the embrace of my deliverer, who moistened my parched lips and burning throat with delicious and copious draughts. It was a elixir of life; I drank health and strength in every drop; sweeter than mother’s milk flowed the warm tide” (150). This elixir is not milk, or any other bodily fluid that we have come to think of as “milk” or “cream.” Instead, Hua Manu makes the ultimate sacrifice for Stoddard: “I must have asked for a drink. He gave it to me from an artery in his wrist, severed by the finest teeth you ever

saw. That's what saved me" (152). Hua Man has become a Christ figure, shedding that his blood that another might live, literally giving his blood to be drunk. Similarly, Stoddard transcends his role as a lover of savages. He has become a vampire character, draining Hua Manu's lifeblood in order to live, killing Hua Manu in the process. This character, this potentially feminine and passive islander, becomes the masculine hero, Stoddard's protector and savior. Indeed, Hua Manu dies, and Stoddard ends the episode with a Christian moral: "out of my heart I would make a parable, its rubric bright with his sacrificial blood, its theme this glowing text: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for a friend'" (153). Thus, Stoddard has simultaneously combined his feelings about the body and the soul while removing himself emotionally from his friend's death by retreating into the role of writer and detached observer.

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In addition to Stoddard's relationships with the South Pacific, he traveled in the "Holy Lands," writing of those travels in several of his books, including Mashallah! A Flight into Egypt (1880). This account of his travels in Egypt and the surrounding area is one of Stoddard's most engaging books, especially in the sense of its being a sustained, chronological narrative rather than a series of disjointed vignettes. In this series of "letters," Stoddard, much like Taylor, admires and desires the Muslim men of the Arab/Persian world. He proclaims a kind of mystical and nearly godly affinity for these men: "there is in my eye or my heart something that almost at once establishes an unswerving fellowship between any dark skin and myself" (Mashallah! 115). Here again he is heading toward a type of sexual fetishism based on race, sexualizing and desiring anyone with dark skin, including Pacific Islanders, Middle Easterners, and Africans.

“A Fair Anonymous,”<sup>3</sup> in Exits and Entrances, A Book of Essays and Sketches (1903), proves to be a circuitous tale of gender, a “mystery” as Stoddard insists, that he painstakingly avoids explaining or solving. “A Fair Anonymous” tells the story of an exotic young man of the world. Stoddard first sees this character traveling alone in Nubia, riding a camel: “On the summit of this beast sat a slight figure clad in the habiliments of the East,—a youth of five and twenty or thereabouts,—a black-eyed blond—an anomaly,—wearing only the dark-hued fez, a token of distinction, and with more trappings at the girdle than is common with higher classes” (208). The young man speaks several languages: “faultless English, followed by a few brief and pointed questions, couched successively in the purest French, German, Italian, Spanish, and something else so hideous that it might easily have been Russian” (208). This chameleon-like character proves to be more than a chance acquaintance. He becomes symbolic of Stoddard’s ideas of gender, fluid appearances and behaviors that are not dictated by biological sex. Stoddard sees the intriguing traveler several more times, in Jerusalem, Damascus, Stamboul, and Athens, the blond hair and black eyes being the man’s only distinguishing features: “it was his custom to adapt himself to the ways of the people among whom he sojourned, and he began with the adoption of their language and dress” (Exits 214).

In his travels, Stoddard arrives in Naples and sees an unusual sight: “I was not surprised when I saw a phaeton drawn by a span of toy ponies and driven by a young lady in a distracting costume” (Exits 215). Stoddard sees this woman numerous times while in Naples until he finally meets her. In this scene, he directly addresses the reader, as one would perhaps address a friend: “Must I confess that our eyes met and that we exchanged

glances of recognition at one and the same moment, and that we did so without a shudder? Do you urge me to proceed? Shall I say that she greeted me, the veritable black-eyed, blond Soudanite?" (Exits 215-216). After this series of questions posed to an indefinite "you," Stoddard veils his narrative in frustratingly uncertain rhetoric and vocabulary: "she was not inclined to acknowledge that masquerade in the Levant. But she knew it by heart and betrayed herself again and again. Of course it is her affair and not mine; and it is for this reason that I write of it" (Exits 216). This vague explanation leads to an even more perplexing statement which concludes the episode: "But between you and me, there are those in Naples who fear her, yet know her not; who despitefully use her yet can not tell you why" (Exits 217). In this instance, Stoddard steps away from the narrative by abruptly ending his depiction of his encounters with the fair anonymous. He does not explain how those who fear her use her. Nor does he explain what he means when he writes that they "can not tell you why." Are they using "her" because they know that she is cross-gendered? Is there some political reason for the masquerades? Stoddard remains infuriatingly silent on these points.

As a result, Stoddard violates genre boundaries by refusing to give the reader a tidy bundle of satisfactory conclusions. He coyly retreats into imprecise rhetoric that does not clarify but instead adds to the bewildering gender bending of this chapter. Does Stoddard know all along that the character is cross-dressing? Is the individual a biological woman dressing as a man in order to enjoy the adventure of the uncivilized deserts? Is he a biological man who retreats into drag when in the civilized Western city of Naples? Because Stoddard's vocabulary is so unclear, the final passages of "A Fair Anonymous" merely add a new and frustrating layer to Stoddard's narrative rather than

enlightening or entertaining the reader. If he is attempting to employ encoding or any other form of “insider knowledge,” he has failed. This character is similar to Virginia Woolf’s Orlando; as a man, he is free to travel where a woman would not be allowed alone. Unlike Orlando, the change from female to male is probably not permanent. However, with Stoddard’s ambiguous statements, one is left to ponder the significance and the longevity or permanence of the changes.

In another passage, in Mashallah!, Stoddard writes with wit and humor, playing with language and with gender expectations. In the complex, convoluted syntax of the opening paragraph of Chapter 9, “The Baths and the Bazaar,” Stoddard seems to be professing his attraction and admiration for a young Egyptian man with “his pathetic and penetrating voice” and “what song of his will recur to you again and again when Old Egypt shall have become a dim but ever-delightful memory in your life. It is his patient, baby face, the image of innocence, his soft, dark eye, with just a suggestion of mischief lurking in the corner of it, his dainty footsteps that fall as lightly as ‘blown roses on the grass’; you will recall his arch, coquettish ways, his childish faith in Providence that teaches him to bear and forbear and abide his time” (Mashallah! 87). At first, this seems to be a description of an attractive and somewhat feminine young Arab man.

However, as the passage progresses, this “he” of Stoddard’s near-worshipful attention is shown to have remarkable ears, and to have a voice unlike any animal. Slowly, in Stoddard’s charming and clever narrative, this seductive creature is revealed to be donkey. The donkey is further described as a vain, over-groomed and -dressed dandy with heavy makeup and laden with extravagant jewelry. This short passage of three pages stands out among the rather stodgy journalistic letters of Mashallah! because in it

Stoddard shows an adroit use of words and a skill of building suspense which he rarely employs in his “straight” travel writings (albeit in the development of humor and irony). Also, he is writing of his overwhelming attraction to the young Egyptian man, and his fascination with the effeminate male encountered in his travels, all the while hiding his attraction behind the word play about a donkey. Perhaps Stoddard’s depiction of the Egyptian donkey is akin to other racist signifiers, such as a monkey for black individuals. The donkey of course indicates not only that the Egyptians, and all Middle Easterners by extension, are animals, but that the males, even when decked out with makeup and jewelry, are sexually endowed like donkeys. Furthermore, even an effeminate singer possesses the sexual threat or enticement of a donkey.

This circumvention and word play can be attributed to a new American awareness of the subtleties of sexuality and gender (and of racism). Stoddard’s sexual conflicts were heightened by the new American and Western European awareness of men like him and their interest in other men. More than ever, in the late nineteenth century actions and identity were linked. No longer could a man perform sexual acts with another man, even a subordinate, because his inherent sexual identity, and his character and worth as a man were questioned. Writers such as the American poet Walt Whitman, the English poet and essayist Edward Carpenter, and the Irish-English playwright Oscar Wilde advocated “adhesive” and “homogenic” love between men. Stoddard had a positive response to Wilde and regretted never meeting him. He wrote to his friend Will Stuart: “Oscar Wilde! Shall I ever find him in this vague world? If you see him before I do, and of course you will, please say the unutterable things that stick in my throat— because there is no one to spoon with, or to gush over, or to care a fig for and I am out of practice”

(Austen Genteel 96). “‘Spoonings’ and ‘gushing’ were specialized words in Stoddard’s vocabulary, used only in reference to his love for men, and outside of his diary, only in letters to fellow lovers of men” (Austen Genteel xl). Of course, these slang terms are of a sexual nature, depicting Stoddard’s identification with other homosexuals.

Of the three authors in my study, Stoddard is the most nearly “out” and most nearly identifiable as gay or homosexual; neither Melville nor Taylor, often viewed as eccentric or unusual, was ever faulted for being a “sissy” or a “nancy.” Stoddard was aware of his attraction to men, particularly younger men, and expressed that attraction in his texts. For example, he makes bold statements with no explanation regarding his sexuality and his romantic involvements: “girls were out of the question in my case, and [Stoddard’s friend Bartholomew] knew that the bachelor hall where I preside was as difficult of access as a cloister” (Footprints 319). Stoddard, perhaps willfully and naively, acted upon his attraction(s). He never married and often openly lived with men who, in retrospect, seem to be his lovers and sexual partners. Bret Harte, Stoddard’s editor, friend, and mentor, encouraged Stoddard probably because of Stoddard’s social awkwardness and fragile nature. Harte had published Stoddard’s poetry in the Overland Monthly. In a letter to Henry W. Bellows, a Unitarian minister of Harte’s acquaintance, Harte wrote: “He is full of poetic sensibility—a good deal like Keats in disposition as well as fancy. Perhaps as much out of place in this very material country as Pegasus in a quartz mill. How he can father ‘epithetic honey’ on the scrubby sand hills of S. F. or keep the fine edge and delicate temper of his fancies in this community excites my wonder as well as my admiration” (Scharnhorst 21).

However, in this context of gender and sexuality, Stoddard’s conversion to

Roman Catholicism and his close emotional ties with priests were not seen as the actions of a homosexual or even a sexual person; Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism, emphasizes and extols the non-sexual and celibate individual, particularly the clergy. Thus, Stoddard had placed himself in the social position of being sexless, similar to the eunuch priest, without desire and without sexual behavior. In this role, he was safe from most criticism of his sexuality and his masculinity. Consequently, he was able to express deep affection (and possibly his sexual longing) within the context of intense Christian brotherhood and not lose any esteem in the religious world. Could Stoddard's conversion have merely been a mask for his homosexuality, allowing his physical intimacy with attractive young men, priests and acolytes, with whom he would not have had any relations otherwise? I believe that his conversion was genuine, based on deep religious beliefs, and the access to the priests and their attention was an added benefit of his religious life.

During the 1890s and the early 1900s, sexuality and sexual identity became more visible and questionable by the law and the community at large. Thus, the sexual outsider was depicted in fiction as rebellious and indifferent to social mores. Stoddard dared to depict some of these behavioral differences in his writings. Although twenty-first century readers often read Stoddard's works as homoerotic and even gay, his contemporaries failed to do so. Roger Austen has suggested that they were unable to view seriously any of Stoddard's gender transgressions, especially his hints at homosexual behavior: "it is understandable that South Sea Idyls caused few eyebrows to be raised a hundred years ago. The combination of innocence and ignorance of nineteenth-century readers was a key factor, of course, but another was Stoddard's

half-shrewd, half-bumbling technique of constructing sentences and paragraphs so as to cover his tracks with confusion” (Austen Journal 75).

“A Sawdust Fairy,” from Island of Tranquil Delights, is certainly among the “queerest” of Stoddard’s accounts. The word fairy as a synonym for gay is documented as early as 1895 in an article in the American Journal of Psychology, referring to “the peculiar societies of inverts. Coffee-clatches, where the members dress themselves with aprons, etc., and knit, gossip and crotchet; balls, where men adopt the ladies' evening dress, are well known in Europe. ‘The Fairies’ of New York are said to be a similar secret organization” (VII. 216). Stoddard was a sophisticated man who lived in San Francisco and most probably would have known current slang, including the term “fairy.” This chapter, or short story relates the narrator’s attraction and vulnerability to the young man Romeo, the fairy of the title, who is also a grifter or con-artist working in a circus. “A Sawdust Fairy” demonstrates another aspect of being taken, taken for a ride or taken for a fool. Stoddard was especially susceptible to being taken this way: “My heart bled for him: it is a way my heart has of doing, and it has caused me much necessary and useless pain; but it continues to keep at it, for experience has taught me how precious a boon sympathy is, though so often wasted” (Island 231).

Stoddard, In “A Sawdust Fairy,” much like Walt Whitman, evinces his attraction to men much younger than himself. These relationships would be suspect today, considered inappropriate at best and most likely illegal.<sup>4</sup> Generally, for Stoddard, his “boys” and “kids,” his “companions,” were all attractive and unattainable. The fictional Romeo proves to be of this type, dying a dramatic and romantic death, as several of Stoddard’s men do: “the news came after awhile that the boy had been swept overboard

in a heavy gale off the coast of Australia, and was never seen again” (Island 251). The “fairy” appears much younger than his true age: “he looked about six, an oldish and precocious six; he might have been seven on a pinch, but I doubted it. Young Romeo was fifteen, as near as he could guess; he wasn’t sure” (Island 234). Romeo uses his diminutive size and child-like charm to manipulate the other characters. He combines the effeminate appeal of the decadent artist with the nonchalant aggressiveness of the street tough: “He was selfish, cynical, vulgar, but he had the physical beauty of one of Titian’s cloud-children and the face of an angel that lived close to death” (Island 237). This angel uses strong adult language: “Young Romeo uttered a sharp exclamation in one syllable; I will not record it. To the heart of the saint it brings no terror; to the heart of the sinner it is everything—everything that is applicable to everything else; it suits all moods, all tenses, all weathers” (Island 228). Romeo chews tobacco, smokes cigars, and is the “pet” of everyone he meets. Thus, as the rough “natural” sexual male, he appeals to the stereotypically refined aesthetic taste of the homosexual. In this sense, Romeo serves as a precursor to the male prostitute or “street hustler” in the fiction of John Rechy, Hubert Selby, Jr., Dotson Rader, and other twentieth-century writers. These characters are engaged in a give and take similar to that of Stoddard and Romeo, based on the youthful power of “taking.” If Romeo had lived, Stoddard would most likely have lost interest in him; Stoddard found Romeo attractive because of the young man’s childlike appearance and his rough demeanor. Romeo would not have maintained the combination of innocent looks and jaded behavior, and Stoddard would have moved on.

Alternatively, if Romeo had lived, he might have become someone similar to Mr. Proteus, the theater professional in “The Drama in Dreamland.” Although the narrative

persona, ostensibly Stoddard in this “non-fiction” account, appears naïve and gullible with Romeo, he is an experienced and even jaded insider with Mr. Proteus. The narrator and Mr. Proteus are sophisticated and worldly wise, even a bit world-weary; they indulge decadent tastes in wine and tobacco (and possibly stronger intoxicants); and they form a bond that is not the typical male relationship, but neither is it an intimate relationship which one could expect from the “artistic types.” Even in Stoddard’s writings containing what can be called a “gay sensibility,” he is continually and persistently stepping back from the social, emotional, and religious abyss of total commitment and mature sexual love. This refusal or inability to commit reflects Stoddard’s actual response to the possibility of intimacy.

Stoddard, like his characters, chose to terminate friendships and love affairs rather than risk being taken sexually. Stoddard energetically sought out lovers and just as readily avoided and sometimes abandoned the men whom he had so ardently pursued. The victim of such an action is freed of any implications that he wanted the sexual activity. Certainly, Stoddard does not write these scenes as scenes of rape or sexual assault; rather, he has chosen the language which makes him the passive, innocent, yet not unwilling participant. In “The Island of Tranquil Delights” he writes of such abductions with tender memories:

Was I not seized bodily one night, one glorious night and borne out of a mountain fastness whither I had fled to escape the sight of my own race?  
Was I not borne down the ravine by a young giant, sleek and supple as a bronzed Greek god, who held me captive in his Indian lodge till I surfeited on bread-fruits and plantain and cocoanut milk? And then did we not part

with a pang—one of those pangs that always leave a memory and a scar?

And this happened not once, but often. (Island 20)

However, as soon as he confesses that he has often been taken by an attractive and masculine native, Stoddard abruptly changes the subject. In the very same sentence, he abandons the topic of being taken by godlike giants, retreating into diplomatic and scholarly verbiage: “for the representative of the great Republic whose Consular duty it was to protect the rights, commerce, merchants and resources of the State, and to aid in any commercial transactions, etc.—see Webster’s Dictionary, Unabridged” (Island 20).

Repeatedly within “The Island of Tranquil Delights” the narrator admits to being warned about his behavior by the Consul who wears a Western white-flannel suit: “the Consul spoke once more officially—I must conduct myself in a path extremely straight and narrow: I must keep myself aloof from the native population” (Island 17). Stoddard is using Biblical language, possibly to indicate that his behavior went beyond the political into moral territory. He is seen as an intruder by the whites on the island because he is not on business and has no money. Consequently, he is seen as suspect; why is he there? Unfortunately, Stoddard is unsuccessful in his struggle against the temptation of being taken by the natives (and of being taken by his attraction to the natives): “What if the gentleman in white flannel should discover me yielding for a moment to the seductions of the climate? I say the climate! The climate of the Spice Islands is seductive!” (Island 19). He is, as usual, blaming external forces for his behavior. He cannot resist the temptation of the islands and the islanders: “I feel it in my heart now, even as I felt it then, to pardon that which verged dangerously upon the unpardonable. I said it is their nature, it is their natural right, it is their right-off, it is their native land” (Island 32).

Shortly after this orgy of unspeakable, and unspoken, behavior, the narrator is ushered off the island by the Consul.

\* \* \*

In much of his work Stoddard was stumbling to find a terminology to describe his feelings, longings, and desires. In For the Pleasure of His Company he was writing of several topics about which he felt strongly, art, religion, love and loyalty, race, and sexuality, but at the same time he was writing beneath the veil of encoding or signifying. Stoddard's encoding is often a combination of current slang and an air of wit and "camp," what some critics would call a "gay sensibility," slick syntax and tone with a flippant attitude toward his subject matter. This tone, often leaning toward an encryption, is a code intended for the insider, the reader in the know.

Paul Clitheroe, the novel's protagonist, has created an isolated, insulated world in his apartment, which he calls the Eyrie, some rooms in a "once beautiful and imposing mansion," "a Gothic ruin." Certainly, the over-decorated rooms are indicative of Victorian and Edwardian styles. These rooms are cluttered with keepsakes and souvenirs, many of them from the island journeys of Clitheroe/Stoddard, a catalogue of belongings that takes up two pages of the text:

three walls beyond the window; where were low, convenient shelves of books; there were books, books, books, everywhere—books of all descriptions neither creed nor caution limited their range. Many pictures and sketches in oil or water-color—some of them unframed— were upon the walls about the book-shelves; there were bronze statuettes, graceful figures of lute-strumming troubadours upon

the old-fashioned marble mantel; there were busts and medallions in plaster, and a few casts after the antique” (17).

However, the proliferation of collections are a type of encoding for a man who is effeminate and overly sensitive: “It may not have been manly, or even masculine, for him thus literally to curtain his sleep, like a faun, with ivy” (20). Clitheroe sometimes dresses as an androgynous eccentric: “He arose, donned a trailing garment with angel sleeves and a large crucifix embroidered in scarlet upon the breast—that robe made of him a cross between a Monk and a Marchioness—slipped his feet into some sandals” (23).

From the beginning Clitheroe is described as “a kind of spectre in a dream” (19). Clitheroe is unquestionably conflicted: “A kind of harmonious incongruity was the chief characteristic of the man and his solitary lodging” (19). Stoddard continues to portray Clitheroe in a series of contrasts: “this unheroic-hero, this pantheistic-devotee, this heathenized-christian, this half-happy-go-lucky aesthetic Bohemian” (20). He is socially ambivalent. Throughout the novel Clitheroe is surrounded by friends and colleagues. However, he is also reclusive and non-social: “If I could only stop right here, and not see anybody—except somebody once in a while, when I wished to, and that somebody just the right one to see!” (44). This monologue comes immediately after Clitheroe learns that he has just been “taken” by his friend Foxlair who has stolen some of Clitheroe’s clothing and other personal belongings.

The characters of For the Pleasure of His Company can be seen as allegorical, the characters painted in broad, indefinite strokes, have names that indicate their personality traits; the only character who does not have such a name is the simply named Elaine who is also a simple but sincere and honest individual, the only likeable, sympathetic

character in the novel. The rest of the characters are histrionic artists, accustomed to being seen and admired. Clitheroe's fellow journalists, Archer, Twitter, and Diogenes, along with their friend Madame Pompadour, serve as a sort of Greek chorus to Clitheroe's life. Grattan Field, nicknamed Roscius, is an actor who becomes one of Clitheroe's "chums," decidedly more than a chum in our current parlance: "Something in Grattan's manner; something in the warm, manly pressure of his arms that encircled Paul, something in the deep distress of his friend, won Clitheroe in a moment: All at once he began to love that wildly impulsive, strangely contradictory, utterly ungoverned and ungovernable nature" (143). However, in the end, the wild and ungovernable Field impulsively leaves San Francisco, and a heartbroken Clitheroe. Foxlair, who proves to be a liar and a thief, is Clitheroe's "intimate friend" prior to Clitheroe's relationship with Grattan Field: "when Foxlair was about to return to his lodgings he invited Paul to accompany him and, without a moment's hesitation, the lad did so, and for a week following they were inseparable" (Pleasure 33). Foxlair, like Field, disappoints and abandons Clitheroe. Throughout the course of the novel, Clitheroe proves to have poor judgment and bad taste in friends, except Elaine whom he routinely neglects.

Although several of the characters in For the Pleasure of His Company are based on persons whom Stoddard knew in the San Francisco area, the references are lost on today's readers. For example, the character Foxlair is the most intriguing of these Roman á clef characters: "Foxlair was a son of the South; a man of mystery; all kinds of romantic rumors were current concerning him,— that he had been a Rebel Spy, or the husband of a Rebel Spy" (28). Austen discusses the "story of Paul Clitheroe's romantic fling with a mysterious young man named Foxlair, whose real life model was Wyle Harding" (30).

Harding is a historical, albeit minor, figure in the Civil War: “Data is scarce on this slippery adventurer’s activities on the West Coast. In Civil War histories, however, Hardinge gets footnote mention as the first husband of ‘Rebel Spy’ Belle Boyd. In the spring of 1864, Miss Boyd fell in love with one of her captors, Samuel Wylde Hardinge, a lieutenant in the Union navy” (Austen 30). Hardinge received a dishonorable discharge and imprisonment because of his affair and marriage to Boyd. Boyd herself writes of Hardinge in her book Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison.

The women, Little Mama, the Pompadour, Elaine, and Miss Juno, are various types of female gender. Little Mama, based on Jenny Spring MacKaye Johns (according to Roger Austen), is the protective older woman who takes care of Paul and his companions, her “boys.” This character is a precursor for the later model of the “fag hag,” a heterosexual woman who socializes and nurtures emotional relationships almost exclusively with gay men. In fact, Little Mama is a matchmaker, making certain that Clitheroe and Field get together: “Little Mama had suggested that Paul spend the night with Roscius; Roscius graciously extended the hospitality of his chamber and they shared it together” (140). The Pompadour (like her namesake) is the worldly-wise woman with extensive experience and knowledge in dealing with men. She seems to be included in the novel to remind the reader that this kind of woman still exists.

“Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable” (68) although purportedly an important character, “one who had, from the first, been to him as a sister” (139) appears briefly in the novel. Elaine is a poet, and her poetry does not sell enough to support her: “From morning till late in the evening she was on duty in a public office; only on Sundays and national holidays could she call her soul her own” (157). She is not like most of the

other characters; she has to work at a routine job in order to make a living. In this sense, she is the voice of reason, a relief from the other posturing, superficial characters earlier in the novel. Elaine chastens Clitheroe: “You owe it to your friends to achieve something in life. You are not striving to. You are wasting time, opportunity, youth, health, energy, everything. Why do you not go to work at something and stick to it until you have achieved the end in view?... O something, anything! Only don’t lie idle—and don’t be led away by our too flattering and seductive friends” (158). Shortly after this conversation with Elaine, Clitheroe becomes disenchanted, even repulsed, by the fickle, hypocritical, and devious ways of his other friends and leaves San Francisco.

Miss Juno, like an independent goddess, is the New Woman, openly dismissive of traditional gender roles. With her nickname “Jack” she is a gender outlaw not only because she goes by a man’s name but because she disregards usual gender expectations. We can see Miss Juno as a sexual alter ego to Paul Clitheroe. They are similar in their thoughts: “They began to talk of the same things at the same moment, often uttering the very same words, and then turned to one another with little shouts of unembarrassed laughter. They agreed on all points, and aroused each other to a ridiculous pitch of enthusiasm over nothing in particular” (88). In fact, the name Clitheroe lends itself to speculation because of words it contains: does it mean to remind the reader of “clitoris”? Is Stoddard constantly reminding the reader that Paul is the “hero” of the novel?

The novel is divided into three sections or “books,” “Book First Paul Clitheroe,” “Book Second Miss Juno,” and “Book Third Little Mama,” each ostensibly told from the viewpoint of its title character. Of course, this is not the case; the narrative goes far beyond the possible knowledge of these three characters, relating incidents in which they

do not personally participate. The three books of For the Pleasure of His Company are another example of Stoddard's genre transgressions. The division of a novel into books was not unusual during Stoddard's time; in fact, it was a respected tradition. However, by separating the novel into these books, Stoddard was able to introduce different endings to the novel.

At the end of "Book First Paul Clitheroe" Paul goes away with a priest for "a week or two." Paul has disappeared without telling anyone of his plans: "So Paul went with him, suddenly and in a kind of desperation: his visit was prolonged from day to day, until some weeks had passed. Peace was returning to him—peace such as he had never known" (Pleasure 80). "Book Second Miss Juno" ends with Paul leaving San Francisco suddenly without telling anyone. "Book Third Little Mama" also ends with Paul leaving San Francisco suddenly without telling anyone. However, the two sections have different explanations of what has become of Clitheroe.

In "Miss Juno," Paul becomes a friar at the shrine of San Francisco del Desert. In a letter to "a friend she had known when she was in the far West, one who knew Paul well and was always eager for news of him" (112), Miss Juno writes of seeing Paul: "We knew that face, the face of the young friar; we knew the hand—it was unmistakable; we have all agreed upon it and are ready to swear on it with oaths! That novice was none other than Paul Clitheroe!" (114). In her letter to the friend, Miss Juno alludes to Robert Browning's poem "Waring": "What's become of Waring/Since he gave us all the slip?" (114), a poem about Browning's friend, the poet Alfred Domett Waring, who has disappeared.<sup>5</sup> In the "Little Mama" ending, Paul boards the ship Waring for a long cruise. He leaves the Waring and rides off in a canoe with three handsome young South

Seas islanders. Certainly, Stoddard is linking these two endings through the name “Waring. These two endings are not necessarily “alternative endings” as Franklin Walker has offered (397). More exactly, I argue that they are both the “real” ending.

Metaphorically, Paul has pursued his devotion to both his new religion and to the men of the islands. He has simultaneously gone to Italy to devote himself to the Catholic Church and to the islands to live with his “beloved savages.” Throughout the novel, the narrator, who remains nameless, is a character who is part of Paul’s inner circle and knows the secrets of the other characters without divulging anything about himself. This narrator would seem to be one of the insiders, akin to Stoddard in his sensibilities and feelings.

The chapter “In a Rose Garden” is clearly influenced by the tone of art for art’s sake and the decadence of the fin de siècle and the emerging camp and decadence of the Aesthetic movement. Paul Clitheroe and Miss Juno engage in a light-hearted and cynical discussion of marriage, deciding that they are against marriage, and that they have seen more miserable marriages than happy ones. They also share their thoughts on gender, comparing feminine males, “girl-boys,” to masculine females, “tom-boys.” Paul Clitheroe and Miss Juno are discussing boys who, according to Miss Juno, “ought to have been girls.” She continues: ““Boys will be girls!’ ‘Horrible thought! But why is it that girl-boys are so unpleasant while tom-boys are delightful?’ ‘I don’t know,’ replied she, unless the girl-boy has lost the charm of his sex, that is manliness; and the tom-boy has lost the defect of hers—a kind of selfish dependence” (98). The discussion resolves very little philosophically and adds nothing to plot development. However, it reveals Stoddard’s ideas about gender relations: “If Miss Juno had been a young man, instead of

a very charming woman, she would of course have been Paul's chum. If Paul had been a young woman—some of his friends thought he had narrowly escaped it and did not hesitate to say so—he would instinctively have become her confidante” (88). Generally, Stoddard's women are decidedly strong and forthright; his men are often soft and dependent. Often, for Stoddard, masculine women and feminine men are pleasant and charming, “natural” in their behavior, proving more genuine and loyal in their friendship.

Rather abruptly, Clitheroe leaves San Francisco, for the first, second, or third time, depending upon the reading, on a cruise with some of his wealthy friends. One night onboard a chartered yacht heading south from San Francisco, he views his party friends with disillusionment and dismissal: “Clitheroe saw at the head of the table the Commodore, stretched back in his easy chair; he was fast asleep; there was no doubt about that. His guests one and all were dozing. The drowsy stupor that follows a debauch pervaded the whole company” (Pleasure 187). Clitheroe steps away from the physical pleasures, the sensuality and sexuality, prudishly passing judgment on the captain and the passengers: “this early morning he had begun to moralize, as he peered down the transom upon the half-shadowy form of those feasters who had fallen by the way. He was asking himself if it paid—this high-pressure happiness that knew no respite save temporary insensibility? He began to think that it did not, and with a shrug of his shoulders and a faint sigh, he turned away” (Pleasure 188). Stoddard turns away also, changing the subject from the pleasures of the flesh that Clitheroe has denied to another topic altogether.

Clitheroe sees a “flitting shadow weaving to and fro astern” (188). The shadow is of “the dusky forms of three naked islanders.... Old friends these, pals in the past, young

chiefs from an island he had loved and mourned” (188). He joins them, and they sail off, not into the sunset but into the sunrise. Paul Clitheroe has disappeared without a trace, not only from his friends in San Francisco but also from the reader. Reminiscent of Stoddard’s conversion to Roman Catholicism, Clitheroe gives up everything—his luxurious private rooms, his social circle, his artistic connections (and pretenses)—foregoing physical and social comforts in San Francisco to fulfill his true nature and satisfy his desires.

The novel closes with a quote from near the end of Meditations (XII 27) by Marcus Aurelius: “And what is left? Dust and Ash and a Tale—or not even a Tale” (Pleasure 188).<sup>6</sup> This passage is a response to Aurelius’s request to the reader: “Constantly bring to thy recollection those who have complained greatly about anything, those who have been most conspicuous by the greatest fame or misfortunes or enmities or fortunes of any kind: then think where are they all now?” (Aurelius 162). It comes directly after Aurelius’s discussion of how the individual humans in this world are connected to each other and to God: “how close is the kinship between a man and the whole human race, for it is a community, not of a little blood or seed, but intelligence.... every man’s intelligence is a god and is an efflux of the” (Aurelius 161). In light of the fuller context of the “smoke to ashes” quotation, Stoddard is floating away into a world that is fuller and greater than the world of the ship that he has just left or of the world back in his San Francisco. He is moving into a great freedom afforded him by young attractive men of color who have very few of the constraints of “civilization” and all of the freedom of the “heathen savage.” This ambiguous ending is similar to the ending of Melville’s Mardi. The protagonist sails off into an uncertain future. However, Clitheroe

is pursuing a dream of love whereas Mardi's protagonist Taji is pursuing a dream of revenge. Finally, For the Pleasure of His Company is complex and puzzling, tenuously exploring Stoddard's views of race, religion, and gender while gingerly avoiding any deep or prolonged analysis of these subjects. Instead he leaves the reader to ponder the obscure and convoluted text.

In an earlier work, the novella "Hearts of Oak" serialized in the Overland Monthly in 1871, Stoddard writes of his ideas of emotional and physical love, including the possibility of a relationship involving one woman and two men, suggesting the bisexuality of Herman Melville's Typee and D. H. Lawrence's Women in Love: "The thought of his beloved Hesper and his dear Chum Rivers was a double joy to him" (63). In relating this three-sided love story, Stoddard introduces eccentricities of style which are types of genre violations: turning from the narrative; willfully, even gleefully, refusing to divulge details to the reader. For example, the narrator refuses to share the contents of love letters between Paul and Hesper: "In giving one of these messages of love to the public eye, it has been considered how the public can not possibly know who Paul is in reality, and that to them Hesper must forever remain a mystery, profound as death.... I do not, on the whole, feel quite right in reproducing the document that charmed and puzzled Hesper" (64). Additionally, Stoddard tells the story from a vague insider perspective, employing the "indefinite we," as I shall call it, rather than a strong first person voice. He never explains the relationship of this observer to the other characters.

Paul Rookh, the protagonist, is strongly attracted to the character Chum Rivers, the "living light in Paul's world." Paul's devotion to Rivers is a histrionic adolescent

crush: “He always thought Rivers the best fellow he had seen in his life, and now he was perfectly satisfied of the fact. He wanted to go down on his knees to him, and worship him as he had never worshipped any one before” (360). One Saturday afternoon, Paul, with a group of school friends, including Chum Rivers, takes an outing to a stream near their boarding school. Rivers, as usual is the leader, the “general.” On the stream bank, seeming to lead by example, Rivers undresses to go swimming. Stoddard describes this adolescent character in clearly erotic terms: “Modesty, without shame, was the characteristic that seemed to clothe him like a mantle. His chest was full and well cushioned with muscle; thighs, plump and sinewy; hips, not too broad nor too narrow; knees, small and of that fine mechanism so different from the clumsy joints of the many imperfect creatures” (361). Rivers, stronger and more mature than the other boys, is clearly superior to them: “a youthful Hercules among a rabble of satyrs” (361). Rookh is awe-struck, wanting to be close to Rivers yet too self-conscious to initiate the relationship.

Attempting to be more like Rivers, the frail Paul dives from an oak tree into the stream and becomes tangled in the roots of the tree. Rivers saves his life, and this event decides their fates as best friends: “Paul found himself lying in the nervous arms of some one, his cheek resting upon a heaving breast, while kind, loving eyes looked strength and gladness into his” (362). Paul, true to the “effeminate and receptive nature” (359) that Stoddard has given him, is overwhelmed with romantic ecstasy: “Had Paul died the next moment, he would have felt that he had accomplished all that was worth living for” (362). Moreover, Paul has his idol to himself: “Paul and Rivers were alone at last.... Rivers gathered his little self-elected charge in his protecting arms, and held him so

closely that his lips touched Paul's, sealing a friendship that was to prove enduring" (362). With the kiss, Part First of "Hearts of Oak" ends. Not only does Stoddard step away from this display of physical affection between the two males, but the action is frozen until the next month's installment. Although the relationship between Rookh and Rivers continues, the two men are separated in effect by Stoddard's introduction of a heroine, Hesper. After being first Rookh's girlfriend and then the girlfriend of both Rookh and Rivers, she eventually marries Rivers. Although Rookh misses Hesper, he mourns the loss of Rivers: "Rivers was gone also—his foster-brother, whom he had loved with a love passing that of a woman" (66). Rookh, like many of Stoddard's protagonists, has become emotionally and spiritually stronger, able to move forward by himself no longer dependent upon others. Rookh approaches the narrator: "he delicately insinuates that his path is plainer now, and that he is able to walk it alone: in proof whereof he plunges boldly into the midst of the throng, and becomes a unit of the million" (68). Paul Rookh, like Paul Clitheroe, disappears into the future. Although he is lost to the reader, he has found himself and can continue without the relationships of his past.

In his travel narratives, Stoddard wrote of the islanders of the South Seas as admirable, with at least as much integrity, honesty, and spiritual strength as any Westerners. Often he wrote of their religious purity as superior to that of Americans. He also admired the Hawaiians' bravery and perseverance in the face of the debilitating and deadly disease of leprosy. In his fiction and miscellaneous collected works, he experimented with the usual formulas, often writing prose that is eccentric and not immediately acceptable or accessible. Consequently, he routinely disregarded genre boundaries, especially when he wished to voice his strong religious and sexual beliefs.

Because he was writing in an atmosphere that was hostile to Catholicism, he had to write evasively and transgressively when discussing religion. Also, he wrote of his homosexual feelings within a vocabulary and style that were elusive and vague, not so much out of inability but rather out of his need to protect and express himself. Thus, Charles Warren Stoddard established himself as a daring writer who violated genre and gender boundaries in order to convey his unorthodox beliefs.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Stoddard's account reads differently: "There was an American who besieged us at the Langham as well as at the lecture-hall. His story was pitiful. Snatched from a foreign office by a change in administration, a lovely life at the point of death, he penniless in a strange land, a born gentleman, delicately reared, unacquainted with toil,—would Mark be good enough to loan him a few pounds until he could hear from his estates at home? Mark did.... this fellow proved he was one of the biggest frauds on record" (Exits 72-3).

<sup>2</sup> Father Damien was beatified on June 4, 1995, and is scheduled for canonization on October 11, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Stoddard addressed "Highways," a section of Hawaiian Life, to A Fair Anonymous. Of course these two individuals are not the same. He apparently liked the term.

<sup>4</sup> Stoddard and Whitman can arguably be described as "hebephiles," adults with sexual interest in pubescent and adolescent individuals. Both men had intense, long-term friendships with teen-aged males, often living with them. Stoddard and Whitman probably acted upon their attractions. However, no evidence exists to support the claim that either man engaged in any sexual activities with any of these boys.

<sup>5</sup> Alfred Domett Waring, a close friend of Robert Browning, was a poet of modest renown in England. In 1842 he emigrated to New Zealand where he became an influential politician, before returning to England in 1871.

<sup>6</sup> The translations that I have consulted (Arthur Spenser Loat Farquharson, George Long, Gerald H. Rendall, R.B. Rutherford) read "smoke and ashes" or "smoke and ash." Stoddard does not indicate the translation he quotes or whether it is his own translation.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions and Speculations

The travel narratives of Herman Melville, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Warren Stoddard stand as strong statements of the American's place in the world during the nineteenth century. The works of these writers indicate the complexities of the new American empire's relationships with the rest of the world, in particular the peoples of regions that have come to be known as the Third World. Consequently, queer theory can open up these writers' texts in new and exciting ways, not only in viewing conventions of gender and sexuality but also in analyzing the political and social dynamics of works within their own eras. Likewise, postcolonial theory can enable critics and scholars to view texts, especially older ones, beyond traditional political and racial explanations of postcolonialism.

The combination of queer and postcolonial stratagems enables us to view works within a vibrant context while also meeting the challenge that John C. Hawley has addressed: "how to theorize the broad diversity of post colonialisms as they manifest themselves in the areas of gender, class, and sexuality" (13). Thus, within the postcolonial/queer arena the travel narratives of Herman Melville, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Warren Stoddard prove to be highly textured and rhetorically flexible, inviting deeper and more extended analysis than I have been able to give them within the limited scope of this dissertation. Although I have shown that these three writers display elements in their writing that can be seen through both a queer and a postcolonial lens, their texts remain open to further study.

I have only begun my work with these authors and the issues of genre and gender within their work. Each of them deserves continued analysis and evaluation within their social and political context. I and other writers must pay more attention their treatment of women, particularly the depictions of women in stereotypical roles, “wife,” “prostitute,” and “mother,” to name a few. Certainly, much of their writing, particularly the shipboard narratives, exclude women because women were not allowed on board those ships. However, their treatment, or lack of treatment, of women, must be scrutinized. How much of it was standard for the time, and how much of it can be considered misogynistic in nature? Did they exclude women because they did not perceive of women as romantic possibilities? I challenge women to explore these topics, especially in the writings of Taylor and Stoddard. To my knowledge, all the scholarship on these two men has been done by men, mostly gay men.

Indeed, a New Historicist approach can help with these endeavors by delineating the actual behavioral expectations of the nineteenth century regarding sex and gender roles. What was the place of same-sex physical affection, and what were the boundaries of that affection? When did a man, or a woman, cross those boundaries and violate the ethical standards (and etiquette) of the era? Precisely when were those violations ignored? Of course, the rules of the nineteenth and of the twenty-first centuries are different, but what are the subtleties that differentiate our rules?

Specifically, regarding their place in postcolonial studies, how genuine were their racial stances in their texts? Were they expressing their true opinions of the natives they encountered, or were they rhetorically performing for their perceived audiences? Possibly they were voicing their own stances while thinking of their readers. Also, how

much of their published work was the result of editors' revisions? I recommend that we research these authors' initial responses to their personal first contacts with the "other." We can see definite respect, affection, and love in the relationships of Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard toward those whom they encountered on their journeys. Yet, we also know that Taylor especially showed religious if not racial prejudice toward Muslims and Jews. Thus, in examining the aspects that can make these writers less attractive but more human, we can contribute more evidence to the field concerning their genuine beliefs.

Their works also need placed in a historical context of the genres of travel and naval writings. For example, what earlier writers' sensibilities were similar to Melville, Taylor, and Stoddard? How often did Melville's contemporary and earlier sailors connect emotionally and possibly sexually with other sailors and with non-white non-Western men? How prevalent was this historically? What literary and historical accounts exist within primary sources and archival material? For example, Daniel Defoe's Captain Singleton, albeit British, fits easily within the "queer category" of sea fiction. Also, Richard Henry Dana's Two Years before the Mast depicts homoerotic relationships onboard. What affect did these and other texts have on the sea narratives of Melville and Stoddard? What was the reception of these works? How were they compared to other works within the genre? In light of this contemporary criticism and appreciation, why did nineteenth-century readers "devour" travel writing? Larzer Ziff suggests that societal restraints were part of the reason for the appeal of travel writing: "In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America the popular appeal of travel narratives was increased by the prevalence of religious, moral, and even political prejudices against fiction as at best a waste of time and at worst sinful lying" (7). In the nineteenth century,

according to Ziff, native-born Americans were eager to show their pride in their own national traditions and their new ways and, as a result, “ maintained a particularly strong interest in measuring those ways against the manner in which other societies met the problems of living the daily life. They could not do this by popping across a border but they could by following the travel reports of their fellow Americans” (7). Beyond national pride, what else prompted the popularity of American travel narratives? Was it merely a fad, or did it have deeper significance in the American psyche?

The poetry of these three writers needs to be explored within the scope of queer and postcolonial scholarship. They were often writing from a rebellious viewpoint in their poetry as well as their prose. Melville’s Clarel and other poems need further investigation by recent scholars in order to understand the delicate and subtle textures of Melville’s poetic statements. For example, “After the Pleasure Party,” considered by many to be Melville’s “queerest” poem, is highly ambiguous. Consequently, much has been said, and imagined, about what Melville is actually saying in “After the Pleasure Party.” Critics, in general, offer their analyses based on personal philosophy and beliefs rather than strong textual analysis. Lewis Mumford, Newton Arvin, and Robert Penn Warren, among others, have committed the “Intentional Fallacy” in their interpretation of the poem. That is, they have assumed what Melville intended in his poem without any clear evidence of Melville’s actual intentions. In some instances, critics have attempted to remove any indication of homosexual content; in others, they have denied any heterosexual content.

Taylor wrote a substantial amount of poetry, lyrical, occasional, dramatic, and narrative. Certainly these need substantial queer/postcolonial investigation. They also

need more study regarding Taylor's religious attitudes, particularly "The Masque of the Gods," a drama in poetry, which has several gods as characters, including Jove, Apollo, Brahma, Ormuzd, Odin, and Baal. Other poems most deserving of critical attention are Lars: A Pastoral of Norway, The Picture of St. John, and The Poet's Journal. Although they do not contain much that is noteworthy in a queer studies aspect, they do afford a deeper understanding of Taylor's body of writings.

\* \* \*

Although Melville has become established in the canon of American literature, his works still merit comprehensive examination. For example, how do specific editions of Melville's works change and transform the texts? How many of the changes were Melville's, and how many were subsequent editors' and publishers'? Certainly, research has been done in this area, but I propose that I will continue this endeavor to widen the scope of my subsequent writing about Melville, his associates, and their environs. Thus, I will heighten my own research and add to my credibility as a scholar.

I also believe that Melville's primary and secondary sources, movies, plays, interpretations, should be revisited. How does each specific era interpret and explain Melville's, or any author's, works? For example, how do the three (at least) versions of Moby-Dick add to and diminish the original work? How do these films "speak" to each other? What is the nature of that conversation? What are we to make of the anime film Hakugei, Legend of the Moby Dick set in the far future in which a young man must save his planet from Moby Dick, "the most terrifying beast in the universe" (according to Netflix)? How do the two film versions of "Bartleby," which I did not cover in my dissertation, enhance the study of that novella? Additionally, what is one to make of the

French movie Le Placard (The Closet) “Bartleby with a twist,” that tells the story of a gay Bartleby and a closeted homophobic narrator? Certainly, “Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street” (1853) easily gives way to a queer reading especially because it is a homosocial law office and the relationship of the lawyer and Bartleby is eccentric. Again, how much of our twenty-first values and perspectives can we assign to earlier eras? Finally, in the Melville-movie realm is Billy-Budd, directed by Peter Ustinov with Terence Stamp as Budd.<sup>1</sup> Also, I encourage new productions of the Benjamin Britten opera Billy Budd. Without doubt, I am proposing interdisciplinary work regarding Melville and other writers, a field of study that includes theater, dance, film, and cinematic arts. I also am proposing that those disciplines continue vigorously applying queer and postcolonial views to the works based upon nineteenth-century American writers.

Herman Melville, by using themes of gender and sexuality, demonstrates his subversive intentions, in clear disagreement with the conventions of sexual and gender roles in American society. Melville’s “pansexuality” and definite homoerotic feelings are among the reasons for his “genre-breaking.” However, to step away from my own study, I believe that more research and writing are needed concerning Melville’s spiritual and religious views beyond queer studies. When were Melville’s religious writings part of his posturing, and when was he being sincere and genuine? How often were Melville’s religious and spiritual statements part of his satirical posturing, and how often was he sincere and genuine in his texts? Thus, in future studies of Melville’s works, I will look at his satire and parody more closely than I have here.

\* \* \*

Aside from the themes that I have discussed in this dissertation, Bayard Taylor's extensive writings offer a great deal of material for further consideration. Although the ideas of sentimental writings and the standards of the genteel tradition have drawn strongly negative criticism in these postmodern times (some of it deservedly), I challenge scholars to take another serious look at genteel writers. If for no other reason, we can gain insight into the social and emotional climate of that time. I propose evaluating Taylor and his circle for their historical value, particularly some of his associates. These include the husband and wife writers Richard and Elizabeth Stoddard, Edmund Clarence Stedman, George Henry Boker, and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. All of these poets, like Taylor, were once widely popular and have fallen out of favor since the mid-twentieth century.

Most importantly of Taylor's circle, the poet Fitz-Greene Halleck needs to be included in the canon again, particularly the gay and queer canon. He was, arguably, as important a poet in his day as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Cullen Bryant, Edgar Allan Poe, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In addition, his lover Joseph Rodman Drake's poetry should definitely be revisited with a queer theory eye. According to John M. W. Hallock, Bayard Taylor, a close friend of Halleck and Drake, was inspired by his friends' relationship: "Halleck's love for Drake inspired Bayard Taylor to challenge the heterosexual novel with his homosexual romance Joseph and His Friend" (10). Furthermore, Gore Vidal, one of the first openly gay American novelists, included Halleck and Drake in his historical novel Burr. Thus, absolutely, Halleck's influence on American literature must be explored for the enrichment of queer and gender studies.

Another area of exploration within Taylor's novels, which did not fit within my study, is the theme of the Mysterious Stranger. Roy R. Male, in Enter, Mysterious Stranger: American Cloistral Fiction, has said that an important aspect of American fiction is the mysterious stranger invading the cloistral space, generally a village. That is exactly what happens in Taylor's fiction. These compelling characters without pasts, including the characters of Maxwell Woodbury, Sandy Flash, or Philip Held, move the plot and enable the other characters to change and grow. Melville's writings, including the short story "The Lightning-Rod Man," the novela Bartleby, the Scrivener, and most importantly, the short novel Billy Budd, all have a mysterious stranger. Billy Budd, conspicuous in its absence in my dissertation, more clearly fits within the mysterious stranger theme than in travel writing. The angel of the Budd character, the possibly impotent Christ figure, affects all the men of the Bellipotent. Foxlair of Stoddard's For the Pleasure of His Company most definitely is a mysterious stranger, appearing from nowhere, causing destruction and loss, and disappearing again. Another aspect of Male's mysterious stranger theme is the traveler as mysterious stranger. How do characters or travel narrators affect those whom they visit or encounter in their travels? For Melville and Stoddard in their Pacific travels, this is an important question with various answers.

Bayard Taylor's relationship with Walt Whitman needs more evaluation. As I have indicated, Taylor and Whitman were congenial social and literary acquaintances if not actually friends. Although they were not intimates, they shared kind and gracious attitudes toward each other, at least for a while. I wish to continue my work with Taylor and Whitman by researching their statements about their friendship, especially Taylor's columns in the New York Tribune and in his letters. What did their friends and

colleagues say about them and their relationship? Also, I believe that how Taylor fit into the social environs of New York City is important in evaluating his writings, especially his columns.

Another area of study which I barely visited in my dissertation is Taylor's place as a playwright. He wrote satirically of other writers in The Echo Club, of a Mormon-like group of Americans in The Prophet, and sympathetically of characters on spiritual quests in The Masque of the Gods. I encourage writers to research these plays and their performance histories. How often were they staged? What was the reception of audiences and critics? How feasible would it be to produce these plays now? Have they lost relevance? Are they significant in the history of the theater? The nineteenth century in America was nearly devoid of original plays that were not melodramas or slapstick farce. Where should we place Taylor in the context of American theater?

\* \* \*

Regarding Charles Warren Stoddard, more needs to be done in the area of researching primary sources. More of his works need to be recovered, and discovered, anthologized and studied. I invite more analysis of primary sources and less reliance on Roger Austen's rather personal accounts that tend to be more "popular" than "scholarly" in scope. That is not to discredit Austen's work but rather to insist that we build on his years of unfailing research and not rely upon it as the final authority.

We also must expand our views of Stoddard beyond the merely "queer" and see him as a writer with strengths in other areas besides "gay." Although the work of queer studies scholars has been fundamental in reclaiming Charles Warren Stoddard, I believe that further study should bring him back into the larger canon of travel writing and

American literature in general. Unfortunately, he is seen as a novelty and not as a serious literary figure. He is often held up as an example of camp rather than a legitimate subject for scholarly inquiry.

Stoddard's strength lay in his fiction or fictionalized travel writing. At his best, he wrote fluid prose, describing places and characters with skill and charm, like his description of the "Arab donkey." For example, in "Siesta. Stag-Racket Bungalow, Honolulu, H.I." included in Hawaiian Life: Being Lazy Letters from the Low Latitudes (1894), he describes one of the unusual occupants of the house, a deaf-mute cat: "at intervals the black cat appears in the doorway and stops there for a moment, lifting one foot and then the other, as if the floor were too hot for her; she would mew if she could, and she does open her mouth as if she were yawning, but that interior is as silent as a morocco-lined potmoanie with nothing in it but two white teeth; she is bob-tailed and dumb, and she disappears suddenly, discharging herself through the passage as if she had been shot from a spring-trap" (Hawaiian 98). These pieces that should be included along with queer analysis in our studies of Stoddard.

I believe that much more research and study should be done regarding Stoddard's place in the travel genre, not only from a queer viewpoint but also as a writer with important contributions to the genre. I also think that he should be seen and appreciated as contributing to the creation of what would become the gay novel and his place as one of the first openly gay and also devoutly religious American writers. His attitude toward his sexuality and his religion stands as a precursor for the many gay religious and spirituality groups of today.

Stoddard needs attention as an important figure in the context of postcolonial studies. How much did Stoddard actually acclimate to the environments and cultures of Hawaii and Tahiti? Although I argue that he did adjust to life, albeit of short duration, among the Pacific Islanders, questions remain. How much of his writing was merely rhetoric regarding his relationships with the natives? Did he perceive of the natives as his intellectual and social equals, or did he harbor an abiding disregard for the natives, seeing them as inherently inferior? These remain elemental questions for a serious detailed reading of Stoddard.

Another area of investigation concerning Stoddard is regarding his place among San Francisco writers: how important is he? What was the contemporary importance of his columns in the Overland Monthly and Ave Maria? Granted, he claimed friendships with Bret Harte, Robert Louis Stevenson, Jack London, and other writers in the San Francisco area. However, how was he influenced by those writers, and how influential was he among those he considered his peers? Exactly how respected was he as a California writer? Did his contemporaries necessarily hold him among the best, as he would have us believe, or was he seen as an mediocre?

Finally these writers' letters, diaries, journals, and other personal writings have not been sufficiently recovered. They need researched, recovered, and assembled into easily accessible collections and reassessed from queer and postcolonial stances as well as placed firmly in their historical contexts. Also, I invite other scholars to investigate the cultural and literary importance (which I believe to be profound) of these three authors' forcing of genres, especially the genre of travel writing, to suit their own political, religious, and sexual agendas.

## Notes

1. Terence Stamp also plays the transsexual Bernadette in the film The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994), a story of first contact between city dwelling queers and Aborigines in Australia's outback.

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