

NOVELS ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN:
AMERICAN AUTHORSHIP IN THE AGE OF SERIAL PUBLICATION,
FROM STOWE TO HEMINGWAY

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of
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Abstract

NOVELS ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN: AMERICAN AUTHORSHIP IN THE AGE OF SERIAL PUBLICATION, FROM STOWE TO HEMINGWAY

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Although there are shelves of academic books devoted to American novels and American novelists, the role of serial publication in literary history of the United States has received slight critical attention. Often, the details of original publication simply go unmarked, reinforcing the myth that novels emerge all at once, fully formed and whole, and neglecting the fact that, for much of the nineteenth century and a good part of the twentieth, American novelists relied upon a publishing system whereby their work appeared in pieces in periodicals over time. Moreover, when scholars make note of a novel's initial serialization, they tend to overstate or understate its effects, assuming either that novelists are corrupted by serialization, resulting in choppy and sensational novels that pander to readers' basest instincts, or that this practice is merely incidental and therefore irrelevant to our understanding of the novelist's craft. Between these two extremes, this dissertation posits, is a third perspective, whereby serialization is understood to be an integral part of the material conditions of authorship, an important publishing phenomenon with which all would-be novelists of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries had to contend.

This is not to say that all experiences with serialization are the same; in fact, individual authors responded to the exigencies of serial publication in distinct and idiosyncratic ways. Nonetheless, authors from Harriet Beecher Stowe to Ernest Hemingway invariably came to see their novels in relation to this mode of publication. Novelists as disparate as Henry James, Pauline Hopkins, Winnifred Eaton, and F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote during a period when serialization was essential to professional success. Their negotiations with serial publication, the subject of this dissertation, are evident in both their explicit comments on serial authorship and in the novels themselves, which engage the formal and theoretical implications of the installment novel in interesting ways. An appreciation of individual efforts to write within such a publication marketplace thus reveals the extent to which ideas about authorship and novel writing developed out of a larger context of periodical publication and the various ways that serialization in American magazines has shaped American authorial identity.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation brings together a diverse group of American novelists: from the best-selling abolitionist author Harriet Beecher Stowe to the fastidious aesthete Henry James; from recently rediscovered minority authors Pauline Hopkins and Winnifred Eaton to twentieth-century literary icons F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway. However, one thing that these and scores of other late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century novelists have in common is that each wrote within a publication environment in which magazine serialization figured large. At a time when periodicals dominated the literary marketplace, serial publication of novels in magazines not only expanded the field of publication opportunities for writers, but also promised profits beyond those derived from book sales. Thus, despite their differences—in critical reputation, in artistic vision, in temperament—each of the authors considered here faced similar publishing circumstances. Each was compelled to negotiate formal and professional issues unique to installment publication: how to satisfy a serial audience; how to structure a novel as a series of units issued over time; and how to turn serial publication to one’s advantage. Their diverse aesthetic and critical responses to these questions form the subject of this dissertation.

My reasons for pursuing this area of investigation are both personal and professional. I became drawn to the idea of the serial novel due to some romantic notions about serial publication as a stimulus to communal reading. Outside of academic settings, novel reading can be a rather solitary affair. Movies, television,

and music provided the subject matter for conversation and social bonding when I was growing up. Discussion of books was a different matter. English classes required discussion of texts but also taught that one was not supposed to gossip about characters, to speculate about what was to come, or to complain about a rotten ending. But what if a novel weren't encountered as something to be read and analyzed but rather as an ongoing narrative in the pages of a magazine? Wouldn't this encourage people to talk about their reading differently, to speculate together as they waited for the next installment?

As I began to explore the history of serialization in an American context and to review the available scholarship on this topic, my interests shifted. First, I was surprised at the relative lack of attention to American serial publication, despite its prevalence throughout much of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century and despite a substantial body of criticism on British serialization practices.¹ Book editions include notes on the original publishing circumstances of a given text, and biographers remark on the serializing practices of their subjects. But, in general, literary critics seem unwilling to draw conclusions from this information or to undertake serious investigations of serial texts as such. Michael Lund's invaluable resource, *America's Continuing Story: An Introduction to Serial Fiction, 1850-1900* (1993) makes a powerful case for the need for attention to serialization, but few book-length studies have taken up this challenge. And, of the handful of book-length works on serial publication as a phenomenon, only one restricts its focus to specifically American authors.

¹ For examples of scholarly articles on the serializing practices of British authors see Gerald Giles Grubb, Graham Law, and Andrew Sanders.

In reviewing the existing scholarship on serial fiction, I was struck by the fact that these critical works consistently approached serialization from the perspective of its effect on reading. For instance, in *The Victorian Serial* (1991), Michael Lund and Linda K. Hughes dismiss the notion that serials share consistent formal characteristics, arguing instead that the determining feature of serial publication is its capacity to extend the reading experience over time, resulting in the creation of a unique “community of readers” engaged in a common experience of reading (9- 10). Jennifer Hayward’s *Consuming Pleasures: Active Audiences and Serial Fictions from Dickens to Soap Opera* (1997) similarly rejects the idea that all serials share “distinctive (and much derided) narrative tropes” and concludes that the genre is constituted by the “unique reading practices and interpretive tactics developed by audiences” (4). The most recent work to address issues of serialization, Patricia Okker’s *Social Stories: The Magazine Novel in Nineteenth-Century America* (2003), also emphasizes audience, arguing that the context of magazine publication made these novels uniquely positioned to take part in a conversation about national identity.

I do not mean to suggest that each of these works draws similar conclusions. Lund and Hughes, for instance, argue that serial publication became preeminent in the nineteenth century because it appealed to Victorian ideas about time, capitalism, progress, and the human life span. Hayward’s work implicitly challenges such notions by discussing a wide range of media and historical contexts. In contrast to Hughes and Lund, Hayward posits that popular serials represent a recurring phenomenon in mass entertainment whereby audiences are granted a degree of control over a fictional text, providing a mechanism by which groups of readers can

forge “shared interests, values, and demands—a means that the nation, fragmented into geopolitical and class factions, had lacked” (30).² This notion of discrete communities formed by serial readers—united by shared interests rather than national identity—is different than Okker’s point that nineteenth-century serial novels in the United States provided an opportunity to forge a community of readers from a diverse and heterogeneous populace, to contribute to the “ongoing project of forging an idea of a group, a society, a nation” (7). “Nineteenth-century magazine novels are social stories,” Okker argues, “not simply because they were read within a community of readers...nor simply because they appear within a community of texts, but also because these features provided novelists opportunities to explore what an American society or nation was (or would be)” (28).

While these works of scholarship contribute to our understanding of serial novels and yield important insights into the effect of serial release on reader response, what is missing is a consideration of the subject from the perspective of the authors who had to negotiate this unique publication system. Determining reading practices for long-dead readers is, after all, a daunting task given the scant evidence of reader-response (although Michael Denning and Janice Radway have provided inspiring models for doing this work). Moreover, in investigating the variant editions resulting from initial serialization and subsequent book issue, authors and publishers’ comments on serial publication, and the critical discussions surrounding serial novels, I became increasingly interested in the relationship between serial publication and

² Here Hayward is speaking of nations in general not a particular nation. She continues by citing a study by Andrew Blake, who posits that the Victorian novel “...was an arena of public information, of public debate, and of ‘interpellation,’ helping by its concerns to form society by helping to form individuals as members of that society” (qtd in Hayward 30).

authorship—the ways in which serial publication shapes authorial practice, informs notions of authorial identity, and constructs an imagined relationship of author to audience.

Consequently, this project departs from the existing work on serialization in shifting critical focus away from serial audiences and onto the individual authors engaged in serial publication. As previous scholars have established certain common contextual features of the genre and considered the types of audience responses serialization is likely to produce, the logical next step is to turn to the authors, to investigate their negotiations with this unique publishing situation, and to consider how this professional context informed their understanding of authorship. However, the emphasis of this project also comes from an abiding sense that the material conditions of authorship play a significant part in authors' conceptions of their work. As R. Jackson Wilson speculates in *Figures of Speech: American Writers and the Literary Marketplace from Benjamin Franklin to Emily Dickinson* (1989), all writers “must necessarily come to terms, one way or another, with the relations of production, the set of arrangements that make writing and reading possible as social acts in a given historical situation” (283). This point is too often forgotten in analyses that consider texts independent of cultural context, particularly since the heyday of New Criticism. Given the vital role of serial publication in transforming novel writing into a viable professional pursuit, I would argue that scholars of literary history are obliged to consider this publication arrangement as a factor in the performance of authorship.

Of course, it also is important to avoid an overly deterministic reading of the act of authorship whereby given material conditions produce certain creative responses. As Richard S. Lowry reminds us, what writers do “is shaped both by the actual conditions that make writing possible and that establish its social value, and by writers’ perceptions of those possibilities...” (7). In other words, authors can only respond according to their own, sometimes idiosyncratic, readings of the cultural field. Nor is the field of cultural production an immutable space within which writers navigate without changing it. “[N]ot only are writers made out of the tensions between position and perception,” Lowry affirms, “they themselves negotiate those tensions in such a way as to transform the social conditions of writing” (8). Rather than strive for definitive conclusions about the effect of serialization on authorship in general, then, I have treated each instance of serial publication individually, investigating each author’s complex and mutable relationship to serialization in order to explore the tension between market conditions and action that made authorship possible. The differences between these writers, as well as their commonalities, provide us with a more complete understanding of serialization as a publishing phenomenon that affected American authorship for at least a century.

This emphasis on authorial response to serialization, as opposed to readers’ reception of serial texts, has implications both for our understanding of serialization practices and for the burgeoning field of authorship studies. In the last few decades, much interesting work has been devoted to the question of authorial identity in an American context. Robert A. Ferguson’s *Law and Letters in American Culture* (1984), for instance, makes a compelling argument for “the remarkable symbiosis

between law and literary aspiration” since both were seen as means of bringing “an American citizenry to virtue through knowledge” (25, 65). Stephen Railton’s *Authorship and Audience: Literary Performance in the American Renaissance* (1991) takes a radically different approach, showing how ideas about public performance shaped the private and solitary “performance” of composing for an audience. Grantland Rice’s *The Transformation of Authorship in America* (1997) posits that the movement away from an eighteenth-century system of tight controls and censorship and the emergence of unregulated print in pre-Revolutionary New England played a significant role in the development of American authorial identity, while Michael Newbury’s *Figuring Authorship in Antebellum America* (1997) explores the impact of the professionalization of authorship in the mid-nineteenth century as manifested in literary representations of different forms of labor. What these studies share is a renewed interest in the ways that ideas about authorship and authorial identity are tied to historical context: to other professions, to the development of new printing technology, and to relaxed control over publication. Although the present investigation focuses on later periods of American literary history, it is part of a similar endeavor to the extent that it functions as an inquiry into the relationship between the market phenomenon of serial publication and ideas about what it meant to be an American novelist.

Since it would be impossible to investigate each of the many novelists whose work appeared serial form during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this project is organized as a series of case studies that consider the relationship between serialization and authorship for American authors who exemplify diverse intellectual

and practical responses to publication in serial form. Following a brief introduction that reviews the historical development of serial publication in Europe and the U.S., the first chapter explores the impact of weekly publication in the *National Era* on Harriet Beecher Stowe's evolution from an author of periodical sketches to a full-blown novelist. This chapter argues that serial publication was essential to this professional transition and integral to Stowe's development of a literary aesthetic suited to serial reading. Although the variety of styles and formal fragmentation evident in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are sometimes considered liabilities—signs of inadequate artistic control—I posit that these features of Stowe's text are both an outgrowth of the periodical context, which favored the short sketch and revealed inconsistency, and part of a strategic response to the circumstances of serial reading. In presenting readers with short, powerful, and self-contained scenes, Stowe's text makes a case for an alternate model of reading that privileges the immediate, emotional response over the critical evaluation of the whole.

The second chapter turns to Henry James, often imagined as an aesthetic purist, indifferent to practical considerations of publication and unwilling to pander to audience demands. Seeking to complicate this view, this chapter argues that this aloof authorial stance emerged, in part, from the author's practical negotiations with serial publication. In his earliest novels, James, like Stowe, was sensitive to both the constraints and possibilities of serial issue, structuring his novels with an eye to serial reading and using the potential for heightened suspense in the temporal break between installments. But as his ideas about authorship and the seriousness of fiction as a creative endeavor began to crystallize, James's views on the serial novel shifted.

In contrast to his earlier magazine novels, *The Bostonians* represents a formal rejection of serial reading that also thematizes James's increasing preoccupation with the literary marketplace. In both his letters and in his criticism of this period, James lays out an argument for literature as a serious pursuit, an argument that can be read as a repression of the relationship between serial publication and professional authorship. It was not until much later in his career, with the publication of *The Ambassadors* and the construction of the New York Edition, that James would come to feel he had discovered an artistically acceptable means of engaging with serial form.

The third chapter considers the similarities and differences in the careers of two less-established authors, the African-American novelist Pauline Hopkins, and the half-Chinese, Canadian-born writer Winnifred Eaton, whose work appeared under the pen name Onoto Watanna.³ Like many other writers of the period, neither Hopkins nor Watanna enjoyed the professional stature that would have allowed them to take advantage of serial issue and book publication simultaneously. Instead, their work remained confined to one field or the other at different points in their respective careers, precluding the possibility of a synergistic relationship between initial serial publication and subsequent book issue. Still, if their relationships to serial publication deviated from the practices of more canonical and established writers, their movement between the two forms reveals much about the interaction of publication context and the marketability of "ethnic" texts. For both, the material form of their work, whether it appeared in a specific periodical or was issued as a

³ Although Winnifred Eaton grew up in Canada, she left when she was still in her teens, published primarily in the U.S., and included American characters in most of her novels.

luxury book, was not a superficial or secondary concern but was critical to their ability to carve a space for themselves in the literary marketplace.

Finally, the fourth chapter offers a reconsideration of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway's understandings of authorship in relation to the two authors' professional negotiations with serial publication. Although neither author made a consistent practice of serial publication, the few instances where they did turn to serial issue reveal their contrasting visions of authorship. Fitzgerald's decision to sell the serial rights to his second novel *The Beautiful and Damned*, for instance, was informed by his desire for wide exposure: the novel's initial appearance in a popular magazine and the subsequent release of his work in national newspapers resulted from Fitzgerald's understanding of subsidiary publication as a prime opportunity to remain before the public eye. Hemingway was no less aware of the importance of exposure, but also was alert to the danger of being perceived as excessively self-promoting. The serial appearance of *A Farewell to Arms* represents an instance of serialization in which the author maintained strict control over serial issue, thereby advancing a carefully crafted image of artistic purity in the pages of the thoroughly respectable *Scribner's Magazine*. Following Hemingway's lead, Fitzgerald later attempted to manage his image more carefully in the placement of *Tender is the Night*, but failed to construct a text well suited to serial release. Fitzgerald and Hemingway's negotiations with serialization point to an evolving understanding of the importance of serialization to self-promotion, discovered in part through each author's attentiveness to the other's career.

In selecting such a diverse group of authors, I hope to demonstrate the range of authorial responses to serial publication and to show how the effects of this critical publishing phenomenon cut across traditional literary categories, with implications for male and female novelists, for the canonical and the marginal, for white authors and for so-called “ethnic” authors. Far from being indifferent to the mechanisms of publishing, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century authors were keenly aware of the subtle differences between audiences for magazine serials and readers of novels published as bound books. Questions of how to divide a work for periodical issue and maintain a cohesive whole preoccupied writers from across the cultural spectrum. The relationship between serial publication and self-promotion was always at issue for the serial novelist, but it would become increasingly important as the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth.

My larger purpose, then, is to shed light on a neglected aspect of publication history while maintaining an understanding of the particularity of authors. Serial publication is, to be sure, a complex and varied phenomenon; there are no simple answers to the question of how its various permutations have affected American literary history. Still, attention to particular authorial responses to this phenomenon is essential to a fuller understanding of what it has meant to be a professional novelist in America.

CHAPTER ONE

“What Dickens Did...”: A Brief History of the Serial Novel

In 1984, when Tom Wolfe’s *The Bonfire of the Vanities* first appeared as a serial in the pages of *Rolling Stone Magazine*, it was hailed as an innovative return to nineteenth-century serialization practices. The novelist himself made the connection in a *New York Times* interview, citing Balzac, Dickens and Zola as influences, not only in his decision to write a big, sprawling novel of the city but also in his method of publication. Several years later, Michael Lund would take up the comparison in an essay published in *American Periodicals*, in which he argued that Wolfe had “resurrected a nineteenth-century pattern for the production and consumption of fiction: the periodical novel” (“The Nineteenth-Century Periodical Novel Continued” 51).

This narrative of resurrection might sound familiar to those acquainted with other recent attempts to issue work by installment. When Stephen King’s *The Green Mile* was published in six paper-bound installments, critics made a similar connection, citing Dickens as King’s inspiration. More recently, *The New York Times Book Review* ran an essay discussing *Harper’s Magazine*’s decision to serialize a novel (*Happyland* by Robert Lennon) “for the first time in 50 years” (Donadio 27). A 2006 article in the *Village Voice* noted that *The New York Times Magazine* had begun publishing serial genre fiction by writers including Elmore Leonard, Patricia

Cornwall, and Scott Turow at the same time that the online journal Slate had initiated a serial novel by Walter Kirn. “[N]ow seems like a strange time for the resurgence of serial fiction in news media...,” the author of the article mused, offering Walter Kirn’s assessment of the situation: “It’s like what Dickens did, working without a net” (Swartz 1).

One interesting feature of these recent forays into serial fiction and the commentary surrounding them is the repeated sense that each instance represents an attempt to revitalize a long-extinct nineteenth-century form. Only *The New York Times Book Review* acknowledges that the mode of publication was not confined to nineteenth-century Europe. More often, the current experiment in serialization is framed in terms of nostalgia for a bygone era in literature, a nostalgia that depends upon a simplified version of serialization history with Dickens squarely at its center. For instance, Lund, a scholar of serial publication in American magazines, identifies Wolfe’s decision to adopt “a Victorian manner of publication” as an endeavor to “[recreate] an old-fashioned relationship between authors and readers,” to “sustain the audience’s interest over time” (57).

This treatment of recent attempts to revive serialization points to a deeply entrenched understanding of serialization as a British phenomenon, reducible to the career of Charles Dickens. Indeed, it is remarkable how often a reference to serialization prompts some version of the response: “Ah, yes, Dickens,” followed by silence. On one hand, there is good reason for this British bias, not only because of Dickens’s critical role in the history of serialization but also because of the substantial attention granted to British serialization practices. On the other hand, this narrative

oversimplifies the history of serialization in Europe and the United States, erasing a complicated practice of publication with significant implications for literary history. In fact, serial publication of longer works as separate installments existed long before Dickens's celebrated *Pickwick Papers* appeared on the literary scene. Furthermore, serial publication was as prevalent in the United States as in Britain, with hundreds of authors, major and minor, known and forgotten, gaining access to print through the pages of magazines throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth.

I.

The history of British serialization is integral to an understanding of how the practice evolved as it made its way across the Atlantic. As R.M. Wiles notes in *Serial Publication in England before 1750*, publication of books in weekly or monthly parts had become common practice in England by the first quarter of the eighteenth century. By the second half of the eighteenth century, Robert D. Mayo observes, “there were few popular magazines of the many published in Great Britain and Ireland that did not attempt to satisfy the growing appetite for ‘tales’ and ‘histories’” (2).⁴ There are, however, key differences between this early serialized fiction and the magazine novels of the nineteenth century. As Mayo notes, the fiction that appeared in the magazines in the eighteenth century did not follow the pattern of publication later exemplified by nineteenth-century novelists like Dickens whereby a novel would make its way through the serial press prior to its appearance in volume form. Instead, much of the fiction to appear in eighteenth-century periodicals merely

⁴ Mayo is referring here to short fiction as well as serial fiction. He goes on to observe that eighteenth-century miscellanies tended to increase in size and circulation in proportion to the amount of prose fiction offered (2).

borrowed from pre-existing books and thus lacked the defining characteristic of having being written expressly for serial publication. Moreover, much of the original fiction to appear in the magazines was never republished in volume form and, as a result, is nearly forgotten today. Even the few contemporary scholars who consider this early reading material tend to dismiss it as inferior stuff. Wiles admits that most of the weekly novels to appear in the magazines prior to 1750 were “trash” (260). Mayo describes the magazine novels written between 1740 and 1815 as “uneven in quality...lacking in vigor and permanent value” (2).

This is not to say that there is nothing to learn from an analysis of this early serialized fiction. According to Mayo’s study of early serialization, these eighteenth-century magazine novels differ from their nineteenth-century counterparts in their utter disregard for the formal possibilities of the mode of publication. In fact, Mayo contends that “serialization was so irregular and accidental a feature of eighteenth-century magazine stories that it affords no fixed standards of any kind” (5). Magazine fiction comprised everything from short sketches to full-blown novels of over two hundred thousand words. A novel of fifteen thousand words might appear in a single magazine issue, while a shorter work might be divided into several parts. Thus, contrary to what one might expect, early authors who published serially were less preoccupied with formal issues of the relationship of part to whole than those who published whole volumes. “Outside the magazines,” Mayo writes of the eighteenth century, “novelists tended to think in terms of ‘chapters’ and ‘volumes’ of conventional magnitude. But in the magazines, chapter divisions had little meaning,

and installments were often mere mechanized divisions made by the editor's pencil or the printer's rule" (5).

This relative disregard for serialization as a unique mode of delivering fiction was overturned in the middle of the nineteenth century due largely to seemingly opposing phenomena: the successes of Eugène Sue and Charles Dickens. First, the unprecedented popularity of Sue's French serial novel *Les Mystères de Paris* (which appeared serially in the *Journal des Débats* between June 1842 and October 1843) signaled the enormous popular appeal of sensational fiction specifically tailored to serial publication, helping to establish a symbiotic relationship between the emergent mass-circulation journalism and the serial novel. According to Peter Brooks, successful *feuilletonistes* "not only learned to live exclusively by the products of their pens," they also learned "to shape their plots to the exigencies of serialization," bringing their plots to a cliff-hanger just before the date to renew subscriptions (147). *Les Mystères de Paris*, which may have been the most popular novel of the nineteenth century, demonstrates this attention to serial form, becoming increasingly sensitive to audience demands as it progressed through issues of the periodical (146). In Umberto Eco's reading, Sue's accommodation to market forces, which dictated that the novel continue beyond the author's original outline, results in a work that is less a novel than "a series of montages designed for the continual and renewable gratification of its readers" (134). The publication of G.W.M. Reynolds's *The Mysteries of London*

(1845-48)—the British equivalent of Sue’s city fiction—attests to the capacity of sensational serial fiction to capture the imagination of working-class readers.⁵

Although these sensational serials demonstrated the appeal of certain types of serial fiction, as Deborah Wynne points out, novels like *Les Mystères de Paris* and *The Mysteries of London* were “roundly rejected by a middle-class family audience” (9). However, at approximately the same time period in Britain, Dickens’s emergence as a serial author with the publication of *The Pickwick Papers* in monthly parts from April 1836 to November 1837 signaled the entrance of the “respectable” author to the arena of serial issue. Although he was not the first serious author to adopt serial publication, Dickens’s decision to take up serial publication is representative of a change in the kinds of authors to engage in this mode of publication that beginning in the 1820s. Mayo notes that Tobias Smollet’s *Launcelot Greaves* (1760-1761) appeared in serial form, but suggests that this early foray into serialization by a major author was premature and failed to establish a pattern of serial publication for the well-regarded author. One might point to the serialization of John Galt’s *Ayrshire Legates* in *Blackwood’s* in 1820 as the real beginning of this trend whereby works of merit would find audiences first in the pages of magazines (Mayo 7). But it was authors like Dickens who would help to establish serialization as an acceptable practice for “respectable” novelists including William Makepeace Thackeray, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, Wilkie Collins and Thomas Hardy.

This shift in the type of authors engaging in serial publication was accompanied by a change in the periodical marketplace. “Before 1859,” Wynne

⁵ One might also point to the American author George Lippard, whose sensational novel set in Philadelphia *The Quaker City; or, The Monks of Monk Hall* takes up similar themes and appeared serially between the fall of 1844 and the spring of 1845.

notes, “there was a marked divide between ‘respectable’ and ‘unrespectable’ fiction, a divide which was reflected in the publishing formats of the novels” (15). Middle-class readers generally borrowed books from circulating libraries or purchased novels in monthly part-issues, while working-class readers tended to read novels as serials in the pages of cheap magazines. Although certain monthlies like *Fraser’s* and *Blackwood’s* catered to an upper-class audience and cheap magazines were available to working-class readers, prior to the launching of Dickens’s *Household Words* in 1850, *middle-class* readers had little access to affordable yet “respectable” literary periodicals. Consequently, the launching of this magazine marked “an important turning-point in the development of the Victorian periodical press, when many new family magazines of a ‘respectable’ nature appeared on the market” (Wynne 15).

These changes in the periodical marketplace gave rise to new attention to the formal possibilities of publication by installment, a change in approach to serial fiction with implications for the Victorian novel. According to Mayo, eighteenth-century magazine fiction existed as a genre apart from the burgeoning tradition of the novel in volume form. “In manner and technique,” he writes, these early serial works “belong to a tradition in British magazine fiction which is not in all respects the tradition of *Moll Flanders*, *Pamela*, *Tom Jones*, and *Peregrine Pickle*” (4). Moreover, “writers of original magazine fiction tended to imitate one another more than they did the English novelists” (4). In the nineteenth-century, however, the formerly distinct spheres of periodical publishing and book publishing began to overlap. Laurel Brake notes that it was during the nineteenth century that publishers and authors came to rely on “a system of pre-volume publication in the magazines or

in part-issue” whereby serial issue culminated in the publication of a novel in book form prior to the release of the last installment, making the conditions of serial publication a significant factor in the conception and production of novels for middle-class readers (88).

These developments—the movement of major authors into the magazines, the rise of the middle-class periodical, and the blurring of the distinction between the periodical and the book—did not result in a uniform pattern of serial publication. Individual approaches to serialization still varied widely. Some, like Dickens and Thackeray, tended to compose separate installments just in time for publication, while others, like Anthony Trollope and George Meredith, frequently completed the entire manuscript prior to the publication of the initial part (Vann 4). Some authors took advantage of the time between serial publication and the release of the book volume to radically revise their work; others made no changes to the serial text upon its republication. In effect, even as serialization moved into the mainstream and was adopted by respected authors, individual practices continued to vary depending on authorial inclination and editorial interference.

Dickens’s experiences as a novelist and editor provide useful illustrations of this variation. Throughout his career as a novelist, Dickens tended to embrace serialization as a mode of publication, allowing it to influence form. For instance, he carefully crafted each number of *The Pickwick Papers* so that it could function as a self-contained unit. One scholar points to Dickens’s use of “anticipatory hints and recollective repetitions” as a response to serial publication (Nänny 61). Another suggests that Dickens’s vivid characters were born out of his recognition that stock

types would help readers recall a large cast from month to month (Vann 4). As the editor of *Household Words*, however, Dickens confronted authors less willing than he to accommodate to what he saw as the necessities of the form. He asked Charles Lever to change the opening installment of *A Day's Ride* to make it more immediately engaging to a serial audience. He clashed with Elizabeth Gaskell on the serial publication of *North and South*, which, he felt, lacked the action necessary to make each installment individually compelling (Vann 11).

Ultimately, the history of British serialization reveals that authors interpreted similar circumstances differently, with serial publication seen as a creative opportunity, a constraint upon artistic freedom, or some combination of the two. Authors like Wilkie Collins adopted the former perspective, becoming adept at turning serial publication to good effect. "Make 'em cry, make 'em laugh, make 'em wait," ran his famous formula for serial composition, and his novels bear evidence that he followed his own advice, concluding each installments with a sudden revelation of new information or a hanging question, a strategy clearly calculated to generate desire for the next installment.⁶ Others, like Gaskell, chafed under the perceived editorial impositions on artistic creation, which suggests that, serialization, despite its importance to professional authorship, hardly exerted a uniform or predictable effect on creative output.

⁶ This quotation is repeated in various accounts of Collins's serialization practices, often without attribution. J. Donn Vann includes this quote in *Victorian Novels in Serial* but does not provide a citation. Vann 14. In *Dead Secrets: Wilkie Collins and the Female Gothic*, Tamar Heller also attributes the quotation "make 'em cry, make 'em laugh, make 'em wait" to Collins but does not provide an original source. However, Webster's Online Dictionary identifies Charles Reade, not Collins, as the originator of a slightly different statement: "make 'em laugh; make 'em cry; make 'em wait." See <<http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definition/em>>.

II.

This overview of nineteenth-century British serializing practices indicates a general shift away from the disorderly serial publishing practices of the eighteenth century and toward a more regular system of initial magazine serialization followed by reissue in book form by “respectable” authors. This trend can be observed in the United States as well, although the situation was complicated by persistent reliance on pirated foreign work. As in Britain, serial publication in the U.S. began to move from the margins into the mainstream around the middle of the nineteenth century, making the evolution of serial publication in both countries a “bottom up” phenomenon. Isabelle Lehuu suggests as much in her study of popular print media in antebellum America, pointing to the 1850s as crucial turning point in the history of literary publishing, when the innovations of the second quarter of the nineteenth century “such as illustrations and serialization...made their way into the sphere of legitimate culture” (34- 35).

Although my study begins mid-century, as Lehuu’s observation suggests, there are earlier instances of American novels published in serial. For example, Patricia Okker points to Jeremy Belknap’s *The Foresters*, which first appeared in Philadelphia’s *Columbian Magazine* in 1787, as the first American magazine novel (29). Yet, while this early magazine novel must be cited as an important “first,” it failed to establish a precedent; the *Columbian Magazine* abruptly ceased serial publication of *The Foresters* after just nine installments (Okker 31). Charles Brockden Brown’s attempts at serialization also proved less than successful. Midway through the serialization of *Arthur Merwyn* in the Philadelphia *Weekly Magazine*,

publication was suspended due to the death of the *Weekly's* editor (Fliegelman xii).⁷ Serialization of Brown's *Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist*, which appeared in installments in *The Literary Magazine* between 1803 and 1805, broke off before the novel was completed. There were a few other attempts at serial publication by American authors in the early nineteenth century, but these were rare and no more successful.

This situation began to change in the early decades of the nineteenth century, due to a number of factors, some of which were common to Britain and the U.S. Both countries saw a rapid increase in adult literacy rates during this period, increasing the number of potential readers. "Never before in English history had so many people read so much," remarks Richard D. Altick in his analysis of reading patterns in the Victorian period, while Cathy Davidson identifies a veritable "reading revolution" in the United States beginning in the final decades of the eighteenth century and extending into the first half of the nineteenth (Altick 5, Davidson, "Toward" vii). Michael T. Gilmore estimates that, by 1850, over 90 percent of white adults could read and write, making the United States the largest literate public up to that point (4). This rise in literacy rates was accompanied by technological advances that made printed material increasingly affordable and expanded the ranks of readers. As numerous scholars have noted, reading in both Britain and the U.S. before the 1800s was largely confined to the wealthy and elite. Altick observes in his history of British reading habits that books were primarily conceived of as luxury items from the sixteenth century into the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (23).

⁷ Ironically, the yellow fever epidemic that had inspired the novel was also responsible for the magazine editor's death, which occasioned the suspension of publication (Fliegelman xii).

Davidson makes a similar point with regard to the U.S., noting that books remained prohibitively expensive throughout the eighteenth century— about three to four times what a comparable hardcover volume might sell for today (“Toward” 25). This pattern began to change in the early nineteenth century, when technological developments in paper-making, printing, and transportation made it possible to produce books and magazines, in greater quantities and at greatly reduced cost (Smith and Price 3; Gilmore 3).

Yet, while serial publication in both countries developed out of similar sociological and technological changes, serial publication in the United States was unique in its initial dependence on pirated British fiction. Of course, both countries relied to some extent on pirated material for serial reprint. In England, the first Copyright Law of England in 1709 did little to prevent piracy, as evidenced by the unauthorized republication Milton’s *Paradise Lost* in twelve numbers in 1739 (Wiles 159). This situation was exacerbated by a 1740 ruling that abridgements were not subject to copyright law, making bowdlerized serial versions immune to charges of piracy (Wiles 160). Reprint publishers in the United States were at an added advantage due to the absence of an international copyright throughout the nineteenth century. Although the U.S. Copyright Act of 1790 might have paved the way for an international copyright, an 1829 decision set a different course for copyright law in ruling that periodicals lacked the permanent and durable character of books and were therefore immune to copyright legislation. “The preliminary steps required by law, to secure the copyright,” wrote one circuit court justice, “cannot reasonably be applied to a work of so ephemeral a character as that of a newspaper,” resulting in newspaper

and magazine publishers' virtually unlimited access to foreign fiction, which remained unprotected until the International Copyright Treaty of 1891 (Lehuu 8).

American writers and critics complained that ready access to pirated foreign work was detrimental to the creation of a national literature; however, the abundance of cheap material, as a result of loose regulations governing copyright, carried certain advantages.⁸ Not only did this situation help publishers provide cheap print material to the masses, encouraging the further development of the reading habit, and thereby fueling demand, but the ready availability of cheap foreign content played a significant part in the burgeoning success of American magazines (Altick 57, Smith and Price 3). As Okker and others have noted, early American magazines of the latter half of the eighteenth century were on shaky ground: circulations were small and most magazines could be expected to fail (33). However, in the 1820s and 1830s weeklies like *Brother Jonathan* and the *New World* began to realize that they could boost their subscription figures by supplementing their content with pirated British material printed serially (Okker 55, Tebbel and Zuckerman 69). In 1850, *Harper's Monthly Magazine* followed suit. Founded as an accessory to the Harper brothers' profitable series of cheap British reprints, the magazine immediately came to rely on pirated material from British periodicals for its literary content—a business model that proved successful indeed. Starting with an initial press run of 7,500 copies, the magazine boasted 50,000 subscribers in just six months, and, by the beginning of the Civil War, had attained a record circulation of 200,000 (Mott 2: 391).

⁸ One editorial argued that an international copyright law was necessary to “do away with the competition of American authors with stolen books” and affirmed that once this was accomplished, “authors will have nothing left to complain of” (“The Rewards of Literary Labor” 749).

Arguably, the success of *Harper's* helped usher in the era of the magazines. "This is the golden age of the periodicals!" the *New York Mirror* would proclaim in 1840, a statement borne out by the figures (qtd. in Smith and Price 5). According to Frank Luther Mott, the total number of periodicals in the United States grew from approximately 700 in 1865, to more than 1,200 in 1870, and to 2,400 in 1880 (3: 7). Circulation numbers tell a similar story: between 1830 and 1842 at least thirty periodicals reached over 100,000 subscribers; at the onset of the Civil War *Godey's Lady's Book* boasted a circulation of 150,000; and in the 1860s Robert Bonner's *New York Ledger* achieved an astonishing circulation of over 400,000 (Mott: 5, Smith and Price: 5). The number of new magazine titles and these circulation figures are particularly striking when contrasted with the publication figures for books. In 1855, George Palmer Putnam estimated that only about one hundred books had been published in the U.S. between 1830 and 1842, and of these about half were foreign reprints (Smith and Price 5). According to Mott's calculations of sales figures for best-sellers, only seventeen books published between 1830 and 1839 reached sales of 125,000, and over half of these were by non-American authors (Mott *Golden Multitudes* 306).

So great was the success of periodical publication that editors were sometimes obliged to defend magazines against the charge that they depleted the market for books. Some argued that periodical reading could act as an inducement to book reading rather than a substitute for it. The periodical "has multiplied readers and excited curiosity and interest touching all literature..." one author and magazine editor insisted; "It is the pioneer: the book will come later" (Holland 44). Magazine

editors also came forward to defend the magazine novel, which *Harper's* declared to be "essential to every periodical."⁹ *Harper's Magazine* frequently extolled the virtues of serial reading in editorials and reviews throughout the 1850s and 1860s. One editorial noted the greater accessibility of the serial text. "When it is printed altogether at the end of twenty months," the writer remarked, "it is such a huge volume, or pair of volumes, that many a reader is repelled who could have easily mastered the whole by short spells of reading every month."¹⁰ Another pointed to the potential for social bonding through serial reading, suggesting that the best way to follow the tale is

with a friendly circle who began with you, who know all the people in the book—who follow their fortunes as we hang upon the careers of real persons—who speculate, and wonder, and plan—who sympathize, and regret, and condemn; and who justly take a deeper interest in many of the characters than in many acquaintances, because they know them better—not to say because they are better worth knowing.¹¹

A third editorial recommended serial reading as a way to "prolong" the delight of the story. "Never forget," the writer advised, "that every number of the tale has a certain completeness, and that serial reading in these days is a most desirable and economical habit."¹² An editor for *Scribner's* proposed a different benefit of serial reading arguing that it was better to "distribute the interest [of novels] through the year than

⁹ "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* May 1866: 803. *Harper's* was not alone in spotting this trend: an essayist writing for *The Galaxy* in 1869 concurred, asserting "the serial novel has become a prime necessity to the popular magazine. Philip Quilibet, "Magazine Novels," *The Galaxy* Jan. 1869: 130.

¹⁰ "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* May 1856: 848.

¹¹ "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* Dec. 1858: 125-126.

¹² "Editor's Easy Chair," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* Aug. 1864: 407.

to devour them *en masse*” since this way they are “mingled with a wider and more valuable range of literature, as they should always be read” (Holland 44).

These defenses of serial publication point to the prevalence of the serial novel and magazines’ dependence on it. For the most part, in the early nineteenth century, this demand for serialized fiction was satisfied by pirated British novels. However, as the century progressed, magazines increasingly turned to American authors and even made it a point of patriotism to support native talent. Periodicals like the *Atlantic* and *Putnam’s* made a policy of featuring American authors, and in 1875, *Scribner’s Magazine* declared that it would publish only American serials (“Topics of the Times” 151). In fact, by the end of the century, even *Harper’s* was carrying more work by American authors than by British (Lund *America’s Continuing Story* 47). Thus, while access to novels by British authors may have hurt American authors in the short term, it is likely that it benefited American literature in the long run by helping to establish serialization as a common publishing practice. For, if magazines profited from the inclusion of serial fiction, American authors would ultimately benefit from the success of those magazines, which would become an increasingly important source of income for authors as the nineteenth century progressed.

The rise of the American magazine and the establishment of serial publication as an essential feature of periodical publishing must be understood as crucial to the transformation of authorship into a professional enterprise. While exceptional eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth-century authors like Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper had been able to support themselves primarily through sales of their books, most early American writers were unable or unwilling to make a living

by their pen. Some, like Hawthorne, relied on alternative sources of income. Others persisted in an understanding of writing as a purely intellectual and social activity, whereby texts were exchanged among peers instead of being marketed to the general reading population (Borus 26). Even into the nineteenth century, the *Atlantic Monthly* would maintain that the truly great writers wrote “for the relief of their own mind and without thought of publication” (Leff xii).

In the middle decades of the century, this pattern began to break down as the gap between literary amateur and professional author widened. According to Michael T. Gilmore, it was during this time that, “[t]he gentlemanly author who wrote for a like-minded group of equals gave way to the professional who depended for a livelihood on sales of his books to an impersonal public” (1). That this transformation of American authorship occurred to a considerable extent in the pages of American magazines was well understood by editors and authors alike. One publisher testifying before a congressional committee in 1885 noted that “It is impossible to make the books of most American authors pay, unless they are first published and acquire recognition through the columns of the magazines” (qtd. in Mott 4: 41- 42).¹³ William Dean Howells made the same argument in his well-known essay “The Man of Letters as a Man of Business.” Before the Civil War, he mused, authors “were either men of fortune, or they were editors, or professors, with salaries of incomes apart from the small gains of their pens; or they were helped out by public office.” But even if it was still impossible for the serious American author to earn a living through book sales alone, Howells continued, “. . . many authors live now, and live prettily enough, by the sale of the serial publication of their writings to the

¹³ The publisher was Daniel Estes of the publishing firm Estes, Lauriet & Co.

magazines” (431). Howells’s assessment of his contemporary moment is confirmed by historians today. As one historical account of American literature points out, by 1850 Cooper had serialized only one of his romances, but “by 1870 almost all recognized novelists were selling their work first to the magazines” (Spiller et al. 520). Michael Anesko notes that the current predominance of the “best-seller” gives rise to an exaggerated notion of its importance to literary history, since for the majority of nineteenth-century authors “serialization of their work in English and American periodicals was much more significant, financially, than returns from published volumes” (“Friction with the Market” 168).

This reliance on periodical publication by American authors persisted through the end of the century and into the early decades of the twentieth. Although some see serial publication as declining in the late-nineteenth-century, according to James West, serialization became even more important to American authors as the turn of the century approached, largely due to the emergence of the first truly modern mass-circulation magazines and to expanded publication opportunities. “Before 1880,” he points out, “serious authors had only a few respectable magazines in which they could publish—*Scribner’s*, *Harper’s*, the *Century*, and three or four others.” However, in the 1880s and 1890s, innovations in print technology and the entrepreneurial vision of editors like Frank Munsey and S.S. McClure gave rise to a number of cheap, visually attractive mass-market periodicals that appealed to a much larger section of the American population (West *American Authors* 103). As a result, authors actually became increasingly dependent on serial sales, with “most American authors before World War I, [seeing] the magazine market as virtually their only source of money”

(*West American Authors* 113). It was not until the 1930s that authors began to turn to other sources of ancillary income such as paperback book sales and profits from radio and movie rights. For instance, Fitzgerald's short story "A Diamond as Big as the Ritz" found another market when it was adapted for the radio, while a Hollywood production firm bought the rights for a movie version of *The Great Gatsby* (*West American Authors* 131, 138).¹⁴

The emergence of these alternative means of supplementing one's income as a writer helps to determine the temporal boundaries of my study. While the decades from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century are not typically classified as a "period" in American literary history, this division is appropriate to a study of serialization given the history of American periodicals, which dominated the cultural scene for a century from the mid-1800s into the early twentieth century. For the majority of American writers of this period, I will argue, access to periodical publication was crucial to economic success and helped to shape the meaning of authorship. To write a novel during this period of American literary history was to write in the era of the serial novelist, with all of constraints and opportunities this mode of publication entailed.

¹⁴ See also Tom Cerasulo's *Writers Like Me: Fitzgerald, West, Parker, Schulberg, and Hollywood*, which explores the careers of early twentieth century who went to Hollywood to make money writing for film.

CHAPTER TWO

“A Self-Taught Genius”:

Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Serial Aesthetics of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

Midway through *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s narrator introduces her readers to Dinah, the head cook at the St. Clare Estate. Dinah’s kitchen is a mess. Dishes and random food items, fake flowers and assorted kitchen implements, all are tucked away in various drawers and cupboards. Fine china is used to store hair grease, a laundry hamper serves as mixing table, and the pastry-table is piled high with unwashed dishes. According to Gillian Brown, Dinah’s disaster of a kitchen is an indication of everything that is wrong with slavery. In contrast to the domestic order of Miss Ophelia’s New England home, the messiness at the heart of the St. Clare household exposes the breakdown between interior and exterior space that is a consequence of slavery. “Slavery, according to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*,” Brown writes, “undermines women’s housework by bringing the confusion of the marketplace into the center of the family shelter, into the kitchen.” (“Getting in the Kitchen” 505).¹⁵

What this analysis seems to overlook, however, is that Stowe accords Dinah genuine respect. Dinah may be a “self-taught genius,” “positive, opinionated and erratic, to the last degree,” but she is, indisputably, a genius (179). As St. Clare puts

¹⁵ See also the revised version of Brown’s essay, “Domestic Politics in Uncle Tom’s Cabin” in *Domestic Individualism: Imagining the Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (1990).

it in defending her to his prim, New England cousin, Miss Ophelia, “But the upshot is, she gets up glorious dinners, makes superb coffee; and you must judge her as warriors and statesmen are judged, by her success” (184). Other women in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* are certainly better housekeepers; indeed, Rachel Halliday’s Quaker household comes close to achieving the pinnacle of domestic perfection. Yet, while Miss Ophelia St. Clare is appalled by the chaos of Dinah’s kitchen, Stowe’s narrator is consistently generous. As she muses:

But it was very seldom that there was any failure in Dinah’s last results. Though her mode of doing everything was peculiarly meandering and circuitous, without any sort of calculation as to time and place, —though her kitchen generally looked as if it had been arranged by a hurricane blowing through it, and she had about as many places for each cooking utensil as there were days in the year, —yet, if one would have patience to wait her own good time, up would come her dinner in perfect order, and in a style of preparation with which an epicure could find no fault (180).

In challenge to Brown’s point, then, I would suggest that Stowe does not offer Ophelia St. Clare, “A living impersonation of order, method and exactness” as a preferably alternative to Dinah and her “shiftlessness.” Not only is Ophelia incapable of reforming Dinah, she lacks Dinah’s intuitive talent (137). Her system, Stowe seems to imply, is perhaps a bit too orderly: “nothing ever seems to be doing or going to be done . . . everything is once and forever rigidly in place” (135).¹⁶ Her obsession

¹⁶ Housekeepers of various temperaments turn up throughout Stowe’s fiction. In *The Mayflower; or, Sketches of Scenes and Characters among the Descendants of the Pilgrim* (1843), Stowe introduces a character named Mrs. Abigail Evetts, who keeps house for a deacon with “unremitting diligence,” which consists largely of reminding everyone in the house what they need to be doing at any given

with “systematic order” and aversion to “shiftlessness” in all its forms, like her initial aversion to poor Topsy, signals a lack of that instinctive warmth and sympathy that defines Stowe’s ideal characters.

Stowe’s treatment of Dinah is significant, I would argue, not merely for what it suggests about Stowe’s views on household management, but also because Dinah comes closest of all the characters in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* to being an artist.¹⁷ This may seem like an odd connection, and Stowe’s praise of Dinah is certainly mixed. She identifies Dinah as “a native and essential cook,” but then exposes her own entrenched racism by attributing this to “cooking being an indigenous talent of the African race.” She describes Dinah rather patronizingly as one who scorns “logic and reason in every shape” and prefers to take refuge in “intuitive certainty,” although, given Stowe’s evident respect for intuition and instinct, this observation must be seen as a compliment of sorts (179). Stowe may be playing for laughs when she likens Dinah’s pipe to a “censer” and depicts her smoking habit as a “mode of invoking the domestic Muses,” but such references to divine inspiration do serve to reinforce the notion of Dinah’s artistic sensibility (180). Thus, while the novel pays lip-service to

moment. (76). As with Miss Ophelia, this obsession with order signals other character flaws, in this case Mrs. Evett’s tendency to interfere in the private affairs of others. In *The Minister’s Wooing* (1859), Mrs. Katy Scudder represents a more positive example of the conscientious housekeeper. For her too, “[e]verything there seemed to be always done and never doing.” Here, however, Mrs. Scudder’s extraordinary talents as a housekeeper are explicitly relegated to the past. Stowe consistently imagines her kitchen as a thing of the past, of “olden times.” Her exhortation to the reader to “let us not forget our grandmothers’ kitchens!” suggests that this way of keeping house is characteristic of an early time and a specific region (12-13).

¹⁷ Stowe’s treatment of Candace in *The Minister’s Wooing* indicates her ongoing interest in African-American women characters. Although Candace is not presented as an artist, Stowe does suggest that she is a natural public figure with the power to captivate a crowd. “[T]here are some sorts of people,” Stowe’s narrator muses, “for whom everybody turns out as they would for a railroad-car, without stopping to ask why; and Candace was one of them.” Like Dinah, Candace is a problematic figure, exhibiting stereotypical characteristics to make the modern reader cringe. But Stowe’s decision to depict Candace and Dinah as independent, even formidable, women also serves as an effective strategy whereby notions of female power and artistry are introduced in a non-threatening manner (69).

the type of order exemplified by Miss Ophelia and would appear to condemn St. Clare's cook, Stowe seems unable to fully repress her admiration for the chaotic genius embodied in Dinah.

Stowe's sympathetic attitude towards Dinah may have derived from her memory of her own father's creative practices. A prominent Presbyterian minister, Lyman Beecher appears to have been Dinah's match in terms of his resistance to New England virtues of tidiness and order. As E. Bruce Kirkham notes, "Her father was untidy; sermons, pamphlets, notes, books, and bits and pieces of most everything cluttered the floor of his study. Wife after wife and daughter after daughter attempted to do to his study what Miss Ophelia attempted in Dinah's kitchen" (121). Yet I would like to suggest that Stowe's notion of the chaotic genius also may have developed out of her awareness of her own literary aesthetic, a recognition of a certain affinity between her own creative practices and that of her fictional cook. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, after all, is by no means an orderly book: subplots and narrative digressions abound; characters appear for a few pages, never to appear again; narrative threads are dropped and picked up again without any apparent regard for over arching structure. Nor does the novel maintain a consistent tone, or adhere to one generic model. As David S. Reynolds points out in *Beneath the American Renaissance*, "the dark undercurrent" running through the novel, most evident in the gothic chapters set on the Legree plantation, often goes unrecognized due to critical emphasis on the sentimental (77). And one could make a similar claim with regard to other elements of the novel that fail to match our expectations of the genre of sentimental "women's" fiction, such as the overlooked comic sequences that open the

novel, or the rousing adventure sections that recall the novels of Sir Walter Scott or James Fenimore Cooper.¹⁸ Thus, much like her contemporary, E.D.E.N. Southworth, whose wildly popular newspaper serial *The Hidden Hand* incorporated a wide variety of genres and styles, Stowe's "meandering and circuitous" approach to fiction was thoroughly consistent with an emphasis on "final results."¹⁹

I

Claims that the novel lacked unity and observations as to its stylistic inconsistencies are not new to the criticism of Harriet Beecher Stowe's most famous work. When *Uncle Tom's Cabin* first appeared in book form in 1852, critical response to the novel and its author ranged from outraged denunciation to adulation; yet, on the issues of organization and unity, early reviews exhibited notable consensus. One reviewer complained about the novel's failure to conform to typical organizing patterns. "It is a rule of art," the reviewer insisted, ". . . that a work of fiction should be so joined together, that every passage and incident should contribute to bring about an inevitable though unexpected catastrophe. Mrs. Stowe's events have many of them no connection with each other whatsoever" (Holmes 469). It is a point to which George Sand conceded, in spite of her high regard for the novel,

¹⁸ The comic shenanigans of Sam and Andy are almost completely neglected in critical treatments of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Yet, somewhat like Mrs. Burr's triumph over her stubborn senator husband, these comic episodes provide alternate models of resistance whereby the weak outwit the strong, a dynamic that contrasts with both George's heroism and Tom's self-sacrifice. Stowe's incorporation of different genres is further evident in the moments in the text indebted to adventure fiction, such as one in which the party of fugitives takes refuge at the top of a thirty-foot chasm, recalling episodes in Sir Walter Scott's *Rob Roy* and in James Fenimore Cooper's *Prairie* (Kirkham, 125).

¹⁹ Like Stowe, Southworth's style varies throughout the course of her novel's serial appearance. One critic observes that "a short list of the genres that Southworth drew upon to one degree or another would include romance, war story, adventure tale, bildingsroman, travel narrative, domestic tale, fairy tale, mystery, ghost story" (Looby 185, n.11).

admitting that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* itself must be considered “defective according to the rules of the modern French romance” (460). Twentieth century critics have also commented, often disparagingly, on the disorder characteristic of the text as a whole, what Bruce Kirkham refers to as the novel’s “jerky movement” and “lack of continuity” and George F. Whicher sees as a consequence of the novel’s tendency to borrow indiscriminately from various popular forms, from “broadly conceived melodrama, humor, and pathos.” (Kirkham 68; Whicher 583).

For Sand, and for sympathetic critics since, such deviance from “rules” of novelistic structure matters little in the final analysis. The novel’s apparent defects, Sand observed, “exist only in relation to the conventional rules of art, which never have been and never will be absolute” (460). More recent reconsiderations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* have also had to confront common literary standards used to assess (and often to dismiss) Stowe’s novel. For instance, in her groundbreaking work, *Sensational Designs*, Jane Tompkins argues that twentieth-century critics have been unable “either to appreciate the complexity and scope of a novel like Stowe’s, or to account for its popular success” due to persistent “assumptions about the nature and function of literature” (125). For Tompkins, works like *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which overtly attempt to influence the course of history, cannot be assessed through reference to “modernist” notions whereby “literature is by definition a form of discourse that has no designs on the world” (125). Instead, she suggests, Stowe’s novel must be considered in light of its own agenda, the rhetorical strategies it employs to convey its message, and the effects it is able to produce in its readers.

Another reassessment of Stowe's novel, also from the mid-1980s, suggests that critics too often fail to perceive the organizing structure of a novel that conforms to female rather than male aesthetics. For Elaine Showalter, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* may not obey the rules "which dictate a unity of action leading to a denouement," but this does not mean that it lacks unity or structure (Showalter, "Piecing and Writing" 237). Instead, Showalter invokes the metaphor of a quilt, suggesting that Stowe conceived of her novel as a collection of contrasting episodes modeled on the Log Cabin quilt, a popular nineteenth-century pattern in which contrasting blocks of fabric are pieced together around a central square, resulting in a bold pattern of concentric rectangles. The cabin invoked in the title and depicted in detail in the fourth chapter thus offers a hint as to narrative structure while serving as the novel's "iconographic center upon which narrative blocks are built up" (235).

Such reconsiderations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* have done much to spark renewed inquiry into this important American novel and to reopen issues of literary value. Yet, these reappraisals of the novel ultimately offer totalizing visions of a text that remains, for me, fascinatingly fragmented. For Tompkins, Stowe's eschatological worldview serves to weld together seemingly disparate events into a single typological narrative. Once one perceives its "ruling paradigm," according to Tompkins, the novel's "highly schematized intent" is revealed (136). Although Showalter begins with an astute observation about the fragmentary quality of the *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she too ends by affirming the novel's fundamental unity. Ironically, the metaphor of a quilt, which originates in an appreciation for variations between sections or episodes, ultimately functions to smooth over such variation, re-

imagining the pieces as firmly stitched together into an elaborately organized whole.

In both analyses, the argument for textual unity derives from the identification of a center or central aim, to which other textual elements become subordinate.

According to both Tompkins and Showalter, Stowe's novel is only apparently sprawling and diverse; in fact it is highly organized, either by the intensity of its rhetorical purpose, or in its formal adherence to an innovative aesthetic pattern.

Thus both comprehensive and unifying readings seem strangely indebted to the assumptions about literature guiding the earlier hostile critic who demanded of novels a perfect subordination of part to whole. Instead, I would argue, appreciation of the novel's parts, the scenes and episodes that comprise the novel, was, for Stowe and for many of her first readers, at least as important as any critical evaluation of the work in its entirety. A more radical reassessment of the work, then, goes beyond a redefinition of textual unity to a reconsideration of the value placed on textual unity to begin with. Indeed, I would like to propose an alternative model of narrative structure based on the recognition of the work's unique publication context, the fact that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was originally conceived, written, and read as a series of installments over time.

II.

While it is impossible to recreate the actual conditions under which any given novel was written or to determine a given author's precise motivation, certain details of publication can help to point to some of Stowe's chief artistic concerns as she engaged in this particular publication enterprise. The critical preoccupations of both

unsympathetic and sympathetic literary critics, the desire to identify a totalizing organizational or thematic structure for a novel understood as a whole, may not have been as dominant in the mind of an author constructing discrete installments to be published immediately upon completion, as part of a literary endeavor of undetermined scope and form. I do not mean to suggest that Stowe was entirely uninterested in issues of overall unity, but rather that these considerations were not likely to have been dominant in her initial conception of the project. Instead, it seems reasonable to assume that Stowe's early training as a writer for periodicals, and her sense of this project as a continuation of that activity, would have figured large in her initial planning and composition of her first novel.

First, it is important to recall that, for Stowe and her contemporaries, the periodical press provided a crucial outlet for literary work and thereby played an important role in artistic development. Stowe's literary apprenticeship may have begun in the parlor and in the friendly circle of the Semi-Colon club, but when she started to produce fiction for a broader audience she turned to the magazines, publishing a number of stories and sketches in the New York *Evangelist* throughout the 1830s, and later placing stories in magazines such as the *Western Literary Messenger* and *Godey's Lady's Book*. Much of this early fiction was quite short, continuous with the "character sketches, essays, travel narratives, poems, riddles, letters, and sermonic and devotional meditations" that members of the Semi-Colon club composed for one another, and shared anonymously (Tonkovich 152). As Showalter reminds us, prior to the 1850s, "the standard genre of women's writing was the sketch or piece written for ladies' magazines or albums," a fact Hedrick attributes

to women's limited access to uninterrupted time in which to write (Showalter "Piecing" 229; Hedrick 229).

Stowe's early career exemplifies this trend. Indeed, the preface to her first published work, a collection of republished stories and sketches entitled *The Mayflower; or Sketches of Scenes and Characters among the Descendants of the Pilgrims* (1943), notes the "enormous multiplication of sketches, tales, novels and romances, of all sorts and sizes, which, by the agency of cheap magazines and mammoth sheets, have been showered into every hamlet in our land," explicitly framing the work as a product of its historical moment (2). According to the preface, this flood of literature should not be perceived as a threat since "there are many advantages to be gained by reading works of this class, if properly selected" (4). Here, *The Mayflower* is clearly presented as a collection of works deemed suitably for republication, a justification that emphasizes the fitness and usefulness of the individual pieces rather than the broader theme evoked by the collection's title.

Stowe's initial publications in the *National Era* appeared to follow this initial pattern of production. Her first story for the paper which appeared in the newspaper in 1850, was a short piece entitled "The Freeman's Dream: A Parable," and, over the next few months, Stowe saw three more sketches into print, including a satire at the expense of city folks, a sentimental tale for the paper's Christmas issue, and a moralizing story about the dangers of late parties (Kirkham 64). Indeed, there is evidence that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was not imagined as a deviation from this pattern of publication. Gamaliel Bailey, the editor of the *National Era* would later remark that initially he "did not dream that she would attempt a novel, for she had never written

one” (“A Pioneer Editor” 748). Although Stowe acknowledged that her new contribution would be “much longer than any I have ever written,” she did not think that it would run for more than three or four installments. Tellingly, she did not refer to her new project as a “novel” but rather as a “story” comprised of “a series of sketches,” and based on “incidents” derived from either personal observations or reports by friends (qtd. in Kirkham 66).²⁰ Thus, from its inception, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was imagined as a collection of parts, not so different from Stowe’s previous creative endeavors. While Stowe might have hoped that her sketches would one day be gathered into a collection, this possibility would not have been foremost in her mind as she set out to compose discrete installments on a rigid publication deadline.²¹

This early training in periodical publishing, her experience creating short and varied pieces for periodicals and literary anthologies, not only influenced Stowe in her early conception of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, but also offered a strategy for composition well-suited to her particular publication situation. The information we have on Stowe’s composing practices reveals an author crafting discrete installments for immediate release, a composing pattern that, while uniquely available to authors of serialized novels, did not represent the only way that a serial novel might be written. Many novels that were written to be serialized were completed well before their installments began to appear in print, while others not originally intended for serialization were cut up and published as serial installments by magazine editors looking for fiction content. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, however, fits the model commonly

²⁰ The letter from Harriet Beecher Stowe to Gamaliel Bailey is dated March 1851.

²¹ Stowe’s experience in some ways anticipates Sarah Orne Jewett’s nearly a half-century later, when the latter author’s *Country of the Pointed Firs* was republished as a book. As Jewett wrote in a letter to her sister Mary, “How little I thought of the ‘Pointed Firs’ being eminent and turning into a book of parts when I began” (Sedgwick 84).

assumed to apply to all serial novels whereby installments are composed simultaneous to its serial publication, with successive installments sent off to the publisher on a weekly basis. Stowe's initial vision of her work as a "series of sketches" indicates that at the outset she had not yet planned, much less written, the novel that would ultimately reach a record forty weekly installments over the course of ten months. The fact that she did not know the precise details of later portions of her project is evident in a letter to Frederick Douglass written nearly one month into the serial, in which Stowe expressed her keen desire to gain information for inclusion in subsequent sections (Rpt. in Fields 133). That Stowe missed not one but four deadlines over the course of the novel's serialization suggests that she tended to compose her installments immediately prior to their publication. At such points, when installments of the novel failed to arrive in time to be printed in the *National Era*, the editor Gamaliel Bailey was compelled to issue apologetic notices to his readers informing them that the missed installment would appear in the subsequent issue of the newspaper.²²

Despite the many questions raised by this particular mode of composition, so different from the typical composing practices of contemporary novelists, relatively few scholars have fully explored the relationship between Stowe's writing practices and the novel's final form. In his influential early work on the composition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, E. Bruce Kirkham's rejects the notion that the mode of publication played a significant role in Stowe's construction of her text since, in his estimate, Stowe failed to exploit the possibilities inherent in installment issue. The variability

²² This occurred on August 28, October 30 and December 18 of 1851, and again on January 29, 1852.

in the length of each installment, he argues, prevented the novel from conforming to “the typical serial structure” whereby “suspense [is] created, sometimes artificially, at the end of the installment to encourage the reader to buy the next issue in order to find out what happened” (75). If serialization had any effect on the novel, Kirkham insists, it was a negative one, leading to “lapses in technique as well as accuracy” (75). According to Kirkham’s analysis, then, serial publication is irrelevant to a formal consideration of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* because the novel fails to exhibit the characteristics of the “typical” serial. However, while some serials did (and still do) make use of this particular structuring device, it hardly represents the only method of organizing serial narrative. Another model might structure each episode as a relatively autonomous unit. (Television sitcoms, for instance, typically follow this pattern, while most soap operas rely on the cliff-hanger ending.) For Stowe, a writer of short fiction and magazine sketches just beginning her first major project, an alternative understanding of serial installments as discrete entities would have held an obvious appeal, providing her with a strategy for composing that both drew on her prior experiences as a writer and allowed her to move forward on this larger project.

Other scholars have offered intriguing but somewhat incomplete assessments of the role of serialization in the novel’s final form. For instance, in her biography of Stowe, Joan D. Hedrick notes that length of the novel should be understood as a consequence of Stowe’s access to immediate and appreciative audience response as a consequence of the novel’s initial serialization— that the opportunity to receive feedback from an audience helped sustain Stowe’s creative energies throughout her composition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. As she and others have pointed out, not only did

Stowe receive direct communications from her readers, as she notes in her “Concluding Remarks” to her readers, but as the novel was being published Gamaliel Bailey printed excerpts from letters by appreciative readers who urged Stowe “not be in a hurry to finish” her serial and to “keep it going all winter” (1).²³ However, Hedrick also speculates that serial publication may have helped Stowe avoid the narrative weaknesses that would plague her later novels, *Dred* and *Oldtown Folks*, both of which were written to be published in book form. “It is,” Hedrick writes, “as if Stowe needed the check of an actual audience to shape her story” (Hedrick 344). This claim, that the “check” of an actual audience kept Stowe from going on too long, would appear to present a paradox in light of Hedrick’s notion that the serial audience was necessary to the expansion of the text from a series of sketches into a full-blown novel. For, if serial publication helped prompt Stowe to expand her project from a few sketches into a forty-five-chapter novel, how could the audience created by serialization simultaneously prevent Stowe from going on too long? How might the audience for the serialized novel function as both a stimulus and a check? And, how do these seemingly contrary forces play out in the novel itself?

Other considerations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as a serial novel avoid such questions entirely, by focusing not on the possible formal implications of installment publication but rather on the serial publication context and the potential effects of this

²³ For Stowe, immediate feedback from readers might have helped to ease the isolation inherent in composing for periodical publication as opposed to writing for a close circle of literary acquaintances. Others did not make this transition from oral to print communication so easily. According to one account of Mark Twain’s relationship to audience, Twain suffered from a sense of disconnection from his readers whenever he wrote for print. A performer on the lecture circuit who had mastered the art of stagecraft, Twain complained in an 1889 letter that his audience had “no voice in print and so I cannot know whether I have won its approbation of only got its censure.” For Twain, then, marketing work by subscription, rather than serial publication, allowed for the creation of the imaginative bond with his readers necessary to composition. (Lowry 20, 48).

situated reading on audience reception. For instance, in an essay comparing the periodical publication contexts of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*, Clair Parfait argues that *National Era* provided a far more nurturing environment for Stowe's serial than the *Journal des Débats* did for Sue (144, 150). Susan Belasco Smith makes a similar point, arguing that the publication context helped to support and reinforce the novel's message, that correspondences between articles in the newspaper and episodes in the novel reveal "the extent to which *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was one part of a strong program undertaken by the *National Era* to expose the scandal of slavery in a variety of ways" (Smith "Serialization" 79).²⁴

These views of the novel as essentially consistent with the editorial vision of the periodical and the material published alongside its installments are complicated by Barbara Hochman's more recent investigation of the relationship between *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the other fiction published in the *National Era*. According to Hochman, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* both repeats and deviates from the periodical literature that surrounded it in order to present the horrors of slavery anew. Noting the surprising scarcity of explicitly abolitionist fiction in the *National Era* and the tendency for authors to revert to lofty generalities in their references to slavery, Hochman concludes that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* marks an important departure from convention to the extent that it turned fiction to an explicitly political end. In spite of the newspapers avowedly anti-slavery bent, Hochman points out, much of the fiction

²⁴ According to Smith, references to European revolution in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would have resonated with readers given the newspaper's ongoing reports on revolutionary activities around the world. Similarly, a sentimental sketch about the death of a young girl entitled "A Reminiscence," which appeared in the same issue as the first installment of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, would have found a counterpart in the subsequent scene of little Eva's death. "As diverse as the article, stories, and features in the paper were," Smith writes, "the underlying purpose of all the coverage was nevertheless to promote the antislavery cause" (78).

in the *National Era* prior to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was intended to provide a respite from the social ills treated elsewhere in the newspaper rather than a translation of political treatise into fictional form ("*Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the *National Era*" 147). Thus attention to the serial context for Hochman suggests that "Stowe both catered to and radically revised the expectations of sentimental readers" (162).

While these arguments regarding the relationship of the novel to its periodical context are illuminating, each analysis accepts, on same level, the inherent unity and coherence of both the novel and the periodical in which it first appeared. This is not to deny the general point that Stowe enjoyed a supportive publication environment as she composed the installments that would become *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. As Parfait and Hedricks note, Gamaliel Bailey proved to be an exceptionally accommodating editor, one willing to publish whatever material Stowe was willing to produce. Bailey himself recalled in 1853 that upon paying Stowe one hundred dollars for a contribution he had informed her that "for that sum she might write as *much* as she pleased, *what* she pleased, and *when* she pleased" ("A Pioneering Editor" 748). And, when the novel expanded "beyond all our calculations," Bailey felt morally bound to send Stowe another remittance of two hundred dollars. This was certainly an amenable situation crucial to Stowe's professional transition from the author of sketches to novelist.

Still, I would like to suggest that, in spite of the newspaper's consistently supportive position with regard to the serial appearing in its pages, both *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the *National Era* are more varied and inconsistent than these readings of publication context would suggest. Although Smith and Hochman reach different

conclusions about the relationship of the novel to the periodical context, both critics proceed from the assumption that the novel is characterized by consistent themes and strategies that may be compared to and contrasted with consistent patterns in style and content characteristic of the *National Era*. In these analyses, the novel represents a reiteration or a departure from periodical precedent. However, in their discussions of the periodical itself, both acknowledge that diversity, rather than uniformity, was the dominant feature of antebellum newspapers in general and the *National Era* in particular. Hochman notes that, like other antebellum periodicals of its day, the *National Era* was comprised of, “A disparate array of texts, laid out side by side . . . designed to attract a readership of men, women, and even children” (145).

Furthermore, she notes, this ““potpourri of ‘high’ and ‘low’ genres was typical of abolitionist newspapers as it was of periodicals that ranged from mass-circulation dailies, to literary ‘annuals’” (145). Smith also remarks on the newspaper’s diversity, referring to the paper as a “polyphonic” text (“Serialization” 78). In another essay on *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* she notes that Bailey had explicitly announced that “the *National Era* would not be confined to the discussion of one subject” (Belasco 24).

Isabelle Lehuu’s recent study *Carnival on the Page* lends additional support to these observations regarding the characteristic variability of periodical content by suggesting that “carnavalesque” diversity was a typical feature of antebellum publications, particularly during the second quarter of the nineteenth century (34). According to Lehuu, this period marked “a temporary, experimental passage in the transformation of American print culture” that persisted until the economic depression of 1857 and the social unrest that accompanied it brought about “increased

cultural bifurcation and the differentiation of reading audiences” (34). Evidence of this diversity is apparent from even a cursory perusal of the material that appeared in *National Era*, from its serious editorials on pressing social ills, to its lofty poems, to the varied contributions by its authors of serial fiction. Advertisements for lard oil, marriage announcements, and editorials on the postal system share space with poems extolling freedom and summaries of political speeches. Some stories, such as E.D.E.N. Southworth’s lurid tale of miscegenation “Hickory Hall; or The Outcast: A Romance of the Blue Ridge,” contain a hint of abolitionist sentiment; others have no discernable relationship to slavery.

Not only does this variation within the pages of the periodical complicate the relationship of the fiction to the other printed material, but it also helps explain the variability evident in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Ironically, the unevenness and shifts in tone evident in Stowe’s novel must be seen as consistent with the liberal aesthetic of the periodical in which it appeared. To expect the type of formal unity and thematic cohesion of novels published as autonomous units, then, is to ignore a publication situation in which variation and novelty were actually preferable to stylistic consistency and thematic coherence. In fact, given the variety of content to appear in the pages of the *National Era*, it is perhaps not surprising to find a similar variability as a key characteristic of Stowe’s serial. Instead, I would argue, this feature of the novel must be understood in light of its original serial publication.

III

One of the larger goals of this study is to determine how individual serial authors responded to the perceived demands of writing in the serial form, how they attempted to manage reader response through attention to the formal potential of serial publication. For Stowe, I would like to suggest, serial publication not only provided an inducement to expand her narrative beyond her original plan, but also offered a strategy for constructing her text as a series of autonomous units, with consistency of style and genre less important than the cohesion of the individual parts. She was hardly the only author to adopt an episodic narrative structure in making the transition from short fiction to long. Louisa May Alcott, for instance, began her first full-length adult novel in 1861 with six discrete chapters, each consisting of the protagonist's encounter with a different form of employment.²⁵ But despite this apparent similarity in their approaches to composition, the two authors differed in their ability to establish a correspondence between this narrative structure and serial publication. When *Work* was eventually serialized in the *Christian Union* between December 18, 1872 and June 18, 1873, it was divided haphazardly, with little thought to establishing a correlation between installment and chapter division.²⁶ Stowe, in contrast, made a conscious effort to maintain control over the serial publication of her novel and was relatively successful in this regard. In Gamaliel Bailey's editorial notices to readers of the *National Era*, he remarks that Stowe had requested that the

²⁵ One of these chapters originally appeared anonymously as a short story entitled "A Nurse's Story" in *Frank Leslie's Chimney Corner*.

²⁶ Alcott's contemporary critics found much to complain about in the structuring of *Work*. One reviewer for the *Springfield Daily Union* wrote, "In an artistic point of view the tale is rambling, disjointed, and stops at no particular place. One almost feels as if it was written by pieces, as the serial installments were called for." A reviewer from *Harper's* complained that the first half of the novel was "without even the semblance of a plot. Miss Alcott appears to have sat down to write the first chapter without knowing what the next chapter would be, and to drift along in the current of her own thoughts till she found a novel growing under her hands" (Zehr 328).

chapters of her novel be published as complete installments.²⁷ And, a careful analysis of the actual installment breaks in the novel suggests that Stowe composed her chapters with an eye to their initial appearance as independent installments.

That Stowe conceived of many of the chapters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as independent units with their own internal logic and cohesion is evident from an analysis of the installment pattern of first half of the novel. Although the first two chapters, which primarily serve to introduce the characters and to set up the situation, were published together, the chapters that immediately follow all show evidence of remarkable unity and focus. Chapter III, for instance, which bears the title "The Husband and Father," centers on a single decision by one character and may be read as an autonomous unit in its own right—a brief sketch of a predicament common to slave fathers and husbands. The chapter title, which points to George's identity within the family unit, urges readers to generalize from this single instance, allowing the chapter to function not just as a moment in the narrative of a fictional protagonist, but also as a representative depiction of one aspect of slavery.

The next two installments are similarly self sufficient, each consisting of a complete chapter that offers its reader a portion of narrative that may be appreciated on its own. For instance, Chapter IV presents us with "An Evening in Uncle Tom's Cabin," a colorful portrait of homey slave life that is set in contrast to the sordid business deals taking place in the dining halls of the main house. Chapter V, "Showing the Feelings of Living Property on Changing Owners," provides a

²⁷ Bailey made note of Stowe's request on at least two instances: once on July 24, 1851 when he explained that the late arrival of the installment had compelled him to divide it, and again on August 21, when he informed his readers, "Chapter XII of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' reached us at too late an hour for insertion this week. Mrs. Stowe having requested that it should not be divided, our readers may look for an entire chapter in the next Era" (qtd. in Kirkham 109, 113).

counterpart to the earlier chapter centered on George through its portrayal of the plight of a slave mother. While some of the installments seem to adhere to a more conventional linear pattern, moving the action forward rather than representing a relatively autonomous fictional episode, others might be read as short stories in their own right. Chapter XI, for instance, could stand alone as a fairly conventional sketch on the subject of racial passing, since the chapter does little to move the narrative forward and derives its interest primarily from the disclosure of George's identity to both an unsuspecting acquaintance and to the reader.

Ironically, the autonomy of the individual units is reinforced by Stowe's common practice of repeating some of the most important information from prior installments. While this practice calls attention to the presence of narrative outside the bounds of a given installment, it also anticipates one of the potential problems of serial publication: the possibility that a reader might have missed or forgotten information from a previous section. Even as the installments that comprise chapters VI through IX adhere to a fairly conventionally linear pattern, chronicling Eliza's progress and the obstructions to her capture, each of these chapters function as autonomous units to the extent that they include repeated versions of important prior events necessary to understanding the events of that particular installment. In Chapter III, for example, a conversation between George and Eliza provides an occasion to reiterate George's dilemma, information already provided in the chapter immediately prior. In Chapter V, Stowe employs a similar technique, using a conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Shelby as an occasion to recall the crucial action that set the narrative in motion. Chapters VI, VII, and VIII likewise provide enough

information from the previous sections to allow the reader to pick up the serial after interruption of a week or more, or even to enter into the narrative midstream.

Perhaps the most striking example of Stowe's use of this narrative strategy is in her repeated recapitulation of Eliza's escape from the Shelby's. In Chapter VI, and again in Chapter VII, we are reminded of Eliza's departure and its primary cause. Eliza's famous flight across the frozen river, which occurs in Chapter VII, is repeated in some form in the two chapters that follow. Chapter VIII opens with a reference to this remarkable feat, which is then recounted by Sam and Andy upon their return to the Shelby household. And in Chapter IX, Eliza provides her own version of events to Mrs. Burr and her family, restating the reasons that compelled her to run away and describing how she eluded her pursuers.²⁸ When encountered as chapters of a book, such repetitions might seem clumsy, the sign of an author with insufficient material at her disposal or an inability to move her narrative forward. But when these chapters appeared as installments of a serial, such repetition must have served an important practical purpose, reminding less diligent readers of important information they may have forgotten, while encouraging new readers to begin following the narrative from this point forward.

Thus, while Kirkham sees Stowe as failing to take advantage of serialization as a mode of publication, careful attention to the early chapters reveals the novel's responsiveness to the unique demands of serial reading. This desire to accommodate her readers' needs is evident not only in Stowe's evident efforts to craft each installment as a relatively autonomous narrative unit and her tendency to remind

²⁸ In the serial, the senator and his wife are referred to as Senator and Mrs. Burr; when the novel appeared in volume form their last name was changed to Bird.

readers of relevant information from prior installments, but also in the type of narration she deploys. While much has been written about Stowe's emotional appeals to her readers—what George F. Whicher dismisses as her “tender pleadings”— less has been said about another narrative voice that appears throughout *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: the friendly and accommodating narrator whose prime concern is to guide her readers through the narrative (563). In this guise, Stowe's narrator gently reminds readers that they are being reacquainted with figures that have appeared in previous installments, referring to them as “our old friend Eliza” or “our humble hero” (116, 132). For readers of the novel in serial obliged to keep track of a host of characters over the course of nearly a year, such reminders would have been welcome indeed.

Not only does Stowe construct her novel with an eye to her serial audience, I would argue that she also attempts to teach her periodical readers how to appreciate her work in all its fragmentation. She does this by employing the same strategy she uses to convey the various horrors of slavery, presenting the reader with scenes— in this case, scenes of storytelling and scenes of reading. Characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are constantly reading to one another and telling each other stories. And, more important, such exchanges consistently elicit powerful responses, in the fictional readers and listeners but presumably in the larger audience as well. In effect, the scenes of reading in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* allow Stowe to introduce an alternative criterion for literary excellence, a new mode of responding to text based on the appreciation of parts, rather than the appreciation of a work as a whole.

The most striking example of this practice occurs in the novel's inclusion of scenes of religious study, which afford a natural occasion for the representation of

narrative and the appropriate audience response to that narrative. For example, in one early scene, George reads from the end of Revelations, deviating from the text occasionally to deliver a few of his own expositions with “a commendable seriousness and gravity” (26). Uncle Tom follows him with a prayer that surpasses George’s in its power to move, for in spite of George’s learning, “Nothing could exceed the touching simplicity, the child-like earnestness, of [Tom’s] prayer.” Such scenes not only reveal Stowe’s vision of ideal narration, her preference for simple and unadorned oral performance of text, they also depict the desired effect of such instances of narration. Young “Mas’r” George’s recital of the last chapters of Revelations is met with enthusiastic interjections from his listeners: “‘Only hear that!’ ‘Jest think on’t!’” But it is Tom’s prayer that generates the most impassioned response: “And so much did his prayer always work on the devotional feelings of his audiences, that there seemed often a danger that it would be lost altogether in the abundance of response which broke out everywhere around him” (26).

Narrated accounts of lived experiences also have the capacity to move those who hear them. When Eliza relates the story of her escape Senator Burr and his family are moved to tears. The two little boys throw themselves “disconsolately into the skirts of their mother’s gown, where they were sobbing and wiping their eyes and noses, to their heart’s content”; Mrs. Burr hides her face in her handkerchief, the two house servants weep and let out exclamations; and even the senator is on the verge of tears (72). St. Clare’s account of how he “tamed” a fierce slave through kindness causes Eva to burst into tears (203-204). Later, when Cassy tells Tom the story of her tragic past, he is so overcome with emotion that he momentarily forgets his wounds;

“So vehement and overpowering was the force with which she spoke,” Stowe proclaims, “that, for a season, Tom was beguiled even by the pain of his own wounds” (318).

Such scenes not only reveal the characteristics of the ideal speaker, namely one able to speak with eloquent simplicity and sincerity, they also suggest a model for the exemplary recipient of Stowe’s text, one with the capacity to react, to participate, to feel deeply.²⁹ This type of response is consistently depicted as something natural and untaught. For instance, when Tom (and by extension Stowe’s reader) learns the story of Lucy’s suffering, he responds with horror. “If only he had been instructed by certain ministers of Christianity,” Stowe remarks wryly, “he might have thought better of it, and seen in it an every-day incident of lawful trade” (113). Eva’s youth, like Tom’s lack of education, actually makes her better able to appreciate the emotional power of stories simply told; for, in addition to being virtually angelic, Eva is also a divine listener. When Tom tells her “in simple earnest phrase” the tale of Prue’s suffering, she exclaims “These things sink into my heart”(190). Later she rebukes her father, “You want me to live so happy and never to have any pain—never suffer anything, —not even hear a sad story, when other poor creatures have nothing but pain and sorrow, all their lives; —it seems selfish. I ought to know such things, I ought to feel about them!” (241).

²⁹ One account of Stowe’s composition practices suggests a correlation between Stowe’s fictional readers and her initial audience. According to Annie Fields, who wrote an 1897 account of the composition of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, when Stowe read Uncle Tom’s death scene to her ten and twelve year-old sons their response was similar to that of Mrs. Bird’s two sons who hide their tears in her skirts. Stowe’s sons purportedly, “. . . broke out into convulsions of weeping, one of them crying out, ‘Oh! Mamma, slavery is the most cursed thing in the world!’ ” (Fields 147). (Stowe changed the family’s name from Bird to Burr in the book edition.)

These moments in the text suggest an alternative to the notion of formal unity as the defining determinant of artistic merit. Significantly, the novel contains no scenes of characters engaging in critical or aesthetic evaluations of narrative (something that would emerge in later “realist” novels).³⁰ Indeed, with the exception of a single reference to a collection of gothic tales in the section that takes place on Simon Legree’s plantation, there are no scenes that depict characters reading fiction (348).³¹ Instead, in Stowe’s novel scenes of reading and listening in the novel enact alternate models for appreciating texts. The oral and written narratives that provoke such strong reactions in their listeners and readers are invariably brief, typified by a simple account related from memory, a passage from scripture, or an abbreviated tale of a life of suffering; yet the sensations inspired by these short, unadorned narratives are immense. Lacking training in critical response, admirable characters in Stowe’s novel listen sympathetically and react spontaneously. The moral response to stories of suffering, Stowe seems to be showing us, is immediate, instinctive, and sympathetic, rather than evaluative. The speaker may be unsophisticated, the language plain, the plot “meandering and circuitous,” but readers of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, like the exemplary characters depicted in the novel, should be able to see beyond such superficialities (180).

³⁰ I am thinking here of William Dean Howells’s *The Rise of Silas Lapham* in particular, where references to reading and books appear frequently. For instance, this novel includes much discussion of who reads and what form that reading takes (whether newspapers, or luxury editions). One extended conversation (which leaves Lapham mystified) considers the appropriate subject for the novelist (Howells 110-110, 189).

³¹ This reference to popular sensational literature seems to indicate Stowe’s awareness that parts of her novel border on the sensational. If so, the self-conscious inclusion of a fictional reader of such fiction could serve to distance Stowe’s text from more extreme popular manifestations of the gothic mode.

Significantly, the model of reading proposed by the novel also suggests a sensible strategy for reading serial fiction. Instead of being able to tear through the novel to find out what happens next, readers of the serial version were obliged to go slowly, to encounter one installment at a time. Serial publication thus helped to foster a specific type of relationship to text, one based on immediate response to brief pieces of narrative, an appreciation for the part over the whole. This understanding of reading, of course, finds a parallel in religious reading. One does not read the Bible in its entirety, from beginning to end; instead the religious reader returns to specific sections and to particularly resonant lines, as Stowe reminds us throughout her novel. She points out that Tom's Bible is filled with "bold, strong marks and dashes, with pen and ink" designating "the passages which more particularly gratified his ear or affected his heart . . . so he could in a moment seize upon his favorite passages, without the labor of spelling out what lay between them . . ." (125-126). When Cassy reads to him from his Bible, she finds the requested passage, "heavily marked" and "much worn" (313). Although Tom is a slow reader and must laboriously sound out each consecutive word, this proves to be more of an advantage than an impediment. "Fortunate for him was it that the book he was intent on was one which slow reading cannot injure," Stowe affirms, "—nay, one whose words, like ingots of gold, seem often to need to be weighed separately, that the mind might take in their priceless value" (125).

Tom's relationship to the Bible, Stowe suggests, represents the ideal relationship to text, not only to the divine word but also to other narratives with the capacity to move. By the same token, apparent impediments to reading, such as a

reader's limited education or the fracturing of a text due to serial publication, may actually help facilitate superior reading. Stowe's first readers, like the characters in her story, do not gain immediate access to an extended novel-length narrative. Instead, readers are confronted with a series of scenes, a sequence of loosely connected stories and episodes. A failure to appreciate these apparent digressions on their own terms or an inability to respond to fragments of text on an instinctive, emotional level, signals a deficiency not in the text but in the reader.

In effect, then, an inability to appreciate the component parts of Stowe's sprawling novel on the basis of perceived flaws in the design of the whole is a bit like refusing to enjoy one of Dinah's meals on account of her messy kitchen. Dinah's culinary methods may be erratic, her kitchen disorderly, dinner may be served late, and some dishes may come up short— although, as Stowe's narrator tells us, Dinah would have ready "fifty indisputably good reasons" to account for any occasional failure of one part of a meal (180). But such considerations are ultimately irrelevant; Dinah's cooking is to be assessed on the basis of her meals, which are reliably satisfying, minor masterpieces delivered on a regular schedule.

I do not mean to press the comparison too far. I am not trying to suggest that Dinah is intended to function as an exemplar of ideal creative activity, or that reading installments of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the same as enjoying a meal. However, Stowe's treatment of Dinah does offer an alternative understanding of the criteria for assessing literary excellence. Defenders of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* often cite the novel's historical relevance— its remarkable popular success, and its influential treatment of one of the defining issues of the nineteenth century. Others have sought to identify an

alternative organizational schema or to thematic center in order to make a case for the novel's inherent organization and unity. Alternatively, I would suggest that an appreciation of the unique situation created by installment publication and an awareness of the demands and delights of serial composition, help to reveal the craft underlying Stowe's endeavor. To perceive *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a novel of parts, and to consider the strategies employed to make those parts individually engaging, is to gain new respect for Stowe's abilities in light of her own objectives in a particular publication context. It is also to challenge conventional notions of artistic unity as the principal measure of literary worth, occasioned by a shift in attention from the whole to the parts.

IV

Stowe's pattern of one relatively self-contained chapter per installment becomes noticeably less pronounced as the serial novel progresses. A few key episodes in the latter half of the novel do appear as single installments: one installment is reserved for the chapter that introduces the reader to Topsy; another is devoted to St. Clare's nephew Henrique, who then disappears from the novel after this chapter. One installment consists of the chapter that illustrates the immediate impact of Eva's death, and another coincides with the only chapter in the novel to take place in a slave market. But about midway into the serial, in early October of 1851, Stowe seems to have retreated from her initial mandate that the editor print each chapter separately. From this point on, installments sometimes end before a chapter is complete and may contain more than one complete chapter.

Kirkham accounts for this shift by suggesting that Stowe may have been supplying Bailey with more copy than he could print in a single issue; and, indeed, the installments do tend to get longer as the serial neared conclusion (138). But one might also speculate that Stowe's retreat from the organizational structure that characterized the first half of the serialized novel was occasioned by arrangements with the Boston publishing company John P. Jewett & Co to publish the serial as a book. According to John P. Jewett's accounts of the novel's publication history, he was first alerted to the serial in the winter of 1851 by his wife, who had been following its progress in the *National Era*. Yet as early as September 1851, Gamaliel Bailey announced in the *Era* that Jewett's company had commenced the business arrangements necessary to publish Stowe's novel. Therefore, although the book was not available until March 20 1852, when it appeared in two illustrated volumes, Stowe would have known sometime in the fall of 1851 that subsequent book publication was effectively assured.

This knowledge, that she was engaged in writing a book as well as a newspaper serial, might explain her retreat from her earlier demand that Bailey avoid dividing chapters for installment publication. Faced with the possibility of reaching a much wider audience, Stowe may have been less concerned with crafting appealing individual installments for newspaper readers than with completing her manuscript and seeing it reissued in book form.³² Chapters might still be composed in sequence

³² In 1851, in the November 27 issue of the *National Era*, Gamaliel Bailey placed the weekly subscription figures at 14,500, and noted that the newspaper's circulation had been increasingly steadily each year. Susan Belasco estimates that the newspaper's circulation had reached 28,000 by early 1853 and suggests that the immense popularity of Stowe's serial novel helped boost circulation figures (29). Of course, even assuming that all of the *National Era* subscribers followed Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* ultimately would reach a much larger audience as a

and sent off to the paper upon completion, but the unity and coherence of each installment, as a concession to serial reading practices, would no longer be of primary concern. At this point, she might have felt particularly obliged to write with an eye to her future readers of her narrative in book form, readers who would have access to the book version several weeks before the serial concluded in the *National Era*.

Stowe's new understanding of her work is evident not only in the narrative decisions she makes as she brings the novel to a close, but also in her explicit addresses to her audience. Significantly, it is only at the very end of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that Stowe refers to her story as "a book," which, she imagines, you might peruse "by the blaze of your winter-evening fire" (384). This belated allusion to a solitary reader contrasts with the direct address to imagined readers that occurs in the epilogue that follows it, in which Stowe refers to her young readers as members of "pleasant family circles" with whom she has met "in spirit weekly." (qtd. in Kirkham 183).³³ Although this epilogue was subsequently removed from the book edition, the juxtaposition of these two scenes of reading in the *National Era* version suggests that, even as she completed her serial novel, Stowe maintained a dual sense of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as both a newspaper serial and a book, and was aware of the somewhat different audiences produced by these two publication contexts.³⁴

book. According to Fields's account, 10,000 copies of the novel in book form were sold in just a few days, and another 300,000 were sold within the first year (Fields, 149).

³³ Stowe's address to her reader here is similar to E.D.E.N. Southworth's closing remarks in the first serial version of *The Hidden Hand*. In the serial version, Southworth explicitly thanks her readers for their "appreciation" which she claims has sustained and fortified her throughout her work on her "pleasant task." This final note, which appeared in the last installment of the novel in the *New York Ledger* was removed for the subsequent book publication.

³⁴ Looby shrewdly points out that certain types of narrative address make sense only within a context of serial publication. In *The Hidden Hand*, for instance, E.D.E.N. Southworth apologizes to the reader for digressions and imagines her reader as impatient for the heroine's reappearance. "A book reader," Looby points out, "...could skip ahead a few chapters; a weekly periodical reader was

Still, having undertaken to complete a novel, soon to be published in book form, Stowe apparently felt bound to bring her narrative to an appropriate conclusion. Having composed a loose and disorderly novel as a series of episodes following a large cast of characters, in the final chapters she would pull together these various narrative threads. Characters from different sections of the novel are discovered to be long lost relatives; George, Eliza and their children, along with Cassy (Eliza's mother) and Emmeline (George's sister) depart for Liberia; Topsy becomes a missionary; and George Shelby frees the remaining slaves on the Shelby plantation. If this conclusion feels forced, it does provide a degree of narrative closure. The double reunions serve as a counterpart to the numerous accounts of families torn apart by slavery that occur throughout the novel, while the conventional device of the reuniting of lost family members helps to establish some connection between the various characters and subplots that have comprised the novel.

Thus, in the final chapters Stowe attempts to do for her novel what Miss Ophelia set out to do for Dinah's kitchen, to impose order. At this stage in her composition she would also have been involved in making other minor revisions to the serial text, which must have contributed to her newfound sense of the work as something that would soon be republished whole.³⁵ Yet Stowe's valiant effort to tidy

constrained to wait out Southworth's narrative excesses." (205-206). Interestingly enough, Stowe not only made reference to the serial publication context of *The Minister's Wooing*, which she wrote for *The Atlantic Monthly*, but retained these moments in the book version. In Chapter XII, the narrator remarks that two readers have written to comment on the action underway and cites an article by "one of our esteemed collaborators in the ATLANTIC." At least one of these so-called readers, improbably-named Dr. Theophrastus, seems to have been an invention, but his presence still signals Stowe's desire to imagine herself as writing for a community of serial readers (107, 113).

³⁵ Kirkham provides the most comprehensive analysis of textual variants to date. He notes that the majority of the changes between the two versions are editorial. In the newspaper version, for instance, there is a mistake in the numbering of the chapters which is corrected in the book edition. However, a number of significant changes do seem to come from Stowe's pen.

up her narrative at the end does not negate the multiplicity of the novel. Readers of the work in installment form would still have experienced the novel, particularly at its outset, as a series of relatively autonomous episodes often characterized by marked divergences in style.

Stowe, for her part, maintained an artistic emphasis on the individual pieces that comprised a work of literature throughout much of her career. In *A Minister's Wooing*, perhaps her most tightly structured novel, she begins by self-consciously evoking the image of a "patchwork," consisting of a number of "figures" that, despite her best efforts, "still seem ill-arranged" (3). Later, in a letter that noted the popularity of her then-concluding series, "House and Home Papers," Stowe laid out plans for a new series, which she planned to call "Christopher's Evenings" and imagined as a series of stories ostensibly written by the title character, "for the winter-evening amusement of his family." This episodic organizational structure, she explained in a letter, not only would "allow great freedom and latitude; a capacity of striking anywhere when a topic seems to be in the public mind," but would also allow her to produce material that could eventually be collected and republished as a book. For, she continued, it is from "a little series of sketches or rather little groups of sketches" that "books may be made" (Fields 300).

This notion of a book as collection or series of relatively autonomous pieces would serve Stowe well during her career, and she produced a number of serials in

Chapter titles absent in the *National Era* were supplied for the book edition. Quotations at the beginning of chapters are added and occasionally corrected. A few passages are expanded or deleted: Stowe removes a reference to Emerson and Carlyle from chapter 12 and slightly revises Tom's death scene; she inserts a preface absent from the newspaper edition; and, as noted, she omits the epilogue.

this vein in the course of her lifetime. Like Alcott, who would assemble collections of juvenile fiction with titles like *Aunt Jo's Scrap Bag* and *A Garland for Girls*, Stowe was able to turn the exigencies of serial publication to her advantage, developing a literary aesthetic involving an ongoing interrogation of the relationship between part and whole. Such negotiation was an essential part of the experience of nineteenth-century authorship, at least for those who hoped for economic reward. Yet, without a clear sense of the interaction of periodical publication and novel writing in general, and an appreciation of Stowe's astute recognition of publishing circumstances in her composition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in particular, it might be easy to lose sight of Stowe's artistry and to overlook her remarkable talents as a successful serial author.

CHAPTER THREE

“Rather Rude Jolts”:

Henry James, Serial Publication, and the Art of Fiction

Several installments into *The Bostonians*, Henry James depicts an awkward social gathering: a small party hosted by the Tarrants for the benefit of Olive Chancellor, Verena’s new friend and mentor. In the course of the afternoon, poor Olive is compelled to interact with a number of characters, none of whom (with the exception of Verena) measures up to her exacting standards. Re-acquaintance with her hostess satisfies her that she is indeed vulgar. Further contact with Selah Tarrant convinces her that Verena’s showman father would renounce all claims to his daughter for money. Nor is she favorably impressed by the young men assembled: a newspaper man named Matthias Pardon and two Harvard students. None of them, she suggests, as she makes her dramatic exit, is worthy to hear Verena speak. “I want you to address audiences that are worth addressing—to convince people who are serious and sincere,” Olive entreats Verena, her voice shaking. “Your mission is not to exhibit yourself as a pastime for individuals, but to touch the heart of communities, of nations” (922).

Although Basil Ransom, Olive’s chief competitor for Verena’s affection and loyalty, is absent from this little gathering, the scene provides a useful encapsulation of a tension that runs through the novel—between Olive’s keen desire to act in the

public sphere and her aversion to vulgarity. Here, as elsewhere in the novel, Olive finds it difficult to maintain a strict separation between her ideal vision of committed public action and the sordid reality of human interaction. She is painfully aware that Verena's entrance on the lecture circuit was initiated by her indisputably trashy father, a humbug performer with a background in mesmerism. And, although she is able to remove her protégé from this corrupting influence, Olive is obliged to make other compromises in launching Verena's career. She allows one of Verena's suitors (one of the two Harvard men) to supply her with a performance venue. She turns to Matthias Pardon for publicity write-ups. She agrees to have photographs of Verena printed and distributed. And, in the scene alluded to above, she grits her teeth and tolerates people she despises. "Miss Chancellor would have been much happier if the movements she was interested in could have been carried on only by the people she liked," James's narrator muses, "and if revolutions, somehow, didn't always have to begin with one's self— with internal convulsions, sacrifices, executions" (904-905).

According to Michael Anesko's reading of *The Bostonians*, scenes like this should be understood within the context of James's deep ambivalence toward the nineteenth-century literary marketplace.³⁶ Challenging persisting notions of James as an aloof master of form, coolly indifferent to public opinion, Anesko argues that James's career is best understood as "a calculated attempt to avoid both the din of

³⁶ This understanding of James as writer torn between the demands of the literary marketplace and his idealistic aims has gained currency in recent years. In 1983 Marcia Jacobson challenged the view of James as an "aloof, self-sustained artist," governed "by a devotion to style and a passion for form," arguing instead that James "initially believed he could compete successfully in the marketplace," and strategically relied on "the conventions of contemporary fiction to appeal to his society at the same time as he examined it." (16). By 1995, Jacobson and Anesko's position had become established enough for David McWhirter to state, "The myth that James was serenely unconcerned with popular opinion and sales of his work has, I think, been decisively laid to rest" (4).

commercialism and the silence of oblivion” (*Friction* 11). Moreover, he argues, this real-life “friction with the market” figures prominently in James’s fiction, suggesting that the central conflict in *The Bostonians* is not between North and South, between male and female, or between Olive and Ransom, but rather between “Olive’s contradictory inclinations, her private ambition and public reluctance” (*Friction* 90). “Her frustrated desire to find an audience for her feelings,” Anesko points out, “is surprisingly similar to James’s, just as she shares his distaste for the vulgarizing influence of incessant publicity” (*Friction* 90).

Anesko’s insights provide a valuable corrective to common, and enduring, assumptions about James’s aesthetic purism and lack of professionalism. However, this reading of *The Bostonians* remains rooted in its theme and content, devoting little attention to the novel’s form. Arguing persuasively for the thematic relationship between the novel and James’s professional concerns, Anesko sees Olive as a stand-in for James; her struggles with publicity mirror those of her creator. Yet James’s negotiations with the literary marketplace are evident not only in the themes and issues taken up by the novel but also in its form and structure. Here too we find evidence of James’s fraught relationship with a pervasive fact of the nineteenth-century literary marketplace: serial publication. While his earlier work reveals James’s acquiescence to certain formal constraints of serial publication, in *The Bostonians* he ignores the practical precepts of serial composition, a shift that coincided with a his tendency to complain bitterly of the practice of serializing novels in letters, and to hint at its damaging effects in his criticism. Thus, if *The Bostonians* is, in Anesko’s words, “an inadvertent epic” of James’s “disaffection from the literary

marketplace,” it is also a record of his increasing disaffection from serialization, a mode of publication that sustained James economically throughout his career but one that he often saw as an impediment to artistic freedom (*Friction* 100).

I.

By the time Henry James emerged on the American literary scene, serial publication had become an integral component of periodical publishing and an indispensable part of survival for the serious author. As William Dean Howells would note less than a decade after the publication of *The Bostonians*, the professional man of letters “knows perfectly well that his reward is in the serial and not in the book; the return from that he may count as so much money found in the road” (“Man of Letters” 432). James’s career exemplified this late-nineteenth-century trend. Like Harriet Beecher Stowe, his first professional earnings came from the magazines, and, during the first decade of his career, periodicals supplied all of his income. Even when he began to see his work republished in book form, serial profits continued to account for a substantial portion of his literary earnings. “It’s a mere money question,” he explained, when Howells pressed him to restrict his periodical output to the *Atlantic Monthly*.³⁷ Several years later, James made the same point more explicitly: “[H]aving a perpetual serial running has defined itself as a financial necessity for me,” he confessed to Howells.³⁸ Anesko’s careful investigation into James’s earnings confirms this analysis; as Anesko notes, between

³⁷ Henry James, letter to William Dean Howells, Jan. 9, 1874, *Letters*. vol. 1, 424.

³⁸ Henry James, letter to William Dean Howells, 24 Oct. 1876, *Letters*. vol. 2, 70.

1875 and 1892, approximately half of James's total literary earnings derived from U.S. serial rights (*Friction*, 175).

Given James's dependence on serial sales, it is not surprising that he made an effort to secure periodical publication whenever possible. Indeed, records of James's interactions with editors reveal him to be highly astute in his negotiations with the literary market. In seeking out a buyer for the serial rights to *The American*, for instance, James was able to pit competing periodicals against one another and thereby drive up his price (Anesko "Friction" 41). Later, he was able to make double profits on *The Portrait of a Lady* by securing simultaneous publication in both the British periodical *Macmillan's* and in the *Atlantic* (Anesko "Friction" 188). Nor was James above accommodating to editorial demands. "I shall be very glad to do my best to divide my story so that it will make twelve numbers" he assured Howells as *The American* was making its way through the *Atlantic Monthly*.³⁹ "Of course 26 pp. is an impossible installment length," he continued apologetically; "I had no idea the second number would make so much." Later, when Howells suggested that he produce a short serial novel, James eagerly promised him that he would supply "the brightest possible sun-spot for the four-number tale." "I agree to squeeze my buxom muse, as you happily call her, into a hundred of your pages," he promised, "I will lace her so tight that she shall have the neatest little figure in the world."⁴⁰

These were not empty words. James's early novels suggest that he went to great lengths to satisfy editorial demands by structuring his work around serial release— both on the level of mechanics and with regard to the correspondence of

³⁹ Henry James, letter to William Dean Howells, 28 May 1876, *Letters*. vol. 2, 51.

⁴⁰ Henry James, letter to William Dean Howells, 30 Mar. 1877, *Letters*. vol. 2, 105.

narrative unit to individual installment. From a purely mechanical perspective, James's early novels demonstrate his careful attention to the serial installment as a physical entity. His first novel *Watch and Ward*, which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* from August to December 1871, was specifically designated as a novel in five parts with each of the magazine installments numbered appropriately. The magazine version of *Roderick Hudson*, James's next *Atlantic Monthly* serial and his first full length novel, was neatly divided into ten short installments of one chapter each, while the majority of the installments of the serial version of *The American* consisted of two complete chapters. Moreover, in each of these early novels, James appeared to have been at pains to keep the length of each installment within appropriate bounds. The greatest discrepancies in installment lengths appeared in *Watch and Ward*, where the first installment ran only thirteen pages and the final installment reached twenty-one pages. In *Roderick Hudson*, James managed to keep his installments between twelve and sixteen pages until the final three numbers; and in *The American* he managed to maintain a length of thirteen to seventeen pages in all save the first and final installments.

More important than James's concern for such technical issues as length and correspondence of chapter to installment is his attention to the installment as a narrative unit in a dramatic sequence. Not only are the installments of these early serials regular in length, their endings suggest that James used the delay created by serial issue to create anticipation for the next installment. In *Watch and Ward*, installments tend to conclude with a revelation designed to create suspense—a letter attesting to Roger's designs on Nora, the intimation that Roger's illness will prove

fatal, and so forth. Indeed, the penultimate installment ends on a note of pure melodrama when Nora is confronted with evidence that Roger, her adopted father, has entertained thoughts of matrimony: “Nora dropped the letter and stood staring, openmouthed, pale as death, with her poor young face blank with horror,” the installment concludes (124). Similarly, in *Roderick Hudson*, James ends at least two installments at moments of high narrative interest: one with Christina Light’s dramatic announcement that she is leaving for Naples, and one with the Cavaliere’s reference to a menacing mystery involving Christina.

For the most part, however, James used the constraints of magazine serialization in *Roderick Hudson* as a structuring method not as an opportunity to create dramatic suspense. Most of the installment divisions correspond not to a moment of high dramatic tension but to the introduction (or re-introduction) of a new character or scene.⁴¹ Part I is appropriately titled “Rowland” and serves to introduce the reader to the novel’s protagonist; part II in the serial edition, titled “Roderick,” introduces the reader to the artist. Other installment breaks correspond to changes in setting: from America to Rome in the third installment; from Rome to Switzerland in the seventh. (Unsurprisingly, these chapters are titled “Rome” and “Switzerland” respectively.) This use of titles is highly unusual for James; he refrains from giving his chapters titles in his later novels, and, significantly, removes the titles from *Roderick Hudson* in subsequent editions. Yet in the serial version, the presence of these titles helps to reinforce the reader’s sense of the novel’s extreme regularity. If James is not making use of the conventional serial strategy whereby installments end

⁴¹ This practice is analogous to the dramatic device of structuring scenes around the entrance of a new character or characters, a feature of “French scenes.” For a discussion of this strategy in relation to Greek Tragedy see Mark Damon, pages 113-134.

at a crisis or revelation, he does construct a highly organized (perhaps overly structured) novel that breaks into logical serial parts.

This attention to James's first novels in light of serial publication suggests that serialization had some influence on form, at least initially. His accommodating comments to editors and his evident financial dependence on serial publication indicate that he was prepared to make concessions to the practical demands of serial publication, and his early novels demonstrate a sensitivity to the fact of installment publication. However, scholars typically have avoided assessing the relationship between serial publication and James's work as either a relevant consideration in analysis of the novels or in a factor in the author's career. Critics occasionally note that most of James's novels appeared first in magazines. Some remark that he disliked the mode of publication. Editorial notes occasionally point to the textual variants between the serial version and later book editions. Yet there have been few efforts to consider the significance of serial publication in James's career—to determine how the author responded to the perceived exigencies of serial publication in specific instances.

One short essay by Manfred Mackenzie, which appeared in *The Philological Quarterly* in 1962, is an exception to this general pattern. Advancing the ambitious argument that serial publication “benefited a great deal more than it detracted from [James's] art,” Mackenzie identifies signs of serial structuring in both *The American* and *The Ambassadors* (499). In *The American*, Mackenzie argues, James not only structures each of his installments as a discrete phase in Newman's experience but makes use of a classic serial strategy whereby several installments end at moments of

high narrative interest. For instance, at the close of the eighth installment, Newman receives a letter informing him that Valentin is ill, “perhaps dying.” The end of the ninth consists of a dramatic parting between Claire and Newman, perhaps “For ever” the narrator tells us (James, *The American* 285). And, the eleventh closes with the revelation of the Bellegardes’s shocking family secret. “For contemporary serial readers,” Mackenzie posits, “the emphasis at these points was strongly on the future revelations of the plot” (494). In this reading, James’s early attempt to adapt to the unique features of serial publication foreshadows the author’s more sophisticated response to serialization in *The Ambassadors*, where, he argues, James used serial installments to mark off distinct stages in his protagonist’s developing awareness. While divisions in *The American* correspond to disclosure of events and new information, in *The Ambassadors* the pattern of successive disclosures corresponds to new insights on the part of the main character, thereby allowing James to achieve an effect of suspense while avoiding melodrama. This reading posits that James’s relationship to serial publication is best characterized as an even progression of artistic development. If *The American* represents a clumsy attempt to turn the exigencies of serialization to good account, *The Ambassadors* exemplifies James’s mature awareness of the potentially symbiotic relationship between serial publication and literary craftsmanship.

However, while Mackenzie’s assessment of *The American* supports my point that James was more responsive to serial pressures than is generally thought, his larger argument about James’s development as a serial novelist breaks down when one considers a novel like *The Bostonians*, which ran in the *Century Magazine*

between February 1885 and February 1886 prior to its book publication later in 1886. Attention to the serial text of this novel, I will argue, suggests that in composing this novel James abandoned or ignored most of the serial strategies he had relied on in his previous work. Unable or unwilling to make his novel conform to a typical serial structure or to take advantage of the possibilities inherent in installment divisions, James ignored most of the unwritten rules of serial publication and thereby risked alienating his magazine readers. If James would eventually reconsider the formal possibilities of serial publication, his resistance to the mode of publication at this point in his career does not suggest an even artistic progression from inexperienced serial novelist to mature master of the serial form. Instead, a novel like *The Bostonians* functions as an artistic renunciation of serial publication, at a time when he would begin to articulate a theory of the artist's necessary freedom.

II.

James's deviation from typical serial strategies in *The Bostonians* is best demonstrated through contrast with his earlier novels. Consideration of *The American* and *The Bostonians* as serial texts, for instance, reveals striking differences in the opening passages of the two novels. In the earlier novel, James begins with a simple statement that immediately situates the reader and the main character in time and place: It is "a brilliant day in May, of the year 1868," and a gentleman is "reclining at his ease" on a circular divan in the Louvre (515). While the name of the "gentleman" is not revealed for several pages, the reader is provided with a lengthy description of the character that will feature most prominently in the narrative to

follow: he is “long, lean and muscular”; he is “a superlative American.” In *The Bostonians*, however, James opens abruptly with a communication from one unnamed character to another on behalf of a third. “Olive will come down in about ten minutes; she told me to tell you that,” the novel begins (803). Serial readers of *The Bostonians* could certainly piece together the pertinent information if they continued to read; it is not particularly difficult to figure out from the next few paragraphs that the first speaker must be Mrs. Luna, that she is addressing a Southerner named Basil Ransom, and that Olive is a relative of both. One could argue that the second opening strategy is more actively engaging. Still, this opening passage presents more of an interpretive challenge to its readers than the introductory lines of the earlier novel, a striking difference considering both narratives’ original appearance in the midst of other texts competing for the magazine reader’s attention. The initial readers of both novels would not have begun at the first page of a book selected and purchased; instead they would have come upon each work as a component of a literary magazine, a radically polyvocal text comprised of poetry, travelogues, reportage, critical reviews, and competing serialized novels.⁴² Given this literary context, one might expect the serial author to attempt to engage potential readers with an immediately accessible opening. Instead, James begins *The Bostonians* with a circuitous and difficult opening passage, perhaps hoping to stoke readers’ curiosity and apparently assuming that his serial readers will be willing to plunge into the narrative and to allow the characters and situation to emerge over time.

⁴² *The American* appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* immediately after a first-person report by Mark Twain and a sonnet entitled “Sunset”; *The Bostonians*’ opening installment was published below a travel piece on Canada and a short poem, and is, in turn, followed by a serialized bowdlerized version of *Huckleberry Finn*.

The relatively minor differences between the opening strategies of the two novels would not be particularly relevant were they not in keeping with James's disregard for the challenges of serial reading evident throughout *The Bostonians*. While James seems to have been careful to provide his readers (and his editors) with carefully structured serial narratives in his earlier work, in *The Bostonians* installment breaks occur at odd and uncomfortable points in the narrative. The break between the first and second installment, for instance, occurs between the moment when Olive fastens a brooch for the rumpled Miss Birdseye and the moment when the aging abolitionist thanks her for her thoughtful gesture. The break between the second and third installment arrives mid-chapter, interrupting a lengthy reverie on Mrs. Tarrant's character. The third installment ends in the middle of the Tarrants' tea party. The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth installment breaks fall in the middle of a conversation, which is resumed in the subsequent issue without explicit or implicit acknowledgement that a month has passed between installments.⁴³

Nor does James seem to be overly concerned with making it easy for his readers to resume their interrupted reading, as he had in his earlier novels. In the third installment of *Watch and Ward*, for instance, James's uncharacteristically accommodating narrator remarks, "readers will not have forgotten that Hubert had thus qualified her lower members," thereby reminding readers of Hubert's earlier crack about young Nora's *pieds énormes* (64). Similarly, the second installment of *The American* opens by re-introducing readers to the characters from the prior

⁴³ The only installment break that seems to end on a note of suspense, is the break that occurs between Chapter 16 (May, 1885) and Chapter 17 (June, 1885). Chapter 16 ends with Olive asking Verena to promise never to marry; the next chapter/installment opens with Verena's decision to grant Olive her wish.

installment and reminding them of where the novel left off. “Newman, among the distractions of Paris, had forgotten M. Nioche and his accomplished daughter; but this was an effective reminder,” James writes, reacquainting his readers with the fact that Newman is in Paris, that he has been seeing the sights, and that has already met M. Nioche, a gentleman with an accomplished daughter (557). In contrast, the second installment of *The Bostonians* throws the reader among a host of minor characters without providing any helpful review of what has come before or any of the obliging asides to the reader included in *Watch and Ward*.

This apparent disregard for his audience is evident not only in James’s refusal to supply his readers with friendly reminders of past events but also in his abrupt openings to successive installments. Like the opening passage to the novel, installments of *The Bostonians* often begin abruptly without disclosing the identities of the primary players. One might point to the August installment, which begins, “As he sat with Mrs. Luna . . .,” but doesn’t inform the reader that “he” refers to Basil Ransom until the reader is well into a long opening paragraph (981). The opening to the September installment begins “They passed through two or three small, short streets,” without revealing from the onset the identity of these unnamed characters (1018). Other installments pose similar challenges for the reader who has not been following the serial diligently or referring back to preceding installments for guidance. For example, the fourth installment begins abruptly with the statement “Tarrant, however, kept an eye in that direction. . .” without explicitly stating what Tarrant is keeping his eye upon (906). Similarly, the sixth installment begins “This idea of their triumph, a triumph as yet ultimate and remote . . .,” but refuses to be

specific as to the triumph under consideration or the characters concerned with that triumph (948). Again, an attentive reader of James's novel in serial, one able to recall where the last installment left off or willing to refer to past issues, would have had little difficulty resuming the narrative after a lapse of a month. It is certainly possible to make out the identities of the characters if one only continues to read. However, the installment divisions of *The Bostonians* do not suggest that James was particularly concerned with helping his readers to enter the narrative at any given installment.

This feature of *The Bostonians*, James's abrupt and somewhat difficult installment openings, represents a departure from the pattern established by *The American*, in which virtually every installment begins with a simple sentence providing the name of the figure to feature most prominently in that particular installment. Most often, this character is Newman, the "American" of the title and the character around which the narrative revolves. If this opening strategy proves somewhat repetitive, it does effectively ensure that the reader recognizes the chief player in each installment and is able to resume the narrative relatively painlessly, even after an enforced lapse of a month. Significantly, James not only abandoned this pattern in his later novel but carefully excised it from his revised version of *The American* for the 1907 New York Edition, eliminating references to his main character's proper name whenever it appears at the beginning of what had once functioned as a break in periodical publication. Thus "Christopher Newman" is replaced with the pronoun "he" in the book edition in the opening lines of Chapter IV, VI, XI, XIII, XIX, and XX (each of which would have initiated a new installment for

the novel as it appeared in serial).⁴⁴ One could argue that the effect of these substitutions in the book edition is to make the transition between chapters more seamless; after all, readers do not need to be repeatedly reminded that they are still following the adventures of one “Christopher Newman.” Yet the fact that James conscientiously eliminated each of these direct references to the protagonist by name, which he had considered appropriate in the context of serialization, indicates both an awareness of the constraints to reading posed by serialization and a desire to accommodate to the needs of his serial audience.

Finally, in *The Bostonians* and in his other serial novels of this period, James begins to ignore conventions regarding length and, in doing so, to tax the patience of his serial readers. Whereas the serial publication of novels like *The American* and *The Europeans* had functioned as a restraint on the length of both the individual parts and the novel as a whole (as evidenced in the author’s comments to Howells), in the 1880s James began to ignore such perceived constraints on form. This is particularly evident in *The Portrait of a Lady*, which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* between November 1880 and December 1881. Not only did this novel expand to fill fourteen installments, well beyond the length projected for the serial, but the installments are considerably longer than those of James’s earlier serials for the same magazine.⁴⁵ In fact, during the serialization of the novel, James was obliged to issue several apologies to his publishers. “I am glad to have wrung from you the confession that you expected it to be in six numbers,” he wrote in a contrite letter to Howells, “. . .

⁴⁴ In chapter 8, which opens the fourth installment, “Newman” is replaced not with “he” but with “the elder” (616).

⁴⁵ The average length of an installment of *The Portrait of a Lady* is 25 *Atlantic Monthly* pages, as compared to 16 for *Roderick Hudson* and 15 for *The American*.

this will teach me to be more explicit in the future.”⁴⁶ To Houghton Mifflin and Co., he expressed his regret that his story had become “portentously long.” “I hope that this change will not make you, or the *Atlantic*, too uncomfortable . . . I do not think *as a book* it will seem too long—that is, to be read with interest” [emphasis added].⁴⁷ Despite this professed regret, James does not seem to have been more conscientious with regard to length in his composition of *The Princess Casamassima* and *The Bostonians*, which he would later refer to as his “two long-winded” serials.⁴⁸ The serial version of *The Princess Casamassima*, which ran in the *Atlantic* between September 1885 and October 1886 is about the same length as *The Portrait of a Lady*. Originally planned to run for a mere six months, *The Bostonians* would grow over the course of its composition, until it became a ponderous novel of thirteen installments.

As is well known, far from being the popular success James hoped it would be, *The Bostonians* failed to generate much interest. “[N]ot a word, echo or comment on the serial (save your remarks) have come to me,” a disappointed James remarked to his brother while the serial was running its course in the *Century*, “This deathly silence seems to indicate that it has fallen flat.” “I hoped much of it,” he continued, “and shall be disappointed— having got no money for it, I hoped for a little glory.”⁴⁹ Several years later, James was still reeling from the shock of this disappointment. As he wrote to Howells in 1888, “I am still staggering a good deal under the mysterious and (to me) inexplicable injury wrought— apparently upon my situation by my last two novels, the *Bostonians* and the *Princess*, from which I expected so much and

⁴⁶ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 5 Dec., 1880, *Letters*. vol 2., 32.

⁴⁷ James, letter to Houghton Mifflin and Co, 13 July, 1881, *Letters*. vol 2, 356.

⁴⁸ James, letter to Grace Norton, 9 Dec., 1885, *Letters*. vol. 3, 106.

⁴⁹ James, letter to William James, 9 Oct., 1885. *Letters*. vol. 3, 102.

derived so little. They have reduced the desire, and the demand for my productions to zero . . .⁵⁰

According to several recent critics, the failure of *The Bostonians* to spark public interest is largely a consequence of James's inability to correctly gauge the literary marketplace. That James clearly hoped that *The Bostonians* would be a popular success is evident from his comments to his brother and his choice of material for the novel seems to have been calculated to appeal to a wide audience. Marcia Jacobson suggests as much in pointing to other novels of this period dealing with "The Woman Question": Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's *Doctor Zay*, William Dean Howells's *A Woman's Reason*, and Sarah Orne Jewett's *A Country Doctor*.⁵¹ The similarities between these novels and *The Bostonians* (each of which involves a young heroine obliged to choose between a career and marriage) indicate James's awareness of the type of fiction then capturing the attention of the reading public. His late decision to make Ransom a Civil War veteran newly arrived from the South suggests yet another calculated move to cash in on the popularity of American Civil War fiction in the eighteen-eighties. Even the placement of the novel, in the *Century* rather than the *Atlantic*, hints at James's desire to appeal to a broader audience. While the serialized version of *The American* reached 20,000 potential readers, by publishing in the *Century* James was faced with a possible audience of some 200,000 subscribers (Mott 2:505; Chielens 365).

⁵⁰ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 1 Jan., 1888. *Letters*. vol. 3, 209.

⁵¹ *Dr. Zay* appeared in serial installments in the *Atlantic* in 1882 and *A Woman's Reason* was serialized in the *Century* in 1883. Jewett's *A Country Doctor* was reviewed in the *Atlantic* in 1884.

Yet James's treatment of this popular and timely subject matter ultimately lost him readers. According to Marcia Jacobson's account of the novel's popular failure, "[i]n superimposing the Civil War romance onto the feminist novel," James combined "two popular genres to express unpopular ideas—a real risk for an author who sought a wide readership . . ." (33). In Anesko's analysis, James lost his audience when he began to indulge in issues of publicity and professionalism of little interest to the average reader. While these points are well taken, I would suggest that James's structural decisions in composing his serial novel certainly did not help matters. If he missed the mark in his treatment of topics he thought would capture public interest, he also failed to recognize the importance of accommodating his serial audience by shaping his novel according to the experience of serial reading. Significantly, the 200,000 readers first exposed to the novel in the pages of the *Century* were provided with none of the aids to magazine reading offered by James's earlier serials, but instead were confronted with a sprawling narrative that refused to provide satisfying and readily accessible individual installments. If readers were displeased by James's characters and the development of his narrative, they also may have objected to his refusal to structure his work as a serial text. Even James's brother found the novel difficult to process when he read it in serial. "It seemed to me so slow a thing had ne'er been writ," William James wrote, in recalling his first encounter with the novel in serial form.⁵²

III.

⁵² *Henry James: The Critical Tradition*, ed. Roger Gard (London: Routledge, 1982) 159.

Not coincidentally, James's deviation from his earlier structuring pattern in *The Bostonians* coincided with the author's private expressions of distaste for serial publication and his public statements on literature as a serious art. In the same decade that he composed *The Bostonians*, James became more vocal in his complaints about serial publication in letters to friends and family and began to formulate ideas about fiction in conflict with the perceived exigencies of this mode of publication. Serialization, James came to feel, both interfered with serious appreciation of the novel as a work of art and impeded the author's necessary freedom to focus on the formal unity of the novel as a whole. James's failure to adhere to serial conventions evident in *The Bostonians*, then, should not be seen as an isolated phenomenon or as a lapse in technique but as part of his evolving ideas about literature as expressed in both private letters and public criticism.

Significantly, James's early letters indicate that he was not always opposed to serial novels but enjoyed following a novel in installments as much as his contemporaries.⁵³ In the early 1870s, for instance, James remarked in a letter to his sister that he was "enjoying very much" William Dean Howells's *A Chance Acquaintance*, then running in the *Atlantic Monthly*.⁵⁴ Several years later, James would compliment Howells on his novel, *Dr. Breen's Practice*, which he had been following as it appeared in serial.⁵⁵ However, beginning in the late 1870s, James attitudes on serialization underwent a shift. In an 1877 letter to Grace Norton, James remarked that he didn't mind if she didn't read his work in the magazines since "It is

⁵³ Howells, for one, does not appear to have objected to serial reading. In a review of James's *The Tragic Muse*, for instance, Howells recalls his "year's pleasure in the story" and admits to having "read it serially as it was first printed" ("The Editor's Study" 634).

⁵⁴ James, letter to Alice James, 25 Apr, 1873, *Letters*, vol. 1, 373.

⁵⁵ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 4 Oct., 1881, *Letters*, vol. 2, 359.

an odious way of seeing them . . . and now they are likely always to be reprinted in volumes.”⁵⁶ A few years later in reference to *Confidence*, James would implore Thomas Sergeant Perry, “Don’t read, in Heaven’s name (or let anyone else read) my Scribner novel, till it is republished.”⁵⁷ “I hope by the way that NONE of you are reading *Confidence* serially,” he remarked to his father with respect to the same work; “if you wait for the volume it will seem very much better.”⁵⁸ In another letter to Grace Norton, James reiterated his desire that she wait to read his novels in volume form. “I hope intensely and immensely that you are not reading, in their present form, my two long-winded serials,” he wrote with reference to *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Cassamassima*, “But do read ‘em when they come out [in book form] and speak of them to me then.”⁵⁹

By 1888, James’s distaste for serial publication had become so strong that he refused to read novels in serial. “I am much obliged to you for the pretty volume of the *Undiscovered*, which I immediately read with greater comfort and consequence than in the magazine,” he wrote to Howells in 1880.⁶⁰ Later, in reference to Howells’s *April Hopes*, which he describes as a “pretty read book” (punning on red) and as a “neat and attractive volume,” James remarked that he hadn’t followed the novel in *Harper’s Magazine*, “for reasons that you will understand— knowing as you must how little the habit of writing in serial form encourages one to read in that odious way, which so many simple folk, thank heaven, think the best.”⁶¹ “I wait, as

⁵⁶ James, letter to Grace Norton, 15 Dec., 1877, *Letters*, vol. 2, 146.

⁵⁷ James, letter to Thomas Sergeant Perry, 15 Sept., 1879, *Letters*, vol. 2, 255.

⁵⁸ James, letter to Henry James, Sr., 11 Oct., 1879, *Letters*, vol. 2, 260.

⁵⁹ James, letter to Grace Norton, 9 Dec., 1885, *Letters*, vol. 3 106.

⁶⁰ James letter to William Dean Howells, 20 July, 1880, *Letters*, vol. 2, 299.

⁶¹ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 2 Jan., 1888, *Letters, Fictions, Lives*, ed. Michael Anesko (New York: Oxford UP, 1997) 265.

always, for the book, to read your current fiction in Harper,” he wrote again to Howells some months later while he was in the early stages of composing *The Tragic Muse*.⁶²

James’s newfound contempt for serialization and its consumers here is palpable; serial reading, James had come to believe, was an inferior, “odious,” method of consuming fiction, one favored only by the most “simple” and unsophisticated readers. In these comments, as in others, James reveals his persistent skepticism with regard to the tastes of common folk—a sentiment he shares with Olive Chancellor. This was not a new position for James; indeed, as early as 1872 James had remarked to his brother William that “the multitude, I am more and more convinced, has absolutely no taste—none at least that a thinking man is bound to defer to”⁶³ In his references to serial reading, however, his general views with regard to readers are bound to a particular reading situation; there is something about serial reading that makes people even worse readers than they might be otherwise. Even his most sympathetic readers—friends and family who, presumably, are more inclined to give his work the consideration it deserves—would do better to read his novels in book form.

This view of serial reading as an impediment to literary appreciation finds its counterpart in James’s critical writing from this same period, in which the novelist began to work out, in a more formal context, ideas evident in his personal communications. In his landmark essay “The Art of Fiction,” James both reiterates his low opinion of readers’ tastes, and offers justification for this position that

⁶² James, letter to William Dean Howells, 29 Sept., 1888, *Letters, Fictions, Lives*, 271.

⁶³ Henry James, letter to William James, Aug., 1872, *Henry James: The Critical Tradition* 27.

indirectly explains his dislike of serial reading. For James, not only do most readers “read novels as an exercise in skipping,” but their tendency is to assess a novel based on highly questionable criteria—the presence of “incident and movement,” for instance, or a novel’s culmination in a “happy ending” (“The Art of Fiction” 424).⁶⁴ “The ‘ending’ of a good novel,” James remarks dismissively, “is, for many persons, like that of a good dinner, a course of dessert and ices, and the artist in fiction is regarded as a sort of meddling doctor who forbids agreeable aftertastes” (425). Although he does not explicitly mention serialization in this essay, it is hard to imagine that would have seen this mode of consuming fiction as an antidote to careless reading. Already suspicious that many people read novels “as an exercise in skipping,” James may have felt that the interruption of the narrative at regular intervals could only further discourage thorough and conscientious reading habits. While he admits that most readers are unlikely to read with an eye to issues of form, serial reading would seem particularly detrimental to a reader’s ability to appreciate a work as a “complete” and “perfect” whole. Moreover, given readers’ inclination to think of novels as multi-course meals, serial release of novels in installments could only perpetuate the trivialization of novel reading as pleasurable consumption delivered with reliable regularity.⁶⁵

Rather than follow the lead of unsophisticated and superficial readers, James insists, the serious novelist must recognize that the “search for form” is the only aim

⁶⁴ James’s suspicions about readers’ tendencies to skim find justification in one unsigned review of the *Tragic Muse* that appeared in the *Dial* in 1890. Here the anonymous reviewer actually suggests that readers would do well to skip some chapters. “A chapter lost here and there makes little difference; the chances are that nothing essential to the understanding of the story will have happened.” *Dial* 11 (Aug. 1890): 92-3; rpt in Gard 209.

⁶⁵ As Janice A. Radway has pointed out, comparisons between reading and eating have theoretical implications since the analogy is often drawn as a means of disparaging popular texts.

worth pursuing and make his goal the creation of a perfect, unified whole (“The Art of Fiction” 424). “A novel,” James theorizes, “is a living thing, all one and continuous”; hence the truly successful novel is one that achieves complete unity and interdependence of its parts “. . . so that every word and every punctuation-point contribute directly to the expression.” While James acknowledges that readers may not respond well to this view of fiction, considering “such artistic preoccupations” to be “too frivolous to be edifying, and too serious to be diverting,” for him these remain the only legitimate concerns of the literary artist, to which all else must be subordinate. Fiction, he contends, sounding rather like Olive, must “. . . take itself seriously if the public to take it so” (423).

Serial publication posed a problem for this lofty notion of literature for several reasons. For one, the physical appearance of a novel in serial form must have jarred with James’s notion of the seriousness of his craft. While the gift edition of a book like *April Hopes* assumes a physical presence that reinforces its status as a work of art, the serial version appears in print broken up and scattered amidst various, ephemeral texts. For the periodical reader confronted with a variety of texts, a serial novel might even assume an inferior position vis a vis the adjacent material—as fiction rather than nonfiction, as entertainment rather than news. As James would later complain in a letter to Howells (an inveterate magazine man), “I hate the hurried little subordinate part that one plays in the catchpenny picture-book.”⁶⁶ The serial novel, then, suffers not only from the temporal disruption of the narrative but also from its physical proximity to others texts and from its inferior material form. For

⁶⁶ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 22 Jan. , 1895, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 3, 512.

James, such circumstances function as impediments to a reader's perception of the novel as art.⁶⁷

Yet, the real danger in serialization, for James, derives not from its influence on readers' perceptions but from its interference with the novelist's freedom to focus on form above all else. As James explicitly states in "The Art of Fiction," his main concern in this essay is not with readers, whose abilities inspire him with little confidence to begin with, but with the serious and committed novelist, "the producer, from whose point of view . . . we are attempting to consider the art of fiction" (428). From this perspective, attention to the exigencies of serial publication functions as a constraint on the artistic freedom James champions. For "The Art of Fiction" is, essentially, a declaration of artistic freedom based on an assertion of the artist's higher calling. Challenging Walter Besant's efforts to catalogue the formal "laws" of fiction, James argues that the novelist is bound to no creative constraints other than those which follow out of his pursuit of formal perfection. Disputing the idea that the novelist must please the masses, he lays out an alternative criterion of excellence based on the individual artist's attention to form. In effect, although James makes no mention of serialization per se, the essay functions, to some extent, as an extension of his repeated entreaties to friends and relatives that they read his work in whole rather than in part. While he is not so impractical as to advise novelists to give up opportunities for serial publication, his own rejection of serial form in *The*

⁶⁷ Howells took exactly the opposite view of the effect of magazine placement. For Howells, not only did magazine publish the "best literature," but magazines brought authors into contact with the best readers. "All this may change again," he noted in one essay, "but at present the magazines. . . form the most direct approach to that part of our reading public which likes the highest things in literary art. Their readers, if we may judge from the quality of the literature they get, are more refined than the book readers in our community; and their taste has no doubt been cultivated by that of the disciplined and experienced editors." ("The Man of Letters as a Man of Business" 432).

Bostonians, his increasingly disapproving views on serial reading, and his arguments for formal unity as the defining characteristic of the novel, ultimately stem from the same impulse—James’s emerging conviction that formal organization must develop out of artistic goals rather than the exigencies of publication.

Given the evident parallels between James’s views on serialization, his composing practices, and his theoretical convictions as expressed in “The Art of Fiction,” it is actually surprising that he does not link his critical positions to the material reality of his publishing environment. James’s passionate call for the novelist to view his literary creation solely in formal terms, for instance, seems strangely out of keeping with his professional experiences as a serial author. His declaration that he “cannot imagine composition existing in a series of blocks,” is peculiar given his evident attention to the correspondence of narrative blocks to serial installments in his earlier novels and his continued practice of composing and issuing novels in by installment (428). In arguing for a new understanding of the novel as an “organic whole,” the material reality of serial composition and publication seems to be not only neglected but strangely suppressed (428).

James’s silence on this issue of serialization in “The Art of Fiction” is particularly striking given the ongoing critical conversation about the implications of serialization that took place in the pages of American magazines throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. While James’s essay deals with issues relevant to this debate, other writers, editors, and critics took up the issue much more directly, using the fact of serial publication to consider various criteria for excellence in fiction. Although these views on serial publication run the gamut— from enthusiastic

endorsement of the mode of publication to the view that novels suffered from being so divided— this critical conversation provides a sense of the critical context in which James wrote both *The Bostonians* and “The Art of Fiction.”

Throughout the nineteenth-century, discussions of serial publication and its implications appeared throughout American periodicals. As I have already suggested, many editorial defenses of serial publication were undoubtedly self-serving. The editors of *Harper’s Monthly*, for instance, were particularly eager to establish the value of serial reading, given the magazine’s economic dependence on reprinted British serials. From the comfort of the “Editor’s Easy Chair,” one *Harper’s* editor celebrated the novel in serial, seeing it as “the growth of modern time, of an improved press, of a diffused education, of a universally reading nation.” “The great fact about America is that we are a reading people” he continued, suggesting that the magazine serials fulfilled a democratic function in supplying reading content to the masses.⁶⁸ Other editorial endorsements of serialization in *Harper’s Magazine* functioned as an opportunity to plug specific novels currently running in the magazine. For instance, one editor remarked in 1856 that it was “not our fault if the friends of the easy chair have not been reading ‘Little Dorrit’ for the last four months.”⁶⁹ Another praised Thackeray’s *Virginians*, while the novel was halfway through its magazine run.⁷⁰

Yet, while these editorials served a specific agenda in promoting their own serial offerings, they also contained some general arguments on behalf of serialization as a superior mode of literary consumption. Acknowledging that the “intelligent reader may dislike such stories printed in serials,” one editor pointed out that “since

⁶⁸ “Editor’s Easy Chair,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* Dec. 1855: 127.

⁶⁹ “Editor’s Easy Chair,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* May 1856: 848.

⁷⁰ “Editor’s Easy Chair,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* Dec. 1858: 125-126.

the great novelists choose to print so, and find their account in it, it would be better to surrender the prejudice and enjoy the story.”⁷¹ “The Virginians should be read, as it is written, from month to month . . .,” another mandated.⁷² “Never forget that every number of the tale has a certain completeness,” a 1864 editorial advised in reference to Dickens’s *Our Mutual Friend*, then running in *Harper’s Magazine*. Such observations may have been self-serving but they also served to reinforce the notion that serial reading represented the most appropriate method of accessing novels designed to be read in parts.⁷³

Other periodical essays offered a slightly different defense of the serial, suggesting that serial publication posed a creative challenge to the author that made it impossible for all but the best authors to survive. Writing for the *Galaxy* in 1869, Philip Quilibut proposed that “the successful serial novel defies the disadvantages of its interrupted publication; or, to speak more truly, it somehow turns these disadvantages to account.” “Not every great novelist can write a magazine novel,” he points out; “In a continuous volume, some dull or distracting chapters may be launched without hazard; but not so in the serial, where the merciless public demands that each installment shall in some sort justify itself” (130-132). This same basic argument would appear in the *Century* some years later (at the same time that installments of *The Bostonians* appeared in its pages). In an essay titled “The Serial Story,” Charlotte Porter argues that “[t]he ‘installment method’ makes the work of entertaining the world more difficult, rather than easier for the author. . . . It defends the market against the demands of the market by making it harder for any but the

⁷¹ “Editor’s Easy Chair,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* May 1856: 848.

⁷² “Editor’s Easy Chair,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* Dec. 1858: 125-126.

⁷³ “Editor’s Easy Chair,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* Aug. 1864: 407.

fittest novels to survive the passing purpose of filling a leisure hour” (Porter 812-813). A few years later, a critic writing for the *Atlantic* would reiterate this view, speculating that the serial author “looks after the articulation of his work more carefully than he would if it were to appear in the first instance as a book” (“Recent Fiction” 112).

A common thread in these discussions of serialization and serial novels is the notion that literary excellence corresponds to the author’s ability to satisfy reader demands. Serialization forced the author to pay more attention to the needs and desires of his readers, to capture audience interest, to avoid unnecessary digression. And, since novelists construct their works as serial texts, it was assumed, readers would do well to follow their lead by following their novels in the magazines. Central to this positive interpretation of the effect of serialization is the assumption that the primary purpose of the novel is to satisfy reader desire, a view that Nina Baym has identified as common for nineteenth-century readers and reviewers alike. According to Baym’s analysis, in nineteenth-century literary criticism:

[T]he formal principle of the novel was plot... . Thus formal criticism and reader response criticism (of course neither of the terms existed) were the same act, since reader response was a function of form and form was a modeling of reader response (81).

To the extent that serial publication might induce the author to be more attentive to audience, and to the extent that serials satisfy reader desire through carefully orchestrated plot disclosures, serial publication was inherently positive.

James's refusal to enter into these debates is noteworthy, but perhaps not surprising, given his tendency to shrink from the vulgar and commonplace. Indeed, this critical posture, James's coy avoidance of the topic of serial publication, finds its counterpart in a brief exchange in *The Bostonians* that occurs in the middle of the Tarrants' terrible tea party mentioned above. As Verena entertains the two Harvard students, Olive Chancellor and the newspaper man Matthias Pardon find themselves awkwardly thrown into each other's company. It would be hard to find a more unlikely or mismatched pair, yet Matthias, who is "not a person to allow himself to droop," takes the initiative and broaches "a literary subject," inquiring of Miss Chancellor whether she has been "following any of the current 'serials' in the magazines." Ignoring Olive's curt reply that "she never followed anything of the sort," Pardon proceeds to launch a defense of the serial system, "which she presently reminded him that she had not attacked" (915).

This brief exchange has little relevance to the novel as a whole, save perhaps to foreshadow Olive's unlikely collaboration with Pardon in promoting Verena. Yet, it does help to illuminate James's own response to the phenomenon of serial publication at this point in his literary career. It reveals that James was well aware of the contemporary predilection to discuss and debate the common practice of serialization and its relative merits; Pardon's decision to broach this particular topic shows that it was familiar fodder for parlor conversation. Thus while James's critical writing from this period notably refuses to take up the issue of serial publication, he has one of his more unsavory characters hold forth on just this topic. More important, though, the exchange demonstrates the extent to which Olive's response to Pardon's

prompt aligns her views on popular culture with those of her creator. It is not surprising that a newspaper man like Pardon would take a favorable view of serialization; he assumes, naturally enough, that Olive holds the opposing position. Yet Olive's response to Pardon is not to challenge him in his defense of the serial but to avoid discussion of the topic altogether. It is not, merely, that serialization is distasteful to Olive (odious, James might say), but rather that the subject itself is suspiciously vulgar. For Olive, to even engage in such a trivial debate is to appear to accept its terms, to agree to the definition of conversation as polite banter on irrelevant contemporary topics and, ultimately, to acknowledge the crass material conditions governing all public communication. Olive's ideals and goals here may be different from those of her creator— James has little interest in political causes while his protagonist demonstrates no interest in the arts— but both shrink from the trivial and the commonplace, both take their self-appointed missions seriously, and both insist that others take them seriously as well. Ultimately, then, James, no less than Olive, wants his work “to address audiences that are worth addressing—to convince people who are serious and sincere” (922). His retreat from serial strategies in the 1880s, his explicit critical statement on the novelist's art, and his avoidance of the issue of serialization in “The Art of Fiction,” reveal the author struggling to distance himself from practical matter of professional authorship, even as he continued to negotiate the troubled waters of the nineteenth-century literary marketplace.

To a large degree, James's stance has influenced his critics, both his contemporaries and ours. Despite a wealth of critical commentary on the positive ramifications of serial publication, and in spite of James's earlier efforts to meet

serialization's formal demands, critics almost uniformly follow the author's lead, dismissing his James's novels as serial texts and focusing their attention on the volumes. Of the numerous early reviews of James's work only one (to the best of my knowledge) suggests that reading a James novel in serial might afford a positive experience since "the minute finish of touch" may be appreciated even when the novel appears in "fragmentary form." Still, this critic cautions that the "very refinement of manipulation may lead one to overlook the larger consistency of the whole figure" ("Portrait of a Lady" 126). Other reviews are more skeptical as to the pleasure James's novels afford when read in serial. "His narratives are so fine-spun and so deficient in incident, so unpicturesque as a whole and weak in the way of sensuous imagery, that they are specially ill fitted for serial publication," complained a generally sympathetic critic writing for the *Atlantic*; "His flavor is too delicate to be suspended and superseded for a month" ("The Europeans" 169). One disparaging British reviewer even suggested that the length of *The Portrait of a Lady* was an effect of economic incentive to provide "as many pages as possible of 'printed matter.'" "In a serial story, running, say, for twelve or eighteen months," the reviewer remarked caustically, "this is a very important consideration."⁷⁴

Conversely, positive reviews of James's novels tend to see the volume version as an obvious improvement upon the original serial publication. A critic of *Roderick Hudson*, for instance, noted the "after-wave of strongly agreeable sensation which must inevitably follow the study of such a story, when it has attained its normal identity as a volume" ("Recent Literature" 237). Another, writing of *The Portrait of a Lady*, suggested that the republication of the novel in book form allowed for its

⁷⁴ [Review of American fiction] *Quarterly Review* Jan. 1883: 212-217; Rpt. in Gard 137.

“complete presentation” and commended James for producing a novel in which “the whole is equal to no fewer than all of its parts.”⁷⁵ Some years later, a reviewer of *The Tragic Muse* pointed out that reading the “comely volumes in which the serial is gathered” allows one’s attention to be held by “the spiritual plot of the tale.”⁷⁶ Even James’s brother agreed that James’s novels worked better as books than as serials. Having complained of *The Bostonians* when it first appeared, William James radically revised his opinion upon completing the text in volume. “I have read *The Bostonians* in the full flamingness of its bulk and consider it an exquisite production,” William James wrote in a letter to his brother. “My growling letter was written to you before the end of Book I had appeared,” he explained “. . . Never again shall I attack one of your novels in the magazine.”⁷⁷

This sentiment clearly matched James’s own view of his work as evident from his repeated entreaties to his friends and relatives to avoid his novels in serial and his ongoing complaints regarding the damage done to his work through installment publication. Of *The Awkward Age* he speculates that it was “only as a book that it compactly exists— that it isn’t read *at all* unless so read.”⁷⁸ It was “murderous” he later fretted when he was compelled to divide his short story “*Julia Bride*”— “it being really all unity & close continuity.”⁷⁹ Yet what is remarkable is that James’s views on this matter found such consensus among his sympathetic readers and critics, who tend to agree with James in his professed preference for the volume and to justify

⁷⁵ [Review of *The Portrait of a Lady*], *Nation* Feb. 1882: 102-103; Rpt. in Gard 113.

⁷⁶ H. E. Scudder [unsigned review] “The Tragic Muse,” *Atlantic Monthly* Sept. 1890: 419.

⁷⁷ William James, letter to Henry James, Oct., 1885; Rpt. in Gard 113.

⁷⁸ Henry James, letter to Howells, 25 Sept., 1899, *Letters, Fictions, Lives*, 351-352.

⁷⁹ Henry James, letter to Howells, 10 March, 1908, *Letters, Fictions, Lives*, 420. Michael Lund notes that many of James’s short stories appeared in two parts over subsequent months. See “Henry James’s Two-Part Magazine Stories and ‘Daisy Miller’.”

their preference for the novels in book form as a sign of the superiority of those works. “We feel that here are the elements for something worth reading without intermission to the end,” wrote one reviewer of *The Europeans*, implying that other novels do not merit such sustained attention (“Culture and Progress” 447). According to another, *The Portrait of a Lady* “like most novels of any pretensions, is most readable when read consecutively,” an assertion that suggests a lesser work will not suffer as much from installment issue.⁸⁰

Indeed, for James’s most committed supporters, the novels are not only worthy to be read in their entirety but even deserve to be saved and reread, another reason to own a sturdy hardbound edition. One particularly glowing review suggested that the reader would find in James’s novels much “which deserves renewed and careful consideration” and points out that this “quality of endurance in a book, this possibility of often-recurring pleasure in it, which determines the position of the author” (“Recent Literature” 237). Another, which had declared James’s novels to be particularly unsuited to serial publication, ends by complimenting James for never writing anything “which was not well worth a connected repurusal . . .” (“The Europeans” 169). Thus, despite critical attestations to the unique challenges of serialization for the serial author and the advantages of serial reading and James’s evident failure to meet those challenges in constructing his serials, James’s sympathetic critics tended to ignore his serial texts, to refer readers instead to the novels, and to suggest that it was only through careful reading and re-reading of his novels in book form that a reader might appreciate the density and nuance of James’s unique art.

⁸⁰ [Unsigned Review] *The Nation* 34 Feb. 1882: 102-103; Rpt. In Gard 113.

In effect, then, sympathetic critics turned James's apparent weaknesses as a serial author into a sign of his artistic strength. Observing of James's art "that it is almost too subtly [sic] delicate for its purpose," a favorable review of *The Europeans* suggests that James's reader ". . . has to be constantly on the alert, must meditate over passages in order to secure their full flavor, and even when the story is finished must go over it again to catch those delicate nuances which constitute its atmosphere and tone" ("Books of the Day" 95). Acknowledging that *The Wings of the Dove* was "not an easy book to read," one reviewer warned his reader, "It will not do for short railway journeys or for drowsy hammocks. The dense, fine quality of its pages—and there are 576—will always presuppose a certain effort of attention on the part of the reader; who must, indeed, be prepared to forego many of his customary titillations and bribes."⁸¹ Significantly, not only was *The Wings of the Dove* one of the novels for which James failed to secure serial publication, but, as if in recognition of its superior status as book rather than a serial, one positive review congratulated James for having produced a novel "which is so essentially a book; a thing, conceived, and carried on, and finished in one premeditated strain; with unbroken literary purpose and serious, unflagging literary skill."⁸²

In their preference for the book over the serial, supportive critics of James's own time followed the author's own inclinations—apparent in his letters, evident in his retreat from serial structuring in *The Bostonians*, and hinted at in his manifesto "The Art of Fiction." Howells, despite his fondness for the magazine novel, is no exception to this pattern. In his well-known profile of his friend and colleague,

⁸¹ [Unsigned Review] *Times Literary Supplement* Sept. 1902: 263; Rpt. in Gard 319.

⁸² [Unsigned Review] *Times Literary Supplement* Sept. 1902: 263; Rpt. in Gard 319.

Howells suggested that, in James's case, an alternative mode of appreciation was warranted. "If we take him at all we must take him on his own ground, for clearly he will not come to ours," Howells explained. Yet Howells's next comment is particularly telling. "We must agree, then," he continued, "to take what seems a fragment instead of a whole, and to find, when we can, a name for this new kind in fiction" ("Henry James, Jr." 25-26). While this proposition would seem to undermine James's emphasis on formal unity, ironically it confirms a sense of the novel as a whole rather than a series of loosely connected parts. An incident that might be merely a fragment of the plot-driven novel becomes the subject of a densely-layered novel, resulting in a new type of fiction that is fundamentally indivisible.

IV

If James's relationship with serialization in the 1880s was a troubled one, the author was hardly in a position to abandon his pursuit of the magazines. Indeed, despite his professed denigration of serialization and his ambivalence with regard to the serial form, James expressed real frustration when he saw periodical publication become "practically closed" to him. "I'm utterly out of it here," he complained to Howells, "and *Scribner*, and *Century*, the *Cosmopolitan*, will have nothing to say to me—above all for fiction." "[P]roduction' for me," he continued resignedly, ". . . means production of the little book, pure and simple—independent of any antecedent appearance."⁸³ James was not actually as "out of it" as his letter to Howells would have it. Although *The Sacred Fount*, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Golden Bowl*, and *The Outcry* had been recently rejected by the magazines, James was able to serialize

⁸³ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 22 Jan., 1895, *Henry James Letters*, vol. 3, 512.

several novels in the late 1890s and would continue to pursue periodical publication in years to come.⁸⁴ If anything, these disappointments seem to have made James more appreciative of the importance of serial structuring, and he even began to consider new and creative approaches to installment publishing in an attempt to capture editors' interest. Whereas James's early efforts to design novels suitable to installment reading were straightforward—his decision in *Roderick Hudson* to begin each installment by situating the characters in time and space, offers one example—for *The Ambassadors* James apparently sought to do something different, to craft a novel that could emphasize the slow development of Lambert Strether's consciousness through the temporal breaks inherent in serial issue.⁸⁵

James's early sense that he could, in *The Ambassadors*, use the unavoidable divisions of periodical publication to good effect is evident in a telling postscript to the extended summary of the novel he submitted to the publishers of *Harper's Magazine*. Here James makes clear that he is thinking of the project in distinct parts, each with its own internal structure.⁸⁶ "Each Part I rather definitely see in Two

⁸⁴ Ellery Sedgwick notes that following the disastrous publication of *The Tragic Muse* in seventeen installments, the new editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* Horace Scudder, determined to publish only James's short stories. He eventually agreed to publish "The Old Things" (later re-titled *The Spoils of Poynton*) in seven installments only when James proved unable to meet the twenty-page limit for short fiction. ("Horace Scudder and Sarah Orne Jewett" 81).

⁸⁵ Several years later, Willa Cather seems to have considered the artistic potential of serial release in her structuring of *The Professor's House*. One biographer notes that Cather was working on the novel, which appeared in *Collier's*, at the same time that she was engaged in editing a new edition of Jewett's work. For the latter project, she made the strange decision to insert three extraneous stories into *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, purportedly to suggest the passage of time. In one reading, the middle section of *The Professor's House* serves a similar function, highlighting the break between the first and last sections. The breaks would have been even more apparent in both books when they first appeared in serial. (Stout 213-214).

⁸⁶ James's renewed attention to serial structuring comes at a time when other authors were experimenting with alternatives to the year-long serial novel. As Sedgwick points out, *Atlantic* editor Horace Scudder encouraged Sarah Orne Jewett to write a sequence of stories rather than a novel, resulting in the celebrated *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896). Some years earlier he had solicited a similar sequence of short stories from Alice French, noting readers' taste for the

Chapters,” he wrote, “...each very full, as it were, and charged— like a rounded medallion, in a series of a dozen, hung with its effect of high relief, on a wall” (“Project” 404). This image of each part as a distinct work of art makes sense given the novel’s meticulous treatment of the relatively minor experiences in the life of its protagonist. Very little happens in *The Ambassadors*: the middle-aged hero Strether arrives in Europe to retrieve his fiancé’s wayward son Chad Newsome; he meets a number of people and enjoys Paris; he gradually comes to feel that the son has been improved rather than corrupted by his relationship with a married woman, Madame De Vionnet. Yet each moment in Strether’s experience, each encounter, is fleshed out with an attention to the minor nuances of human interaction and to Strether’s minute impressions of his new acquaintances potentially making even mundane episodes in the novel appear “full” of interest and “charged” with meaning.

James evidently felt that this type of story, the story of an older man’s gradual transformation, was best told and best experienced slowly, which meant that serial reading could actually act as an aid to reception rather than an impediment by drawing out the reader’s experience of the novel in a manner analogous to Strether’s own gradual awakening. As James advised one reader, it was best to “take” the novel “... very easily and gently: read five pages a day— be even as deliberate as that...”⁸⁷ While serial reading could not break the novel into such small parts nor impose such regular reading, it would have accomplished a similar function in extending the narrative over time. “I find that the most difficult thing in the art of the novelists is to give the impression and illusion of the real lapse of time,” James remarked in the

“concentration of effect” to be found in short fiction that may “be taken down in one gulp.” Ellery Segdwick. (“Horace Scudder and Sarah Orne Jewett 81).

⁸⁷ Henry James to the Duchess of Sutherland. Dec. 23, 1903. *Letters*, ed Edel, 4:302-303.

same letter, "... and the drawing-out the reader can contribute to help a little perhaps the production of that spell."⁸⁸ Through such deliberately slow reading, the readers' experience of the text might become closer to Strether's encounter with Europe, at least in theory. Like Strether, the reader would be obliged to wait some time before making contact with Chad and even longer to meet the woman who has caused Chad's mother such concern. Like Strether, the serial reader would find her experience prolonged, as each new month brought about new impressions, slight modifications in understanding.

Years later James would express his satisfaction that in *The Ambassadors* he had successfully responded to the exigencies of serialization, that he had found an artistic approach that allowed him to master the form. In the "Preface" to the New York Edition of the novel, James would remark—perhaps somewhat disingenuously given his other comments on serial publication—that he "...had been open from far back to any pleasant provocation for ingenuity that might reside in one's actively adopting— so as to make it, in its way a small compositional law— recurrent breaks and resumptions." "I had made up my mind," he continued, "here regularly to exploit and enjoy these often rather rude jolts—having found as I believed, an admirable way to it" (Preface 42).

James's sense that he had found a satisfactory formal solution to the "rather rude jolts" occasioned by serial publication has been noted by several scholars who have celebrated James's accomplishment. In his introduction to a recent Penguin

⁸⁸ Henry James to the Duchess of Sutherland. Dec. 23, 1903. *Letters*, ed Edel, 4:302-303. One analysis of the novel notes that "James makes frequent references to the time elapsing between incidents in the novel, but his sums do not add up to a calendar." Strether arrives in Europe sometime in March and the leaves in mid-July (Bellringer 96).

edition, for instance, Harry Levin remarks that “[i]t would be hard to think of a more symmetrical arrangement, running in its original publication through a calendar year (1903), into twelve periodical installments” (23). Levin also identifies evidence of serial structuring in the details. “To glance at the ending of one ‘book’ and the commencement of another is to appreciate how he exploited the monthly gaps: a predictable continuity between Books First and Second, for instance, as opposed to a suspenseful pause between Books Third and Fourth” (23). For F. O. Matthiessen, James’s achievement goes beyond such aids to reader appreciation. “In *The Ambassadors*,” he writes, “we have a fine instance of the experienced artist taking an external convention, and, instead of letting it act as a handicap, turning it to his own signal advantage” (19). “His subject,” Matthiessen continues, “was well fitted to such treatment, since it consisted with Strether’s gradual initiation into a world of new values, and a series of small climaxes could therefore best articulate this hero’s successive discoveries” (19).

What James’s own account of *The Ambassadors* and these positive assessments by his critics tend to overlook, however, is that the novel was hardly an unqualified success as a serial text. Despite James’s early assurance to his potential publisher that he was planning a novel uniquely suited to serial publication—a series of a dozen “medallions”—his project failed to capture the interest of *Harper’s* editor H. M. Alden. In his memo concerning the proposed novel, Alden bluntly dismissed the proposal on the grounds that “it [did] not promise a popular novel.”

The tissues of it are too subtly fine for general appreciation.... It is subjective, fold within fold of a complex mental web, in which the

reader is lost if his much-wearied attention falters... I do not advise acceptance. We ought to do better” (Alden 415).⁸⁹

Ultimately, that *The Ambassadors* appeared in serial at all seems to have been a fluke. As S. P. Rosenbaum points out in his analysis of the various editions and revisions of the novel, it is difficult to determine why Harper and Brothers, the publishers of both *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* and the *North American Review*, decided to sign a contract with the author when its editor clearly had rejected the serial, an apparent oversight that may have arisen from the confusion surrounding Harper’s bankruptcy in 1899 (356). Even after the publishers issued the second half of the payment for serial rights, the novel’s serialization was uncertain. It was not until 1903, several years after James had sent in his manuscript, that *The Ambassadors* appeared in installments over the course of a full year in the pages of the *North American Review*.

This was not the only unusual thing about this instance of serialization. Significantly, the appearance of *The Ambassadors* marked the first time that the *Review* had seen fit to publish a work of fiction in its long history. There does not seem to have been any particular demand by readers for this change in editorial policy; in fact, the editors are quick to reassure readers that this effort to “broaden” the magazine in scope” will not alter “in any general direction the general character of its policies” (“Editorial Announcement”).⁹⁰ Instead, the novel was treated as a sort of supplement to the regular material, appearing in back pages in smaller type without impinging upon the regular content. “To provide for this novel feature,” the editors explain, “the number of pages in each issue will be considerably increased, so that the

⁸⁹ The same editor who rejected James’s novel had recognized the drawing potential of Du Maurier’s *Trilby*, which appeared in 1894 and sparked a “Trilby craze.” (Mott 400).

⁹⁰ This announcement appears at the beginning of the magazine before the onset of pagination.

REVIEW will be in a position to continue to discuss with undiminished comprehensiveness and adequacy the important questions of the time.” The *Review* went on to publish one more serial novel immediately following *The Ambassadors*—Howells’s *The Son of Royal Langbrith* appeared in eight installments in 1904—but, in general, the magazine continued to give fiction only marginal consideration in the decades to come. With the exception of this unusual period in the *Review*’s history, the magazine does not seem to have made any effort to cultivate the habit of serial reading in its subscribers.

Yet despite, or perhaps due to, this unusual approach to serialization, James was delighted. “I like extremely, the place the N.A.R. makes for my novel,” James enthused in a letter to Howells, “it meets quite my ideal in respect to that isolation and relief one has always fondly conceived as the proper due of one’s productions.”⁹¹ That the *Review*’s circulation was considerably smaller than that of *Harper’s* was not a problem.⁹² Nor did James mind that his novel was confined to the back pages, when his novels had once opened issues of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Instead James rejoiced that his novel was not placed “... amid the promiscuous petticoats and other low company of the usual magazine table-of-contents... for the petticoats and all the foolish feet aforesaid to trample over with the best conscience in the world.”⁹³ Howells’s essay “Mr. James’s Later Work,” which served as an introduction to the serial, affirmed that this instance of serial publication in the *Review* was no common matter. “I can imagine [James] addressing himself to a circle of readers as this

⁹¹ Henry James to William Dean Howells. *The Letters of Henry James*, Ed. Percy Lubbock, 1:4141.

⁹²The circulation remained small; there were never more than 76,000 subscribers at any one point. (Chielens 289).

⁹³ Henry James to William Dean Howells. *The Letters of Henry James*, ed. Percy Lubbock, 1:4141.

Review's with a satisfaction, and a sense of liberation, which he might not feel in the following of the family magazines," Howells observes, pointedly placing the magazine, and its readers, at a level above that of the average (412).

James's comments and Howells's observations both suggest that what mattered most in the placement of *The Ambassadors* in *The North American Review* was the status to be gained through affiliation with a venerable magazine and, somewhat paradoxically, exposure to a discerning, critical audience that generally did not bother with magazine fiction. Whether or not readers actually followed the novel from month to month was less important, finally, than the magazine's treatment of the text with dignity and propriety.⁹⁴ Here, then, was an case of serialization unlike anything in James's prior experience. It was, in effect, a serial novel for those who didn't read serials, an instance of serial publication best suited to an author deeply ambivalent with respect to this aspect of professional authorship, an author who hoped to be considered by people who were "serious and sincere" and feared being a mere "pastime for individuals."

James would not have an opportunity to repeat this atypical performance. He failed to find a publisher willing to serialize *The Wings of the Dove*, which was written after but published before *The Ambassadors*. And, despite his best efforts to adapt his next novel, *The Golden Bowl*, to satisfy the magazine editors, here too serial publication was closed to him. He would remark to Howells in 1904 that in response to the possibility of serializing he, "feverishly divided it into 12 installments (& it cut

⁹⁴ Many scholars have remarked on the difficulty of James's late novels. Stephen Railton, for one, identifies James as "the first American writer to put high art beyond the reach of the middle-class audience." Of course, a work like *The Ambassadors* was literally within "reach" of middle-class subscribers to the *North American Review* even if it were beyond their reach, or tastes, in other respects. (21).

far better than it might have) . . .” When the manuscript was refused, James bemoaned the fact that he hadn’t attempted to adapt the novel to serial publication earlier: “If I had only known, or tried *before* (instead of forming the book independently), I am pretty sure I could have captured them...”⁹⁵

With serial publication no longer an option, James turned his energies to the New York Edition, which he hoped would be both “the bread of [his] vieux jours” and a final monument to his career.⁹⁶ Troubled by “the demoralisation, the vulgarisation of literature in general, the increasing familiarity of all such methods of communication,” James hoped that a new luxury edition of his works could provide the “dignity of aspect” befitting his novels (“The Future of the Novel” 51).⁹⁷ Described in the publisher’s prospectus as “an elaborate edifice whose design and execution are absolutely unique in their kind owing to their complete unity of effect,” the New York Edition brought together most of James’s novels, revised one final time, and accompanied by preface by the author written especially for this new project (Edel 169). If the bound book represented an improvement over ephemeral magazine installments, a lavish, uniform set of James’s novels reinforced the message that here was an oeuvre worthy of serious regard. As one critic would declare upon the publication of the edition, “Mr. James is no author for ‘pocket’ editions. He is to be read in the library, in all the dignity of large type and fair-margined pages” (Marsh 138).

⁹⁵ James, letter to William Dean Howells, 5 Aug., 1904, *Letters, Fictions, Lives*, 408.

⁹⁶ Henry James to Edith Wharton, 20 Dec. 1911, Rpt. in Bell 167.

⁹⁷ Henry James, letter to Charles Scribner’s Sons, 9 May, 1906, Rpt. in *Henry James Letters*, vol. 4, 403.

Ironically, however, some of the clearest statements of the importance of serial publication to James's sense of his work may be found in his prefaces to the various volumes of the New York Edition. Here James is surprisingly frank about the material conditions of publishing behind the composition of his longer works, often mentioning specific details of serial publication. It is in the Preface to *The Ambassadors* that James refers to his "admirable" solution to the "rather rude jolts" occasioned by serialization. In the Preface to *Roderick Hudson*, he notes that the novel "was designed from the first for serial publication" (*The Art of the Novel* 3). With regard to *The American*, James recalls its initial appearance in serial even before the novel was completed. In the Preface to *The Tragic Muse*, James laments the novel's "running on, inordinately, several months beyond its proper due" (*The Art of the Novel* 79).

The Preface to *The Wings of the Dove*, is particularly telling on the subject of serialization, effectively encapsulating James's long ambivalence toward practicalities of publication. In one breath the author posits the value of certain editorial impositions as a kind of creative constraint. Such "prescriptions," he admits, "when not too blighting... operate as a tax on ingenuity—that ingenuity of the expert craftsman which likes to be taxed very much to the same tune to which a well-bred horse likes to be saddled" (*The Art of the Novel* 295). In the next, he insists that "[t]he best and finest ingenuities" are those that "rest all on permanent rather than in any degree on momentary proprieties" (*The Art of the Novel* 295-296). Such vacillation is, ultimately, quite characteristic of James. It recalls Olive's conflicted

desire to act in the marketplace and to avoid its taint. It echoes James's wavering between pursuit of serial publication and resistance.

James's irresolution on the subject of formal constraints such as those presented by serialization is also appropriate given the two noteworthy features of the New York Edition: the exclusion of *The Bostonians* and the inclusion of several texts specifically designed for serialization. Ironically, the novel in which James had most blatantly flaunted the conventions of serial publication and that had been written in a period in which he began to give voice to ideas about the importance of the whole, was excluded from the final authoritative edition of James's work and thereby denied the reincarnation that could affirm its status as a carefully crafted unified work, a part of the author's definitive oeuvre. Instead, it was *The Ambassadors*, a novel he described as "all conveniently 'arranged for'" that was ultimately deemed the most perfect in its composition, the best "all round" (Preface 35).

Whether or not serial publication helped or harmed James's creative endeavor is difficult to determine, but it is clear that this fact of publication constituted a significant part of his experience of authorship—something to work within, struggle against, and attempt to redefine. Despite his fluctuating response to serialization over the course of a long career, James's belated public comments on serialization in the prefaces to the New York Edition suggest that he had, at last, found a way to imagine himself as having mastered this mode of publication, that artistic experimentation and skill could transform something of vulgar origins into an object worthy of serious and sincere contemplation. The New York Edition, which was issued volume by volume,

between 1907 and 1909, with one volume appearing each month, would be James's final engagement with "serial publication."

CHAPTER FOUR

“Between Scylla and Charybadis”: Pauline Hopkins, Winnifred Eaton, and the Racial Politics of Serial Publication

In March of 1903, the editors of the *Colored American Magazine* printed a letter from “one of our *white* readers” who had written to cancel her subscription and express her dissatisfaction with the portrayals of interracial romance in the magazine’s serial novels. “Does that mean that your novelists can imagine no love sublime and beautiful within the range of the colored race, for each other?” the reader demanded. “I have seen beautiful home life and love in families altogether of Negro blood. The stories of these tragic mixed loves will not commend themselves to your white readers and will not elevate the colored readers.” (Condict 398). Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins, the literary editor of the *Colored American Magazine* and the author of three serial novels published in the magazine between 1901 and 1903, responded with her own published letter. “I am glad to receive this criticism,” she bristled, “for it shows more clearly than ever that white people don’t understand *what pleases Negroes*” (Hopkins Letter; emphasis in original).

This public exchange in the pages of the *Colored American Magazine* points to fundamental a shift in Hopkins’s sense of the purpose and possibilities of fiction as she abandoned book publication for serial fiction. In her published response, Hopkins might have directed her reader to her first novel, *Contending Forces: A Romance*

Illustrative of Negro Life North and South (1900), in which she *had* portrayed “love sublime and beautiful within the range of the colored race, for each other” and the “beautiful home life” of a middle-class black family. Instead, by citing her current and more pressing obligations to black readers Hopkins’s response points to an evolving understanding of audience given the author’s newfound commitment to serial fiction. If the first novel was intended to function as a “plea for that justice of heart and mind for my people which the Anglo-Saxon in America never withholds from suffering humanity,” the serial novels were designed to please a different audience of magazine readers (*Contending Forces* 15).

Hopkins’s reevaluation of her role as she moved from the novel to serial fiction is illuminating in and of itself, but it also raises larger issues around the relationship between authorship, audience, and publication context, particularly for authors who did not have the luxury of seeing their work appear in periodicals prior to book publication. Unlike such mainstream authors as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry James, whose novels consistently appeared in the magazines before being published in book form, more marginal writers could not always expect to see their work appear in both media. Successful late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century writers relied on earnings from serial rights to supplement their income and sometimes bemoaned the perceived impediment to independent composition this occasioned, but for many writers of the period, book publication and periodical publication represented distinct arenas, alternative modes of publication that needed to be addressed on their own terms. Publication in one venue or the other thus

required renegotiation and repositioning: a new understanding of audience, a new formulation of fiction's role, a revised formulation of authorship.

I.

Before considering Hopkins's relationship to serial issue and book publication, I would like to turn to another recently rediscovered "ethnic" writer of the same period who established a rather different relationship to her "white" audience. A Canadian born to a Chinese mother and British father, Winnifred Eaton moved to the United States as a young woman, adopted the Japanese-sounding pen-name Onoto Watanna, claimed to be half-Japanese, and produced a series of commercially successful romances set in Japan. Today, thanks to scholarly efforts to recover the works of so-called minority writers, both Hopkins and Eaton are better known, with substantial literary scholarship devoted to their best-known novels. Yet, for both authors, critical attention to the books without adequate consideration of each author's negotiations with magazine publication fails to address the subtle differences between periodical and book publication.

Attention to the interplay between periodical publication and book publication is critical given the ongoing recovery of periodical fiction by minority authors. Martin R. Delany's unfinished novel, *Blake; or The Huts of America*, which appeared in installments in the *Weekly Anglo-African*, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's early serial novels for the *Christian Recorder*, and the recently rediscovered serial novel *The Curse of Caste; or, The Slave Bride* by Julia C. Collins, compel us to consider what it meant to write a novel for a magazine

instead of producing a discrete work of fiction bound between covers. In some cases, magazine work translated into subsequent book publication; late in her career, Harper would see *Iola Leroy* appear in book form. But for many writers magazine publication did not automatically lead to the publication of novels as books.

Much like Hopkins, Eaton began her literary career in the magazines, more specifically, in the world of women's periodicals. Yet unlike Hopkins, in just a few years, Eaton had successfully made the transition into the more lucrative arena of gift book publication, turning out a number of lavishly illustrated books that included *Miss Numè of Japan* (1899) and the best-selling *A Japanese Nightingale* (1901). In contrast to a high-brow author like Henry James, who earned more from publication in established literary magazines than from book sales and was unsuccessful in his late efforts to repackage his work as a luxury commodity, a popular author of bestsellers like Eaton could actually make more money from books than from appearance in small regional or specialty magazines. Had Hopkins been able to capture such an audience, she would have found it more profitable than her work for the *Colored American Magazine*. A question driving this discussion of Eaton and Hopkins, then, must be: what was it that allowed Eaton to thrive in the world of book publication where Hopkins had not? Why did Eaton's "ethnic" novels provide the basis for a successful literary career, while Hopkins's single venture into book publication led her to re-dedicate her energy to the *Colored American Magazine*?

To a large extent, Eaton's success speaks to her ability and willingness to participate in a newly- created cultural niche, the turn-of-the-century craze for things

Japanese. Eaton's novels, from *Miss Numè* (1899) to *Sunny-San* (1922), represented the literary equivalent of other popular manifestations of "Japanese" culture such as the hit comic opera *The Mikado*, which premiered at the Savoy Theatre in 1885 and was staged throughout the U.S., or the Japanese exhibits at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, which enjoyed wide coverage by the American press. This late-nineteenth century fad for Japanese culture gave rise to a flood of periodical writing about Japan, as well as a minor genre of Japanese fiction and non-fiction. One scholar notes that over 170 entries on Japan are listed in *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature* for the years between 1892 and 1896, and over 500 listing appear for the years 1902 to 1906 (Matsukawa "Onoto Watanna's Japanese Collaborators" 33). Lafcadio Hearn's books on Japan, Pierre Loti's famous fictionalized travel narrative *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887), and John Luther Long's *Miss Cherry-Blossom of Toyko* (1895) and *Madame Butterfly* (1898) all helped to establish a precedent, creating a recognizable niche market into which Eaton could insert her fiction.

Eaton's participation in this literary niche is evident not only from the similarities in subject matter between her work and that of her fellow Orientalists but also in the presentation and packaging of her "Japanese" novels. Like the earlier books by Pierre Loti and John Luther Long, Eaton's romances were lavish affairs, printed on decorated paper, containing numerous illustrations, and bound with colorful, highly-designed covers. Like the works of these two male writers, *Miss Numè of Japan* and *A Japanese Nightingale* depict romances between virile western men and quaint Japanese maidens, thereby reiterating a common narrative of East-West contact. Such similarities have led some to attribute Eaton's success to her

ability to establish a gendered relationship between the reader and novel whereby the author is placed in a position similar to that of her Japanese heroines. Jean Lee Cole points to Eaton's decision to adopt a Japanese persona, to package her work as luxury commodities, and to pose for publicity photos in Japanese attire as strategic moves that allowed collectors of the novels "— particularly male ones— to indulge in erotic fantasies of possessing a geisha of their very own," to imagine that when they purchased a book by Onoto Watanna "they were also, in a sense, purchasing *her*" [Fig. 1]. Eaton, Cole posits, like the male Orientalist writers before her, gave her readers, "especially men, yet another opportunity to engage in the semierotic fantasies about women that they had indulged in reading earlier works by writers like Loti and Long" (Cole 27-31).

This notion of Eaton's literary project as a sort of elaborate seduction, with both her literary persona and her novels functioning as productions to attract male readers finds support in some of the early reviews of her work, but the situation becomes more complex when we consider Eaton's work within the context of her writing for women's magazines. William Dean Howells's reference to the heroine of *A Japanese Nightingale*'s "surpassing loveliness," for instance, and his positive remarks on the "indescribable freshness" of the "pretty novelette" points to a feminization of Japanese culture ("A Psychological Countercurrent" 872-88). However, a broader assessment of Eaton's career undermines this gendered reading of reader response by revealing the extent to which Eaton's work developed out of her earlier writing for women's magazines. Continuities between this periodical work and the novels that followed, coupled with evidence that more women than men read

the books, suggests that Eaton's success cannot be explained solely through reference to her ability to capture the interest of a male readership. Instead, I would argue, Eaton's popularity as a novelist depended on her ability to draw upon her earlier experiences as a writer for women's periodicals, and more specifically, to create fiction attuned to the desires of white women readers.⁹⁸ If movement from periodical fiction to book publication (and back) required that Hopkins adjust her sense of purpose and audience, Eaton's move to book publication was significantly smoother, allowing the author to draw upon lessons from her earlier work to meet the new challenge of book publication. In effect, Eaton was able to make the period she spent writing for women's magazines work to her advantage, supporting her project of adapting the generic "Japanese" romance to meet the demands of a women readers of books.

As perusal of the late-nineteenth-century magazines where Eaton's work first appears makes clear, there was a decided demand for information about Asian women and fictional depictions of young Japanese women and girls. In the very first issue of the women's magazine *The American Home Journal* (the location of many of Eaton's first publications) the editors promise readers that future issues will address the subject of "Japanese Women." Although the story that Eaton supplied under the pen name Onoto Watanna was essentially a fairy tale set in Japan, it is referred to as a "graphic portrayal of Japanese womanhood," indicating an awareness of reader interest in this subject matter ("Editorial Chat" 136). Other articles maintain this focus on the women of Japan. Eaton's "An Oriental Holiday," for example, is

⁹⁸ Occasionally, Eaton turned to her previous writing for copy. Sections of *Miss Numè of Japan* are imported wholesale and some of the photographs used to illustrate this book are identical to those used in articles published at an earlier date.

illustrated with numerous photographs of young Japanese women and pays tribute to their “doll-like beauty” (12-13). During the same period, Eaton was able to place similar articles entitled “The Life of a Japanese Girl” and “The Happy Lot of Japanese Women” in the women’s magazines *The Ladies Home Journal* and *Metropolitan Magazine* respectively.

Not only does the content of these magazines reveal white women’s fascination with Asian women and girls, in both fictional sketches and nonfiction accounts American women living abroad are represented as mentors and benefactresses to young Asian women and girls. For instance, in her holiday story “Shizu’s New Year’s Present,” Eaton presented her readers with a sentimental story in which a poor geisha girl decides to give herself as a gift to “the kind American lady” who has helped her find a job (4). “Tha’s account I have no present for give you,” she explains, when the American lady finds her asleep among the holiday presents. “I give you ME! jus’ me! for present. You lig’ me?” This holiday story bears a striking resemblance to a “touching, yet pretty” incident recounted in Eaton’s non-fiction piece “An Oriental Holiday,” which concerns a poor girl who “spent all her little savings . . . in buying a present for an American lady who at one time had befriended her” (13). A story by another contributor concerns a western woman who befriends a half-Chinese girl in Hawaii.⁹⁹ “I could not put her out of my thoughts,” the narrator recalls, “and schemed and schemed how I might obtain permission for

⁹⁹ Some critics have argued that Eaton confined herself to Japanese subject matter due to anti-Chinese sentiment, but the readers of *The American Home Journal* (later *Conkey’s*) appear to have been as eager to read about Chinese women (Ling 5). At the same time that Eaton was placing her Japanese stories and articles in this periodical, one long-forgotten contributor penned an article entitled “A Chinese Beauty,” which noted that “the little Chinese girl has often many characteristics that may well captivate European eyes” (May 21).

her to come and live with me.” By the end of the story, the girl has become the woman’s maid, upon which the American proceeds to teach her English, to replace her Hawaiian clothes with “neat American dress,” and to oversee her conversion to Christianity (Banks 10).

Variations on this narrative of American women befriending and aiding foreign women are also evident in Eaton’s only serial novel, *The Old Jinrikisha*, a series of loosely connected episodes involving an antique rickshaw cart and its passengers that appeared in *Conkey’s Home Magazine* in 1900.¹⁰⁰ Although most of the episodes center on heterosexual romances, two of the main stories concern friendships between young women of different cultural backgrounds. In the first, which occurs in the third installment, readers are introduced to a vivacious and independent “American girl” named Beryl Evans, who forms a friendship with her British husband’s sister who is described as “one of those loving little women with big pathetic faithful eyes, frail and ethereal as a lily, but staunch, and intensely true to those she loved” (9). In the sixth installment, a half-Japanese, American-raised girl named Koto becomes deeply attached to her Japanese half-sister Natsu. Although Beryl and Elinore are both Caucasian, American and British respectively, the dynamic that characterizes their cross-cultural friendship is remarkably similar to that of the Asian and Eurasian pair. In both cases, the American (or Americanized) girl assumes the dominant role and advises her foreign protégé in romantic relations.

¹⁰⁰ In a strange twist on the objectification of young Asian women apparent in the other fiction, Eaton’s serial novel is narrated by a Japanese object, a jinrikisha or rickshaw cart, who provides a chatty commentary on the lives of “her” occupants over the course of several generations. In the second paragraph of the first installment, the jinrikisha recalls, “I remember when I was being made, one of the workmen, or, as I sometimes like to call them, one of my creators, remarked, after he had padded me with the softest of rice straw and matting, that I was as soft and pliable as a pretty woman. So my sex was set” (1).

When Elinore learns that her fiancé has formed a temporary marriage to a Japanese girl, Beryl insists that Elinore give him up. Similarly, Koto interferes on behalf of her half-sister, warning her that she will be “dreadfully unhappy” if she goes through with her traditional arranged marriage (4).

What these two pairings have in common, then, is a notion that friendships between women of different cultural backgrounds may be compassionate and intense, comparable to the marital arrangements formed between men and women. As several cultural critics have observed, intense yet platonic friendships between women were not uncommon in the nineteenth centuries, either in life or in fiction. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg points out that “an abundance of manuscript evidence suggests that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women routinely formed emotional ties with other women” and that these “deeply-felt, same-sex friendships were casually accepted in American society” (1). According to Elaine Showalter, this phenomenon is partly a consequence of limited social contact between women and men, for at the same time that “premarital relationships between the sexes were subject to severe restrictions, romantic friendships between women were admired and encouraged.” “In fact,” she asserts, “the homosocial world of women’s culture allowed much leeway for physical intimacy and touch,” though “these caresses were not interpreted as erotic expressions” (*Sister’s Choice* 14).

In her periodical fiction Eaton clearly drew upon this idealized version of female friendship but also adapted it to encompass relationships between American women and their less-sophisticated, foreign sisters. Moreover, this emphasis carried over into Eaton’s career as a novelist. Although her first novel, *Miss Numè of Japan*

appears to repeat the typical romance between a western man and a Japanese woman—in this case Miss Numè and Arthur Sinclair—it may also be read as a conversion narrative in which two white women, Cleo Ballard and Mrs. Davis, move beyond a superficial interest in Japanese women to gain a deeper appreciation for the novel’s Japanese heroine.¹⁰¹ At first Cleo and Mrs. Davis see Japanese women as sweet doll-like creatures to adopt and coddle. “When I go back to America,” Cleo tells her cousin during their trip to Japan, “I think I’ll take a little Japanese maid with me. They are so neat and amusing” (56). This initial, superficial attraction to Japanese women temporarily gives way to animosity when Numè emerges as Cleo’s competitor. Forgetting her friendship with the Japanese girl, Mrs. Davis “. . . remembered only that Cleo was her dearest friend—that this strange Japanese girl might cause her immeasurable trouble and pain, and that she must do something to prevent it” (159). But by the end of the novel such tensions are resolved as Numè manages not only to marry her American lover but also to win over the two American women. In fact, Eaton’s first novel ends, not with the marriage of Numè and Sinclair but with a strange scene of reconciliation between Cleo and her Japanese rival. In a final chapter, titled simply “Cleo and Numè,” Eaton effectively rewrites the traditional heterosexual romance by replacing it with a moment of homosocial intimacy in which Cleo acknowledges Numè’s charms. “‘I understand,’ she said softly [to Sinclair], ‘why you—you loved her. If I were a man I would too’” (218). “‘Ah! Thad is a regret,’ sighed Numè, who had overheard her and half understood.

¹⁰¹ Evidently inspired by *Miss Cherry-Blossom of Toyko*, a novel by John Luther Long which also included both Japanese and western female characters, *Miss Numè* is ultimately more optimistic about the possibility of friendship between white and Asian women, extending Long’s analysis of inter-ethnic relations between women of America and Japan in order to imagine a homosocial intimacy capable of transcending ethnocentric competition.

‘Thad you nod a mans to luf with me . . . ’” (219). Such moments of homosocial bonding complicate a reading of Eaton’s work as Orientalist fantasy solely geared to white western men. Instead, drawing upon her work for women’s magazines, Eaton sought to adapt a general American interest in Japanese culture to suit an audience that was predominantly female. Eschewing the tragic endings of the Japanese romances produced by white men, Eaton’s first novel published in book form offers its heroine a traditionally happy ending: marriage to an attractive and suitably wealthy Western man. But her text also grants significant authority to white women characters, who learn to love the Asian heroine and eventually endorse her interracial romance.

In her second and most popular novel, Eaton takes this relationship between white women and Asian women further, making the outcome of the novel contingent upon the interference of a white American woman. In this romance, when the Japanese Yuki and her American husband Jack become separated, Eaton abruptly introduces a new character, the wife of a theatrical manager who hopes to add Yuki to his troupe of traveling performers. At first the American woman is merely struck by the Japanese girl’s loveliness, much as Cleo and Mrs. Davis were by Numè. She compares Yuki to “a pretty picture on a fan” and looks after her as she would a child. But when she learns the girl’s romantic story her feelings deepen. As Yuki relates her “immeasurable longing for the man she loved, and whom she had married “for jus’ liddle bid while... [a]ll the big romantic heart of the American woman went out to her as she took her into her arms and mingled her own honest tears with Yuki’s” (163, 166). Indeed, the happy outcome of *A Japanese Nightingale*, turns on the pleasure of

this unnamed American woman. It is only because the theatrical manager's wife appreciates Yuki's true value, recognizes that she loves Jack, and is willing to thwart her husband to interfere on Yuki's behalf that the novel ends with a reconciliation between husband and wife. Yet even as she successfully arranges Yuki and Jack's reunion, the American wife bemoans the fact that she has lost Yuki for herself. "Such a romance!" she exclaims with pleasure, as she spies on the couple's tearful reunion; "[s]uch a nice, big fellow, too!" "And, oh dear me," she remarks a second later, "I've lost her sure enough now forever! Bother men, anyhow!" (171).

I do not mean to overstate the homoeroticism of this moment, which like Yuki's ingenuous regret that Cleo is not a man to "luf" with her, points to the potential for strong emotional bonds between white and Asian women. But these moments of homosocial bonding in Eaton's first novels do challenge the notion of the books as exotic commodities for men to consume and possess. Although critics like Cole have focused primarily on the erotic appeal of "Japanese" fiction with its demure and exotic heroines, characters like Cleo and Mrs. Davis in *Miss Numè* and the seemingly marginal figure of the theater manager's wife in *A Japanese Nightingale* complicate a reading of the novels in strictly hetero-normative terms. Instead, these moments suggest that Eaton was particularly attuned to the desires of her female readers most likely as a result of her apprenticeship in women's magazines. Having begun her career writing periodical fiction for American women, she had not only developed a vocabulary for representing contact between eastern and western women but also an appreciation for the need to secure the interest and empathy of American women readers.

In Eaton's texts, the inclusion of these white female characters may have served to ameliorate the potential challenge to white female privilege implicit in the novels' happy endings. It is not too hard to imagine that Eaton's tales of marriage between western men and Asian women—novels purportedly written by an exotic and talented Eurasian—being seen as challenges to American superiority and to the sexual appeal of American women in particular. Unlike the male protagonists of Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* and Long's *Madame Butterfly*, who experiment with interracial relations but ultimately prefer white women, Eaton's white men consistently choose Asian women over their white competitors. Whereas Loti is more than happy to leave his strange foreign wife, and Long's Pinkerton finds a legitimate American wife shortly after he abandons Cho-Cho-San, in Eaton's tales Japanese women are presented as fully worthy of white male affection. Women reading the earlier male-authored tales, might pity their poor foreign sisters, and condemn the actions of their callous countrymen, but they would not have to contend with a narrative that presented Asian women as equal, or superior, to white women. Howells's early review of Eaton's second novel appears alert to the possibility that Jack's preference for Yuki to any woman of his own race might be taken as a slight to American womanhood. Although he gushes about Yuki's "surpassing loveliness," he is quick to assure his readers that "the irresistible charm of the American girl," the one thing keeping young men "from going out and marrying Japanese girls" ("A Psychological Counter-Current" 872- 88). Yet, despite Howells's early recognition of the need to defer to American women readers, contemporary critics have generally failed to consider how women readers might have responded to Eaton's texts.¹⁰² As

¹⁰² Here I am indebted to Jonathan Culler's point that the "hypothesis of a woman reader" provides

far as I have been able to determine, only one critic of Eaton's work has raised the possibility that white women might have been "particularly sensitive to issues concerning the coupling of 'their' men with women of color."¹⁰³ And, to the best of my knowledge, no critic has speculated that such negative reception might have been mitigated through the subtle positioning of the western women in the novels themselves.

In fact, Eaton's work for women's magazines and her novels in book form suggest that she was acutely aware of the need to appease white American women readers and developed narrative strategies for circumventing negative response to her "Japanese" texts. The most obvious indication of such deference is evident in an early article in which Eaton explicitly assured her readers that for all their charm, Asian women lack "the brilliancy and cleverness of their European sisters" ("An Oriental Holiday" 12-13). In the fiction, Eaton's approach is more subtle. Here she reveals her sensitivity to her audience by making the happiness of her Asian heroines is contingent upon their acceptance by white female companions and by providing readers with a model of interethnic affection between women. Fictional scenes of

a useful tool "for displacing the dominant male critical vision" (57). However, like Patricia Okker I have reservations concerning the idea advanced by Culler and by Judith Fetterly that an alternative perspective is achieved only through active resistance, that women must unlearn ingrained patterns of reading as men before they can read as women. While Okker acknowledges that this has been true for women academics reading the traditional texts of the western canon, she argues that generalizing from this reading experience ignores "variances of reading communities." For middle-class women readers of nineteenth-century women's magazines, like those who would have encountered Eaton's early periodical work, reading occurs within the context of "a culture that associated women with reading and that encouraged women to read texts written by women." Therefore, rather than assume that Eaton's women readers simply adopted a male reader's relationship to her texts, one must consider how the culture of reading constructed by the ladies' magazines, and implicit in the texts themselves, might produce certain types of response (*Our Sister Editors* 111-112).

¹⁰³ Pat Shea posits that America's history of miscegenation, specifically the exploitation of black women by white men, would have made white women "particularly sensitive to issues concerning the coupling of 'their' men with women of color" (26).

homosocial bonding across national and ethnic borders thus serve to foster acceptance, encouraging readers to adopt similarly sympathetic responses, both to the exotic persona of “Onoto Watanna” and to her fictional creations. Analysis of existing copies of the novels testifies to Eaton’s success in capturing this particular audience. Although I have not been able to conduct a more thorough survey, inscriptions in twenty-one surviving books indicate that at least fourteen of these were at one point were owned (and presumably read) by women.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, many books bearing traces of ownership seem to have been given as gifts, often from one woman to another, pointing to a relationship between reading and female bonding and further attesting to the importance of women readers in supporting Winnifred Eaton’s career as a purveyor of “Japanese” romance.¹⁰⁵

II.

At first glance, Hopkins first novel *Contending Forces* would seem to occupy a market niche similar to that of her contemporary, Winnifred Eaton. Both wrote “ethnic” romances that were marketed as luxury commodities. Both constructed romantic narratives involving casts of interracial characters: white, black, and bi-racial in the case of Pauline Hopkins; Japanese, Caucasian, and Eurasian in Eaton’s

¹⁰⁴ To acquire this information, I contacted the current owners of original texts who had advertised their books for sale on Amazon.com. I also looked at copies at the Hunter College Library and the New York Public Library. Overall, inscriptions in the surviving copies of Eaton’s books point to a predominantly female readership. Not one of these twenty-one books bore the name of a male owner. The six remaining books have inscriptions that give no indication of ownership or include names that are not clearly female (i.e. Jeuil A. Naekes and N.I Gibson).

¹⁰⁵ It is worth noting that Eaton’s first novel was affectionately dedicated to “my friend Helen Bowen, because I love her so.” Her fictionalized autobiography, *Me, A Book of Remembrance* (1915), was also dedicated to female friends: “To ‘Lolly’ my friend who was and to Jean my friend who is.” In both cases, the dedication reinforces the idea of books as objects of exchange between close female friends.

novels. Editorials and advertisements in the *Colored American Magazine* support this notion of Hopkins's novel as a luxury item. "With original illustration and cover design by R. Emmet Owen. Over 400 pages, 8 vo.," announced one advertisement.¹⁰⁶ Readers who were able to enlist new subscribers to the magazine were offered a choice between either "A Beautiful Watch, FREE!" or a copy of Hopkins's novel, implicitly linking the two as luxury goods. Another promotion presented readers with the opportunity to acquire the novel, described as "beautifully illustrated and bound in red vellum, with handsome ornamental stamp" along with a photogravure "in beautiful tinted effect, suitable for framing," thereby emphasizing the material value of both items.¹⁰⁷

Yet if finely-bound, illustrated novels set in Japan were a marketable commodity at the turn of the century, a situation Eaton was able to exploit, novels of contemporary middle-class African Americans were not. In promoting an ambitious novel like *Contending Forces*, Pauline Hopkins did not have the dubious privilege of presenting her novel as an exotic commodity tailored to commercial demand. Instead, the presentation and framing of the novel suggest that the author and her publishers hoped to find a significant audience among white readers sympathetic to the African-American cause. This attention to the desires of white readers is evident in the full-page advertisements for the novel that appeared regularly in the *Colored American Magazine* and optimistically predicted, "a large sale among the whites."¹⁰⁸ But it is also apparent in Hopkins's self-effacing preface, in which she asserts her objective to "do all that [she] can in a humble way to raise the stigma of degradation

¹⁰⁶ "The Greatest Book of the Year!," advertisement, *Colored American Magazine* 4.4 Mar. 1902: n.p.

¹⁰⁷ "Last Call! Our Great Book Offer," advertisement, *Colored American Magazine* 5 Oct. 1902: n.p.

¹⁰⁸ "The Greatest Book of the Year!"

from my race” (*Contending Forces* 13). Asking for the “indulgence of the generous public” and proposing that fiction “cements the bond of brotherhood among all classes and all complexions,” Hopkins’s preface does not preclude a black readership. But at points it is quite direct in its address to white readers, characterizing the novel as “pleading for that justice of heart and mind for my people which the Anglo-Saxon in America never withholds from suffering humanity” (13, 15). The assurance that the events portrayed “have actually occurred” and the promise to introduce “enough of the exquisitely droll humor peculiar to the Negro to give a bright touch to an otherwise gruesome subject” (both of which appear in the advertisements as well as the preface) also seems to speak to white readers’ desire for an authentic encounter with African American life, as well as (somewhat paradoxically) comic representations of “the Negro” that conform to popular precedents (14, 16).

Readers of Hopkins’s novel would have to be well into the narrative before arriving at the promised scenes of “droll humor peculiar to the Negro,” which occupy a relatively small portion of the text. Instead, a significant portion of the novel is devoted to the daily life of middle-class, urban African Americans, who serve as reminders of black cultural achievement and, thereby, help to “raise the stigma of degradation from [the] race.” In the novel, the resourceful widow Mrs. Smith efficiently manages a Boston boarding house, her daughter Dora faithfully assists her and organizes a series of meetings for tenants designed to foster “upright conduct,” and her son Will Smith pursues a career in medicine (102). Other residents of the Smith boarding house are similarly respectable, upwardly mobile, and eager for improvement, even if they are not particularly well-educated. The entrepreneurial

widows Mrs. Davis and Mrs. White, for instance, having made a tidy sum in the laundry business, choose to make their home at Mrs. Smith's in order to "come in contact with brighter intellects than their own" (104).

If these upstanding characters serve as reminders of the range of black accomplishment and offer "a record of growth and development from generation to generation," at other points the novel is more frankly didactic (14). "With about every avenue for business closed against them," the narrator muses, "it is surprising that so many families of color manage to live as well as they do and to educate their children and given them a few of the refinements of living" (86). In an observation that also seems intended to flatter white readers while affirming black gentility, the narrator praises members of the black community for cultivating "the arts of a higher civilization, so common among the whites... Whatever grace or accomplishment may be the order of the hour, it is copied or practiced among some portion of the population"(86).

Perhaps the most telling episode in the book in terms of the imagined relationship between black culture and white patronage, however, is the depiction of the community's annual church fair. In this section, which is accorded two full chapters, Hopkins not only inserts comic scenes in which minor characters gossip and boast in dialogue—the promised instances of "droll humor"—but also draws readers' attention to the collaboration that goes into preparing for the important event. "All of the committees worked willingly, and soon every one of the departments had been provided with appropriate enclosures like quaint pictures set in exquisite frames," Hopkins's

narrator tells us, likening the church fair to an artistic exhibition. Through this effort and keen attention to visual aesthetics, the “bare walls” of the church are transformed, until “the whole place burst into beauty bewildering enough to draw the money from the pockets of the spectators who would come with the evening to help a worthy charity” (915).

The fair, at any rate, is a great success. The narrator remarks that, on the opening day, “[m]any influential whites were present in order to display their philanthropic interest in the welfare of the colored people” (an observation that seems to anticipate a similar interest on the part of readers and subscribers who might lend support to the Colored Cooperative Publishing Company) (201). As if to make the connection between the organization and the fictional fair perfectly clear, the prizes that go to those who sell the most tickets—a gold watch and chain, a piano, a diamond pin—are suspiciously similar to the items offered by the *Colored American Magazine* to those able to secure new subscribers. Yet if the fictional event is a rousing success, the novel, with its similar aims to showcase black achievement and win white patronage, seems to have been somewhat disappointing as a commercial venture. Whereas *A Japanese Nightingale* is thought to have sold as many as 200,000 copies, despite the *Colored American Magazine*’s enthusiastic endorsement of *Contending Forces* and an ongoing advertising campaign in its pages, Hopkins’s novel evidently did not sell well enough to deplete supply (Birchall xv). Even when the book was offered free to new subscribers, demand for the novel remained in the “hundreds” rather than the thousands. Indeed, the Colored Cooperative Publishing Company suffered economically from its venture into book production. “We have

dabbled in the publishing of books (an expensive luxury),” the magazine’s founder Walter W. Wallace explained in a 1901 letter to Booker T. Washington requesting financial assistance for the struggling magazine (Rpt. in Bullock 108).

This economic reality must have alerted Hopkins’s to the difficulty of finding buyers for “race” novels published as books and from this point onward she would dedicate herself solely to periodical publication. But, as I have suggested earlier, for Hopkins, retreat from book publication and dedication to serial fiction did not merely represent a change in publishing format. Instead, close attention to the evolving style of the serial novels points to a decided shift in Hopkins’s understanding of authorship, audience, and the possibilities of African American fiction. Whereas Eaton’s move from writing periodical fiction to producing hard-bound, luxury novels, was relatively seamless, with the former experience providing insights necessary to the success of the subsequent artistic endeavor, for Hopkins, writing serial novels for the *Colored American Magazine* required greater creative readjustment, and most important, a revised understanding of audience demand. This is not an entirely new observation. In her pioneering work on Hopkins, Hazel Carby notes that the three serial novels, which appeared in the *Colored American Magazine* between 1901 and 1903, mark a departure from Hopkins’s first novel in their incorporation of “elements of popular fiction” such as “the strategies and formulas of the sensational fiction of dime novels and magazines” (*Reconstructing Womanhood* 143). But if this stylistic development signals the author’s effort to produce fiction with popular appeal, it also demonstrates the influence of publication context on authorship, revealing how serialization might lead to a reevaluation of fiction and its aims.

One sign of the different meanings assigned to serial fiction versus novels in book form lies in the magazine's treatment of works published in one form or the other. While the *Colored American Magazine* had promoted *Contending Forces* as a commodity, an embodiment of black achievement, and an appeal to white readers, the magazine's framing of the serial novels is different. Gone are references to the novel as a marker of culture, or as a plea for the colored race. Instead, serial fiction was described in terms of narrative appeal. "No person who starts the reading of this powerful story will be satisfied unless they get the entire issues containing the same," ran one announcement, directing readers' attention to *Hagar's Daughter*, then appearing under Hopkins's pseudonym Sarah A. Allen.¹⁰⁹ When the editors later disclosed the secret of the author's identity, they promised readers that the new serial by Hopkins would provide "[a] dramatic tale of Negro life," and "a thrilling story, filled with incidents of heroism."¹¹⁰ As this serial came to a close, the editors remarked "The great serial story, 'Winona,' ends in this issue, and as our readers peruse its tragic and absorbing ending, we know full well that they will unconsciously ask, 'What is to be Miss Hopkins' next story and when will it begin?'"¹¹¹

If the first novel reinforced an image of black achievement—both in its existence as a cultural artifact and in the novel itself—a chief aim of the serial novels seems to have been to appeal to the demands of magazine readers for excitement and entertainment. This evolution is evident not only in the presentation of the serial novels but also in the stylistic and generic differences between *Contending Forces* and the subsequent magazine novels. The settings in the serial novels, for example,

¹⁰⁹ "Editorial and Publishers' Announcements," *Colored American Magazine* Feb. 1901: 316.

¹¹⁰ "Editorial and Publishers' Announcements," *Colored American Magazine* Mar. 1902: 335.

¹¹¹ "Editorial and Publishers' Announcements," *Colored American Magazine* Oct. 1902: 4.

represent a marked departure from the humble location of the first novel. Whereas *Contending Forces* had offered readers scenes of daily life in Boston's black community, *Hagar's Daughter* takes place in the exclusive circle of high-society Washington D.C. In *Winona*, Hopkins locates her characters further from the contemporary scene, setting her tale first in the rustic environs of the Canadian wilderness, and later at the secret camp of John Brown and his band of fugitives. In *Of One Blood*, Hopkins even seems to call attention to the contrast between familiar and exotic locales, setting part of the novel in contemporary Boston and part in the ancient city of Telassar hidden deep in the African desert. These colorful settings in turn provide the backdrop for increasingly fantastic plots. While *Contending Forces* turned on the question of Sappho's mysterious past, in *Hagar's Daughter* such mysteries multiply, with each of the primary characters in the contemporary version of the narrative exposed as an older version of a key figure in the first part of the novel.¹¹² *Winona* and *Of One Blood* also evince the influence of popular adventure novels in their inclusion of dramatic moments of danger, including a last-minute escape from the hands of a lynch mob in *Winona*, and confrontation with leopard in *Of One Blood*. And in *Of One Blood*, Hopkins's plunges further into the realm of the fantastic, as a voyage to Africa leads to the discovery of remarkable riches, uncovered through the aid of a treasure map, guarded by snakes, and hidden within a secret city.

The narrative pacing and serial structuring of these novels also marks a divergence from that of Hopkins's first novel. Unlike *Contending Forces*— which

¹¹² Claudia Tate notes that Hopkins secured a copyright for the first three chapters of *Hagar's Daughter* in 1891, eight years before the copyright date for *Contending Forces*. The remaining thirty-four chapters of *Hagar's Daughter* were copyrighted in 1901, which accounts for the stylistic differences between the beginning and end and the similarities in the first parts of the two novels (198).

had included lengthy addresses to the reader—the serial novels move at a rapid clip with few pauses for authorial commentary. By the time she wrote *Of One Blood*, Hopkins had even abandoned her strategy of launching her novels with pages of historical contextualization; instead, the first installment of *Of One Blood* opens with a melodramatic tableau of the hero alone in his room contemplating suicide. And, in all three of the magazine novels, Hopkins makes strategic use of serial structure in order to maximize suspense and create a desire for subsequent installments, something that she could not have done for a novel in book form. As Hazel Carby points out in her introduction to Hopkins's collected magazine novels, these novels consistently employ an episodic structure, whereby "[e]ach episode ends in a state of suspense that is not relieved until the next issue, which in turn ends in suspense." (xxxvii). This stylistic development is particularly striking when the installment breaks in the magazine novels are compared to the chapter conclusions of *Contending Forces*. In the earlier work, chapters tend to conclude at the end of a conversation, with a final comment on the action by the narrator, or with a character drifting off to sleep; resolution, rather than the creation of suspense, is the organizing principle. In contrast, the magazine novels' monthly installments (which sometimes, but not always, correspond to chapters) typically end at a moment of high dramatic tension, with some shocking development that places the protagonist in danger. If the prototypical book chapter ends with the close of the day, the classic installment concludes at the moment the protagonist faints, overcome by shock or misfortune.

Hopkins's embrace of popular genres, her preoccupation with exotic locations, her movement away from more realist representations of "beautiful home

life,” and her reliance on serial structuring all indicate the author’s attentiveness to trends in popular magazine literature and awareness of the limited demand for domestic novels of contemporary black life. It may have been that Hopkins was simply disappointed by the sales of her first novel and hoped that in abandoning the domestic novel in favor of more popular forms, she could win a larger audience for her fiction.¹¹³ Still, in her published response to her white reader quoted above Hopkins explicitly asserted a desire to please not a general audience but a specifically black audience. This is a rather different issue. Awareness of the varied class positions of her target audience and the unique demands of the magazine reader may have compelled Hopkins to move toward more popular fiction forms, but in imagining her magazine fiction as holding particular appeal for black readers, Hopkins suggests that the difference between *Contending Forces* and her subsequent magazine fiction resides in the serial novels’ greater attention to black desire.

This turn in Hopkins’s career, her newfound dedication to pleasing the black magazine readers, has been given surprisingly little critical attention, particularly considering the wealth of recent work on Hopkins.¹¹⁴ Instead, critics tend to read

¹¹³Despite the magazine’s enthusiastic endorsement and ongoing advertising campaign for Hopkins’s book, it evidently did not sell well enough to deplete supply, as evidenced by the magazine’s eventual offer to provide the novel free to new subscribers. This experience must have alerted Hopkins to the difficulty of finding an audience for “race” novels published as books; from this point onward, she would confine herself to periodical publication.

¹¹⁴Many critics disregard Hopkins’s interest in popular forms and negotiations with audience, focusing on the novels as instances of racial theorizing. For instance, Thomas J Otten argues that, “far from being merely entertaining,” Hopkins’s work makes “use of the genre of the fantastic” in order to “[make] problematic basic assumptions about persons, . . . strategically [widening] the controlled ambiguities of racist discourse” (236). Cynthia Schrage identifies a theoretical inconsistency in *Of One Blood*, whereby the novel both “[theorizes] about the indeterminacy of racial subjectivity and figures racial identity in terms of a more deterministic discourse of blood.” (184). Critics like Martin Japtok and John Nickel see Hopkins’s engagement of eugenics and Darwinist discourse as ultimately problematic strategies that reinforce racist views as much as they undermine them. While these careful readings do much to elucidate the ideas about race manifested in the fiction, to read Hopkins’s novels solely as articulations of race theory risks neglecting their function within the

Hopkins's retreat from the representations of black life and strong black female characters as a sign of her growing pessimism. Elizabeth Ammons sees *Of One Blood* as "a bitter story" of the death of the female artist (84). According to Claudia Tate, "The racial optimism that dominated novels by African American writers in the 1890s novels and is evident in Hopkins's *Contending Forces* is initially mitigated in her first two serials and ultimately suspended in death-like dissolution in this last novel" (207). Yet it is worth considering that Hopkins's goals as editor of the *Colored American Magazine* and her dedication to magazine fiction took precedent at this point in her career, that differences between Hopkins's earlier and later novels may be less a consequence of a fundamental shift in the author's political views than a sign of a change in purpose, a more pressing agenda to win greater numbers of black magazine subscribers through popular serial fiction. It is quite possible that Hopkins felt black magazine readers would derive more satisfaction from the apparently "bitter" magazine novels—with their scenes of white punishment and re-education, representations of powerful black men, and visions of escape—than from the more optimistic and plausible ending of *Contending Forces*.

There are a number of features distinguishing the magazine novels from the earlier novel that support such an understanding of Hopkins's revised thinking about audience. For one, it is important to note that one consequence of Hopkins's decision to set her first novel within a black community is that narrative tension and its

larger project of the *Colored Magazine*, which sought to capture a popular audience, in part, through the publication of entertaining, sensational fiction alongside more overtly political statements on current race issues.

resolution must, to some extent, arise from within that community.¹¹⁵ Thus, in *Contending Forces*, selfish characters like John Langley are censured, while noble characters like Will and Sappho are rewarded with matrimony and, (as in Frances Harper's *Iola Leroy*) devote themselves to the cause of racial uplift— "Yoked in all exercise of noble end" (402). Such a conclusion clearly proposes that African-American uplift can be achieved by rooting out the most self-serving members of the black community and through the self-sacrifice and effort of the black bourgeoisie. This position might have been satisfying and encouraging for Hopkins's most activist readers and appealing to white sympathizers, yet such an argument also runs the risk of placing all responsibility for social improvement on black communities and exemplary black individuals. In this scenario, the villainous "mulatto" must be removed from the community to establish order, while the good, mixed-race protagonists are allowed to marry provided that they dedicate their lives to the African-American cause.

In contrast, the magazine novels set in predominantly white communities, make fewer implicit demands on African Americans. In these works, black protagonists are exempted from the immediate obligation to take on the challenge of racism writ large while white characters become targets of punishment and reeducation and are compelled to answer for their indifference to, or ignorance of, the scourge of American racism. In *Hagar's Daughter*, for instance, two white men, Ellis Enson and Cuthbert Sumner, suffer for their inability to transcend their own

¹¹⁵ Of course, the Smith family does receive an unexpected windfall from outside the community when a stranger arrives and informs Ma Smith that she is heir to a small fortune since she is the last living descendent of Jesse Montfort. The benevolence of the "white" relatives, who are thrilled to be reunited with their black relatives and eager to make reparations may serve as a reminder to white Americans of their duties to former slaves.

racism. At key points in the narrative, both of these white men discover that their wives have black blood, fail to respond to this information honorably, and are punished for their moral shortcomings.¹¹⁶ In *Winona*, the white Englishman Warren Maxwell's capture by the pro-slavery Kansas Rangers serves to convince him of southern barbarism. Prior to his encounter with the pro-slavery mob, Warren naively imagined that "the South will see its error and the Negroes will be granted freedom by peaceful means" (*The Magazine Novels* 351). His capture and torture at the hand of a lynch mob, and the mockery of a trial that condemns him to death, serve to disabuse him of such optimism. "Con-vinced are you?" a friend asks after Maxwell is rescued, ". . . there's nothing so convincin' as experience" (402-403). Similarly, in *Of One Blood*, Reuel's white acquaintance Charlie Vance undergoes a series of lessons on something he at first facetiously refers to as "the ubiquitous race question" (584). Although his first response to the theory that the Ethiopian is the primal race is "Gee whiz! . . . Count me out," in the course of the narrative he is forced to reckon with the evidence of Africa's cultural heritage. "He had suffered so many shocks from the shattering of cherished idols since entering the country of mysteries," the narrator tells us, "that the power of expression had left him" (521, 534). At one point, Charlie is rebuked by the powerful Prime Minister of Telassar: "Fair-haired worshipper of Mammondo you not know that you have been weighed in the balance and found wanting? that your course is done? that Ethiopia's bondage is about over, her travail passed?" (585). And, by the end of the novel, he acknowledges his error:

¹¹⁶ This theme also emerges in Hopkins's short story "Talma Gordon" in which a father renounces his two daughters after he learns that their mother had black ancestry. One of the daughters is abandoned by her suitor, while the other is revealed to be the wife of the doctor narrating the tale ("Talma Gordon" 271-290).

“He felt then the truth of the words, ‘Of one blood have I made all races of men’
”(590).¹¹⁷

Although these scenes of white reeducation in the three serial novels exist at the peripheries of the primary plots, I would argue that they provided deeply satisfying moments for Hopkins’s contemporary black readers frustrated by white indifference and persisting American racism. While Hopkins’s stock villains scheme and plot, and are predictably eliminated, characters like Ellis Enson, Cuthbert Sumner, Warren Maxwell, and Charlie Vance suffer and change, allowing Hopkins to present her black readers with spectacles of white men being disciplined for their moral and intellectual failings and undergoing moral reformation. This attention to fictional white characters and their relatively modest ordeals might seem peculiar, particularly in the Post-Reconstruction era of devastating discrimination and prejudice against real-life black men and women. Yet such fictional moments might have provided welcome relief for black readers during one of the worst periods of racial oppression after emancipation. At a time that historian Rayford Logan has characterized as the “nadir” of black experience in the United States, fictional moments like Maxwell’s harrowing encounter with a white mob and Charlie’s conversion must have struck Hopkins’s readers as a fitting counterpoint to the current sufferings of the race.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ John Greusser makes a similar point in his reading of *Of One Blood*, arguing that “the most powerful effect of this novel... may have been cathartic, eliciting a needed emotional response from Hopkins’ *Colored American Magazine* readers, particularly in the scene where one of the affluent white characters is forced to answer to black power for American racial policies” (75).

¹¹⁸ Reports on the atrocities committed by lynch mobs appeared frequently in the *Colored American Magazine* in its first years of publication. In its first issue, the magazine reported that 1,500 “negroes” had been lynched since 1890. See the “Editorial and Publisher’s Announcements,” *Colored American Magazine* May 1900: 60-61. A few months later the magazine re-published a grisly account of a lynching in Louisiana entitled “Louisiana

Another sign of Hopkins's sensitivity to her black audience lies in her increased emphasis on black heroism in her last two serial novels. As *Of One Blood* was appearing in serial, Hopkins published an article in the *Colored American Magazine* entitled "Heroes and Heroines in Black," in which she celebrated black men and women who had performed deeds of "gallantry, valor, [and] courage" (206). "As a race, we need the stimulus of books and tales of this 'cathartic virtue' more than any other literature we can mention," she explained in an introduction that might have served equally well as commentary on her last two serial novels.¹¹⁹ What is striking here is Hopkins's keen attention to reader response. Taking a cue from Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay, "Heroism," Hopkins suggests that stories of courage have the power to change their readers, to "[instill] a wild courage, a 'stocism [sic] of the blood' that brings to any race undying fame" (206). This call for literary representations of heroism is answered in Hopkins's last two serials, specifically in her depictions of black masculinity. In *Winona*, although Warren (a white man) secures Winona's love, Judah is consistently presented as the more masculine and daring of the two. When he is being held as a slave, he subdues a wild horse that no one else can approach. "There was not among them all so noble a figure of a man," notes the narrator admiringly (323). When Warren is reunited with Judah, the Englishman is immediately struck by the African American's manliness: "It was the involuntary tribute of Nature to nobility . . . wherever found . . .," he observes,

'Civilization,'" which had first appeared in the *New Orleans Times-Democrat*. And, in August, 1902, as *Winona* was appearing in serial, the magazine ran a lengthy article on the history of lynching by Charleea H. Williams

¹¹⁹ The introductory section of Hopkins's article relies heavily on Emerson's essay "Heroism." The phrases "stocism [sic] of blood" and "cathartic virtue," both of which appear in quotation marks, are taken from this earlier essay, as are many of the ideas advanced on the subject of heroism.

“Something truly majestic—beyond his years—had developed in his character” (335). It is Judah, not Warren, who plays the most prominent part in their escape from the slave-trader. And, it is Judah who rescues Warren when he is languishing in prison. Similarly, in *Of One Blood*, the pale-skinned Reuel emerges as an exemplar of black manhood, although his superiority derives as much from his intellect and noble inheritance as from his courage and physical prowess. One scene, in which Reuel seemingly raises Dianthe from the dead, shocking the assembled medical experts, functions much like the scene from *Winona* in which Judah tames the wild horse; in both, a lone black male is surrounded by initially skeptical white men who come to recognize the hero’s superiority. When Reuel assumes his new role as King Ergamenes, descendent of a long line of Ethiopian kings, his supremacy is confirmed.

Finally, I would suggest that the endings of the serial novels demonstrate a desire to appeal to African American magazine readers by providing emotional uplift along with entertainment. Although critics have expressed reservations regarding the conclusions to Hopkins’s last two serial novels, both of which promise physical escape from American racism, such endings are arguably more cathartic than the “realistic” ending of Hopkins’s first novel. While *Contending Forces* concludes with the main characters bound for England, it is understood that they will return to America to serve the black cause: “United by love, chastened by sorrow and self-sacrifice, he and she planned to work together to bring joy to hearts crushed by despair” (401). In contrast, *Winona* and *Of One Blood* conclude with fantastic visions of worlds beyond race prejudice—England in *Winona* and Africa in *Of One Blood*—endings which, according to Claudia Tate, reveal “the failure of the U.S. civil sphere

of Hopkins's epoch to sustain the ideal ending" (196). This substitution of fantastic conclusions outside the U.S. for the conventionally happy ending of the earlier domestic novel could easily be read as an abdication of civic responsibility or even, as Tate suggests, as an "inscription of chronic racial despair" (208). Yet, one might also see Hopkins's gestures toward imagined ideal locations (like her depictions of exemplary black manhood, and her disciplining of deficient white men) as part of a different goal: the creation of fiction with popular appeal capable of fostering racial uplift on a psychological and spiritual level.¹²⁰ Given Hopkins's keen attention to the demands of her black readers, it is important to recognize her novels not only as articulations of a political agenda, but also as narratives designed to produce psychological effects, to cultivate in her readers "a wild courage," a "stoicism of the blood."

This perspective on Hopkins's artistic objectives finds support in her other fiction for the *Colored American Magazine*. Her first short story for the magazine, "The Mystery Within Us," may be read as an investigation into emotional health, much like *Of One Blood*. Both the short story and the novel begin with accounts of near suicide, and in both the protagonists' will to endure comes from knowledge gained in contact with the supernatural. In the story, Tom Underwood is confronted by the spirit of a dead scientist who makes him the recipient of his lost life work; in *Of One Blood*, Reuel is distracted from his study of psychology and his melancholy

¹²⁰ This speculation is inspired, in part, by Michael Denning's *Mechanical Accents*, in which he identifies a marked divergence between the stories of workers' lives in genteel, "realist" fiction and those found in dime novels. For instance, he notes, "in the genteel novel ... the working woman dies tragically; in the Libbey dime novel, the heroine triumphs magically." If the latter type of fiction offer "escape," he argues, it is "[escape] from the nightmares of bourgeois myths" (212).

reverie by the vision of a beautiful woman. At the same time, the titles to both suggest that the “mystery” is actually something located within, that what is “hidden” is not a mystical world, but a secure and sustainable “self.” Hopkins’s last serial novel, *Of One Blood*, thus offers insight into the author’s developing theory of popular race fiction and its potential effects, something the author had been grappling with throughout her tenure at the *Colored American Magazine*. Tellingly, as *Of One Blood* begins, Reuel asserts that “the wonders of the material world cannot approach those of the undiscovered country within ourselves— the hidden self lying quiescent in every human soul” (448). This theoretically grounded observation resonates later in the novel when his actual discovery of a hidden African city engenders his psychological recovery and a newfound sense of pride in his racial heritage. Moreover, this process of both material and psychological “self recovery” is not restricted to *Of One Blood*’s protagonist but also is available to the reader following Hopkins’s novel in the *Colored American Magazine*, a reader who would have been granted access to the same revelations regarding Africa’s proud past and, like Reuel, might undergo a similar redefinition of self. Ideally, then, popular entertainment and psychological uplift go hand in hand. If the larger-than-life heroes, idealized heroines, and fantastic plots transcend the boundaries of literary “realism,” they do so not only in order to capture reader’s attention and to secure magazine subscriptions but also to provoke a powerful reaction, the catharsis necessary to uplift the race.¹²¹

¹²¹ This reading of *Of One Blood* is supported by the advance notice for the novel that appeared in the *Colored American Magazine* prior to the first installment. Describing the forthcoming serial as “A most powerful psychological novel,” the editors also promised that it would treat “both the temporal and spiritual solution of the greatest question of the age—the Negro. “Editorial and Publishers’ Announcements,” *Colored American Magazine* Oct. 1902: 4. Whether *Of One Blood* addresses the “temporal” solution to turn-of-the-century race relations is another question. At the end of the novel, Reuel feels “apprehension” regarding the encroachment of

Thus, for Hopkins to write serial fiction for the *Colored American Magazine*, was to write for African-American readers in need of entertainment and uplift (and for a magazine in need of boosting sales). Whereas movement into the field of book publication had resulted in Hopkins's attention to the perceived needs of both white and black readers, this temporary focus was strategic rather than philosophical; once she dedicated her creative energies solely to magazine fiction, which she saw as a source of pleasure and spiritual uplift for African Americans, her understanding of fiction and authorship changed accordingly. While Hopkins's white reader had complained that the serial novels would not "elevate . . . colored readers," assuming that positive portrayals of happy home life would be more effective in providing African Americans with appropriate, positive models to emulate, for Hopkins to "elevate" seems to have meant something different, something psychological and spiritual rather than material or moral. If, as she explained in her published response, her stories were "planned to show the obstacles placed in our path by a dominant race to subjugate us spiritually," they also function as efforts to counter that subjugation in ways that transcend the material and mundane.

III.

For both Eaton and Hopkins, professional success was fairly short lived and remained confined to a relatively narrow field. Although Eaton was able to find

"mighty nations," and there is no indication of a solution to racial injustice in an American context (*The Magazine Novels* 621). However, as Elizabeth McHenry has argued, "middle-class black Americans defined their political mission in terms of racial uplift. Rather than direct political or economic protest, middle-class black Americans saw their literary work as a means of instilling pride in their own community; stressing the importance of racial solidarity and self-help, they struggled to turn the pejorative designation of race into a source of dignity and self-affirmation" (149).

publishers for her Japanese romances for the next two decades, she was not able to repeat the commercial success of her second novel and she would come to chafe under the restrictions on her creative output. As she would put it later in an anonymously published autobiography, “my success was founded upon a cheap and popular device . . . Oh, I had sold my birthright for a mess of potage!”¹²² This is not to say that Eaton’s output was entirely confined to Japanese novels. She took a break from Japanese fiction in 1907 with a humorous “Irish” novel, *The Diary of Delia*, and published two autobiographical narratives, *Me: A Book of Remembrance* (1915), which was originally serialized in *Century Magazine*, and *Marion: The Story of an Artist’s Model* (1916).¹²³ And, after moving to Canada in the 1920s she wrote two novels set in Calgary, far from the exotic Oriental setting of her Japanese fiction. But despite this evidence of Eaton’s creative flexibility, the period during which Eaton posed as Onoto Watanna and produced one Japanese novel after another, remained her period of greatest productivity and commercial success.

For Hopkins, opportunities to see her work into print were more tenuous, highly contingent upon her ability to sustain a professional relationship to the *Colored American Magazine*.¹²⁴ While she was able to exert significant influence over the

¹²² This moment in Eaton’s text echoes the ending of James Weldon Johnson’s fictional autobiography *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912) in which the narrator bemoans his decision to pass as white (153). Although two authors use alternative spellings (“potage” in Eaton’s case, “pottage” in Johnson’s) both are clearly referencing the biblical story of Esau trading his birthright for a meal.

¹²³ Autobiographies (or fiction posing as autobiography) by “ethnic” authors fared somewhat better than “ethnic” novels. Abraham Cahan and Mary Antin were both able to publish pieces in mainstream periodicals that were later collected and repackaged as books.

¹²⁴ Hopkins wrote articles for the *Voice of the Negro* in late 1904 and early 1905 and self published a historical treatise entitled *A Primer of Facts Pertaining to the Early Greatness of the African Race and the Possibility of Restoration by its Descendants— with Epilogue*. In 1916, Hopkins became editor of the short-lived Boston-based magazine the *New Era*, which she founded along with her former colleague Walter Wallace. Unfortunately, the magazine ceased publishing after only two issues with only a fragment of a new Hopkins’s serial “Topsy Templeton” in print. (Wallinger “Pauling Hopkins as Editor and Journalist” 163-164).

magazine for several years, Hopkins's belief in popular fiction as both an integral part of a successful African American periodical and as a stimulus to "cathartic virtue" would run counter to the *Colored American Magazine's* new editorial philosophy following its relocation to New York from Boston under new management.¹²⁵ As several scholars have noted, after 1903, the magazine came to place greater emphasis on the material and practical concerns of the race, publishing more articles devoted to black economic and professional advancement than it had in previous years.¹²⁶ One editorial of this period asserted, "more stress is laid upon what an individual or nation possesses materially than what is known mentally," a fact that "...has to be reckoned with all over the world" (Fortune 394). The new editor Frederick R. Moore now affirmed the need for stories of "our own heroes and heroines... [t]he stories of the men and women who have struggled up from slavery, the stories of our school teachers, their sacrifices and their successes, the stories of our business men."¹²⁷ This conception of literature may have been amenable to Hopkins at the time when she wrote *Contending Forces*, but it clashed with the conception of literature arrived at by the author of such fantastic serials as *Winona* and *Of One Blood*, which may have occasioned her exile from the magazine. By June of 1904, Hopkins's name had

¹²⁵ According to one line of argument, Hopkins's oppositional political stance set her at odds with her more conciliatory successors. W.E.B. Du Bois observed in a 1912 article in *Crisis*, that after the magazine's transfer from Boston to New York it "became so conciliatory, innocuous and uninteresting that it died a peaceful death almost unnoticed by the public" (33). Abby and Arthur Johnson reiterate this assessment, claiming that a "conciliatory approach was discernable as early as 1904" (12). According to Jill Bergman, gender played a larger role in Hopkins exclusion than is often recognized since the magazine became increasingly male in focus after its move to New York (181-200).

¹²⁶ Penelope Bullock notes that regular features of the magazine included reports on the activities of fraternal orders and business enterprises (114-115.) Jill Bergman points out that the change in management brought about a redesign of the magazine's cover, with portraits of successful business men replacing women's portraits (194).

¹²⁷ See "Publishers' Announcements," *Colored American Magazine* June 1906: 435; The phrase "up from slavery" echoes the title of Booker T. Washington's autobiography, indicating Moore's allegiance to the philosophy of racial uplift via material acquisition.

disappeared from the magazine's masthead. And, in the last few years of its existence, fiction all but disappeared from the pages of the *Colored American Magazine*.¹²⁸

Within this historical and theoretical context, then, Hopkins's last novels emerge not only as an experiment in popular race fiction but also as part of a larger conversation concerning the value of race fiction at a time when the main outlet for her work was becoming increasingly materialistic, practically-minded, and anti-intellectual. The culmination of Hopkins's experimentation with popular race fiction, *Of One Blood* also appears to be in dialogue with the magazine itself. While seeming to offer a portrait of black success in the figure of Reuel—a would-be doctor who passes as white in order to further his career, and travels to Africa in pursuit of material gain—Reuel's discovery of his identity ultimately outweighs these superficial concerns.¹²⁹ Rather than celebrate such relatively modest achievements as marriage and individual upward mobility as she had in *Contending Forces*, in *Of One*

¹²⁸ Although the Johnsons indicate that Moore included about the same amount of fiction as Hopkins, in fact there were significantly fewer short stories published in the magazine's later years, with the appearance of even a single short story becoming the exception rather than the norm (6, 13). This movement away from politically engaged fiction seems to have contributed to the drop in subscription rates. Hanna Wallinger cites one letter from Pauline Hopkins to William Monroe Trotter, which would indicate a decline in circulation shortly after the magazine's relocation, with monthly circulation dropping from 800 to 1,500 copies to a mere 200. Still, Hopkins's assessment should be considered in light of her contentious departure from the magazine. Hanna ("Pauline E. Hopkins as Editor and Journalist" 162). Moore did launch three serial novels between 1904 and 1908, yet analysis of these novels in their magazine context supports the notion that he did not place much importance on fiction. The helpful synopses of previous chapters that open each installment of Hopkins's novels are gone as are editorial references to ongoing serial novels. The first serial novel to appear during Moore's tenure—a reprint of an 1840 novel by the British writer Harriet Martineau concerning the Haitian rebel Toussaint L'Ouverture—was discontinued after only six installments. It was nearly two years before the magazine would publish another serial novel. And, midway through this serialization, the magazine announced that it could no longer afford to pay contributors. It was not until 1908, that the magazine decided to run another serial, an extravagant Arabian romance that was indebted to popular fiction but lacked Hopkins's political sensibilities.

¹²⁹ Cynthia D. Schrager identifies a similar message in Hopkins's early short story, "The Mystery within Us," in which, she argues, "a spiritual and collectivist ethos is substituted for the values of materialism and individualism typically associated with dominant American culture" (186).

Blood Hopkins repeatedly calls attention to that which is beyond material experience— fantastic occurrences, psychological states, and mystical encounters. If the inclusion of such subject matter is partly a consequence of Hopkins’s increased reliance on popular genres and tropes and her retreat from sentimental realism, it is also a sign of her belief in the power of fantasy and imagination in popular serial fiction to resist efforts by the dominant race to “subjugate us spiritually.”

For both authors, then, publication context played a key role in the process of arriving at a coherent sense of audience and purpose. This is not to say that Winnifred Eaton and Pauline Hopkins wrote solely to satisfy clearly demarcated audiences; obviously, crafting a novel is a wildly more complicated affair. Still, for both, movement between magazine publication and book publication was integral to their understandings of audience and their imagined relationships to their readers. Writing for women’s magazines, or writing for an African-American magazine, helped each author to more narrowly define her audience. The demographic make-up of the subscribers, the dominant editorial philosophy, the other texts appearing in a given periodical, all offered clues as to readership and reader response crucial to the struggling author. Venturing into book publication was a somewhat different matter. Yet, here too, each author arrived at a notion of audience that was informed by magazine fiction, either as a continuation of that work, or as an alternative mode of publication with distinct aims and potential readerships. For Eaton, as I have discussed, initial publication in ladies’ magazines, compelled her to imagine her readers as exclusively female, to consider the likelihood that white women would accept Asian and Eurasian heroines, and to experiment with strategies for securing

their interest and emotional involvement. The move into book publication occasioned a newfound appreciation for the larger context of Orientalist writing, but white women readers remained the primary market for her fiction as evidenced by the inscriptions in existing texts, allowing for a relatively fluid transition from the woman-centered magazine to the romance novel.

In contrast, publication of a novel in book form for Hopkins was not so much an extension of her magazine work as it was part of a distinct enterprise, an experimental effort to create a cultural item appealing to both white and black readers. Rededication to periodical fiction and to magazine novels in the latter part of Hopkins's career at the *Colored American Magazine* thus stood as a repudiation of this earlier emphasis, a new commitment to the possibilities of popular magazine fiction for black readers. If *Contending Forces* marked an attempt to elevate the race by persuading white readers of black respectability and merit, the serial novels would eschew such "responsible" race fiction in favor of exciting tales of black heroism that could offer fantasy, catharsis, and emotional uplift to African-American magazine readers.

For both writers, then, publication in different media proved integral to the task of navigating twentieth-century publication. For both, this was a literary marketplace complicated by the authors' status as "ethnic" writers, and by the fact that their work was inevitably targeted to groups defined largely in terms of race and gender. For Hopkins, this literary environment posed a particular challenge. While publication of Japanese fiction in the women's magazines proved the more commercially successful route to general acceptance by American women readers, it

would be several decades before white readers would clamor for “exotic” fiction of black urban life. Although the situation would change in the decades to come, when Hopkins wrote *Contending Forces* there was no similar demand for African-American novels, particularly those that dealt with the lives of the upwardly-mobile black middle class. A writer like Charles Chesnutt might establish a literary reputation on the basis of his “local-color” tales, publishing dialect stories like “The Gophered Grapevine” (1887) in such prominent national magazines as the *Atlantic Monthly*, but his serious novels were less well-received. Paul Laurence Dunbar’s novels were almost entirely eclipsed by his light-hearted dialect verse, although there does seem to have been some interest in his portrayal of a black family’s moral and economic decline in *The Sport of the Gods* (1902), a grim and naturalistic novel that was written in response to a request by *Lippincott’s Magazine* and anticipates some of the gritty tales of urban black life that would become popular later in the century.¹³⁰

Hopkins appears to have been well aware of the unique challenges she faced as an “ethnic” writer. In her published response to her white critic, the author affirms her commitment to African American readers, but describes her position vividly as that of one caught between the “Scylla and Charybadis [sic]” of her black and white audiences. “If you please the author of this letter and your white clientele,” she notes with some chagrin, “you will lose your Negro patronage”; but, “If you cater to the *demands* of the Negro trade, away goes Mrs. _____” (Letter 400). Whereas *Contending Forces* had sought to skirt these dangers through compromise, if anything

¹³⁰ In 1887, *Lippincott’s Magazine* decided to abandon serial publication in favor of publishing an entire short novel, or novelette, in each issue. According to Frank Luther Mott, this policy was not a striking success as it “proved impossible to educate the public to a liking for novels in paper covers, chosen in advance by editors of a series” (Mott 3: 401)

seeking to appeal more to sympathetic whites than to black readers, Hopkins's magazine novels are marked by a readjustment in focus. At this later point in her career, Hopkins's published response makes clear, her primary concern was with her black audience, and more specifically, the African-American readers of the serial novels then appearing in the pages of the *Colored American Magazine*.

This was not a choice with which Eaton had to contend. For her, a career as an "ethnic" author required attention to the desires of white readers, and white women in particular. At this time, there simply was not a significant population of Asian or Eurasian American readers to whom she might have marketed a different brand of ethnic fiction. There were no "Asian" periodicals in which Eaton might have developed a unique brand of "ethnic" fiction for a community self-identified as Asian.¹³¹ Eaton could write "Japanese" fiction amenable to white audiences or she could struggle to redefine herself along different racial and national lines, as she would do in her "Irish" tales and Canadian fiction.¹³²

Yet while recognizing the discrepancies between the two authors in terms of their career paths and choices, it is also important to acknowledge the dexterity with

¹³¹ Abraham Cahan's career offers an interesting counter-example given his work for both the Yiddish newspaper the *New York Daily Forward* and for mainstream magazines like *McClure's*, which serialized a version of *The Rise of David Levinsky* in 1913. This bi-cultural and bilingual publication pattern enabled Cahan to articulate ethnic experience from within and without, both for the Jewish community and for a general American audience. Scholars have suggested that Cahan's success within the general periodical publishing market derived from his ability to adapt to his audience. As Susan K. Harris points out, stories of immigrant experience like "The Imported Bridegroom," clearly assume a readership of the "relatively uninitiated" (92-93). Similarly, when the text that would become *The Rise of David Levinsky* first appeared in *McClure's*, it was targeted to a non-Jewish audience, given the subtitle "The Autobiography of an American Jew," and framed as a real account by one who "has probably the most intimate knowledge of Jewish life of any man in America" (Barrish 644).

¹³² In a recent essay, Gretchen Murphy argues that Eaton's treatment of Irish characters, particularly in the novel *A Japanese Blossom* (1906) and in the short story "The Wrench of Chance" (1906), points to her participation in a discourse of racial formation, whereby the Irish were not seen as definitively white, nor the Japanese as definitively non-white.

which they negotiated the literary terrain of the early twentieth century. Hopkins's ability to adapt to a different conception of audience and Eaton's capacity to extend strategies for appealing to the women readers of her novels in book form, testify to both authors' resourcefulness, adaptability, and skill. For these authors, and for others like them, professional experience with serialization, and with periodical publication in general, were integral to the process of negotiating authorship at the turn into the twentieth century.

CHAPTER FIVE

“A Very Fine Performance En Route”: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and the Performance of Serial Publication

Midway into the book edition of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned*, the narrative of Anthony and Gloria Patch's tumultuous marriage is interrupted by a brief account of their friend Richard Caramel's literary career. "In the last two years since the publication of 'The Demon Lover,'" the narrator informs us, "Dick had made over twenty-five thousand dollars."

His stories varied; there was a measure of vitality and a sort of instinctive technic [sic] in all of them, but none attained the personality of 'The Demon Lover,'" and there were several that Anthony considered downright cheap. These, Dick explained severely, were to widen his audience. Wasn't it true that men who had attained real permanence from Shakespeare to Mark Twain had appealed to the many as well as the elect? Though Anthony and Maury disagreed, Gloria told him to go ahead and make as much money as he could— that was the only thing that counted anyhow... (614).

The similarities between Fitzgerald's career trajectory and that of his fictional author are hard to ignore. When *The Beautiful and Damned* appeared in book form in 1922, it had been two years since the publication of *The Side of Paradise*, the book that made Fitzgerald a celebrity. Like his fictional author, Fitzgerald was not quite thirty.

And like Dick, Fitzgerald had a complicated relationship to literary professionalism. These superficial similarities between the author and his fictional creation make at least two of Dick's insights into the profession of authorship particularly resonant: his notion that it was important to reach as wide an audience as possible, and his implicit belief, voiced here by Gloria, in money as a chief inducement to authorship.

Both values are in evidence in Fitzgerald's decisions concerning the serial publication of *The Beautiful and Damned*, which first appeared as installments in the *Metropolitan Magazine* between September 1921 and March 1922. A popular magazine targeted primarily to women, the *Metropolitan* boasted a circulation of 300,000, many times the number that would eventually purchase the novel in book form. At this point in Fitzgerald's career, he saw serialization as both a commercial transaction and an opportunity to keep his work before the public eye. Therefore, he did not object when the magazine's editor Carl Hovey took extreme liberties with the novel he had purchased, cutting, "nearly a third of the 130,000 word typescript" to suit the magazine's needs.¹³³ As Fitzgerald was said to remark when an acquaintance commented on the differences between the two versions, "Well, they bought the rights to do anything they like with it when they paid for it."¹³⁴

Fitzgerald's acquiescence on this matter, his apparent lack of concern for the presentation of his novel once he had sold the serial rights and pocketed his payment, stands in direct contrast to the conduct of his friend and contemporary Ernest Hemingway, who not only maintained a fierce control over his serialized work but

¹³³ Amy J. Elias points out that "[n]owhere in his collected letters does Fitzgerald protest these cuts" (256).

¹³⁴ A description of this exchange appeared in an article entitled "Literary Libels— Francis Scott Fitzgerald" in the *St. Paul Daily News* (Rpt. in Brucoli 66).

made sure that others recognized his inflexibility on this issue. While it has become common practice to contrast the artistic temperaments and philosophies of these two often-linked authors, their differences are not only highlighted but also complicated by their negotiations with serial publication. If Hemingway's careful management of the serial release of *A Farewell to Arms* forms a striking contrast to Fitzgerald's laissez-faire approach with regard to *The Beautiful and Damned*, it would be simplistic to see these differences as merely a matter of contrasting artistic temperaments. And, if Fitzgerald's subsequent serialization of *Tender is the Night* failed to achieve the success of the serial run of *A Farewell to Arms*, it was not because Fitzgerald hadn't learned from Hemingway's successful performance of authorship. Instead, I would argue, it was through exposure to one another's professional missteps and achievements that both authors came to recognize the importance of serial publication to a new era of authorial self-promotion. Ironically, at a time when serialization was becoming less of a practical necessity and as new sources of subsidiary income emerged to support the author's craft, serial appearance became even more important to the crafting of an authorial persona. For both authors, then, serial issue meant something different than it had for their predecessors. Their negotiations with this mode of publication in the first decades of the twentieth century help to illustrate a shift in American serializing practices with implications for twentieth-century American authorship.

I.

Fitzgerald's seeming carelessness with regard to the serial issue of *The Beautiful and Damned* was not an oversight since it was consistent with his notion that exposure was critical to commercial success. As James West points out, the principle behind granting second-serial rights was not money but publicity; ceding second serial rights brought only \$150 to \$250 per newspaper but could bring Fitzgerald's novels to the attention of large audience of potential readers (128). To give some sense of perspective, *The Beautiful and Damned* sold approximately 50,000 hardback copies, but it was distributed to over 500,000 newspaper subscribers during its rounds as a second serial. Although both of Fitzgerald's first novels were considered best sellers, they reached far more readers, approximately 1.5 million readers according to one estimate, when they appeared as second serials.¹³⁵

Still, the benefits of reaching such a large audience must be weighed against the disadvantages occasioned both by radical cuts made to each of these texts upon their appearance in the newspapers and by the negative impact of such exposure to Fitzgerald's image as a serious writer. West points out that chapter headings and space breaks were often eliminated from the newspaper serials and scenes were frequently cut off at mid-paragraph, since newspapers were more concerned with filling allotted space than with presenting a coherent portion of narrative (67-68). Moreover, newspapers persisted in advancing an image of Fitzgerald as a "flapper author." "Fitzgerald was not appearing in *Scribner's Magazine* alongside Henry James and Edith Wharton," West observes pointedly. "Instead he was being touted as

¹³⁵ *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned* both appeared as second serials in the *Washington Herald*, the *Chicago Herald and Examiner*, the *New York Daily News* and the *Atlanta Georgian*. *The Great Gatsby* was published as a second serial in the pages of *Famous Story Magazine* between April and August of 1926 and, in 1927, appeared in an abbreviated version in the Sunday supplement of the *Chicago Herald-Examiner* (West, 63-74).

the chronicler of the flapper on the back page of the daily newspaper, right next to ads for corsets and corn plasters” (74).

Appearance in a popular magazine like *The Metropolitan* posed a similar risk to Fitzgerald’s literary reputation, with the serial installments of *The Beautiful and Damned* creating a significantly different impression than the one generated by a hardbound edition. For one, in the serial version there is a decided emphasis on Gloria’s physical appearance, reinforcing a sense of the novel as supplement to the magazine. The first issue to carry an installment of the novel featured an artist’s rendition of Gloria that is indistinguishable from the portraits of glamour girls that graced the cover of the magazine each month. The implication here seems to be that this particular issue simply provides a narrative to go along with the glossy beauty featured for the month, that the fiction is merely an extension of the magazine. Further emphasizing the close connection between the novel and its magazine context, the illustrations of Gloria that appear throughout the serial installments often bear a striking resemblance to the fashion plates and advertisements sprinkled throughout the magazine. In one full-page advertisement for makeup, for instance, two women discuss the appearance of a third; “She always looks so individual—so herself,” they remark. Various subheads to the illustrations for the novel are similar in tone: “she was dazzling—she seemed alight” reads one that appeared in the opening installment; “Her hair, reddish gold and full of an unrelatable glamour was radiant.”¹³⁶

Other features of the novel as it appeared in the *Metropolitan* also serve to underscore the most superficial and sensational aspects of the novel. The magazine

¹³⁶ “The Beautiful and Damned” [first installment], *Metropolitan Magazine* Sept. 1921: 9.

version attaches a sensational and misleading subtitle, “A Searching Novel of the Revolt of American Youth.” The synopses of previous chapters, the occasional callout quotations, and the headings for the illustrations also emphasize melodrama.¹³⁷ “He besought her jauntily but earnestly to send him away,” runs one teaser; “. . . he didn’t want to fall in love. He wasn’t coming to see her anymore.”¹³⁸ “He all at once let go of her and she fell to the floor, her shoulder hitting the table a glancing blow,” proclaims another.¹³⁹ And, in an editorial decision apparently calculated to maximize suspense, several installments break off at critical moments mid-chapter. The break between the December and January installments, for instance, creates a version of the “cliffhanger” absent from the novel as it appeared in book form. In the serial version the installment ends with Gloria, drunk and giddy, climbing an iron staircase to train tracks spanning a river, where she stands at the top with her arms flung out wide (643).

Finally, the passages selected for exclusion from the serial version of the novel preclude the meta-textual reading available to readers of the novel in book form. While there are numerous textual differences between the two versions, with cuts often serving to accelerate the narrative pacing, one of the most striking changes to the original text is the removal of passages that explicitly tackle issues of literary professionalism. The somewhat cynical comments on Richard’s literary career, which opened this chapter, appear only in the book edition. Another exchange, in

¹³⁷ Fitzgerald’s experience at the hands of *Metropolitan Magazine* editors anticipates *Pictorial Review*’s treatment of Edith Wharton’s *The Mother’s Recompense*. In the serial version of this novel, illustration effectively altered the age of the protagonist, making her appear younger with each passing installment and subtly manipulating reader reception, thereby “[translating] Wharton’s text into the more dominant languages of the magazine” (Thornton 37).

¹³⁸ *Metropolitan Magazine* Oct. 1921: 27.

¹³⁹ *Metropolitan Magazine* Dec. 1921: 33.

which Richard explicitly denies that he intentionally writes “trash,” is also notably absent from the magazine version (586). Also missing is Fitzgerald’s famous observation that the wise writer should write for the “youth of his generation, the critic of the next, and the schoolmaster of ever afterward” (587). In the book version, Anthony makes reference to this statement as something Richard had said in an interview with a “most admiring young lady” (587). Although Richard explains that the interviewer’s flattery had made him lose his head and say a lot of strange things, he doesn’t retract the observation. “‘Oh, I believe a lot of it,’ admitted Richard with a faint beam. ‘It was simply a mistake to give it out’ (587). Here Richard’s experience runs directly parallel to that of the author, who had made a similar remark in a 1920 interview with Haywood Broun for the *New York Tribune* and then included the quip in a leaf inserted in copies of *This Side of Paradise* at the American Booksellers Association later that year. Thus, while recent critics have remarked on the parallel between the author and his fictional creation, suggesting that “in the figure of Richard Caramel... Fitzgerald delineates a possible future for himself,” the ironic commentary on contemporary authorship embodied in this character would not have been so readily available to the readers of the magazine serial (Hook 34). For the generation’s youth, for the readers of popular magazine fiction, *The Beautiful and Damned* refrains from extensive analysis of the literary marketplace; for book readers, but perhaps also for the critics, he is more overtly self-conscious.

If the candid treatment of Richard’s career functions as a sort of pre-emptive defense against charges that Fitzgerald catered to popular demands, a more complete defense of literary professionalism emerges from Anthony’s brief foray into fiction.

In another episode that never made it into the serial novel, Anthony determines that he too can make money as an author. He decides to take Dick's advice to "[t]ry some popular short stories... [since] it'd be a year and half before you'd make any money out of a novel," he spends a week at the public library reading popular periodicals, and he picks up a few tips from a booklet titled "Success as a Writer Made Easy." This preparation complete, he dashes off a few stories, "six wretched and pitiable efforts to 'write down' by a man who had never before made a consistent effort to write at all" (678-679). Here the novel's critique is not of the professional writer's necessary compromises with the literary marketplace, but rather with the naïve view that anyone can write a popular story, that it does not require talent, dedication, and expertise even to successfully "write down." Richard's compromises with the market, so easy to denigrate, should not overshadow his significant accomplishments. As Anthony Patch's experiment with fiction reminds us, even being a hack is not as easy as it looks.

While these moments of self-conscious commentary on the strange career of fiction writing would have alerted readers of the novel in book form to the tensions around authorship that preoccupied Fitzgerald, their absence from the serial text results in an alternate version of the novel that entirely lacks this self-consciousness. For readers of the novel in book form, discussions of the struggles of authorship might have helped to deflect concerns that the novel pandered to popular taste. For contemporary literary scholars, the inclusion of such material contributes to an understanding of the novel as both a work of popular fiction and an astute, if cynical, critique of the commodity culture. Readers of the magazine novel, however, would

not have had access to such self-referential moments, and for them the novel was bound to appear unself-conscious, a straight-forward, sensational tale of a glamorous couple, that was perfectly consistent with the magazine's enduring obsession with the rich, the famous, and the beautiful. If the novel as it appeared in book form explores the necessary compromises that come with literary professionalism, the abbreviated text that is the serial version could be said to embody them.

II.

Fitzgerald's seeming passivity when it came to magazine serialization forms a marked contrast to Hemingway's careful negotiations with *Scribner's Magazine* concerning the serialization of *A Farewell to Arms*, evident in correspondence between Hemingway and his editor Max Perkins over the serial issue of the novel. As Michael Reynolds observes, Hemingway insisted that "each omission be discussed specifically" and "resisted the idea of dropping an entire passage" (68). Every part of the book depended upon every other part, Hemingway maintained, and if a passage had to be dropped, he was adamant that a blank should indicate the deletion.¹⁴⁰ When some lines were cut without his approval, Hemingway protested, pointedly reminding Perkins that "emasculat[i]on was a simple operation in men, animals, and books, but that the effects were very great" (Reynolds 68). "I'd rather return the money and call it all off than have arbitrary eliminations made without any

¹⁴⁰ Hemingway was certainly not the only author to tangle with editors on the question of excisions. When he proposed cutting *The Age of Innocence* to make room for illustrations, Edith Wharton reprimanded her editor Rutger Bleeker Jewett: "I cannot consent to have my work treated as prose by the yard" (Thornton 29).

mention of the fact they are being made,” Hemingway declared (qtd. in Donaldson 72).

For the most part, Hemingway’s protests seems to have been effective in forestalling drastic editorial changes to the serial version. Robert Bridges, then editor at *Scribner’s*, begged Hemingway to consider that things “which are perfectly natural and realistic in a book are not viewed with the same mind in serial reading,” and held firm over some changes to the magazine version, but a comparison of the two texts shows that *Scribner’s* generally was respectful of Hemingway’s wishes (Reynolds 69). According to Reynolds’s evaluation of the various manuscripts, “With few exceptions, the serialized version of [*A Farewell to Arms*] that appeared in *Scribner’s* magazine is identical with the hardcover publication,” with discrepancies of “not more than a dozen words or phrases” (Reynolds 27).¹⁴¹

It is tempting to extrapolate from this account a narrative of heroic authorship: the story of an author maintaining his artistic integrity amidst the constraints and impositions of periodical publication. Still, I would argue that the opposition between artistic “purity” and “corruption” should be tempered by a recognition of the professional implications of this artistic stance. I am not trying to suggest that Hemingway’s distaste for the crass business of professionalism was feigned, but rather that it is also important to consider the degree to which this oppositional stance would enter into his public authorial persona, the ways in which “purity,” or

¹⁴¹ Reynolds’s claim that there are not more than a dozen alterations in the serial version is somewhat misleading. In addition to numerous substitutions of blanks for obscenities, at least two substantial passages were removed without any note to mark their absence. Frederic’s fantasy of a night in a hotel with Catherine did not appear in the *Scribner’s Magazine* version. Six lines of dialogue were also cut from the end of Chapter XIV. The serial version of the last chapter is also somewhat different. Frederic’s reassurance to Catherine that he won’t “do our things with another girl, or say the same things,” for instance, appears in the book edition but not the serial (38, 92, 331).

perceived distance from the publishing machine, would become a part of Hemingway's public appeal.¹⁴² This seemingly paradoxical feature of self-promotion plays out in a number of ways both in the publishing history of *A Farewell to Arms* and in the novel itself—in the controversies surrounding the novel's serial appearance, and in the novel's interrogation of issues of propriety. Although it is well known that the Boston police chief banned copies of the magazine carrying the second installment, I would suggest that a preoccupation with notions of decency and indecency was part of the novel from the beginning, that the novel functions as an investigation into conventional morality on a number of levels.

For one, Hemingway was surely aware that serializing a novel that dealt frankly with war and sex in the pages of the eminently genteel *Scribner's Magazine* presented a challenge to conventional notions of decency, but he remained convinced that *Scribner's* was the appropriate outlet for his novel. Indeed, Hemingway had been hoping to see a novel serialized in the magazine for some time. He had explored the possibility of having *The Sun Also Rises* appear in *Scribner's* and been disappointed when then-editor Robert Bridges's rejected the manuscript. According to Leonard Leff, this decision was merely in keeping with the magazine's "prim stance toward 'unappeased sexual instincts'" (44). As Max Perkins, Hemingway's editor, would explain upon the novel's rejection, "no magazine 'with an eye to their heterogeneous public' could serialize a work of debased sexuality" (44-45). Yet despite this rebuff, Hemingway and Perkins were convinced that *Scribner's*

¹⁴² John Raeburn's analysis of Hemingway's construction of a public persona makes a similar point, arguing that the author used the popular mass media to distance himself from the literary establishment and to avoid charges of effete elitism. My reading of the early serial publication of *A Farewell to Arms* in *Scribner's* proposes that Hemingway's rejection of a more conventional literary persona was evident even in the late 1920s and was reinforced by his treatment in *Scribner's*.

represented the best venue for serial publication of the next Hemingway novel. Although *Cosmopolitan* had expressed interest in running his next work (tentatively entitled “A New Slain Knight”), when this project stalled and Hemingway began to make progress on the manuscript of *A Farewell to Arms*, he turned again to *Scribner’s* (89).¹⁴³ Other periodicals had higher circulations and offered better rates, even excluding the most popular magazines. *Harper’s* circulation was at 120,000 and *The Atlantic* boasted a circulation of 130,000, compared to *Scribner’s* 70,000; yet media historians agree that “*Scribner’s* maintained the ‘higher, purer’ literary standards of the other ‘quality’ magazines” (Mott 729, Leff 35). As Perkins would put it, it was here that an author could hope to reach “the thinking people” that made up “the real book reading public.”¹⁴⁴ Consequently, even though *Cosmopolitan* would have paid more for *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway was determined “to showcase the new novel in *Scribner’s*, where he could reach a moderately large, yet fully respectable, audience” (Leff 101).¹⁴⁵ “[I]f we can bring out this serial without arousing too serious objection, you will have enormously consolidated your position,” Perkins promised his author (Berg 145).

Hemingway’s commitment to *Scribner’s Magazine* as his publishing venue of choice may explain why his correspondence on issues of editorial interference sometimes appears inconsistent. Despite frequent protests concerning cuts, there are

¹⁴³ Leff notes that *Cosmopolitan* sent Hemingway an advance of 25,000 francs for the serial rights to his next novel in the summer of 1927. However, he returned the check explaining that he did not want the stress of installment publication affect the novel’s development. This excuse is not entirely convincing given the his eagerness to serialize in *Scribner’s*.

¹⁴⁴ Maxwell Perkins, letter to Ernest Hemingway, 14 June, 1926, Rpt. in Leff, 35.

¹⁴⁵ The publishing house’s reputation for maintaining “higher, purer literary standards” would later become part of its defense against charges of indecency. “The very fact that Scribner is publishing *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway is a sign of our belief in its validity and integrity,” asserted the publishing house in a published statement in the *New York Times*. (Fenstermaker 284).

moments in the letters that indicate Hemingway's willingness to compromise. For instance, although he does request that Perkins discuss each omission individually with him, he also promises not to be unreasonable in his demands (Reynolds 69). In another letter, in which he complains to Perkins of changes made without his permission, he ultimately concedes, "but am of course in their hands."¹⁴⁶ This grudging acquiescence to *Scribner's Magazine* suggests that Hemingway understood the importance of publication context and the necessity of certain compromises as a condition of gaining access to that particular publishing venue. Yet, having identified *Scribner's* as most respectable of the quality magazines, Hemingway seemed determined to push at the boundaries of the respectability and gentility he so valued. "There has always been first rate writing and then American writing (genteel writing)," he declared in a letter to Perkins. "But you should not go backwards."¹⁴⁷ Thus, even as he sought access to genteel culture through publication in *Scribner's Magazine*, Hemingway appeared intent on positioning himself in opposition to that genteel tradition and to American priggishness more generally.

In fact, *Scribner's* did much to assist Hemingway in the presentation of this authorial persona. While some readers cancelled their subscriptions upon the publication of the novel, and the Boston Police chief banned the distribution of the periodical following the appearance of the second installment, the magazine rallied around its author, evidently recognizing that such responses would do more good than

¹⁴⁶ Ernest Hemingway, letter to Maxwell Perkins, 7, June 1929. In *Critical Essay's on Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms*. ed. George Montiero (New York: G.K. Hall, 1994) 68.

¹⁴⁷ Hemingway, letter to Maxwell Perkins, 297.

harm.¹⁴⁸ In fact, the general sentiment at the time was that Boston had done Hemingway a favor. “Many readers had doubtless missed Mr. Hemingway’s powerful story, and they will be grateful to the [Boston police] chief for calling their attention to it” ran one editorial in the New York *Herald Tribune*. “Having been led by the chief to read the story with care and attention, searching each paragraph for evidence of obscenity,” the writer remarked, “we emerge utterly without a sense of moral degradation, unshocked and unmoved by lascivious impulses.”¹⁴⁹ To ensure that this assessment of the situation was not lost on its readers *Scribner’s* reprinted these and other supportive editorials. In October, the magazine included a humorous poem from *The Daily Oklahoman* that began: “When beatific Boston bans a book / The people of the nation rush to read it.”¹⁵⁰ “Ernest Hemingway’s novel is stirring up no end of talk, the magazine noted in a “Behind the Scenes” column.¹⁵¹ And, in the synopsis that opens the final installment, the novel is pointedly characterized as a “much discussed novel of love and war.”¹⁵²

Contemporary critics concur that the police chief’s ruling “had little or no effect on the overall circulation figures of the magazine and undoubtedly served to stimulate sales of the book when it was published on September 27” (Donaldson 70).

¹⁴⁸ One reader explained her reasons for canceling her subscription thus: “Specifically I object to this serial ‘A Farewell to Arms,’ . . . I cannot allow a magazine containing such vileness to be seen in my house. I have burned the offending number. There is no excuse for printing indecency.” A representative of the Young Men’s Christian Association wrote “It is with keen regret that I am now obliged to withhold Scribner’s from the magazine tables . . . I refer particularly to Ernest Hemingway’s ‘A Farewell to Arms’ which, in my judgment, is absolutely lacking in literary merit and vulgar beyond expression” (Reynolds 82-83).

¹⁴⁹ “What You Think About It.” *Scribner’s Magazine* Sept. 1929: 31.

¹⁵⁰ “What you Think About It.” *Scribner’s Magazine* Oct. 1929: 53. At least one of Hemingway’s contemporaries expressed envy over the publicity generated by censorship. Thomas Wolfe, for one, hoped that Boston would ban *Look Homeward Angel* in order to increase its chances of commercial success (Monteiro 5).

¹⁵¹ “Behind the Scenes.” *Scribner’s Magazine* 86 Aug. 1929: 25.

¹⁵² “A Farewell to Arms [6th installment],” *Scribner’s Magazine* Oct. 1929: 373.

The magazine itself saw a slight, temporary upturn in its subscription rates, for which Frank Luther Mott gives partial credit to Hemingway (Mott 729). And, when the novel appeared in book form late in September, it quickly sold out of the first printing run of 31,050 copies, far more than the 6,000 sold for the first run of *The Sun Also Rises* (Donaldson 76). “By January 8, 1930,” Reynolds notes, “the sales of the novel had passed 70,000 copies.” And by February 1930, with sales approaching eighty thousand, one bestseller list placed the novel “at seventh place and rising” (Reynolds 81).¹⁵³

Again, it is tempting to see the outcome of the Boston ban as the triumphant conclusion to a struggle between artistic courage and outmoded propriety, a view that is consistent with the image of Hemingway as an author bravely pushing a timid publishing enterprise and sheltered readership forward toward modernity. Yet it is also important to consider the degree to which this conflict over questions of decency and censorship was part of the novel from the beginning, to consider the possibility that Hemingway did not simply write *A Farewell to Arms* and only later confront the opposing forces of editors and censors, but was also engaged in a highly public performance of artistic defiance, played out in the pages of the eminently respectable *Scribner's Magazine*.

If Hemingway's professional struggles with editors and censors point to an engagement with issues of propriety, decency, obscenity, and censorship I would

¹⁵³ Coincidentally, several years later James Joyce's *Ulysses* would enjoy a similar boost in sales due to censorship. Parts of the novel had appeared in installments in the *Little Review* as early as 1918, resulting in the prosecution of the editors Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap in 1920. For over ten years, the book was not available in the United States, making rare, illegally imported copies immensely valuable, and, when the novel finally appeared, the controversy over its initial censorship was used to promote and publicize the book (Sutherland 195-199).

argue that these issues are, in fact, central to the novel itself. In one of the opening scenes, readers are confronted with just such a clash of ideals embodied in a group of uncouth Italians casually baiting a young army priest. In response to the captain's insistence that he has seen him in the local brothel, the priest merely "smiled and blushed and shook his head" (7). When a lieutenant joins in the game, asking the priest if he has ever read a book called *Black Pig* (or *Il Maiale Nero*), the priest responds simply: "It is a filthy and vile book... You do not really like it" (7). The priest's attitude throughout is tolerant, yet quietly insistent. He does not tell the officers to be quiet; he does not allow himself to get upset. Instead, he recognizes their bawdy talk for what it is: the blustering of uncultivated, restless men in a time of war. This positive depiction of religious restraint is intriguing, coming as it does so early in the novel, and given the indecency charges that would eventually be lodged against the novel. The best response to "offensive" language and ideas, the priest's actions seem to imply, is to maintain the proper perspective, to recognize the context, to resist the impulse to get offended.

Tellingly, the protagonist of the novel is introduced as a figure who stands between the extremes represented in this opening conversation, neither partaking in the rowdy Italian officers' game at the priest's expense nor doing anything to stop it.¹⁵⁴ Lieutenant Henry's intermediate position is further emphasized through the discussion as to how he will spend his leave time. The officers insist that he go to "the centres of culture and civilization" to meet "fine girls... beautiful girls, while the

¹⁵⁴ Judith Fetterley makes a similar observation regarding Frederic Henry's intermediate position between the priest and the other soldiers. She notes that Frederic "does not openly identify with the cleric, neither does he join his mess-mates in their priest baiting. For him, Catherine is a 'sacred subject,' and he resists Rinaldi's attempts to sexualize everything and to reduce his feelings for Catherine to the genitals" (Fetterley 52).

priest quietly encourages him to visit his family in a small town in Abruzzi” (8).¹⁵⁵ “There is good hunting,” he tells him in clear simple prose that echoes that of the narrator, “You would like the people and though it is cold it is clear and dry” (9). Although Frederic Henry does not take the priest’s advice and returns with suggestive references to prostitutes encountered throughout Italy, when he meets the priest in the mess hall, he is immediately sorry. “I myself felt as badly as he did and could not understand why I had not gone. It was what I had wanted to do and I tried to explain how one thing had led to another and finally he saw it and understood that I had really wanted to go and it was almost all right” (13).

Thus, from the second chapter, the tension between religious piety—located in the character of the priest—and uncouth masculinity is placed front and center. The fact that Frederic is torn between two very different ways of spending his leave time, that he is remorseful after several nights of debauchery, sets him apart from his fellow soldiers. He is no saint; like the others, Lieutenant Henry is a drinker, prone to swearing, a frequenter of brothels. But the novel is also careful to distinguish the hero from the rest by virtue of his relationship to the priest, a careful positioning of the protagonist that seems to anticipate the controversy that would ultimately surround the book. Not only are readers who disapprove of Frederic’s actions invited to see him through the forgiving eyes of the Catholic priest, whatever the reader

¹⁵⁵ Mark Cirino points out that Hemingway modified some of the priest’s speeches in the published version. For instance, in the manuscript, the priest says, “I take your greetings to the mess,” but in the published version the correct future tense is substituted. Cirino notes that “the imperfect speech spoken by the priest—which Hemingway discarded—echoes the captain’s tortured language in the published novels early mess hall scene.” The effect of this minor alteration, I would argue, is to make the priest and Frederic seem more closely united despite the language barrier, while creating a distance between Frederic and the rough soldiers with their pidgin English (Cirino 49).

might object to in *A Farewell to Arms*, the novel reminds us, cannot possibly be as bad as a truly “filthy and vile” book like *Black Pig*.

The central romance between Frederic and the English nurse Catherine Barkley charts a similar course, skirting the boundary between decency and licentiousness. From the beginning, the novel asks readers to consider the contrast between the couple’s innocent initial meeting and the anonymous sexual encounters Frederic alludes to when he returns from leave. Contact between the two is clearly presented as something inadvertent, accidental, fortuitous: Frederic is merely accompanying his friend Rinaldi, an Italian surgeon with syphilis who has a casual crush on the English nurse. Catherine immediately prefers Frederic to Rinaldi, calling the former a “good boy” and “sweet” and a “little puppy”—expressions that paint the seduction in the least threatening light. Early on in their courtship Catherine objects to “the nurse’s-evening-off aspect of it,” exhibiting an awareness of the potentially sordid nature of the affair that effectively dismisses this negative interpretation. Similarly, when the couple books a room in a hotel in Milan, Catherine has a moment of misgiving, which quickly passes, allowing the room to become cozily domestic, “our own home,” the way that “the room in the hospital had been our own home” (153). Earlier in the novel, Frederic had fantasized about such a night with Catherine, a night with “the door locked and it hot and only a sheet and we would both love each other all night in the hot night in Milan” (38).¹⁵⁶ But here wholesomeness predominates. ““I wish we could do something really sinful,” Catherine [says], ‘Everything we do seems so innocent and simple. I can’t believe we do anything wrong’” (153).

¹⁵⁶ This passage did not appear in the *Scribner’s Magazine* version.

Such moments in the text not only establish an opposition between conventional morality and debased behavior, but also underscore the hero and heroine's successful navigation of a middle route. For every potentially offensive scenario, the novel evokes one that is worse: more sordid and more seamy. Presented as basically decent figures—monogamous, faithful, married in all but name—Catherine and Frederic are consistently imagined as figures that transcend simplistic categories of virtue and vice. Occasionally this narrative strategy backfired, as when editors at *Scribner's Magazine* deemed Frederic's fantasy of a hot night in Milan too steamy to print and eliminated it from the serial version, thereby spoiling the constructed contrast between Frederic's erotic fantasy and the simple, decent, reality of their night together. Still, through this pattern of identifying more sordid possible scenarios, the novel effectively defends the behavior of its main characters, demonstrating how far they are from real debauchery.¹⁵⁷ By giving voice to and discrediting their phantom critics, those who would label their relationship illicit, the couple enacts a subtle rejoinder to stodgy readers like those who cancelled their subscriptions and enacted the Boston ban.

Not only does the novel address readers' concerns over indecency, it also tackles the issue of censorship, albeit indirectly, in several pointed references to the pervasive wartime practice of scrutinizing letters. "Don't write anything that will bother the censors," Frederic warns Miss Ferguson, another nurse at Catherine's hospital (25). To this she responds, "Don't worry, I only write about what a beautiful place we live in and how brave the Italians are," a prescient exchange given the

¹⁵⁷ Ironically, the relationship between Hemingway and Agnes Von Kurowsky, on which the fictional romance was based, was even more wholesome. Most critics agree that the evidence indicates the two did not have sex.

subsequent banning of the book in Italy (25). Later Frederic takes advantage of wartime censorship when he can't figure out what to write home. He decides instead to send a few cards with everything blacked out except the phrase "I am well." "That should handle them," he muses. "Those post-cards would be very fine in America, strange and mysterious" (36). Although these two moments deal with the issue of censorship in seemingly offhanded manner, they function as remarkably astute commentary on the censorship Hemingway would later face with the publication of the novel itself. Unlike Mrs. Ferguson, the narrator of *A Farewell to Arms* does not paint a rosy picture of life at the Italian front, for which the book is ultimately banned in Italy. Nor does he shy away from frank representation of human sexuality, for which the magazine carrying installments of the novel gets pulled from the shelves in Boston.

But, perhaps more interestingly, Frederic's musings on letter writing also suggest that he, much like his creator, is aware that interest is generated by obscured text, by what is missing. Hemingway's metaphor of writing as exposing only the tip of an iceberg is well known. It has become a centerpiece of Hemingway's theory of writing, if not a cliché, that readers will sense what lies below the surface of the text, even when such material eliminated in the process of editing.¹⁵⁸ Here, however, the principle seems to work on a micro level, with individual words and passages becoming more evocative in their absence than in their presence. For instance, in considering the effects of certain excisions to the serial version of his novel, Hemingway speculated that "blank passages might make readers more eager to buy

¹⁵⁸ Of course, Hemingway was referring to authorial editing, not excisions made by magazine editors, but the metaphor still seems apt (Interview 84, Oldsley 81).

the novel to see what had been left out,” a comment that resonates with Frederic’s assessment of his family’s response to his blanked out post-cards (qtd. in Reynolds 69). Similarly, obscene words that are replaced with blanks become, if anything, more powerful. Hemingway appeared to call attention to just this when he asserted in his own defense: “No one that has read the Mss. has been shocked by words. The words themselves do not stand out unless you put a ring around them,” which is more or less what happens when a line is substituted for an obscenity that can be easily deduced from the surrounding context.¹⁵⁹ The printed blanks may even invite participation in the restoration of the original text, as evidenced by Hemingway’s insertion of the word “fuck” into the relevant blank spaces in Maurice Coindreau’s copy of the text.¹⁶⁰

This notion of the power of absent or suppressed words is brought home in the novel itself when a soldier tries to reassure two young peasant girls that they are safe from being raped. In both the serial version and the book edition, the word “fucking” is glaringly absent from the dialogue. “‘Don’t worry,’ he said. ‘No danger of ----,’ using the vulgar word. No place for ---” (196). The soldier’s message is clearly lost on the girls who are unfamiliar with the language and grow increasingly agitated. “I could see that she understood the word and that was all,” the narrator observes (196). Thus, when obscenity is divorced from context, it is the “obscene” word that stands out the most. For the two frightened girls, with their tenuous grasp of the language, the “vulgar word” displaces the other words needed to make sense of the sentence,

¹⁵⁹ Ernest Hemingway, letter to Maxwell Perkins, 7 June 1929, in *Critical Essay’s on Ernest Hemingway’s A Farewell to Arms* (qtd. in Monteiro 68).

¹⁶⁰ For a copy of the page that includes Hemingway’s annotation, see Robert Trogon’s *Ernest Hemingway: A Documentary Volume*, page 96.

transforming a statement meant to be reassuring and non-threatening into something far worse.¹⁶¹

It is within this environment, in which certain words are deemed vulgar regardless of context, that Hemingway's hero gives voice to an alternative view of language. The truly shameful words, the novel seems to suggest, are those that lead to immoral acts, such as the tired clichés trotted out to justify war. In one of the most famous passages in the novel, Frederic muses:

I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through, and had read them on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear ... Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates (184-185).

The view of language advanced in this passage is consistent with a larger critique of the hackneyed phrase and the clichéd plot, which threads throughout the novel. For

¹⁶¹ Hemingway saw squeamishness over profanity and the editorial policy of substituting blanks as frustrating but also a bit ludicrous. In one letter to Max Perkins he observes playfully, “[t]he idea that a writer can write a book then become a business man, then a writer again is all [---] as we say,” a paradoxical observation given the fact that it was business sense that made authors allow editors to substitute blanks. Ernest Hemingway, letter to Max Perkins, 15 December 1929 (rpt. in *Selected Letters* 316).

instance, in one early chapter Catherine recalls her “silly belief” that her lover would return “With a saber cut... and a bandage around his head. Or shot through the shoulder. Something picturesque” (20). This is, more or less, what happens in the novel, but in identifying and naming the fantasy as naïve and “silly,” the text forges a distinction between the tired fantasy and the plain facts of Frederic’s convalescence in Catherine’s care. Indeed, the basic plot, the love affair between a military man and a battlefield nurse, also skirts dangerously close to cliché. Yet here too, the novel aims to distance itself from the hackneyed war story. In rejecting Frederic’s advances because she can’t stand “the nurse’s-evening-off aspect of it,” Catherine both names and dismisses the trite version of events leaving the characters free to kiss, temporarily liberated from cliché (26).

While it is difficult to tell whether Hemingway’s inevitable tangles with editors, publishers, and censors inform the novel’s abiding concern with issues of language and obscenity, such instances in the text complicate the simple narrative of an author engaging in an act of creation without a thought of audience, and only later meeting the attacks of his prudish challengers. Rather, I have been trying to suggest, questions of decency and indecency permeate and surround the novel, resulting in a carefully constructed and inter-textual performance of authorship set in motion long before the Boston episode. Hemingway’s decision to serialize in *Scribner’s*, the novel’s preoccupation with propriety and profanity, speak to a larger interrogation of moralistic and linguistic conventions that cannot be reduced to a simple opposition between the artist and the world.

Moreover, if the text itself takes part in its own defense against charges of indecency, *Scribner's* publicity campaign did much to reinforce it, first by advancing the image of the author as an upstanding, fully masculine figure—a new kind of fiction star (Fenstermaker 284). Photographs of the author appeared in *Publishers Weekly* to announce the forthcoming *Scribner's* serial, and a full-page photo of the author in a jaunty cap ran in the first issue of *Scribner's* to carry an installment. The final installment (which, perhaps not coincidentally, takes place in Switzerland in winter) featured a full-length image of the grinning author on skis in a snowy landscape [Fig. 2]. This representation of authorship was not just business as usual. Leonard Leff notes that *Scribner's* “rarely published photographs of its fiction authors” (111). But by presenting the author as a wholesome, handsome, outdoorsman, the magazine helped contribute to the image of Hemingway as a fully masculine writer, one brave enough to flaunt conventional rules of propriety.¹⁶²

¹⁶² The publishers of Dashiell Hammett's *The Thin Man* adopted a rather different defense of the author's use of “objectionable” dialogue. Alfred Knopf made a personal statement concerning one controversial passage in the novel which was excluded from the serial. In the magazine version, a character asks, “when you were wrestling with Mimi, didn't you have an erection?” Knopf does not defend the statement, but he denies that book sales were due to its inclusion. “Twenty thousand people don't buy a book within three weeks to read a five word question,” he asserts in a signed advertisement in the *New York Times*, a statement that both minimizes and calls attention to Hammett's spicy language. (Knopf, 17).

More important, though, is the pointed attention given to Hemingway's use of language. Not only did early advertising notices promote Hemingway as a "star," they also praised his "sharp, direct style," a characterization of the author that could serve as both a testament to his innovations in prose and a warning of the "strong" language soon to appear in the pages of *Scribner's*. While the brief synopses provide basic plot information for those following the novel in serial, in the fourth installment the editors explicitly direct readers' attention to the novel's language, announcing, "The present instalment [sic] contains some of the most magnificent writing in the whole book."¹⁶³ In the "Behind the Scenes" column in the same issue the magazine promises that the next issue will contain "A magnificent piece of writing describing the Caporetto retreat" and that subsequent issues will offer readers "passages of lyric beauty of love scenes in Switzerland."¹⁶⁴ In the same issue, "the distinguished author Owen Wister" penned a glowing tribute to Hemingway's artistry. "The author's grasp of his art is more muscular than ever," Wister affirms, directing readers' attention to the author's "skillful use of slight details," his "abstinence from spinning comments" and his elimination of "those jolty Western Union ten word sentences which he overdid at times." "In him lives a humble artisan who keeps him constantly true to his art. And he, like Defoe, is lucky to be writing in an age that will not stop its ears at the unmuted resonance of a masculine voice."¹⁶⁵

This emphasis on Hemingway's use of language, not only furthers the image of the author as indisputably male and a consummate artist, but also makes sense

¹⁶³ "A Farewell to Arms" [4th installment], *Scribner's Magazine* 86 Aug. 1929: 169.

¹⁶⁴ "Behind the Scenes," *Scribner's Magazine* 86 Aug. 1929: 25.

¹⁶⁵ "What You Think About It," *Scribner's Magazine* 86 Aug. 1929: 27.

given the novel's serial publication. For one, calling attention to Hemingway's prose implies that even readers who haven't been following the plot might gain something from a discrete installment, that the installments may be appreciated on their own given the author's masterful handling of prose. Moreover, although these comments about artistry do not explicitly deal with the obscenities, they subtly imply that an author with such a careful attention to language would not heedlessly insert certain "objectionable" words merely for the sake of effect.

Significantly, this emphasis on Hemingway's prose would come to dominate critical assessment of the author in years to come. Ford Madox Ford would famously praise the writer's craft, explaining, "Hemingway's words strike you, each one, as if they were pebbles fetched fresh from a brook.... Any sentence of his taken at random will hold your attention" (qtd. in Monteiro). For such an author, the removal of even one word, even a mere obscenity, becomes a struggle between artistic courage and timid conventionality, not simply a matter of editorial oversight as usual.¹⁶⁶ This image of Hemingway is thus inextricably tied to the controversy over obscenity that surrounded *A Farewell to Arms*—part of the same performance of authorship, a performance made possible by serial publication.

III.

A few years after Hemingway's successful serialization of *A Farewell to Arms* in *Scribner's Magazine*, Fitzgerald's last completed novel *Tender is the Night*, appeared in the same magazine in four parts. However, that journey through

¹⁶⁶ This understanding of the damage caused to Hemingway's text by editorial excisions has led one critic to argue for the publication of a new definitive edition of *A Farewell to Arms* that reinstates the deleted obscenities (Meriwether 456).

Scribner's was decidedly different from his initial serialization. Although publication in *Scribner's* did not pose the problems Fitzgerald had encountered in the *Metropolitan's* issue of *The Beautiful and Damned*—it was not subjected to bowdlerization or to other editorial decisions that might have hurt the author's standing in the public eye—serial publication failed to generate the critical interest and acclaim that had surrounded Hemingway's earlier venture. Critical ambivalence toward the novel was evident immediately upon the publication of the first installment, the appearance of which prompted one newspaper to proclaim: "First Installment of Fitzgerald Novel is a Disappointment" (Wenke 247). Evidently some readers only read the opening installment: one remarked that a good novel could not be written about an actress, evidence that the reviewer hadn't made it past the first month.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, if one of the objectives of the serialization was to boost book sales, the undertaking was a decided failure, with national sales figures reaching only a little over 10,000 copies when the book appeared in April 1934 (Berg 229). In contrast to the serialization of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, which had served to pique public interest, serialization in this instance seems to have had a negative effect, leading Brucoli to affirm that "the indifferent popular and critical reception of the serial of *Tender is the Night* almost certainly hurt the sale and reception of the book" (*Composition* 192).

There are any number of explanations one might offer for the commercial failure of the novel. Fitzgerald's career was on a decline at this point, and many readers seem to have seen *Tender is the Night* as a repetition of his earlier work, another chronicle of the glamorous and dissolute. The unsavory incest plot, which

¹⁶⁷ F. Scott Fitzgerald, letter to Joe Hergesheimer, 1953 (*Letters* 532).

emerges midway through the novel, must have put off some readers and reviewers. And, for some, the decline of the main character into alcoholic self-destruction was too sudden and unexplained to be fully convincing. Still, one of the contributing factors in the cool reception of the novel was surely its complicated narrative structuring—Fitzgerald’s decision to open his novel with narrative attention focused on the character of Rosemary Hoyt, a young Hollywood starlet who meets the glamorous Mr. and Mrs. Diver while vacationing on the French Riviera. But while the non-linear chronology of the novel and the shifts in narrative perspective have been a topic of much critical discussion, both defenders of the original structure and its critics tend to overlook the implications of narrative sequence on the reception of the novel in serial and fail to consider the degree to which confusions over the novel’s complex narrative structure were exacerbated by its initial appearance in serial form.

One thing upon which scholars do agree is that Fitzgerald’s decision to begin with Rosemary’s impression of the Divers and to withhold information about the couple’s past was quite deliberate. As Bruccoli’s analysis of the manuscripts makes clear, “the flashback structure is the only scheme represented in the manuscripts.”¹⁶⁸ While he was working on the novel Fitzgerald had expressed his desire to do “something really NEW in form, idea, structure—the model for the age that Joyce and Stein are searching for, that Conrad didn’t find” (Bruccoli *Composition* 25). Bruccoli has also suggested that Fitzgerald was influenced by Ford Madox Ford’s discussion of the novel, in which he observed that “what was the matter with the Novel and the British novel in particular, was that it went straight forward.” To illustrate his point, Ford explained that genuine understanding of a character often

¹⁶⁸ Bruccoli, *Composition* 103

emerges out of prolonged contact, with the resulting analysis being quite different from the first impression. “To get such a man in fiction,” he explained, in words that could be applied as easily to Dick Diver, “you could not begin at his beginning and work his life chronologically to the end. You must first get him in with a strong impression, and then work backwards and forwards over his past” (Brucoli 15). Fitzgerald’s determination to structure his novel along these lines is evident in his communications with his editor. When Perkins expressed reservations about the opening section, Fitzgerald defended his decision. “I like the slow approach,” he explained, “[it] has a psychological significance affecting not only the work in question, but also having a bearing on my career in general” (Berg 229). For a while, he would seem to hold to this position, asserting in a letter to a fellow writer that on the issue of narrative pacing his “best solution to date is the to-and-fro, keep-facts-back mystery stuff.”¹⁶⁹

But despite Fitzgerald’s early commitment to this structural principle, by the late 1930s he was less certain that he had adopted the best course. In a 1938 letter to Perkins he concluded that the novel’s “great fault is that the *true* beginning— the young psychiatrist in Switzerland— is tucked away in the middle of the book.” Referring to the current narrative structure as a “mistake [that] was noted and suggested by a dozen reviewers,” Fitzgerald proposed that “If pages 151-212 were taken from their present place and put at the start, the improvement in appeal would be enormous” (qtd. in Merrill 598). It was around this time that Fitzgerald began

¹⁶⁹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, letter to John Peale Bishop, May 1935 (*Letters* 367).

work on an alternative version, creating a new outline for the novel and even going so far as to take apart his copy and rearrange it to follow a chronological sequence.¹⁷⁰

Fitzgerald's reversal on this point was undoubtedly influenced by the overwhelmingly negative reception of the novel in general and its narrative structure in particular. Bruccoli notes that the majority of the early reviewers and readers were truly puzzled by the novel's structure (Bruccoli *Composition 2*). Even a primarily positive review that appeared in *Forum and Century*, suggested that the novel gave the impression of having been "slung together, rather than constructed" (Colum 61). Another contemporary reviewer for the *St. Paul Dispatch* concluded that "the parts are not well integrated. It is not necessary to be an expert to observe the symmetry and the disproportion" (Gray 65). Although generally impressed by the novel, one *New York Times* reviewer observes that when Rosemary is dismissed from the novel "the reader pauses, at page 100, in rueful bewilderment... [and] those who have been chasing him fall figuratively on their noses as Mr. Fitzgerald is off on a new tack" (Chamberlain 69). A more unfriendly review concludes that the novel "suffers from the obscure manner in which the narrative is developed, and from the introduction in the first half of the novel, of matter which has no real and intimate connection with the main theme" (MacMillan 15).

While it is difficult to determine whether these critics first encountered the novel in serial form, the novel's initial appearance in parts could not have helped matters. For, while the shift in focus and in time might have come as a surprise to

¹⁷⁰ Such actions provided the justification for Malcolm Cowley's publication of a posthumous edition published in 1951, the appearance of which renewed critical interest in issues of structure and chronology that the novel had prompted from its first appearance in serial. For a discussion of the critical response to the two editions, see Lucy M. Buntain.

readers of the novel, it would have seemed even more sudden and abrupt to *Scribner's* subscribers, who would have returned to what had first appeared to be a novel about a young Hollywood ingénue to discover in the synopsis accompanying the second installment that Dick and Nicole Diver are, in fact, “the principal characters of the novel.”¹⁷¹ No indication of this narrative focus was provided in the initial installment, which featured an illustration of Rosemary, not Dick or Nicole, on its first page. Nor would readers of the novel in serial have had the privilege afforded to readers of the novel in book form, who could easily refer back to the earlier pages. In doing so, readers of the book edition might have recognized the implications of a strange exchange between Rosemary and Mrs. McKisco about who is, or is not in “the plot.” “We thought maybe you were in the plot,” Mrs. McKisco remarks in the first installment, explaining “We don’t know who’s in the plot and who isn’t” (14). Just as Rosemary is unable to make much sense of these comments, readers without easy access to a complete version of the novel who had been compelled to wait a month between installments would have been less likely to recognize them as foreshadowing for the novel’s subsequent shift from Rosemary to Dick.

In considering such subtle uses of foreshadowing, Hemingway’s often cited comment that “in retrospect *Tender is the Night* gets better and better” is quite apt (qtd. in Bruccoli *Composition* 9). For, it is only in returning to the complete text, either literally or mentally, that the opening section makes sense within the larger scheme of the novel. Returning to the novel for a second time, the reader is able to identify the hints and warnings that the Divers are not as perfect as they first appear.

¹⁷¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, “Tender is the Night” [2nd installment], *Scribner's Magazine* 95 (Feb. 1934): 88.

Nicole's obsessive list-making on the beach, Dick's apparently innocent friendliness, both appear differently once we know the couple's secret and the novel's outcome. Indeed, it is only in accepting the notion that one's initial view of the Divers was as distorted and superficial as Rosemary's that the reader can take pleasure in the novel's sudden reversal. Alfred Kazin would once observe that "*Tender is the Night* grows better on each re-reading—without always being able to account for the sources of your pleasure" (17). At least part of this pleasure, I would posit, is the pleasure of being in on the secret, knowing (as one only can in a second reading) who is in the plot and who isn't.

The inability to easily refer back to earlier portions of the novel would have been only one inconvenience for those following the novel as it made its way through the magazine, a difficulty exacerbated by the physical divisions of the serial novel necessitated by its appearance in four parts. In the book edition, the novel itself is divided according to narrative focus, with the section dominated by Rosemary confined to Book I. This means that the section that begins with the flashback sequence is distinctly set off from the rest of the novel and the novel's abrupt shift in time coincides with the onset of a new section, clearly labeled Book II, which initiates a new sequence of chapters. In contrast, the second serial installment gives little formal indication of the radical shift in perspective and temporal setting. In the *Scribner's Magazine* version, the second installment includes a portion devoted primarily to Rosemary and part of the flashback sequence, with only a chapter break to divide the sequential narrative of the opening section from the flashback. This division, which may well have been dictated by *Scribner's* space constraints, means

that the disclosure of Nicole's insanity and the Divers' original relationship as patient and doctor does not arrive until part way into the second installment, at which point the readers would have to reassess their understanding of a novel they would have formed one month prior.

Several of Fitzgerald's contemporaries seem to have recognized that serializing such a complex novel in parts ran the risk of confusing readers. John Dos Passos confessed in a letter to Fitzgerald that "Reading *Tender is the Night*—the book—I got entirely a different impression from reading a couple of [word missing or illegible] in Scribners [sic]. It's so tightly knit together that it can't be read in pieces."¹⁷² Max Perkins had reservations from the beginning about issuing such a novel in serial form. He was concerned that the novel took so long to achieve a decisive focus on Dick Diver, for "as soon as people get to Dick Diver their interest in the book, and their perception of its importance increases thirty to forty percent." In a letter to Hemingway, Perkins voiced the opinion that such complex work really shouldn't have been chopped up for serialization.¹⁷³ Fitzgerald's awareness of the potential for confusion for the reader is evident in two seemingly minor revisions to the book edition that appear calculated to forestall confusion. In the second chapter of the book version, Fitzgerald inserts the line, "To resume Rosemary's point of view," hinting that this narrative perspective is not inevitable. At the end of chapter eight, Fitzgerald writes that Rosemary again "wondered what Mrs. McKisco had seen in the bathroom," thereby reinforcing the importance of this still mysterious moment (Brucoli *Composition* 201).

¹⁷² John Dos Passos, letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald, Apr. 1934. (*Correspondence* 358).

¹⁷³ Maxwell Perkins, letter to Ernest Hemingway, 12 Jan., 1934. (Berg 229).

Yet as was often the case in Fitzgerald's career, practical considerations precluded such attention to detail; Fitzgerald might add these helpful notes to the revised book edition, but for serial publication he rushed the manuscript to print. Max Perkins had pursued serialization in *Scribner's Magazine* as a means of reducing the amount Fitzgerald owed to the publishing house (Berg 201-202). At this point in his career, Fitzgerald was woefully in debt to his publishers having taken out cash advances on unpublished work, including this novel which had taken him so long to finish. Consequently, of the ten-thousand dollars Fitzgerald received for the serial rights, six-thousand were directly applied to outstanding debt. Another practical outcome of serial publication was that it provided Fitzgerald with a much needed impetus to completing the novel that had occupied him off and on for nearly a decade. This was not the first time that Fitzgerald had tried to impose deadlines as an inducement to completing set sections of text. In the fall of 1928 he had determined to send two chapters of the novel to Perkins each month, a scheme that ultimately failed (Brucoli *Composition* 56). Several years later, Harold Ober agreed to a similar arrangement, whereby Fitzgerald would submit the novel to Ober chapter by chapter (Brucoli *Composition* 68). Here too, Fitzgerald soon abandoned his disciplinary strategy. It was not until Perkins secured serialization in *Scribner's* that Fitzgerald was able to meet the firm deadlines imposed by magazine publication. And, Brucoli's extensive work on the manuscripts has shown, the delay between serial publication and the resetting of type for the book issue allowed Fitzgerald to make numerous stylistic revisions that he felt represented a real improvement in the work (Brucoli *Composition* 199). Much as he had for *The Beautiful and Damned*

when he made various alterations to the magazine version and substituted a new ending, Fitzgerald seems to have perceived serialization as yet another opportunity to continue to polish his work, an understanding of serialization as a stage in the composing process rather than a crucial opportunity to make a strong first impression.

IV.

Fitzgerald's *Scribner's* novel thus stands in marked contrast to *A Farewell to Arms* in several respects. The most important of these may be that Hemingway's novel is easily accessible in parts: it encompasses a shorter period of time, exactly one year, and it proceeds chronologically.¹⁷⁴ It is worth noting that this approach to narrative was not typical of Hemingway. Bernard Oldsley's research into the early drafts of the novel identifies an alternative starting point, a draft for two chapters that would become Chapters XIII and XIV. Had Hemingway continued with this material, Oldsley notes, "it would have been in keeping with a number of Hemingway's narratives which begin *in medias res* with the protagonist already wounded, suffering, incapacitated, or recuperating" (Oldsley 61). One critic of *Tender is the Night* actually blamed Hemingway for Fitzgerald's misguided use of a

¹⁷⁴ Several critics have identified the frequent references to time and the seasons as a structuring element in Hemingway's novel. Reynolds observes that "[t]he rhythm of cyclical flow that Hemingway establishes in the first two chapters of Book One is used throughout the novel to both control and unify the action . . . each section of the novel has its appropriate season." (Reynolds 265). Another notes that "nearly every one of the novel's thirty one chapters opens with a reference either to the time of day or the season of the year (Adair 165, See also Parton and McCarthy). However, none of these critics consider how this regularity might have made the novel particularly well suited to serial publication. Leff is one of the few to speculate that Hemingway's experience with the short form made *A Farewell to Arms* so well suited to serialization. "Unlike *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms* had continuity and dramatic suspense: the love affair, the characters' separations and reunions, and the pregnancy that occurred at midpoint would have the power to hold readers from one *Scribner's* installment to the next. The near-equal size of the segments and the episodic and chronological structure of the novel would also make it easy for the readers to recall the story from one month to the next" (Leff 102).

non-linear narrative structure, citing Fitzgerald's "inability (peculiar to the Hemingway school) to write a story chronologically" (MacMillan 15).

Thus, while Fitzgerald seems to have followed Hemingway's lead in some respects—in his recognition of the importance of appearing in a "quality magazine" like *Scribner's* and in his realization of the negative effects of bowdlerization—he does not seem to have considered that the formal structuring of *A Farewell to Arms* might also have contributed to its success. Having learned of the dangers of serializing in less reputable and scrupulous publications, he then failed to produce a novel that was easily accessible when read by installment, instead treating serial publication as an inducement to get a first draft off to the publishers.¹⁷⁵ This oversight is surprising given Fitzgerald's abilities as a producer of the popular linked tales that kept him financially afloat during the last decade of his life. Fitzgerald's Basil Duke Lee and Josephine Perry stories, which he wrote for the *Saturday Evening Post* and considered combining into a single work, demonstrate Fitzgerald's ability to compose discrete, individually satisfying episodes around single characters. However, when it came to the novel, Fitzgerald seems to have given little thought to his serial audience, the magazine subscribers who would follow his novel as it appeared each month. When publishing in a serious literary periodical, Fitzgerald sought to showcase his serious fiction, which in this case meant a novel that was

¹⁷⁵ Fitzgerald's comments on the novel are telling. In a March 11, 1935 letter to Maxwell Perkins he wrote: "It has become increasingly plain to me that the very excellent organization of a long book or the finest perceptions and judgment in time of revision do not go well with liquor. A short story can be written on a bottle, but for a novel you need the mental speed that enables you to keep the whole pattern in your head and ruthlessly sacrifice the sideshows as Earnest did in 'A Farewell to Arms.' If a mind is slowed up ever so little it lives in the individual part of a book rather than the book as a whole; memory is dulled. I would give anything if I hadn't had to write Part III of 'Tender is the Night' entirely on stimulant" (*F. Scott Fitzgerald on Authorship* 144).

formally experimental and abandoned the serial strategies he had relied on in his writing for popular magazines.

It would be easy here to conclude that Hemingway simply grasped the importance of serial publication as public performance whereas Fitzgerald did not. But it is perhaps more important to recognize the degree to which each author, and their mutual editor, learned from one another. While Fitzgerald's early serialization practices indicate a desire to be always before the public eye, a policy Perkins encouraged, one scholar notes that "[b]y 1925 even Perkins had conceded that Scott Fitzgerald's personal reputation [had] injured his books' and given him 'an altogether frivolous look in the eyes of the trade and public' " (Leff 62). Thus when *Current Merchandisers* expressed interest in serializing Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* in the newspapers, "Perkins recalled Fitzgerald among the daily papers' workaday features ('The Gumps' and 'Doris Blake's Answers to Problems of Love')." "[S]yndicating seems all just a part of the idea of killing a book off and getting it out of the way as soon as possible after publication," he wrote in a letter to Hemingway.¹⁷⁶

While it has become something of a truism to speak of Fitzgerald's weaknesses as a self-promoter, his apparent tendency to "almost deliberately [damage] his literary status by trading permanent fame for notoriety," and to see Hemingway as a master of publicity, adept at charting the waters of early-twentieth-century celebrity culture, the career choices of the two authors are not so easily

¹⁷⁶ Max Perkins, letter to Ernest Hemingway 18 Sept., 1929 (qtd. in Leff 121).

disentangled (Brucoli “Man of Letters” 20).¹⁷⁷ Their various experiments with this important and often overlooked component of early-twentieth-century publishing and publicity offers insight into a developing understanding of the potential of serialization—the opportunities it offered to perform authorship and to stage narrative. Such performance was crucial to successful twentieth-century authorship. In a telling statement in the August issue of *Scribner’s*, Hemingway responded to complaints about the dreariness of his earlier novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, by noting that he knew “some very wonderful people who even though they were going directly toward the grave . . . managed to put up a very fine performance en route.”¹⁷⁸ This observation about his previous novel, printed with two more installments of the new novel yet to come, serves as a warning that the novel currently appearing in print might not close with a conventionally happy ending. But it also makes a point of privileging the journey over the destination, the performance of the characters, but also that of the author himself, en route to the concluding installment. This was an insight that Fitzgerald didn’t seem to grasp, at least not in the serious fiction he submitted for serial publication. Instead, Fitzgerald evolved from an understanding of serial publication as an opportunity for increased exposure to a belated recognition of the importance of publication location in conferring literary prestige. It was

¹⁷⁷ For a comprehensive account of Hemingway’s use of popular magazines to promote his public image, see John Raeburn, *Fame Became Of Him*. Raeburn argues that the “expansion of the mass media and the diffusion of literary authority” in the early twentieth century led to a new way of looking at the artist in general and at Hemingway in particular. “To the public he was no longer the secular priest of ideality whose private life was inviolable; rather, he was a skilled entertainer whose personal activities and opinions were of interest as complements to his writing.” According to Raeburn, “far from being either the unwitting or the unwilling recipient of this personal attention as he liked to intimate he was, Hemingway was the architect of his public reputation.” By making use of the publicity offered by mass-market magazines like *Esquire*, *Time*, and *Life*, Hemingway’s literary career was ultimately eclipsed by the spectacle of the author as a colorful celebrity (5, 7).

¹⁷⁸ “Behind the Scenes.” *Scribner’s Magazine* 86 Aug. 1929: 25.

Hemingway's astute sense of both the formal and the performative possibilities of serial publication that would determine serial practices in the decades to come.

CONCLUSION

“Without a Safety Net”:

Tom Wolfe’s *The Bonfire of the Vanities* and the Idea of the Serial Novel

By the middle of the twentieth century, instances of serially published fiction in mainstream American periodicals had become increasingly rare. Whereas many mid- and late-nineteenth-century authors had been able to take advantage of both serial and book publication, only a handful of major twentieth-century authors found magazines willing to buy serial rights. Consequently, by the mid- to late-1900s, the serial novel had come to seem a thing of the past, a quaint publishing practice of an earlier age.

As one might imagine, there is some discrepancy of opinion as to the timing and cause of serialization’s supposed demise. According to one version of events, the end of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of the end for the installment novel. Michael Lund notes that by the 1890s “issuing works first in inexpensive, single volume editions was becoming more profitable” (Lund *America’s Continuing Story* 102) Patricia Okker points to several key moments as signs of the end of serial publication as a common practice: *Lippincott’s* decision to switch from serialized novels to completed novels in single issues in 1887, *Colliers’s* decision to drop serial fiction in the early 1900s, and *Munsey’s* promotion of the short story over the serial

novel (156). Others, like James West, have challenged the notion of the serial novel as a nineteenth-century phenomenon, noting that not only was serial fiction produced and consumed into the first half of the twentieth century, this period should be seen as a high point for serial fiction, with authors able to serialize novels in “an unprecedented number and variety of magazines” (103). Some would contend that serial publication has never really disappeared, but has instead been translated to new media. As Roger Hagedorn argues persuasively, commercial exploiters consistently turn to serial fiction whenever new media technology is introduced “precisely in order to cultivate a dependable audience of consumers” (5).

These seemingly contradictory accounts of the history of serialization make sense, however, given both the widening gulf between popular and literary magazines in the twentieth century and the emergence of new media in competition with print media. While serial fiction did become less prominent in the older, literary magazines, in the early decades of the twentieth century editors and publishers like Frank Munsey, S.S. McClure, John Brisbane Walker, Edward Bok, and George Horace Lorimer began to produce mass-circulation magazines for a middle-to-lowbrow American readership. Popular periodicals like the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Red Book*, and *Woman's Home Companion* continued to serialize new novels, while pulps like *Argosy* and *Blue Book* churned out serial genre fiction: science fiction, westerns, and action adventures (Tebbel 271). By 1910, monthlies solely devoted to fiction, such as *All-Story Magazine*, had appeared on the scene (Taliaferro 68). Yet, since this magazine fiction is generally missing from accounts of American literary history, the inevitable result is an illusionary

sense of serialization's demise. In a sense, then, the apparent decline in serialization practices in the latter part of the twentieth century mirrors the seeming absence of serialization during the antebellum period; it is not that there were no serial novels but rather that few of the serial authors of these periods are read and remembered today, resulting in a skewed vision of serialization as a temporally limited phenomenon.¹⁷⁹

Similarly, the notion that serial fiction ended at the turn into the twentieth century falls apart in the face of a broader definition of American culture. For, once one includes other media, examples of serial narrative are virtually unlimited. Some of the first motion pictures made use of serial release to capture audiences from week to week, and today the film industry continues to rely on blockbuster series (arguably a relative of serial fiction).¹⁸⁰ Newspaper comics and comic books, soap operas and television series, all could be considered instances of twentieth-century serial fiction, as Hayward's work reminds us. But one might also point to any number of popular television series, or to more experimental forays into serial narrative such as R. Kelly's bizarre invention of "hip-hopera" or the online postings of "Lonelygirl15" on YouTube.¹⁸¹ Such instances of serialized fiction in popular culture, both the mainstream and the anomalous, are invariably excluded from academic accounts of

¹⁷⁹ In some ways, Edith Wharton is an exception to this pattern. A serious author, who continued to earn extraordinary profits from serial publication well into the 1920s, she was paid \$27,000 for the serial rights to *The Mother's Recompense* (1924-1925). Significantly, though, Wharton's continued serial sales depended on her movement away from older literary magazines like *Scribner's*, where she had published initially, to mass-market magazines such as *McClure's*, the *Pictorial Review*, the *Delineator*, and *Redbook*. "You are the only author in the magazine field who is writing literature and at the same time being paid the high figure which is usually the reward of tosh" her editor Rutger B. Jewett once remarked (Lewis 459, 446).

¹⁸⁰ See Raymond William Stedman's *The Serials: Suspense and Drama by Installment*, for a treatment of serialization in early film, and an account of the transformation of a 1912 magazine serial into an film series.

¹⁸¹ One of the most compelling aspects of this venture into online serial fiction was the producers' ability to monitor viewer response and adapt their posting accordingly. A spike in views after an emotional episode entitled "My Parents Suck" led the producers to pursue family and relationship drama. (Davis 238).

American literary history, but they certainly warrant a place in a more general narrative of the history of serialized fiction. And, the more cultural historians turn to genre fiction and to “non-literary” publications, the more common “serialization” will come to seem.

In any event, the absence of prominent serial novels and the sense of serialization’s extinction has proved integral to the way that some twentieth-century serial novels have been packaged and understood. In the 1980s, for instance, the seeming dearth of serial fiction allowed Tom Wolfe to promote the release of installments of *The Bonfire of the Vanities* in *Rolling Stone Magazine* as a noteworthy literary event—a return to a bygone era in the history of the novel and a rare artistic feat. As Wolfe would assert in a 1989 essay for *Harper’s Magazine*, subtitled “A Literary Manifesto for the New Social Novel,” “the intelligentsia” had always scorned the realist novel as exemplified by Dickens (“Stalking”). A serial novel like *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Wolfe implies, recalls an earlier literary history, reinvigorating the realist mode, while resurrecting a nineteenth-century publication practice. It also, in Wolfe’s account, showcases the artistic daring of its creator. He would later describe the process of composition as writing “a chapter every two weeks with a gun at my temple,” a macho representation of serial publication that reappears in the publishing history notes for the paperback edition, which applaud the magazine’s “daring” in its decision to publish the novel “serially, chapter by chapter, as it was being written, without a safety net” (“Stalking” 54, *Bonfire*).

Clearly, the understanding of serialization in evidence here relies on a repression of the complex history of serialization practices in the United States.

There is no room in Wolfe's account for an author like Stowe, who would have undermined the clean line forged between the nineteenth-century British greats and Wolfe. It is difficult to imagine any of the authors considered in the previous pages representing serial publication as a showy stunt. More recent instances of serial fiction are also quietly excised from Wolfe's account in order to support the idea of this publishing venture as unique. *Esquire's* serial issue of Norman Mailer's *An American Dream* in 1965, and *Playboy's* publication of *The Executioner's Song* in three parts in 1979 are conveniently forgotten. Armistead Maupin's popular serial *Tales of the City*, which began to appear in a San Francisco newspaper the 1970s, is also notably absent, despite the two writers' shared interest in documenting the intersecting lives of city inhabitants.

On one hand, then, the serialization of *The Bonfire of the Vanities* and the commentary surrounding it highlight the significant differences between this situation and the ones considered in this study. Unlike his predecessors, Wolfe was not primarily driven by economic necessity in his decision to publish in a magazine. James would probably have abandoned serial publication if he could have afforded to do so. Eaton was happy enough to forsake the serial novel when she discovered a market for attractively designed luxury books. But for Wolfe, proceeds from the serial version were slight compared to the money he received for book publication, pointing to motives quite different than those of his predecessors. According to a 1998 report in the *Daily News*, *Esquire* submitted a meager five-figure bid for the serial rights to the novel, while *Vanity Fair* offered the most at \$150,000. Ultimately, *Rolling Stone* secured the rights at a little less than this by promising Wolfe

appearance in both *Rolling Stone* and the affiliated magazine, *Men's Journal*, whose combined circulation reached nearly 2 million (Kelly 92). Although \$150,000 is no measly sum, compared to the 1.5 million Wolfe earned for the paperback rights to the novel, the earnings from the serial issue seem almost negligible, suggesting that motives other than money were behind the author's desire to see his work appear first in the magazine.¹⁸²

The relative absence of a financial motive and the apparent absence of other cases of serialization also gave Wolfe more freedom to present his method of releasing his novel as a conscious and innovative artistic choice: a sign of his allegiance to a particular literary tradition and evidence of his creative versatility. This framing of a specific instance of serial publication was not so readily available to his nineteenth and early-twentieth-century precursors, who could hardly point to their engagement with serial publication as an indication of their creative allegiance to a venerable literary tradition or to celebrate their achievement as an exceptional compositional feat. In earlier periods, serialization was simply too pervasive for one author to make a convincing argument that his or her use of serial publication carried such special meaning. Editors and publishers might comment on the implications of serial publication in general, but individual authors working within a system of serialization would have found it difficult to represent their publication practices as something remarkable in and of themselves.

¹⁸² As Michael Anesko points out, contemporary authors have more options for making money from a single work. Whereas nineteenth century authors could turn to serialization and re-publication in deluxe editions, today's authors can recycle literary material for a variety of outlets, from film to television to cheap paperback reprints. Thus, even though the film adaptation of Wolfe's novel was a commercial failure, earnings from this source were undoubtedly more than Wolfe's earnings from serial publication ("What Was an Author?").

However, as these chapters have demonstrated, earlier serial authors did respond to this mode of publication in various and highly personal ways, grappling with the formal and political issues posed by serial issue, and using serial release to project a certain image of authorship. To a certain extent, then, Wolfe's effort to make meaning out of his publication circumstances is typical; like all serial novelists, practical and theoretical negotiations with serial publication informed his understandings of what it meant to be a professional novelist. Tellingly, Wolfe would later affirm that writing by installment had allowed him to make the transition from reporter to novelist (in much the same way that Stowe's periodical publication enabled her to make the transition from writer of sketches to novelist). It is worth noting that he had written "The Right Stuff" (ostensibly a work of non-fiction) as a four-part serial in *Rolling Stone* in 1973 six years before its reincarnation as a book, a project that might have provided a model for *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. As Wolfe would explain, writing serially eased his earlier struggles with composition: "I knew this would force it out of me. I knew from my newspaper days I could make a deadline" (Rothstein). His depiction of writing with a gun to his temple may have been an exaggerated bit of bravado, but it does serve to illuminate one way that the specific, material conditions of serial publication could facilitate the transition from writer to novelist.

This is not to say that serial publication represents the only, or even the primary professional experience by which an author comes to understand his or her craft. Models of exemplary authorship undoubtedly exert an enormous influence in writer's sense of what it means to be an author, as do instances of unsuccessful

attempts to enter the profession.¹⁸³ Encounters with audience through public and private performance, cultural commentary on the role of the author, and dialogue with other writers all shape ideas about what it means to write a novel. Walter Ong would argue that writers create their fictional audiences primarily through rhetoric, meaning that authorial stance and narratives strategies are essentially determined by literary precedent. Still, one should not discount the various ways that tangles with serial publication have influenced ideas about authorship. Indeed, negotiation with serialization has played a substantial role in the business of authorship, both literally and metaphorically, not only in supporting a literary livelihood, but also in promoting particular types of engagement with issues of form and with audience.

Undoubtedly, novelists would have struggled with form regardless of the modes of publication available to them. The novel has always been a malleable genre, one that eludes easy definitions, and the problem of how to hold the pieces together, to produce, in James's formulation, an "organic whole" has plagued authors and critics for centuries. James's well-known characterization of certain novels as "loose baggy monsters" attests to the difficulties inherent in the composition of a long work, as does Stowe's subtle treatment of order and disorder in her first and most famous novel.¹⁸⁴ Serial publication, paradoxically, both exacerbated this problem and offered solutions. For Stowe, the idea of the novel as a collection of parts, initially a mere practicality, ultimately provided a useful model, particularly given her Christian

¹⁸³ According to Michael Anesko, Henry James's somewhat patronizing view of Nathaniel Hawthorne arose out of the author's lack of professionalism, apparent in his inability to produce installments of the *Dolliver Romance* after he had promised it to the *Atlantic Monthly*. In this case, a negative model of authorship, rather than a superlative instance of artistic success, helped to shape James's ideas about the uneasy relationship between literature and the literary market. (Anesko *Friction* 66).

¹⁸⁴ See James's letter to Horace Walpole, 19 May 1912, *The Letters of Henry James* ed. Percy Lubbock, 2 vols. (New York: Scribner's, 1920): 2.237.

understanding of reading the Bible as the intense experience of inherently fragmented text. For James, the temporal and physical “jolts” occasioned by periodical publication were more distressing; it was not until *The Ambassadors* that he felt he had found an artistically acceptable aesthetic solution to the problem of serial publication. Yet regardless of how each author negotiated the publishing phenomenon, producing a serial text occasioned increased engagement with form and an intensified understanding of the novel as a composition of parts. It promoted certain types of formal experimentation in which large decisions about structure became the principle focus. It provoked theorization on issues of form by critics and novelists alike, who addressed its theoretical implications directly, as James did in his criticism, or more covertly, as Stowe did in her fiction.

At least as important, the experience of publishing a novel serially in the magazines shaped the way novelists understood their relationship to readers. Assuming an authorial stance in relation to audience has always been an uncertain proposition involving a significant imaginative leap. But for novelists who understood their work, at least in part, as a serial text, this elusive “reader” might assume a more distinct, if still highly contested, form. Unlike authors who compose solely for book publication, the serial author has a somewhat more empirically-based sense of just who will be reading a given work and how those readers will be encountering her text. Given the shortage of information available to authors to form an image, however indistinct, of their readers, such information is crucial. The importance of magazine publication in shaping authorial stance and content is perhaps most clearly evident in the work of Eaton and Hopkins, whose experiences

with serial publication involved complex interactions with ethnically demarcated reading populations. But publication location is also integral to the experiences of every serial author, as evident from the case studies considered here. For Stowe, for example, writing a novel for readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* was different than composing installments for the *National Era*. For James, to appear before readers of the *North American Review*, which had so long held out against fiction, was to stand above the common fiction-reading rabble.

Of course writers were not always accurate in their assessments of audience or in their formal responses. James's optimism that he had solved the problem of serial authorship with *The Ambassadors*, for instance, was out of step with the views of his contemporaries. Eaton's strategic positioning of herself and her heroine in relation to her white female readers, has been less effective in capturing the sympathy of contemporary women critics, who remain troubled by her stereotypical depictions of quaint Asian women. In contrast, Hopkins's rejection of "white" criticism makes her a compelling figure for current critical reevaluations (although it may have cost her an important publishing outlet in her own time). But in each instance, confrontation with the material conditions of authorship in general, and with the peculiar phenomenon of serial publication in particular, allowed for the assumption of authorship and determined the possibilities and limitations of that authorship.

Arguably, for Hemingway and for Fitzgerald, the risks were even higher given the increasing importance of marketing and publicity in the twentieth century. As the careers of both authors demonstrate, in the first decades of the twentieth century the performance of authorship had become even more public and more fraught.

Publication placement, image, and reputation had always mattered to some degree, but in the twentieth century the promotion and marketing of the author reached a new level with both emerging as celebrity authors. A canny self-promoter, Hemingway understood that serializing *A Farewell to Arms* in *Scribner's* was less about making money than about generating buzz, while advancing a certain image of heroic authorship. Fitzgerald seemed to overestimate the short-term material advantages of exposure via serial publication, only later recognizing the damage that placement and editorial treatment could do to his literary reputation.

Ultimately, the encounters with serial publication discussed in the final chapter provide a fitting close to this study in anticipating two contemporary trends in serial publication. In one version of contemporary serialization, the serial publication of a novel becomes a newsworthy event. If the banning of Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms* was used to generate media hype in the 1920s, since the middle of the twentieth century the mere fact of serialization has been enough to advertise a book. This feature of contemporary serial publication was clearly in evidence in Wolfe and *Rolling Stone's* promotion of *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, but it is also apparent in the treatment of other forays into serialized novels in past years. Stephen King's highly publicized venture into online serial publication generated interest and then outrage when he abruptly discontinued the series (Rose 2006). More recently, *Harper's Magazine's* decision to serialize a novel—“for the first time in 50 years”—became the subject of the literary essay for *The New York Times Book Review*, which explored

the strange circumstances behind the novel's appearance by installment rather than in book form: "one of the more intriguing publishing stories of the season."¹⁸⁵

If anything, such publicity around the serial issue of a novel points to the death of the mode of publication rather than its continued vitality. When serial novels were everywhere, there was no need to broadcast the arrival of yet another magazine novel. That Wolfe and other authors are able to imagine serial publication as an exceptional act, evocative of early-nineteenth-century publication practices, is a sign of the virtual absence of serial publication from contemporary publishing. The notion that *The Bonfire of the Vanities* represents a return to a nineteenth-century tradition depends on an erasure of the complex history of serial practices throughout American literary history, but also suggests that various twentieth-century endeavors have failed to register an impact except as anomalies.¹⁸⁶

But if magazine novels are rare, the practice of excerpting fiction endures. Magazine editors continue to play a role in identifying and supporting authors by publishing sections of forthcoming books, a practice that seems to have taken the place of initial serialization. In the 1970s, *Esquire* published excerpts of novels by Tom Robbins, William Styron, John Updike, Saul Bellow, and Tim O'Brien. More recently, parts of Michael Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*,

¹⁸⁵ The novel, "Happyland," by John Robert Lennon was under contract to W.W. Norton, but the publisher pulled out at the last minute for fear of libel charges, given the novel's fictional representation of Pleasant Rowland, founder of American Girl dolls. In a reversal of the previous pattern whereby magazine editors were more likely to avoid potentially controversial material, here a magazine publisher proved to be less timid than book publishers (Donadio 27).

¹⁸⁶ One sign that serial publication could be making a genuine resurgence is the simultaneous appearance of several serial novels in the past few years. *Harper's* venture into serial fiction represents one example, but *The New York Times Magazine* and the online magazine *Slate* have also taken up the practice. As the *Village Voice* noted recently, beginning in September 2005, weekly installments of genre fiction by Elmore Leonard and Patricia Cornwell began to appear in the *New York Times Magazine*, a policy that continues with the more recent appearance of works by Scott Turow and Michael Chabon. Between March and June 2006, *Slate* issued a new novel by Walter Kirn in biweekly installments.

Chang-rae Lee's *A Gesture Life* and *Aloft*, and Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* (to name only a few) appeared in *The New Yorker*. Thus, in much the same way that nineteenth-century serial fiction sought to entice readers to follow the novel in the next installment, publication of only part of a forthcoming novel might compel a reader to look for further "installments" in the bound book. Much like Hemingway's prescient serialization of *A Farewell to Arms* in *Scribner's*, the appearance of a novel, even a portion of a novel, in a respected arbiter of culture like the *New Yorker* functions as both endorsement and advance publicity for the novel to come.

Although these traces of serial publication may be found in the contemporary scene, they are clearly less central to the experience of authorship than in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Today, there are a number of ways that author's might gain public recognition and other media better equipped to bring an author before the public eye. For most authors, the unlikely opportunity to publish a novel in serial form has not proven practical or attractive enough to pursue; there are other ways to supplement a literary career, and scholars interested in the material basis of creative pursuits would do well to investigate the ways that authors negotiate these various roles. But for a period of time in American literary history, serialization in the magazines was an essential part of what it meant to be a novelist, a publishing phenomenon that shaped ideas about authorship, audience, marketing, and the purpose of fiction. For contemporary critics, then, an understanding of periodicals as a vital creative field both influenced by and influencing the fictional output, is essential. For those interested in the construction of authorial identity in American literature history, insight into the details of such publishing practices is key. Through

attention to the private musings and public theorizing, the formal maneuvers, and political negotiations of individual American authors, we inevitably arrive at a better sense of what it has meant for different authors, at different times, to write an American novel.

APPENDIX A

Illustrations



Fig. 1

Undated publicity photo of Winnifred Eaton as Onoto Watanna. Published with the permission of the photograph's owner, Eaton's grand-daughter Dina Birchall.



Fig. 2

Hemingway in Gstaad, Switzerland in 1927. This photograph appeared in the October 1929 issue of *Scribner's Magazine* on page 372.

Credit: Photograph in the Ernest Hemingway Collection of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston. Copyright unknown.

APPENDIX B

Publishing Information for Selected American Serial Novels

This appendix consists of a partial list of novels by American authors serialized in American periodicals. The entries appear chronologically according to the initial date of periodical appearance, and each entry includes the name of the novel, the author's name, and the dates of publication. Autobiography, including fictionalized autobiography has been omitted, as have instances of serial fiction with fewer than four installments and instances of publication in parts.

I consulted a variety of sources to create this list. Scholarly works such as Frank Luther Mott's invaluable reference, *A History of American Magazines*, suggested places to start, as did the work of Michael Lund, Patricia Okker, Roger Chielens, Arthur John and others. Online databases consulted include the Making of America index, Harpweek, Readers Guide Retrospective, and the Nineteenth Century Masterfile. I also consulted original periodicals and print and microfilm reproductions located at the New York Public Library, Lehman College Library, and Brooklyn College Library.

Serial Authors Included in this List

Louisa May Alcott	Sarah Orne Jewett
Jeremy Belknap	Grace King
Charles Brockden Brown	Walter Kirn
Gertrude Dorsey Brown	Robert Lennon
William Wells Brown	Elmore Leonard
John Edward Bruce	Sinclair Lewis
Pearl S. Buck	Jack London
Frances Hodgson Burnett	Norman Mailer
George Washington Cable	Herman Melville
Abraham Cahan	S. Weir Mitchell
Willa Cather	Frank Norris
Michael Chabon	Maitland Leroy Osborne
Julia C. Collins	Thomas Nelson Page
Michael Connelly	Elizabeth Stuart Phelps
Patricia Cornwell	Edgar Allan Poe
Steven Crane	Ian Rankin
Rebecca Harding Davis	Christian Reid (Christine Fisher Tiernan)
John W. De Forest	Sax Rohmer (Arthur Sarsfield Wade)
Winnifred Eaton (Onoto Watanna)	Soledad Santiago
Edward Eggleston	Horace E. Scudder
Edna Ferber	William Gilmore Simms
Harold Frederic	E.D.E.N. Southworth
F. Scott Fitzgerald	Ann Stephens
Dashiell Hammett	Harriet Beecher Stowe
Frances Ellen Watkins Harper	Booth Tarkington
Bret Harte	Kamba Thorpe
Julian Hawthorne	Scott Turow
Nathaniel Hawthorne	Mark Twain
John Hays	S.S. Van Dine
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	Rebecca West
Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland	Edith Wharton
Saxe Holm (Helen Hunt Jackson)	Mary E. Wilkins
Pauline Hopkins	Tom Wolfe
William Dean Howells	Constance Fenimore Woolson
Henry James	
Mary Johnston	

Pre-1850

The Foresters

Jeremy Belknap

Columbia Magazine (June 1787 – Apr. 1788)

Stephen Calvert

Charles Brockden Brown.

Monthly Magazine and American Review (June 1799 – June 1800)

[Unfinished; reprinted in 1815]

Arthur Gordon Pym

Edgar Allan Poe

Southern Literary Messenger (Jan. 1837 – Feb. 1837)

[Not completed; published as *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* in 1838]

Lost and Found

Ann Stephens

Peterson's Magazine (Jan. – Dec. 1848)

Retribution

E.D.E.N. Southworth

National Era (Jan. 4 – Apr. 12 1849)

Palaces and Prisons

Ann Stephens

Peterson's Magazine (Feb. 1849 – Feb. 1850)

1850 - 1859

Katherine Walton

William Gilmore Simms

Godey's Lady's Book (Feb. – Dec. 1850)

The Sword and the Distaff (later issued as *Woodcraft*)

William Gilmore Simms

Southern Literary Gazette (Feb. – Nov. 1852)

Uncle Tom's Cabin

Harriet Beecher Stowe

National Era (June 5, 1851 – Apr. 1, 1852)

Israel Potter; or, Fifty Years of Exile

Herman Melville

Putnam's Magazine (July 1854 – Mar. 1855)

Benito Cereno
Herman Melville
Putnam's Magazine (Oct. – Dec. 1855)

Marion Earl: or, Only an Actress!
Louisa May Alcott (originally published anonymously)
American Union (July – Sept. 1858)

The Minister's Wooing
Harriet Beecher Stowe
Atlantic Monthly (Dec. 1858 – Dec. 1859)

The Hidden Hand or, Capitola the Madcap
E. D. E. N. Southworth
New York Ledger (Feb. 5 – July 9 1859)
[the first two installments also appeared in the *National Era* in February 1859.
The novel was re-serialized in 1868 and 1883, but did not appear as a book until
1888]

1860- 1869

*Miralda; or The Beautiful Quadroon: A Romance of American Slavery, founded
in Fact*
William Wells Brown
The Weekly Anglo-African (Dec. 1, 1860 – Mar. 16, 1861)
[An early version of the novel titled *Clotel; or The President's Daughter: A
Narrative of Slave Life in the United States* was published in London in 1853.
The novel was revised for serialization and this revision became the basis for the
two U.S. book publications in 1864 and 1867.]

Agnes of Sorrento
Harriet Beecher Stowe
Atlantic Monthly (May 1861 – Apr. 1862)

A Story of To-Day
Rebecca Harding Davis [published anonymously]
Atlantic Monthly (Oct. 1861 – Mar. 1862)
[Re-titled *Margret Howth* in 1862]

Blake; or The Huts of America
Martin R. Delany
Weekly Anglo-African (Nov. 1861 – May 1862)

David Gaunt
Rebecca Harding Davis
Atlantic Monthly (Sept. - Oct. 1862)

Paul Blecker
Rebecca Harding Davis
Atlantic Monthly (May - July 1863)

House and Home Papers
Harriet Beecher Stowe
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. - Dec. 1864)

The Chimney-Corner
Harriet Beecher Stowe
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. 1865 - Sept. 1866)

The Fate of the Forrests
Louisa May Alcott [published anonymously]
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (Feb. 1 – Feb. 25, 1865)

V.V.; or, Plots and Counterplots
Louisa May Alcott [attributed to A. M. Barnard]
The Flag of Our Union (Feb. 4 – Feb. 25, 1865)

The Curse of Caste; or The Slave Bride
Julia C. Collins
The Christian Recorder (Feb. 25 – Sept. 23, 1865)

A Marble Woman: or, The Mysterious Model
Louisa May Alcott [attributed to A. M. Barnard]
The Flag of Our Union (May 20 – June 10, 1865)

A Nurse's Story
Louisa May Alcott [published anonymously]
Frank Leslie's Chimney Corner (Dec. 2, 1865 – Jan. 6, 1866)

Behind a Mask: or, A Woman's Power
Louisa May Alcott [attributed to A. M. Barnard]
The Flag of Our Union (Oct. 13 – Nov. 3, 1866)

The Freak of a Genius
Louisa May Alcott
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (Oct. 20 – Nov. 17, 1866)

Joscelyn; A Tale of the Revolution
W. Gilmore Simms
The Old Guard (Jan. – Dec. 1867)

The Abbot's Ghost: or, Maurice Treherne's Temptation
Louisa May Alcott [attributed to A. M. Barnard]
The Flag of Our Union (Jan. 5 – Jan. 26, 1867)

Waiting for the Verdict
Rebecca Harding Davis
The Galaxy (Feb. – Dec. 1867)

George Bedillion's Knight
Rebecca Harding Davis
Atlantic Monthly (Feb. – Mar. 1867)

Poor Richard
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (June – Aug. 1867)

Taming a Tartar
Louisa May Alcott [published anonymously]
Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (Nov. 30 – Dec. 21, 1867)

Dallas Galbraith: An American Novel
Rebecca Harding Davis
Lippincott's Magazine (Jan. - Oct. 1868)

Will's Wonder-Book
Louisa May Alcott
Merry's Museum (Apr. – Nov. 1868)

Malbone: An Oldport Romance
Thomas Wentworth Higginson
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – June 1869)

Minnie's Sacrifice
Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
Christian Recorder (May – Sept. 1869)

1870-1879

Oldtime Fireside Stories
Harriet Beecher Stowe
Atlantic Monthly (June – Dec. 1870)

A Day's Pleasure
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (July – Sept. 1870)

Overland

John W. De Forest

The Galaxy (July. 1870 – July 1871)

Pink and White Tyranny

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Old and New (Aug. 1870 – Aug. 1871)

Natasqua

Rebecca Harding Davis

Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1870 – Jan. 1871)

My Wife and I

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Christian Union (Nov. 12, 1870 – Nov. 8, 1871)

Kate Beaumont

John W. De Forest

Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – Dec. 1871)

Morton House

Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]

Appleton's (Mar. 18, 1871 – Oct. 14, 1871)

Their Wedding Journey

William Dean Howells

Atlantic Monthly (July – Dec. 1871)

Watch and Ward

Henry James

Atlantic Monthly (Aug. – Dec. 1871)

Septimus Felton; or, The Elixer of Life

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – Aug. 1872)

Arthur Bonnicastle

Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland

Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1872 – Apr. 1873)

The Wetheral Affair

John W. De Forest

The Galaxy (Dec. 1872 – Oct. 1873)

Work, or Christie's Experiment
Louisa May Alcott
Christian Union (Dec. 1872 - June 1873)

A Chance Acquaintance
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. - June 1873)

Hugh's Vendetta
Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]
Appleton's (Jan. 1 – Jan 25, 1873)

Bressant
Julian Hawthorne
Appleton's (Feb. 15 – May 3, 1873)

Berrytown
Rebecca Harding Davis
Lippincott's Magazine (Apr. – July 1873)

Nina's Atonement
Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]
Appleton's (July 5 – Aug. 9, 1873)

A Daughter of Bohemia
Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]
Appleton's (Oct. 25, 1873 – Apr. 11, 1874)

Earthen Pitchers
Rebecca Harding Davis
Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1873 – Apr. 1874)

We and Our Neighbors
Harriet Beecher Stowe
Christian Union (May 1874 – Apr. 1875)

A Foregone Conclusion
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (July - Dec. 1874)

My Tourmaline
Saxe Holm [Helen Hunt Jackson]
Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1874 – Feb. 1875)

Sevenoaks,
Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland
Scribner's Monthly (Jan. – Dec. 1875)

Hearts and Hands
Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]
Appleton's (Oct. 24 – Dec. 26, 1874)

Eight Cousins
Louisa May Alcott
St. Nicholas (Jan. – Oct. 1875)

Roderick Hudson
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – Dec. 1875)

Garth
Julian Hawthorne
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (June 1875- Dec. 1878)
[There was a significant break in sequence in late 1877]

The Little Joanna
Kamba Thorpe [Elizabeth W. Bellamy]
Appleton's (Aug. 7 – Nov. 30, 1875)

The Land of the Sky; or, Adventures in Mountain By-Ways
Christian Reid
Appleton's (Sept. 4, 1875 – Feb. 12, 1876)

Gabriel Conroy
Bret Harte
Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1875 – Aug. 1876)

The Heirs of the Bodley Estate
Horace E. Scudder
Appleton's (Nov. 20 – Dec. 11, 1875)

Private Theatricals
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (Nov. 1875 – May 1876)
[Published as *Mrs. Farrell* in 1921]

Journey to the Unknown
Julian Hawthorne, pp. 9-12
Appleton's (Jan. 1 – Mar. 25, 1876)

The American
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (June – Dec. 1876)

Sowing and Reaping
Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
Christian Recorder (Aug 1876 – Jan. 1877)

That Lass o' Lowry's
Frances Hodgson Burnett
Scribner's Monthly (Aug. 1876 – May 1877)

Nicholas Minturn
Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland
Scribner's Monthly (Dec. 1876 – Oct. 1877)

A Law Unto Herself
Rebecca Harding Davis
Lippincott's Magazine (July – Dec. 1877)

Under the Lilacs
Louisa May Alcott
St. Nicholas (Dec. 1877 – Oct. 1878)

The Europeans
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (July – Oct. 1878)

Haworth's
Frances Hodgson Burnett
Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1878 – Oct. 1879)

The Lady of Aroostook
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (Nov. 1878 – Mar. 1879)

Confidence
Henry James
Scribner's Monthly (Aug. – Jan. 1879)

The Grandissimes
George Washington Cable
Scribner's Monthly (Nov. 1879 – Oct. 1880)

Jack and Jill
Louisa May Alcott
St. Nicholas (Dec. 1879 – Oct. 1880)

1880-1889

The Undiscovered Country
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – July 1880)

Washington Square
Henry James
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (July – Dec. 1880)

Portrait of a Lady
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (Dec. 1880 – Dec. 1881)

Anne
Constance Fenimore Woolson
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Dec. 1880 – May 1882)

Friends: A Duet
Elizabeth Stuart Phelps
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – July 1881);

A Fair Barbarian
Frances Hodgson Burnett
Scribner's Monthly (Feb. – Mar. 1881)

A Fearful Responsibility
William Dean Howells
Scribner's Monthly (June – July 1881)

Dr. Breen's Practice
William Dean Howells
Atlantic Monthly (Aug. – Dec. 1881)

Through One Administration
Frances Hodgson Burnett
Century (Nov. 1881 – Apr. 1883)

A Modern Instance
William Dean Howells
Century (Dec. 1881 – Oct. 1882)

For the Major
Constance Fenimore Woolson
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Nov. 1882 – Apr. 1883)

A Woman's Reason
William Dean Howells
Century (Feb. – Oct. 1883)

Dr. Zay
Elizabeth Stuart Phelps
Atlantic Monthly (Apr. – Sept 1883)

Armine
Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]
Catholic World (Apr. 1883 – May 1884)

The Breadwinners
John Hays [published anonymously]
Scribner's Monthly (Aug. 1883 – Jan. 1884)

Dr. Sevier
George Washington Cable
The Century (Nov. 1883 – Oct. 1884)

In War Time
S. Weir Mitchell
The Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – Dec 1884)

Lady Barberina
Henry James
The Century Magazine (May 1884 – July 1884)

The Rise of Silas Lapham
William Dean Howells
Century (Nov. 1884 – Aug. 1885)

East Angels
Constance Fenimore Woolson
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Jan. 1885 – May 1886)

A Marsh Island
Sarah Orne Jewett
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – June 1885)

The Bostonians
Henry James
Century (Feb. 1885 – Feb. 1886)

Indian Summer
William Dean Howells
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (July 1885 – Feb. 1886)

The Princess Cassamassima
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (Sept. 1885 – Oct. 1886)

Little Lord Fauntleroy
Francis Hodgson Burnett
St Nicholas (Nov. 1885 – Oct. 1886)

An Adventure with Huckleberry Finn
Mark Twain
Century Magazine (Dec. – Feb. 1885)
[A bowdlerized version]

The Minister's Charge; or The Apprenticeship of Lemuel Barker
William Dean Howells
Century (Feb. – Dec. 1886)

Seth's Brother's Wife
Harold Frederic
Scribner's (Jan. – Nov. 1887)

April Hopes
William Dean Howells
Harper's Monthly (Feb. – Nov. 1887)

Here and There in the South
Rebecca Harding Davis
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (July – Nov. 1887)

The Graysons: A Story of Illinois
Edward Eggleston
Century Magazine (Nov. 1887 – Aug. 1888)

The Aspern Papers
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (Mar. – May 1888)

Annie Kilburn
William Dean Howells
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (June - Nov. 1888)

Jupiter Lights
Constance Fenimore Woolson
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Jan. – Sept. 1889)

The Tragic Muse
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. 1889 - May 1890)

A Hazard of New Fortunes
William Dean Howells
Harper's Weekly (Mar. 23 – Nov. 16, 1889)

1890-1899

In the Valley
Harold Frederic
Scribner's (Sept. – June 1890)

The Shadow of a Dream
William Dean Howells
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (July – Oct. 1891)

An Imperative Duty
William Dean Howells
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (July – Oct. 1891)

The Faith Doctor
Edward Eggleston
Century Magazine (Feb. – Oct. 1891)

Characteristics
S. Weir Mitchell
The Century (Dec. 1891 – July 1892)

The World of Chance
William Dean Howells
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Mar. – Nov. 1892)

Jane Field
Mary E. Wilkins
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Apr. – Nov. 1892)

The Coast of Bohemia
William Dean Howells
Ladies Home Journal (Dec. 1892 – Oct. 1893)

Balcony Stories
Grace King
The Century Magazine (Dec. 1892 – Oct. 1893)

The One I Knew The Best of All; A Memory of the Mind of a Child
Frances Hodgson Burnett
Scribner's Magazine (Jan. – June 1893)

Horace Chase
Constance Fenimore Woolson
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Jan. – Oct. 1893)

The Land of the Sun
Christian Reid [Christine Fisher Tiernan]
Catholic World (Mar. – Sept. 1893)

The Copperhead
Harold Frederic
Scribner's Magazine (July – Nov. 1893)

Pudd'nhead Wilson
Mark Twain
The Century Magazine (Dec. 1893 – June 1894)

John March, Southerner
George Washington Cable
Scribner's Magazine (Jan. 1894 – Dec. 1894)

Pembroke
Mary E. Wilkins
Harper's Weekly (Mar. 10 – Apr. 14, 1894)

The Red Badge of Courage
Steven Crane
Philadelphia Press (Dec. 3 – Dec. 8, 1894)
[A shortened version of the novel]

A Circle in the Water
William Dean Howells
Scribner's Magazine (Mar. – Apr. 1895)

A Singular Life
Elizabeth Stuart Phelps
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – Oct. 1896)

An Open-Eyed Conspiracy
William Dean Howells
Century (July – Oct. 1896)

The Country of the Pointed Firs
Sarah Orne Jewett
Atlantic Monthly (Jan. – Sept. 1896)

The Old Things
Henry James
Atlantic Monthly (Apr. – Oct. 1896);
[Re-titled *The Spoils of Poynton*]

The Landlord at Lion's Head
William Dean Howells
Harper's Weekly (July 4 – Dec. 5, 1896)

Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker
S. Weir Mitchell
The Century (Nov. 1896 – Oct. 1897)

Jerome: A Poor Man
Mary E. Wilkins
Harper's Weekly (Jan. 2 – June 26, 1897)

The Story of a Play
William Dean Howells
Scribner's Magazine (Mar. – Aug. 1897)

The Turn of the Screw
Henry James
Collier's (Jan. – Apr. 1898)

Red Rock
Thomas Nelson Page
Scribner's Magazine (Jan. – Nov. 1898)

The Adventures of Francois
S. Weir Mitchell
The Century (Jan. – Sept. 1898)

The Awkward Age
Henry James
Harper's Weekly (Oct. 1, 1898 – Jan. 7, 1899)

The Marketplace
Harold Frederic
The Saturday Evening Post (Dec. 17, 1898 – June 3, 1899)

Their Silver Wedding Journey
William Dean Howells
Harper's New Monthly Magazine (Jan. – Dec. 1899)

The Gentleman from Indiana
Booth Tarkington
McClure's (May – Oct. 1899)

To Have and to Hold
Mary Johnston
Atlantic Monthly (June 1899- Mar, 1900)
[Temporarily doubled the magazine's circulation]

1900-1909

The Old Jinrikisha
Winnifred Eaton/ Onoto Watanna
Conkey's Home Journal (Feb. – Oct. 1900)

The Stress of Impulse
Maitland Leroy Osborne
Colored American Magazine (Aug. 1900 – Jan. 1901)

The House Behind the Cedars
Charles W. Chesnutt
Self Culture/ Modern Culture (Aug. 1900 – Feb. 1901)
[The magazine title changed in September. The novel was reprinted serially in
The National Domestic in 1905]

Hagar's Daughter: A Story of Southern Caste Prejudice
Pauline Hopkins [appeared under the pseudonym Sarah A. Allen]
Colored American Magazine (Mar. 1901 – Mar. 1902)

The Pit
Frank Norris
Saturday Evening Post (Sept. 20, 1902 – Jan. 31, 1903)

Of One Blood: or, the Hidden Self
Pauline Hopkins [early installments attributed to Sarah A. Allen]
Colored American Magazine (Nov. 1902 – Nov. 1903)

The Ambassadors
Henry James
North American Review (Jan. – Dec. 1903)

Winona: A Tale of Negro Life in the South and Southwest
Pauline Hopkins
Colored American Magazine (May – Oct. 1903)

The Call of the Wild
Jack London
Saturday Evening Post (June 20 – July 18, 1903)

The Sea Wolf
Jack London
The Century Illustrated (Jan. – Apr. 1904)

The House of Mirth
Edith Wharton
Scribner's (Jan. – Nov. 1905)

A Case of Measure for Measure
Gertrude Dorsey Brown
Colored American Magazine (Apr. 1906 – Oct. 1906)

By the Light of the Soul
Mary E. Wilkins
Harper's Weekly (June 9 – Sept. 8, 1906)

The Fruit of the Tree
Edith Wharton
Scribner's Magazine (Jan. – Nov. 1907)

The Diary of Delia
Onoto Watanna [Winnifred Eaton]
Saturday Evening Post (Feb 23 – Mar. 16 1907)

The Black Sleuth
John Edward Bruce
McGirt's Magazine (Aug. 1907 – Sept. 1909)

1910-1919

Ethan Frome

Edith Wharton

Scribner's (Aug. – Oct. 1911)

Alexander's Masquerade

Willa Cather

McClure's Magazine (Feb. – Apr. 1912)

[Re-titled *Alexander's Bridge*]

The Custom of the Country

Edith Wharton

Scribner's (Jan. – Nov. 1913)

Autobiography of an American Jew: The Rise of David Levinsky

Abraham Cahan

McClure's Magazine (Apr. – July, 1913)

The Valley of the Moon

Jack London

Cosmopolitan (Apr. – Dec. 1913)

The Story of Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise

David Graham Phillips

Hearst's Magazine (Jan. 1915 – Jan. 1916)

Marion: The Story of an Artist's Model

Winnifred Eaton [Anonymous; by "the author of *Me*"]

Hearst's Magazine (Apr. – Nov. 1915)

Summer

Edith Wharton

McClure's (Feb. – Aug. 1917)

1920-1929

The Age of Innocence

Edith Wharton

The Pictorial Review (July – Oct. 1920)

The Beautiful and Damned

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Metropolitan Magazine (Sept. 1921 – Mar. 1922)

The Old Maid
Edith Wharton
Redbook (Feb. – Apr. 1922)

Glimpses of the Moon
Edith Wharton
The Pictorial Review (May – Aug. 1922)

Butterfly
Kathleen Norris
Pictorial Review (Nov. 1922 – Feb. 1923)

A Son at the Front
Edith Wharton
Scribner's Magazine (Dec. 1922 – Sept. 1923)

A Lost Lady
Willa Cather
Century (Apr. – June 1923)

The Mother's Recompense
Edith Wharton
The Pictorial Review (Oct. 1924 – Feb. 1925)

The Professor's House
Willa Cather
Collier's (June 6 – Aug. 1, 1925)

Mantrap
Sinclair Lewis
Collier's (Feb. – May 1926)

Show Boat
Edna Ferber
Woman's Home Companion (Apr. – Sept 1926)

Death Comes for the Archbishop
Willa Cather
The Forum (Jan. – June 1927)

The Canary Murder Case
S.S. Van Dine [Willard Huntington Wright]
Scribner's Magazine (May – Aug. 1927)

Claire Ambler
Booth Tarkington
Ladies Home Journal (Sept. 1927 – Jan. 28)

Poisonville
Dashielle Hammet
Black Mask (Nov. 1927 – Feb. 1928)
[Four installments had individual titles; Re-titled *Red Harvest*]

The Greene Murder Case
S.S. Van Dine
Scribner's Magazine (Jan 1928 – Apr. 1928)

The Children
Edith Wharton
Pictorial Review (Apr. – July 1928)

Hudson River Bracketed
Edith Wharton
Delineator (Sept. 1928 – Feb. 1930)

The Dain Curse
Dashielle Hammet
Black Mask (Nov. 1928 – Feb. 1929)
[Installments given separate titles]

A Farewell to Arms
Ernest Hemingway
Scribner's Magazine (May – Oct. 1929)

The Maltese Falcon
Dashiell Hammet
Black Mask (Sept. 1929 – Jan. 1930)

The Cimarron
Edna Ferber
Woman's Home Companion (Dec. 1929 – May 1930)

1930-1939

The Glass Key
Dashiell Hammet
Black Mask (Mar. – June , 1930)

Fu Manchu's Daughter
Sax Rohmer [Arthur Sarsfield Wade]
Collier's (Mar. 8 – May 24, 1930)

Mirthful Haven
Booth Tarkington
Saturday Evening Post (May 31 – July 12, 1931)

High Summer
Booth Tarkington
American Magazine (June – Oct. 1931)

The Gods Arrive
Edith Wharton
Delineator (Feb. – Aug. 1932)
[A sequel to *Hudson River Bracketed*; rejected for serial publication by *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Liberty*, and *Collier's* because it features an unmarried couple living together.]

Mask of Fu Manchu
Sax Rohmer [Arthur Sarsfield Wade]
Collier's (May 7 – July 23, 1932)

Three Women
Willa Cather
Ladies' Home Journal (Sept. – Nov. 1932)
[Re-titled *Old Mrs. Harris*]

Presenting Lily Mars
Booth Tarkington
The Saturday Evening Post (Oct. 8 – Nov. 26, 1932)

Fu Manchu's Bride
Sax Rohmer [Arthur Sarsfield Wade]
Collier's (May 13 – July 8, 1933)

Tender is the Night
F. Scott Fitzgerald
Scribner's Magazine (Jan. – Apr. 1934)

Rennie Peddigo
Booth Tarkington
Woman's Home Companion (Dec. 1934 – Apr. 1935)

Now and Forever

Pearl S. Buck

Woman's Home Companion (Nov. 1935 – Mar. 1936)

Exile

Pearl S. Buck

Woman's Home Companion (Nov. 1936 – Mar. 1937)

This Proud Heart

Pearl S. Buck

Good Housekeeping (Oct. 1937 – Feb. 1938)

1940-1949

Man of the Family

Booth Tarkington

The Saturday Evening Post (Nov. 9 – Dec. 21, 1940)

China Sky

Pearl S. Buck

Collier's (Feb. – Apr. 1941)

China Gold

Pearl S. Buck

Collier's (Feb. – Apr. 1942)

Shadow of Fu Manchu

Sax Rohmer (Arthur Sarsfield Wade)

Collier's (May 8 – June 12, 1948)

1950-1959

Across the River and Into the Trees

Ernest Hemingway

Cosmopolitan (Feb. - June. 1950)

Giant

Edna Ferber

Ladies Home Journal (July. – Nov. 1952)

Fountains Overflow

Rebecca West

Ladies Home Journal (Aug. – Nov. 1956)

1960- 1969

Dangerous Summer

Ernest Hemingway

Life Magazine (Sept. 5 – Sept. 19, 1960)

American Dream

Norman Mailer

Esquire (Aug. – Mar. 1965)

1970-1979

The Executioner's Song

Norman Mailer

Playboy (Oct. – Dec. 1979)

1980- 1989

Bonfire of the Vanities

Tom Wolfe

Rolling Stone Magazine (July 18 1984 – Aug. 29, 1985)

1990-1999

Streets of Fire

Soledad Santiago

New York Newsday (ca. Mar. – June 12, 1999)

2000- 2007

Comfort to the Enemy

Elmore Leonard

The New York Times Magazine (Sept. 18 – Dec. 18, 2005)

At Risk

Patricia Cornwell

The New York Times Magazine (Jan. 8 – Apr. 16, 2006)

The Unbinding

Walter Kirn

Slate (Mar. – June, 2006)

Limitations

Scott Turow

The New York Times Magazine (Apr. 23 – Aug. 6, 2006)

Happyland
Robert Lennon
Harper's Magazine (July – Nov. 2006)

The Overlook
Michael Connelly
The New York Times Magazine (Sept. 17, 2006 – Jan. 21, 2007)

Gentlemen of the Road
Michael Chabon
The New York Times Magazine (Jan. 28 – May 6, 2007)

Doors Open
Ian Rankin
The New York Times Magazine (May 13 , 2007 – to date)

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