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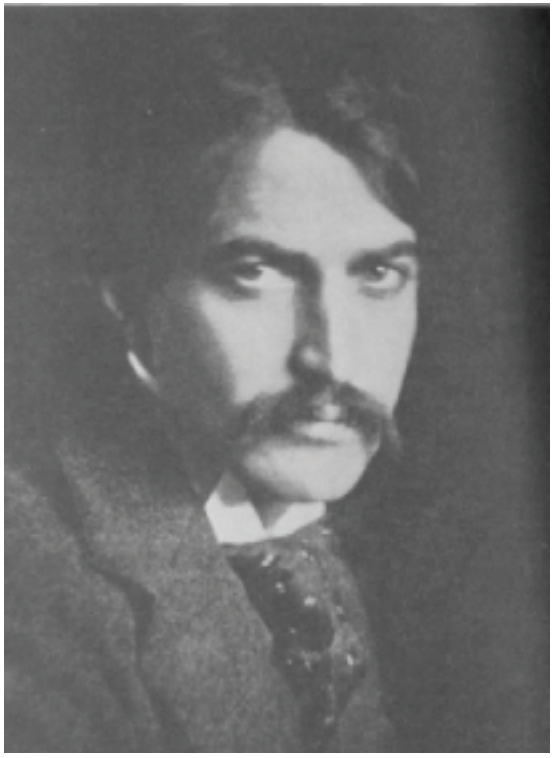

Stephen Crane Society

Stephen Crane Studies

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While addiction maintains a consistent presence throughout the American literary tradition, during the temperance movement's postbellum resurgence the addict's desire-without-limits provided literary naturalists the perfect aesthetic model for the new American century, addiction as what John Crowley terms "the sign of modernity itself" (18). American naturalist writers disdained sentimentalism and for those examining the human condition in the neurasthenic society of late nineteenth-century America, there was little room for the moralism and melodrama of the sentimental novel, a form Frank Norris suggested should be "handed down the scullery stairs" (1165). Norris' commentary notwithstanding, temperance literature significantly influenced American literary naturalism and these genre's intersectionality demonstrates a crucial link connecting literary naturalism to the American sentimental tradition.

I examine the relationship between naturalism and sentimentalism by placing Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1893) in conversation with E. M. Whittemore's contemporaneous temperance narrative *Delia: The Blue-Bird of Mulberry Bend* (1893). Rather than arguing for a direct influence of Whittemore's text upon Crane's, as I have not uncovered any such evidence, I instead argue that these two works, each discursively engaging a culture of social abandonment, mutually reinforce one another at the moment of their co-emergence. I consider how these texts, one a realist novella and the other a temperance biography, coordinate the public's recognition of social ills and I further address two aesthetic issues. The first is Crane's configuration of a negative ecology, a diegetic world that presents a hopelessly consumptive and self-negating environment. The second feature that I discuss is the use and effect of what I term an

aesthetic of (dis)integration, the representation of life at the very point of its destruction that serves to integrate and align publics and does so here across literary realist and temperance genres.

Temperance literature and American literary realism helped generate a print culture whose readers, regardless of their ideological positions, participated in the realities of social crisis through texts that were entertainment commodities. The ways temperance literature and realist fiction, the one purportedly real and the other realist, coordinated cultural narratives about poverty and addiction tells us much about realist strategies for mapping the actual as well as the limits of these representational practices to both document experience and motivate social change. While temperance literature is oversaturated with tales of young women seduced by libertines and led to death by vice, and Crane no doubt benefitted from these sources, the story of Delia Loughlin and the illicit society in which she traffics conflates with Crane's *Maggie* in ways that turn on the sentimental to reveal the morally barren and physically brutal society of the lower classes in late nineteenth-century New York.

While the addict's place in literary culture suggests a heightened awareness of addiction as a social problem, it also indicates a social crisis' marketability. Addiction, consumerism, and an expanding national press align at the turn-of-the-century when an increasingly synchronous communications network allowed for the rapid proliferation of crisis narratives vis-a-vis the yellow press.[1] At the same time, changing beliefs about addiction and laws aimed at curtailing drug abuse in the United States redefined the addict's identity. In time, first with the passage of the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act and later following the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914, courts increasingly conceived of the addict as either a juridical or volitional type.[2]

Formerly productive citizens overcome by addiction are what Timothy Hickman refers to as juridicial addicts, individuals who became "addicted by the conditions of a changing world" (10) and the modifications of laws in their lifetime that criminalized previously noncriminal behavior. Conversely, addiction was largely considered volitional and a matter of

choice for those of the lower classes and non-whites. Volitional addicts abused alcohol and drugs in spite of the fact that they "were supposedly free of the commercial and cultural strains of modern life" (Hickman 10) and, so, lacked an excuse for their behavior. The juridicial addict, who quickly found herself addicted to now illegal drugs, often became a patient while the volitional addict, whose habits would appear to supersede these legal modifications, became a criminal. As such, the population of who could be defined as an addict grew to encompass urban toughs, mid-western housewives, and military veterans.[3]

Just as the juridicial addict helped build a healthcare industry and the volitional addict the business of criminal justice, drug abusers and alcoholics inhabited a literature and literary culture where the sentimental and sensational competed for the serious-minded reformer and vicarious thrill seeker alike.[4] Activists like Jerry McAuley and Samuel H. Hadley delivered the temperance gospel to the New York missions and through the temperance press funneled their stories of inebriety and redemption to thousands more. Temperance stage-plays and performances, as John W. Frick writes, helped exhibit temperance's didactic rhetoric in popular culture and from temperance anthologies to revival auditories the temperance question leveraged addiction to build reform communities.[5]

E. M. Whittemore's *Delia* takes up the crisis of women's intemperance through the life of Delia Loughlin, a notorious figure and a known criminal, prostitute, habitual opium user, and alcoholic, imprisoned on at least six occasions in facilities on Blackwell's Island and in Brooklyn. Loughlin's biographer and mentor, Emma Whittemore, often referred to as Mother Whittemore, was an upper-class Evangelical convert, whose spiritual awakening came after witnessing a reform sermon by Jerry McAuley, one of the leading figures in New York City's temperance movement.[6] Whittemore quickly became known throughout the temperance circles of New York City, engaged in social work and outreach, and in 1890 founded the Door of Hope for Fallen Girls.

Delia Loughlin's narrative, written by Whittemore,

privileges Loughlin's life and transformation, but also emphasizes Whittemore's relationship with Loughlin, who was categorical proof of Whittemore's efficacious reform efforts and an early resident at the Door of Hope. Whittemore catalogs certain of Loughlin's early trials by implication, noting that "through the subtle administering of a powerful drug by one regarded as a friend, she was, in a great measure, forced into a life which she soon learned to despise" (9). The passage indicates that Loughlin likely engaged in an opium habit early on, but prior to her addictions Loughlin was an orphaned child, raised in a convent, and at the age of seventeen became enamored with an "unscrupulous" suitor. While not explicit, it is implied that Loughlin's paramour first introduced her to drugs. After Loughlin's abandonment by her lover, she flees the city where "[a] few months of misery followed, never to be forgotten, when, one day, a greater sorrow than all came into her life, and, having none to counsel with, she soon became desperate" (Whittemore 11). While the source of this "greater sorrow" is never clearly stated, it seems likely enough that Loughlin's desperation was that of a young woman abandoned in her pregnancy. Following an indeterminate period of difficulties, Loughlin eventually resorts to drink, opium, thievery, and prostitution.

The fallen-woman trope is fundamental to the sentimental tradition and the early American conduct tract, but temperance literature emphasizes moral and material deprivations in ways sentimental literature tends to not. The temperance narrative relies on its claims to authenticity and the degree to which it can capture and convincingly represent human subjects appropriate to their environment. By her own admission, Whittemore's transformation was as much about her ability to see dignity in the inebriates and denizens of the streets that she had formerly derided, as it was about coming into a closer relationship with Christ. This authenticity was not solely rhetorical, and social action that ameliorated the suffering of others showed it to be true. While poverty tourism or slumming was probably less common than is generally thought, the reformer's authenticity and placement within communities of vice, as was the case for

McAuley, was central to reform efforts. Whittemore's situating of herself within the narrative of Loughlin's restoration underscores this importance.

Loughlin's renewal occurs in a moment of religious ecstasy when Whittemore gives her a rose in a basement tavern. As Whittemore looks upon Loughlin's abused visage, she suggests that a divine presence looks upon it too, a moment metonymically linked to religious inspiration compressed in the image of poverty and abuse:

> I looked upon her poor, bruised face, with those ugly black marks under her eyes, I saw a bad cut on the forehead, and that part of her hair had actually been pulled out by the roots, while the side of her ear showed another bad scar, from a former fight, as she afterward explained. The remainder of her hair was hanging loosely down the back, over a dirty blue cotton dress. (Whittemore 17) [7]

Whittemore's description of Loughlin as a battered rogue contrasts Loughlin's pre- and post-conversion physicality.[8] The inebriate's strategic visuality, and in Loughlin's case, a female inebriate at that, produces a panoply of incommensurate emotions: revulsion at the sight of the addict, compassion, and exhilaration at the potential for physical and spiritual restoration.[9]

Once converted, Loughlin affects change by working within her community. When she proselytizes to her old gang, they are "blear-eyed, bruised and battered" and "strangely stamped by sin" (Whittemore 42). Whittemore's focus here is on the women of the crowd and not the men, whom she suggests she "had better not describe" (42). Whittemore surveys pained and brutalized women and actively produces a voyeuristic frame, detailing social abjection to give dimension to the social crisis of the poor: "One wretched specimen of a woman, with an eye out, her hair flying in all directions, stood listening in respectful silence, while down her cheek could be seen signs of tears on one side of her poor face. Another, literally covered with rags, had, through a dreadful fight, broken her nose, and yet she stood and stood, taking in all that was said" (Whittemore 42). The degenerated

lives Whittemore surveys give the sense that their suffering is part of an undifferentiated mass, a human geography of abandonment and abuse, from which one can only obtain individuality through conversion and temperance.[10]

Moreover, Whittemore's *Delia* is a text written by women, about women, and for women. "[Y]ou know when a woman is down," writes Whittemore, "she's down, and she is even cast out by her own, and she is lower, as the saying goes, than a man could ever be" (60). Compellingly, Whittemore's Delia never relapses, a feature that runs counter to an aspect common in temperance narratives and cycles of addiction more generally. The story itself is also non-linear and pivots from Loughlin's conversion, missionary work, and death to return the reader to Loughlin's missionary experience. This structural movement implicates Loughlin as a Christ-like figure whose death is memorialized on the cross and then again in the resurrection at his tomb. At one point, Loughlin, writing about her conversion, is quoted as saying, "No; praise God, Delia died, was crucified, and, as Jesus was risen, so is she in newness of life" (48).

During the first death scene, Loughlin, addressing Whittemore, exclaims "'O mother dear, He's given me something!'" and explains that "'I couldn't sleep last night, so spent hour after hour in prayer and waiting upon God, and just asked Him to give me a birthday gift in a message, and He gave me this: 'Chosen and sealed unto the Lord,' and, giving my hand a tight pressure, she added, 'O, isn't it beautiful?'" Quite literally, Loughlin's assertion is that God provided her a message, a text really, that Whittemore has "cut out in large letters, and hung over her bed!" (74-75). The scene suggests that just as a religious devotee might consider the Bible a divinely inspired text, so too does the word of God animate the convert, whose narrative here is reproduced as *Delia; The Blue-Bird of Mulberry Bend*.

Of this divinely inspired message, Whittemore writes "[h]ow she loved to gaze up at it! Just before entering into the presence of God, her eyes rested upon the text, and when asked if she felt then as if she was truly chosen and sealed unto the Lord, though past speech, her face was illumined with expectant glory, and

she bowed her head in assent with a smile of joy. A few moments later she entered into the reality of it all" (74-75). Not only does Whittemore portray Loughlin as receiving divine language upon her death, but because of Loughlin's conversion and temperance she receives a merciful end. During the second death scene, Whittemore helps to prepare Loughlin's body, noting that "I had often been told by human lips how scarred her body was from cuts, bruises and stab wounds, but I could hardly imagine it could be so marked" (98). Whittemore determines the abuses Loughlin suffered throughout her life as markers of her grace and the violations to her body provide evidence of her chosen status. "I saw the scars and cruel marks of her former life, until I thought how Christ had branded her, as it were, with His own marks of glory, and that through the ages to come the former ones would be lost sight of forever, while His would remain to tell the story of redeeming love for even one such as she" (Whittemore 98). Through detailing Loughlin's physicality and scarred body after her death, Whittemore's narrative crucially intertwines corporeality and language, exposing realism's narratological primacy in the construction of the temperance public.

Amy Kaplan describes realism as "constructing a society which appears more interdependent and interconnected than ever before while the connections between people appear more invisible and elusive" (43). I might add that realism constructs linearity through sequentiality and cohesion by way of fragmentation. Realism's subjective interconnectivity is only ever representational objectivity. Realism can never really live up to its claims, but sometimes in its thrust to capture moments of pivotal crisis, what I term (dis)integration, realism acutely demonstrates the ecological connectivity coordinating self, society, and environment. At the turn-of-the-century, and as realists strove to "construct a social world out of the raw materials of unreality, conflict, and change" (Kaplan 14), realist depictions of addiction demonstrated material ruin to refract the social inequalities and traumas dissipating the addicted self.

By the time U.S. naturalism develops, the addicts these later realists represent are largely evacuated of their Christian temper. Naturalists like Crane adopted temperance literature's

hard-boiled sentimentalism and inverted the conversion trope to focus instead on addiction's terminality. Biological and social forces, and not spiritual ones, prey upon the would-be addict, manipulating her desires within the exigencies of environment.[11] Naturalism subverts temperance rhetoric and the faith-based culture of recovery it promotes, overexposing human suffering while refusing idealized resolutions. The naturalist's living-dead, as Crane's *Maggie* suggests, do not resuscitate, but remain in their final destroyed forms, a rhetorical subversion that makes any authentic transformation a tenuous proposition at best.

Donald Pizer's foundational criticism on *Maggie* argues that Crane principally formulates the slums as an ideological space less "about the slums as a physical reality" (169) than they are a social "battlefield" and "prison" where the "key to the morality of the Bowery is . . . its self-deceiving theatricality" (171).[12] There is without doubt an implicit performance to Crane's text, but the conditions facing both Loughlin and Maggie represent real socioeconomic barriers and the slum's rhetorical production reveals the convergence of violent social forces. When Maggie's older brother, Jimmie, sneaks past his mother who is passed out on the floor of the Johnson's apartment, Crane notes how her "great chest was heaving painfully" and "face was inflamed and swollen from drinking" (18). The ravages of intoxication and domestic violence have incapacitated the mother, while Maggie, "the ragged girl . . . haggard from weeping" (Crane 19), looks on from a corner.

The vision of two children terrified of their inebriate guardian's rampages and huddling for safety in the corner of a room expresses vile social conditions that, as Pizer suggests, perpetuate both Jimmie and Maggie's imprisonment. Within the shabby confines of the Johnson's apartment, one traumatic experience stacks atop the next. These negativities saturate the Johnson kids, defining the scope of their emotivity while configuring Jimmie as a youth of perpetual distrust and rage and Maggie forever descending into a desire for security that can never be met. The ecology of the home animates the poverty, violence, and inebriety of the slum such that psychological, social, and environmental conditions reinforce one another, blurring

public and private space within a negative ecology.

Delia Loughlin provides Whittemore with just such a case study. The constellation of familial abandonment and youthful seduction leads Loughlin to addiction, prostitution, and a descent into criminality. Save for addiction, Maggie Johnson's destruction is framed by similar circumstances, but from here the two characters diverge. Delia Loughlin attains real transformation through spiritual awakening and material intervention. Maggie Johnson does not. Certainly, Crane and Whittemore represent the hard actualities of urban poverty and addiction and, to varying degrees, each writer privileges the trope of lost womanhood while constructing their female protagonists as social innocents. Whittemore and Crane also appear to share the thesis that profane environments psychologically, physically, and spiritually disintegrate their subjects. Despite these rhetorical similarities, the two writers plainly enough depart from one another in their positions on ameliorative action.

Whittemore's work is didactic, calls upon sentimentality to motivate the reformer, and emphasizes direct religious intervention as a means to restore fallen women. Crane dismisses religious intervention as superficial, a position evident in Maggie's encounter with the minister who shuns her on the streets to save "his respectability" (69). Crane takes the good-hearted maiden and brutalizes her before the reader's eyes, and, as Paul Sorrentino writes, "[u]nlike the popular sentimental fiction of the day, *Maggie* does not offer Christianity as a haven from a war-torn jungle. At its best, Christian practice is ineffectual; at its worst, hypocritical. The poor are shunned by the wealthy and condemned as sinners by preachers. Throughout, characters mask their hypocrisy with the appearance of respectability" (108).[13] Crane's *Maggie* transgresses sentimentalism, and he uses narrative as a means to hold social violence up to the light of public recognition. Crane attacks social fantasies and exposes people who project the identities that best satisfy their social obligations as harboring, beneath the surface of normative gestures and niceties, desires at odds with social ideals. Still, even as Crane dismantles sentimental conventions, among true

reformers, as Eoin F. Cannon writes, "it is skeptical realism that represents conventional thought, while their belief in the prostitute's potential for reform constitutes new thinking" (35).

Familial abandonment and social dysfunction precipitate addiction and the addiction subculture that drive Maggie and Loughlin alike to poverty, prostitution, and an early death. However, Maggie is not permitted the sentimental politics that brought Delia to Mother Whittemore's guardianship. Instead, Maggie's abusive mother throws her out after she learns of Maggie's relationship with Pete, a saloonkeeper, and further refuses to provide her shelter when Maggie comes begging to return. The same stigma of fallen womanhood that harries Maggie Johnson compels the bonds of womanhood so central to Whittemore and the Door of Hope mission. Maggie's fantasy of a better life and the reform society that delivers Loughlin sanctuary are each facets of the social ecology that constructs the environment of the poor.[14]

Despite these narrative disjunctures, what remains apparent is the manner in which Crane and, perhaps more empathetically, Whittemore depict the viciousness of the inebriate and the poor. Maggie's purity, like that of Loughlin's, is realized, albeit somewhat condescendingly, in her comparison to a flower, a symbol also made clear in Delia. "The girl, Maggie," writes Crane, "blossomed in a mud puddle" and "grew to be a most rare and wonderful production of a tenement district, a pretty girl" (24). Even when Maggie's infant brother, Tommie, dies, his wake indexes the flower. "He went away in a white, insignificant coffin, his small waxen hand clutching a flower that the girl, Maggie, had stolen from an Italian" (Crane 20). Delia's flower, which is suggestive of divine intercession and the spirit of the Virgin Mother, in Crane's hands is an object signifying societal naïveté and death, and not the street-wise persona we assume such an environment would generate. While Maggie-as-flower gestures towards the possibility of Maggie one day transcending the slums, hers remains a death flower that undercuts sentimental formulas and lays bare the outcomes of those that will not be saved.

Similar to Loughlin's early experiences, men and an androcentric social order define the parameters of Maggie Johnson's social experience. Jimmie, Maggie's brother and by far her most resolute male support, is still a young man "dreaming blood-red dreams at the passing of pretty women" and who "menaced mankind at the intersections of streets" (Crane 20). A drunk and a philanderer, Jimmie whiles away the hours in saloons because he recognizes his world as one where masculine desire corrupts nurturing and restorative feminine attitudes. After all, "on a certain star-lit evening," Jimmie once said, "wonderingly and quite reverently: 'Deh moon'" that ancient symbol of woman, "'looks like hell, don't it?'" (Crane 23). It simply doesn't seem to matter whether one turns to celestial bodies, city streets, or maternal figures; everything in the diegetic space vitalizes a negative ecology characterized by androcentric consumption.

Negative ecology is a term that conveys the socioeconomic and political engineering of discrete ecologies made hazardous by the routine extraction of the material resources and vitality of the human populations existing within them. I am not suggesting that a negative ecology is without hope, simply that a negative ecology entraps its subjects and reproduces a cycle of environmental degradation and social oppression. Negative ecology expresses disintegration and attention to these patterns and their representations, in which human experience and environment demonstrate a shared diegesis, helps bring eco-social problems to light. Through exposure and analysis negative ecologies can undergo re-narrativization and the disintegrative aura exuded in material decay and human precarity disclose the rhetorical and material conditions producing social crises.

Much like Loughlin's narrative, Maggie seeks respite from the oppressions of home and poverty through a relationship with a man who inevitably cares little for her aspirations to a normative life. Pete, the saloonkeeper and local tough, essentially defines Maggie's sexuality for her by virtue of the gendered power disparity instantiated by his ability to take what he wants, specifically her sex, and then abandon her as it suits him. Loughlin too, although she becomes a hardened criminal on the

streets of New York, is made vulnerable by virtue of her desire to gain station through marriage. Denied the cultural model of true womanhood, both sink further into despair and intemperance. Such plot conventions evoke sentimental politics because male desires actualize the narrative of the fallen woman that in turn generates the pervasive threat of social failure.

In *The Female Complaint*, Lauren Berlant writes that "the emotional labor of women places them at the center of the story of what counts as life" (20) and Maggie's trials, which force her into the configuration of an object by each and every man she encounters, effectively conjure masculinity as a force that seeks to occupy and dismantle the feminine center, producing its authority in direct relation to women's degradation. When Pete takes Maggie out on the town among the immodest women and prostitutes, a displaced male desire projects the anticipations of the brothel onto Maggie: "Grey-headed men, wonderfully pathetic in their dissipation, stared at her through clouds. Smooth-cheeked boys, some of them with faces of stone and mouths of sin, not nearly so pathetic as the grey heads, tried to find the girl's eyes in the smoke wreaths" (Crane 53). Maggie is effectively put up for show and, against her will, materialized as a prostitute. What does society do with a young woman abandoned by family and driven to prostitution? Nothing is Crane's bleak rejoinder. He implicates society-at-large as the voyeuristic culprit. Rather than provide a tidy resolution, Crane forces his reader to ask why a young woman should come to such an end.

The slum's environment is where dissipation and salvation struggle to outdo one another, but temperance literature resists deterministic social logics and figures like Loughlin directly challenge the cyclicality of naturalized social oppression. If men and women could recover within the slum, then communal partnership demonstrated that the slum was an impermanent environment capable of positive transformation. Robert M. Myers suggests that Crane responds to the environmentalist concerns of the period, split between negative environmentalists who "focused on eradicating the evils of the slums, especially

prostitution and alcohol" and positive environmentalists who "pursued tenement reform, city planning, and the construction of parks and playgrounds as ways to inculcate virtue among the poor by improving their environment" (191). The social responses and civic initiatives Myers details demonstrate the nuanced environmentalism of the period and the significant weight that many reformers attributed to material change. Crane's environmental determinism speaks to a far more negative ecology and yet, as I argue, there is value here to social ecological thought.

Crane's negative ecology reveals a disintegrative cycle. His depictions of the abused Johnson kids and Maggie's adult collapse are, for Crane, the natural outcomes of a very specific social order. While provocative, Crane's images are no starker than Whittemore's descriptions of a bruised and world-worn Delia Loughlin. Each character, the one fictional and the other not, fall into a shared world of dissipation, sexual abuse, and death. Their realities demonstrate the hard actualities at play and while Loughlin's conversion is the result of her encounter with Whittemore, no such intercession is afforded Maggie. Clearly enough, romanticized womanhood and sentimental politics find their limits, if not outright disavowal, in Crane's Maggie, but that does not mean that Crane devalues Maggie's social worth. As Christopher Benfey writes, "Maggie herself is the dominant maternal presence in the novel, and the figure upon whom Crane's own feelings and yearnings crystallize" (71). Maggie, unlike her street-toughened inebriate mother and the pre-conversion Delia Loughlin, is virtuous and caring. What is clear is that Maggie's purity, chastity, and innocence are ideological categories and performativities apparently incommensurate with the sociology of the poor.

Crane's *Maggie* defaces the sentimental plot and uses Maggie, the romanticized girl, to undo romantic conventions, but even as Crane performs his aesthetic task he works less with the actualities of urban poverty than his own fantasy of it. Crane, as George Monteiro writes, "adopted the temperance workers' familiar paradigms, twisting and turning them so as to

accommodate his view of reality" (34). Having developed a rough draft of *Maggie* while in Syracuse, Crane proceeded to hone his text after his move to New York, and, as Benfey suggests,"[w]hat urban texture the novel manages to muster is borrowed from Riis and from Methodist tracts about the evils of the modern city" (63). Necessarily, Maggie is an imagined figure and one drawn less from the experiences of women like Delia Loughlin than she is from the sentimental temperance tracts Crane's mother, Mary Helen Peck Crane, a reform activist and member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, likely familiarized him with at an early age. It is Crane's imagining of social violence, his fantasy, that motivates his investigative attitude and draws him to research the lives of the poor in New York City and it is here that we see Crane's efforts directly challenge his father's ideas about literary fiction.

Citing an essay Jonathan Townley Crane published while at New Jersey College, "The Fiction of Our Popular Magazines," Sorrentino suggests the elder Crane saw sentimental and romantic fiction as that which "misled naive readers into confusing their own mundane lives with those of heroes and heroines in melodramatic adventures" (22).[15] Doubling down on the same argument some twenty-six years later in *Popular Amusements* (1869), the elder Crane writes that

> [t]he man who has tampered with some intoxicating drug until an artificial want, a new, imperious appetite, has been created, is on the road to ruin, so they have already done themselves a fearful wrong who have indulged in the intoxications of fiction, until they are restless and unsatisfied without it, an unostentatious every-day life, such as belongs to the vast majority of mortals, seems tame, dull, void of interest. (129-30)

Importantly, when Jonathan Crane aligns addiction with popular fiction, he defines them as modern social issues, and, particularly in his view of addiction, joins the majority opinion in viewing addiction as a modern disease. More closely linking alcohol and drug abuse to fiction's intoxicating effect, Jonathan

Crane writes that

> [t]he victim of drugs does not love opium or alcohol because of its taste or smell. The effect which he covets is, in truth, a mental effect. He resorts to the drug that he may feel rich, powerful, exalted, and happy, while, in reality, he is 'wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' The victim of novels aims at the same thing in another way, by applying the bane directly to the mind itself. (143)

Jonathan Crane sees fiction reading as a crisis of imagination that supplements real life with the fictive. He suggests that all too often the reader over identifies with the subject and so loses track of his identity, the same threat to traditional communities often attributed to modern socioeconomic and technological change. As Crane suggests, "[t]he whole thing becomes so far a reality that it has something of the force of a genuine experience; and he feels happy, or grows melancholy with the varying futures of his imaginary passion" (140). Fiction, it would seem, seduces the mind like a drug. Conversely, Stephen Crane's work suggests that it is this very radical overdetermination that is needed to jolt society out of its complacency and re-evaluate its beliefs.

Considering Jonathan Crane's sanctions against vice and popular fiction, and the many hardships the Crane family endured following his death, it is no wonder that Stephen Crane rebelled against his deceased father's conservatism. But in other ways, and certainly as Maggie makes evident, Stephen Crane's representations of inebriety cohere with his father's vision of alcohol's social threat. When, in *Arts of Intoxication* (1870), Jonathan Crane asserts that "[u]nder the bewildering power of this baneful drug the bad become worse, the cruel more cruel, the sensual grow brutish, and those who might otherwise maintain their integrity fall an easy prey to the tempter" (165) we get the sense of alcohol's power to deteriorate its user and morph one into a social deviant.[16] Unlike his father, Stephen Crane did not care for overt moralism. He believed literary art played a higher role, a means to imagine social conflict and provoke real ideological and material change.

Maggie, unlike Loughlin, does not die among friends and

family anticipating heaven and at peace with the world. Maggie is devoured, homeless, penniless, and prostituting herself in the New York night, a sequence reinforcing the consumptive economy dominating the novel: "She went into the blackness of the final block. The shutters of the tall buildings were closed like grim lips. The structures seemed to have eyes that looked over her, beyond her, at other things. Afar off the lights of the avenues glittered as if from an impossible distance" (Crane 72). What Sydney J. Krause identifies as the enmeshment of the human and non-human, "[s]huttered buildings, glistening avenues and streetcar bells become symbols of an ironic vitality, life without the living" (255), is the surreal and dehumanizing diegetic space that amalgamates the psychic, social, and environmental to affect Maggie's disintegration. It is negative ecology that animates Maggie's descent and reinforces the human and environmental co-extension from which she can never escape because it is this destructive and socially engineered ecology to which she belongs.

In thinking through the disintegrative conditions Crane sets in motion, Michael Fried's critique of Crane's "powers of defamiliarization" (93) is useful. Fried identifies tendencies of miniaturization (shifts in scale and perception) and monstrosity as two features that seem to reiterate in Crane's aesthetic. For Fried, Crane's "monstrosity" is apparent in the gigantic forms threats sometimes take, as in the fat man preying upon Maggie at the novel's close. Crane's New York becomes an animated colossus, a god made of brick and steel and glass that remains not only unmoved, but oblivious to Maggie's plight. Its monumental sublimity only gives perspective to Maggie's insignificance as she is turned-out to a culture of unmitigated and cruel desire. Emerging from this monstrosity is the corpulence and greed of the city made flesh, the john whose "whole body gently quivered and shook like that of a dead jelly fish" and who "[c]huckling and leering . . . followed the girl of the crimson legions" (Crane 72). It is here, in Maggie's prone state, exhausted and hungry, that she succumbs to a man that is gluttony personified. "At their feet the river appeared a deathly black hue. Some hidden factory sent up a yellow glare, that lit for a moment the waters lapping

oilily against timbers. The varied sounds of life, made joyous by distance and seeming unapproachableness, came faintly and died away to a silence" (Crane 72). Everything here, from the black passages to the deathly waters, implies that this is the night of Maggie's death at the hands of a pig-like monstrosity, who, for all his inhumanity, is ultimately just a man.

For Crane and Whittemore alike, environmental materiality is co-extensive with social fantasy, and the imagined world is made real through its structural production. The slum's negative ecology requires Maggie and her inebriate kin because, though thoroughly disempowered, they actively generate the ideological and structural forces needed to control and contain them. The Johnsons provide tangible evidence that sobriety, hard work, and fidelity to one's family and employer are practices that create the social space differentiating productive citizenry from the lower class. That is to say that social stability can be measured relative to the Johnsons' instability. If people like Delia Loughlin and the Johnson family provide the reason for reform, then we should consider the negative ecologies in which they exist as not hovering at the periphery of American political life, but at the very center. After all, it is the use and abuse of the Maggies of the world that Crane suggests determines societal ethics and values.

Despite temperance reform's faith-based and socially unifying message, social survival remains an aleatory outcome. Chance, and not divine providence, positions Whittemore and Loughlin in the barroom together. In this regard, Crane's bleak narrative is an invaluable secular counter to faith-based positions even as it drives home the stark brutalities that reformers put to use among the public. Both Maggie and Delia Loughlin are trapped within social systems contextualized by despair, poverty, and violence, but the degree to which either experiences social agency seems largely dependent upon the gendered construction of the communities in which they exist. Loughlin, although she eventually succumbs to a health issue likely exacerbated by her years of inebriety, gains agency through a temperance subculture that to varying degrees empowers women. Maggie is not afforded such an opportunity, and her narrative of violence and violation

is only ever a reality produced by men in which she appears but an incidental subject.

Hollowed out and deprived of her womanhood, Maggie dies a vessel for men's animus and desire. Psychologically tormenting, socially predatory, and environmentally despoiled, Maggie's world ceaselessly moves in one economically self-cannibalizing direction, discursively returning upon itself to devour the parts most exhausted and which fuel its negative ecology. Importantly, Maggie's death forecloses her social future, but not all social futures. Crane confronts the reader with trauma's irreconcilability, and his antithetical resolution provides the undetermined space permitting the reader's authorship within the imaginary. The space of the predatory world remains exposed, if not primed, for reinvention. Realisms like those of Crane and Whittemore effectuate scopophilic portals through which the reader attains sight and spectatorial authority over the poor and addicted and just as they ask hard philosophical questions about their subjects, so too do these texts demand moral and political contemplation from their readers. Although the social realist text and realist biography here hold different aims, the fantasies of the underclass that both Whittemore and Crane discursively produce generate the very publics meant to transform them.

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Notes

1. Much like addiction, conspicuous consumption, as Thorstein Veblen termed it, operates through supplementation. The commodity, much like the drug, stands in for an unmet

psychosocial need. As the supplemental object takes on the aura of that of the original, the source of psychological need becomes obscured and the satiation of desires, now disconnected from their original source, becomes of paramount concern. Bruce K. Alexander's *Globalization of Addiction*, David Courtwright's *Forces of Habit*, and Virginia Berridge's *Demons* each provide valuable analyses of addiction's place in commodity culture and important discussions of addiction's evolving historical definitions and social responses to it. Alexander in particular focuses on addiction's socioeconomic determinants and the ways globalization contributes to addiction's proliferation in the early twenty-first century. See Bruce K. Alexander, *The Globalization of Addiction: A Study in Poverty of the Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), David T. Courtwright, *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Harvard UP, 2001), and Virginia Berridge, *Demons: Our Changing Attitudes to Alcohol, Tobacco, & Drugs (*Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013).

2. The Pure Food and Drug Act (1906) regulated food and drugs trafficked through interstate commerce. The Act improved food and drug quality and addressed standards of purity, while requiring industries to appropriately label ingredients. Importantly, the Act required the labeling of dangerous and addictive substances. Although the rhetoric informing the Harrison Narcotics Act (1914) was steeped in xenophobic and racial power arguments, the Act ultimately sought to curtail opiate and cocaine abuse in the United States. The Harrison Narcotics Act taxed and restricted commodities and patent medicines containing opiate and cocaine derivatives. In the end, the Act reduced supply and criminalized the prescription of opiate and cocaine-based drugs used in the treatment of addiction. The subsequent rise in reportedly addiction-related crimes then led to tougher sentences and the expansion of drug enforcement initiatives.

3. In the Progressive Era, focus extended from women's alcoholism to an increasing concern for women's drug dependence, and, particularly after the Harrison Narcotics Act, on illicit non-medical narcotics abuse. While public concern

fell on middle-class women succumbing to cocaine and opiate dependence and thus sinking into poverty, Loughlin's narrative discloses the extreme economic vulnerability faced by already impoverished women while its form harkens back to the early American epistolary novel. The naive youth corrupted by a libertine, a plot paradigmatic among conduct tracts, reveals class conflicts and the instrumentalization of women's sex, demonstrating how the same social transgression could potentially affect a man and a woman in radically different ways. Loughlin's narrative repurposes sentimentality to invalidate gendered social power differentials because although Loughlin dies by the story's close, she is rehabilitated within a women's community of care, regaining her womanhood from within the women's temperance subculture.

4. Sensationalism certainly has a longstanding place in U.S. literature and the sensational trend, which escalated in postbellum American print culture, exploited the literary market to rival the waning popularity of sentimental domestic fiction. The public desire for exciting narratives of western gunslingers and urban crime noir was equally satisfied by stories of social crisis. But even before the yellow press had its day, sensational literature intersected with the temperance tale and works like Walt Whitman's Washingtonian-inspired *Franklin Evans* (1842), George Foster's *New York by Gas-Light* (1850), and Timothy Arthur Shay's *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room and What I Saw There* (1854) appealed to reformer and sensationalist reader alike, as they disclosed lurid scenes of inebriety and urban depravity for audiences at mid-century.

5. Temperance rhetoric and reform orations created spaces for conversion, but the articulation of the reformer's performance was not limited to social intervention. Just as Whittemore creates environments on the page, stage plays that dramatized destitute behavior and moral reform also produced the space of the slum as entertainment for its audiences. For further discussion on temperance drama see John W. Frick, *Theatre, Culture and Temperance Reform in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

6. Although its signage in 1872 advertised a "'Helping Hand for Men'" (64), McAuley's Water Street Mission provided aid to men and women alike. Rum-sodden men like McAuley were only ever part of the larger demographic of drug addicts and inebriates and despite moralist sanctions against discussing women's descent into poverty, prostitution, and inebriety, these issues were genuine social concerns in American urban centers and problems significant enough to work their way into public oratories, newspaper exposés, and temperance literature. For McAuley's own biographical account of his conversion, see Jerry McAuley, T*ransformed; Or, The History of a River Thief, Briefly Told*. (New York: Jeremiah McAuley, 1876).

7. The rose is a symbol of the Virgin Mary and in various hagiographies a miracle of the roses represents divine intervention. A later image of a rose also appears on p. 49.

8. Similar to McAuley's *Transformed* and many other temperance narratives, Whittemore uses the before and after photograph of Loughlin in the volume's front matter to visualize the effects of rehabilitation. The turn-of-the-century temperance movement strategically used illustrations and photography and so applied visuality to validate their textual claims.

9. Aside from the before and after image of Delia Loughlin located in the book's front matter, other imagery throughout Delia are illustrations of the saloon where Loughlin was found p. 17, the Door of Hope Mission p. 24 and p. 30, and the Bradley Street Mission in New London, CT p. 46, all of which serve to visualize spaces of opprobrium and salvation.

10. In *The Saloon and the Mission*, Eoin F. Cannon notes that reformers "transformed saloons into missions by taking advantage of their roles as performance spaces, substituting infectious piety for the addictive and the carnivalesque qualities of intoxication" (37). Such interventions in the midst of the saloon and street were expectedly uneven, tolerated by some proprietors and rebuked by others, but the temperance reformer's work required direct action and lived presence if she hoped to transform the inebriate and her environs.

11. See Émile Zola,"The Experimental Novel,"in *The*

Experimental Novel and Other Essays, Translated by Belle M. Sherman (New York: Cassell Publishing Co., 1893). Taking a lead from Émile Zola, and his call to represent "the natural man . . . modified by the influences of his surroundings," (23) the period's naturalists saw their literary project as the redevelopment of the romance unencumbered by the optimism associated with the realist novel. Still, sentimentalism was central to the literary tradition inherited by Norris and his fellow naturalists, and their reworking of moral suasion amid the dictums of psychology and evolutionary determinism marked a shift in literary aesthetics that gestured away from the real and towards more radical, if not grotesque, representational strategies.

12. Also see Donald Pizer, "*Maggie* and the Naturalistic Aesthetic of Length," *American Literary Realism*, 1870-1910 28.1, Special Issue on Stephen Crane (Fall 1995): 58-65. For further work addressing Crane's approach to social issues, see Howard Horwitz, "*Maggie* and the Sociological Paradigm," *American Literary History* 10.4 (Winter 1998): 606-38. Working from Pizer's writings on theatricality, Howard Horwitz advances the argument that Crane's emphasis on physicality and gesture produced characters as general character types like the street tough, the drunken mother, and the naive innocent, who reproduce the scripts from which they are constituted. Horwitz identifies "Crane's aestheticism, especially with its irony," as that which "distinguishes himself (and his readers) from the depravity he depicts, specifically from his subjects' determination by environment" (620) and argues that "[a]s audience, we feel superior to Crane's other-half characters and their false self-sense," noting "[t]hat is how slumming works: we are not types or representations of a type; the other half is" (624). Horwitz also views Crane's approach as in line with sociological thought and its modes of group classification, aligning Crane's work with the theories of environmental determinism prevalent in his day, a model that "conceives persons as natural growths of environment, who do not modify but instead reflect and reproduce environment" (607-08) as imitations of it. Horwitz argues that Crane's intervention was in part the way that he "deflates the

ideal of transcendence structuring the sociological paradigm" (610) and asserts that "*Maggie* realizes early sociologists' ideal of social control" (619). For work considering the intersection of class, economy, and theatricality see Andrew Lawson, "Class Mimicry in Stephen Crane's City," *American Literary History* 16.4 (Winter 2004): 596-618. Lawson argues that conspicuous consumption enables Maggie's characters to similarly participate in the miming of class. For Lawson, this "emulation is based on class mimicry, a form of mimetic excess attuned to both the aesthetic and the precise indices of social worth in a rigorously stratified society" (599). Lawson sees cultural practices like "vaudeville, organized charity, and prostitution" as serving to "make and unmake the self, weaving and unraveling the fabric of identity as they perform their cultural work" (599). This assertion regarding selfhood returns to Maggie, whose "emulation" prefigures her destruction, as she is "conducted not upwards but downwards through social strata organized and sustained by class mimicry, her society's regulative principle" (610).

13. Crane's contempt for the insincerities of religious communities is again alluded to in his 1896 sketch "Opium's Varied Dreams," where Crane writes that "[a]n opium-smoker may look like a deacon or a deacon may look like an opium-smoker" (854). See Stephen Crane, "Opium's Varied Dreams," in *Stephen Crane: Prose and Poetry*. Notes by J. C. Levenson (New York: Library of America, 1984), pp. 853-58.

14. Environmental critique is central to Crane and Whittemore's work, but I prefer to focus on the term ecology as opposed to environment. I do so because environment tends to signal objective conditions. Ecology, on the other hand, more accurately captures the idea of systems integration. This is particularly important when considering social activism and the activist text where psychological, social, and environmental conditions intersect and actively determine social experience. When I discuss Crane's and Whittemore's representations of the Bowery's social ecology, I am privileging an integrative logic that tracks the mutual reinforcement between epistemological and material factors and the sense that self, society, and environment

are not so easily disentangled from one another.

15. Jonathan Townley Crane attended New Jersey College, now Princeton University, from 1841-43.

16. In *Arts of Intoxication*, Crane further suggests that "[t]he injury begins with the formation of the evil habit, and progresses as the habit grows. No man who seeks exhilaration in the use of a drug, however little of the intoxicant it takes to secure it, can possess while under its influence the same cool reliable judgment which he would have if he were free from his enemy" (190). Moreover, Jonathan Crane's views on the inheritability of vice from biological and social vectors suggests predilections to vice may well be inborn characteristics disproportionately affecting the poor. Ultimately, Stephen Crane's critique of the Johnson family implies hereditary arguments not too far afield from those of his father. At the same time, Jonathan Crane views the inebriate as a victim of environment and emphasizes empathy as a faculty critical to reform efforts and the perseverance of communal intervention, a position evident in Crane's suggestion that "[w]e wrong the fallen one when we denounce his apparent lack of honor, and every noble attribute, and refuse to recognize the strength of the chains which bind him, the weight of the iron hand which drags him to his doom" (196-97).

"Nothing Had Happened."—Why?: Stephen Crane's Three Mexican Stories

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I

Stephen Crane traveled through the West and Mexico in 1895, sponsored by the Bacheller syndicate. Jamie Robertson remarks that because Crane "spent only five months in the West and Mexico," he "was therefore . . . a tourist."[1] Indeed, the narrators and the characters in his short sketches and stories, especially those set in Mexico, seem to reflect the tourist's limited perspective. In "Stephen Crane in Mexico (II)," for example, as "the train rolled out of the Americanism of San Antonio . . . and into the southern expanses of mesquite,"[2] the capitalist from Chicago and the archaeologist from Boston occupy themselves by saying to each other "Look at this"or "Look at that"(448).[3] "The two travelers" who are "hungry for color, form [and] action" (451) are not, however, necessarily looking for genuine novelty: "Once they saw a black outline of a man" from the train, they found that "this figure justified to them all their preconceptions. . . . He was the proving of certain romances, songs, narratives" (450). As tourists, people often expect to see their long-term expectations confirmed.[4] Whether the sights are actually new does not always matter, and this offers room for prejudice. They can find "romances, songs [or] narratives" in anything, simply because, as Crane remarks on an Indian clad in his old sombrero in "Hats, Shirts, and Spurs in Mexico," "you can imagine anything at all about him, for his true character is impenetrable" (468).

Foreign scenery, therefore, mirrors the mental state of its observers. Novelty often exists in the sightseers' psychology rather than in the strange landscapes through which they pass. Nonetheless, unfamiliar sights tend to awaken novel mental conditions. Especially in Crane's impressionistic presentation,

where the peculiarities of individual mentalities emerge vividly even in everyday settings, characters visiting foreign lands react more readily to strange things and tend to show eccentric feelings that would be difficult for ordinary people in ordinary life to accept. In "One Dash—Horses," for example, the protagonist Richardson rides on horseback among the Mexican mesquites and sees the surroundings as follows:

> The hills in the west were carved into peaks, and were painted the most profound blue. Above them, the sky was of that marvelous tone of green—like still, sun-shot water—which people denounce in pictures. (5: 13)

The protagonist admits that his representation is liable to "denouncement," presumably because of its unnaturalness if employed in ordinary pictures. This color-soaked impression implies that Richardson, who has seen outlandish landscapes, has become correspondingly hypersensitive to colors. In "The Mexican Lower Classes," Crane says that in Mexico, "[i]t seems that a man must not devote himself for a time to attempts at psychological perception. He can be sure of two things, form and color" (8: 436). This is why the above-mentioned archeologist and capitalist in "Stephen Crane in Mexico (II)" are intent on aesthetic impressions, and the protagonist in "One Dash—Horses" is similarly susceptible to the exotic hue of his surroundings.

Moreover, in Richardson's case, he could hardly "devote himself to psychological perception" if he intended to do so, but he relies almost solely on his senses. He is in a panic; after encountering some Mexican bandits, he has been seriously frightened and cares only about how he can flee from them. In short, "he was escaping, not reflecting" (5: 19). Thus, the protagonist is driven to be more nervous about the "form and color" of the seemingly weird and occasionally threatening environment. Richardson remembers the approach of the Mexicans as a collection of sights and sounds:

> The firelight smothered the rays which, streaming from a moon as large as a drum head, were struggling at the open door. Richardson heard from the plain the fine, rhythmical trample of the hoofs of hurried horses. He went to sleep wondering who rode so fast and so late.

> And in the deep silence the pale rays of the moon must have prevailed against the red spears of the fire until the room was slowly flooded to its middle with a rectangle of silver light.
>
> Richardson was awakened by the sound of a guitar. . . . He wondered why the noise was so loud. Raising his hand from his saddle pillow, he saw, with the help of the valiant moonbeams, a blanket hanging flat against the wall at the further end of the room. (14-15)

Critics agree in regarding the blanket as a symbol of Richardson's limited understanding.[5] In his desperate efforts to investigate the gang's activities, the protagonist is obliged to depend on his aroused senses because he is unable to count on his unsettled reason. However, even his senses prove unreliable. When chased by the bandits, Richardson is perplexed: "Sometimes he was sure he saw them. Sometimes he was sure he heard them" (21). Here, "sure" is an ironic hallmark of the unreliability of his senses. His malfunctioning reason and senses drive Richardson to a series of misunderstandings and mistakes. For example, although he constantly sees Jose, his aide and interpreter, as panic-stricken and incompetent, it was José who noted the error when "Richardson lost the trail once" (22). Moreover, José finally discovers the rurales, the local guard, and asks them for help, thus securing safety for Richardson.[6] However, he seems ungrateful for his aide's great achievement.

II

Richardson's lack of "psychological perception" and his reliance on occasionally unreliable senses, along with his resultant mistake in comprehending circumstances, can also be attributed to his inability to understand the local language, a problem that tourists often experience. In this respect, one sees Crane's problematic treatment of translation. The English-speaking narrator, who is usually identified with the author, offers the reader a translation from the Spanish spoken by José and the Mexican robbers. Here lies room for irony at the expense of Richardson, whose Spanish ability remains rudimentary.

Furthermore, his disturbed psychology aggravates his linguistic handicaps:

> The tumultuous emotions of Richardson's terror destroyed that slow and careful process of thought by means of which he understands Mexican. Then he used his instinctive comprehension of the first and universal language, which is tone. Still it is disheartening not to be able to understand the details of the threats. . . . (16)

The collapse of his hearing ability is essentially due to his limited grasp of the language, the usual basis of auditory sense. Yet one wonders whether he cannot understand the following exchange between the Mexican outlaws. As Richardson listens, his dominant feelings are loneliness and helplessness as he longs for his native country:

> Richardson was dreaming of his far and beloved North.
>
> "Well, I would kill him, then!"
>
> "No, you must not!"
>
> "Yes, I will kill him! Listen! I will ask this American beast for his beautiful pistol and spurs and money and saddle, and if he will not give them—you will see!" (15)

The terror subsequently evoked in Richardson is hardly explicable unless he comprehends the above words. His fears seem to be too sharply defined and specific to be triggered merely by the Mexicans' "tone." To what extent does Richardson really understand Spanish? Is he familiar enough with the language to notice that the Mexican bandits "were calling each other worse names than common people know in other countries?" (15) One has difficulty attributing the comment to either the English omniscient narrator or the protagonist when an epithet expressed by one of the Mexican robbers is described as "a word peculiarly of Mexico" (16). In short, in this story, consciousness often seems shared by the objective narrator and Richardson. The narrator's ironic viewpoint, based on the protagonist's misunderstanding of the Mexicans' speech and behavior, is therefore not always clear, and this complicates the interpretation of the story's denouement:

> Richardson saw José throw himself from his horse and begin to jabber at the leader of the party [the Mexican

> guards]. When he arrived he found that his servant had already outlined the entire situation, and was then engaged in describing him, Richardson, as an American senor of vast wealth who was the friend of almost every governmental potentate within two hundred miles. This seemed to profoundly impress the officer. (24-25)

Is the protagonist really able to understand José's explanation in such detail? Because he assumes that José's invented story triggered the officer's imperious attitude toward the approaching chief of the rascals, Richardson can explain why the "face" of "the fat Mexican" became "green": "it could be seen that he expected death" (24). However, Richardson's expectation of the "prospective volley" (24) from the Mexican guards is betrayed:

> Richardson again gulped in expectation of a volley, for—it is said—this is one of the favorite methods of the rurales for disposing of objectionable people. . . . Nevertheless, he [the chief of the bandits] was allowed to vanish in a cloud of yellow dust at the ridge-top. (24-25)

With his limited language ability and rather naïve belief in the popular view of the unlawful West and Mexico, does Richardson misunderstand the entire situation? First, he is unlikely to be able to confirm the terms in which José described the situation to the rurales. Richardson may overestimate the effect of José's fabricated explanation; likewise, he may expect a dramatic conclusion too easily. Deluded by popular accounts of savage Mexico, he anticipates the execution in vain. The rurales appear to be strict with the bandits, but in reality, they may simply frighten or even jest with them. Glen M. Johnson and Jamie Robertson note a similarity here to the refusal of the conventional Western violent climax in Crane's "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky."[7] However, Richardson is never like Jack Potter, the town marshal who confronts the villainous Scratchy Wilson. He is more like the townspeople of Yellow Sky, onlookers who wrongly predict a showdown between the two parties. Upon reflection, in "One Dash—Horses" it seems unsurprising or perhaps even natural that "nothing had happened" between the outlaws and

the Mexican guards.

Richardson may not be worried about his possible misunderstanding of the situation. After all, he is a traveler, and the local people and place are not of serious interest except when his own safety is at stake. Rather, facing crisis in a foreign country, he tries to emphasize his position as an outsider and to distinguish between himself and his companion: "José being a Mexican, it was natural that he should be killed in Mexico; but for himself a New Yorker" (22). For him, in fact, such a fate was unthinkable. Thus disowned by his American master and "pounced" on as an "American's servant" by "the whole group of Mexicans" (17), José seems to have been more seriously in danger of losing his life rather than Richardson was. Raymund A. Paredes regards Crane's treatment, through his protagonist, of José and the other Mexicans as governed by racial prejudice.[8] In contrast to this judgment, Robertson sees a difference in attitude between Crane and Richardson toward the Mexicans: "All of the clichés of the Western are here, including the inferior Mexican, but they are Richardson's clichés, not Stephen Crane's."[9] However, this interpretation becomes possible only when one makes a distinction between the omniscient narrator (Crane) and the protagonist, a distinction that is not always maintained in the work, as mentioned above. This blurred distinction implies that the prejudice expressed in the text may be shared between the two. One can hardly judge Paredes' criticism as completely unjustified. Moreover, there is a basis for the remark of Melani Budianta, another critic who notes Crane's racial (and sexual) bias. Referring to the sentence in the story that states, "My friend, take my advice and never be executed by a hangman who doesn't talk the English language" (15), Budianta comments:

> The narrator, who addresses the reader as "my friend," identifies with Richardson and shares his terror. The narrator also clearly assumes that his readers are English-speaking ones, readers who are supposed to empathize with Richardson's situation. . . . [T]he narrator of "One Dash—Horses" lends to the assumed readers the eyes of the story's white male protagonist.

. . .[10]

In my view, this easy identification manifests in the confused distinction between the bilingual objective narrator and the monolingual protagonist, and this ambiguity opens up the possibility for conflicting interpretations. If one takes the supposed distinction literally and strictly, the monolingual American supremacist Richardson may be held responsible for racism, thereby exempting the narrator from the charge. However, the greater the identification between the narrator and the protagonist—a possibility already seen in their occasional shared consciousness and the undermining of the ostensible differences in their language ability—the greater our suspicions become concerning the objective narrator's racist tendencies.

The reason for the potential violation of the protagonist's assumed monolingualism seems quite simple; the author is supposed to be translating and transcribing Spanish into English. The translated Spanish is expressed, after all, in English. It is very likely that occasionally Crane may forget this assumed process of translation and thus may fail to take into account the premised difference between his translated Spanish and his own original English. Therefore, the protagonist, whose Spanish vocabulary should be strictly limited, often exhibits an unnatural understanding of the language.

Irrespective of Crane's original intention, his monolingual protagonist undeniably remains a bigot, deaf to what he cannot understand. Richardson is prejudiced against Mexicans despite knowing little about their life. This ignorance prompts his terror and disturbs his emotions, hence rather ironically offering the author an opportunity to display his skill at the impressionistic depiction of a violently agitated state of mind. Due to the particular kind of ignorance that one often suffers in a foreign country, the gap between the panic-stricken psychology that pervades the narrative and the anticlimactic conclusion seems even larger than in the usual Cranean world. One can observe a similar situation in Crane's two other Mexican short pieces, which also address monolingual English-speaking characters.

III

In "The Five White Mice," the Casa Verde, a "popular American saloon," attracts "a host of . . . members of the Anglo-Saxon colony" in Mexico City as well as "some tourists" (41). The New York Kid, the protagonist of this story, is one of the saloon's regular customers, who kill time by playing dice. He seems to have stayed in the city for some time, presumably longer than ordinary travelers, but he still "could not follow Spanish well" (47). One reasonably assumes that his linguistic handicap may be one of the reasons for his lack of curiosity and preference for a secluded life with his fellow countrymen. When he is involved in an unexpected confrontation with the Mexican grandees, he naturally has difficulty understanding their behavior and words: "It [the fight] was a new game; he had never been obliged to face a situation of this kind in the Beacon Club in New York" (50). His inability to comprehend the situation and to control it makes chance a more significant factor in finding a solution. Therefore, the New York Kid chants an incantation in his mind, the "five white mice of chance," and asks them for help. Some critics regard this story as an expression of pluralism that involves a combination of both chance and free will.[11] Thus, the New York Kid is sober by "chance," but takes action against the Mexicans out of his "free will." Again by "chance," he escapes from a violent showdown and realizes one truth:

> Thus the Kid was able to understand swiftly that they [the Mexicans] were all human beings. They were unanimous in not wishing for too bloody combat. There was a sudden expression of the equality. (50)

This epiphany of common humanity, though precious to the Kid, seems essentially naïve and ironically reveals that the Kid has understood virtually nothing about the Mexicans. Blessed with this ignorance that mystifies others, in his skirmish with the grandees he has, in a sense, created a phantom autobiography of an untimely death and its aftermath. Marston LaFrance notes the tonal disjunction between the two parts of this story.[12] In the first half, the Kid enjoys tranquility at the Casa Verde, which hardly

seems to fit the intense emotional drama he undergoes in the latter. However, as in "One Dash—Horses," with the approach of evening, the exotic atmosphere of the Mexican world increasingly engages the visual and auditory senses, as if to prepare the Kid to step out of the American Casa Verde with his curiosity renewed:

> After the regular shower, many carriages rolled over the smooth *calle* and sent a musical thunder through the Casa Verde. The shop-windows became aglow with light. . . . The City of Mexico gave forth the deep mellow organ-tones of its evening resurrection. (emphasis original, 40)

The Kid's midnight encounter with the grandees "[on] a little Mexican street" (46) certainly revives his curiosity; he is eager to identify these strangers in this foreign city, like a tourist gazing at that which is new. His regained curiosity does not last long, however, because he discovers a certain unexpected "unanimity" with the aliens that is anathema to the tourist mind. As Crane says of travelers in "Galveston, Texas in 1895," "it is the differences that are supposed to be valuable"; therefore, "the passion for the differences . . . prevent[s] a general knowledge of the resemblances" (8: 474). With his realization of "the resemblances" of human nature, the Kid may have come closer to the local realities, but he wishes to stay, as it were, at the tourist level. As Richardson in "One Dash—Horses" attempts to secure his position as an outsider and singe-mindedly "escape" from the bandits, the Kid's behavior serves to negate an unbearable discovery:

> Upon the instant he pounced forward and began to swear, unreeling great *English* oaths as thick as ropes and lashing the faces of the Mexicans with them. He was bursting with rage because these men had not previously confided to him that they were vulnerable. The whole thing had been an absurd imposition. . . . After all there had been an equality of emotion, an equality: he was furious. (my emphasis, 5: 51)

The Kid is angry to find not only that the Mexicans are "equal" to him in their "emotion" but also that they share his

"vulnerability." Since his chance meeting with the unpredictable Mexicans, he has been annoyed by a sense of their different or even inscrutable feelings. Paradoxically, this has been a source of the strange but vivid sensations that are fitting or even desirable for a traveler in a foreign city. Finding that this sense is an illusion, however, he is naturally "furious." The discovery of "equality" satisfies neither of the contradictory tourist aspirations for something new and different, or predictable, as discussed above; "equality" never leads to difference, nor does the Kid expect it. The "English" epithets uttered by the Kid are not intended to be understood by the equally monolingual Mexicans; instead, they are a suitable medium for reasserting the Kid's distance from them. This mutual incomprehensibility between the respective monolinguals reestablishes the Kid's position as a tourist. Thus far, his linguistic incompetence has mystified the Mexicans, and even after his realization of his "equality" of "emotion" with them, the Kid's purposeful use of "English" against them negates this "equality" and eliminates any chance of truly understanding the Mexicans.[13]

The New York Kid returns home with his American friends. He will again be a constant visitor to the Casa Verde, where "the old French chef . . . abus[es] Mexican helpers" (39). This is an appropriate place for the Kid, who has unhesitatingly shown his contempt for the local people. As long as he denies the "equality" of "emotion," no serious mutual understanding can be achieved between him and the locals, and therefore, "nothing" is likely to "happen" between them except for accidental and fleeting contacts, such as the Kid's midnight encounter. In contrast, in the protagonist's mind, as mentioned above, a series of imaginary events "had happened," from his own death (i. e., "Into the mouth of the sober Kid came a wretched bitter taste as if it had filled with blood. He was transfixed as if he was already seeing the lightning ripples on the knife-blade" [47]) to its effects (i. e., "His mind leaped forward and studied the aftermath. The story would be a marvel of brevity when first it reached the far New York home . . ." [48]). Obviously, this mental turmoil is one-sided; it involves little consideration for the Mexicans' actual

actions and is, as it were, internally self-fueled, though the Kid believes it to be "imposed" by his opponents. The Kid's mind has worked exactly in the same way as a tourist's. One recalls the sentence quoted above: when faced with an exotic native, "you can imagine anything at all about him, for his true character is impenetrable."

One may wonder what emotional breakthrough remains for monolingual foreigners who have little inclination to know the realities of the local people and place, only to be blessed with a chance encounter in a foreign country like the Kid in "The Five White Mice." Unquestionably, the deeper their seclusion and the less their interest in the outside world, the fewer chances they are likely to have. Crane's American characters in "The Wise Men: A Detail of American Life in Mexico" are much more self-complacent than those in "The Five White Mice." Accordingly, the excitement they enjoy is pitifully self-gratified and superficial.

IV

As its subtitle testifies, "The Wise Men" concerns itself exclusively with the activities of Americans. Some of the colonial settings (such as the Casa Verde) and monolingual characters (such as the New York Kid) are shared with "The Five White Mice," and even the newly appearing Café Colorado also caters primarily to Americans; the guests are American "loungers, ranging from the newly-arrived and superior tourist to the old veteran" (27). The main topic of this short piece, the foot race between the two owners of the American cafés on a street in Mexico City that is observed by the American audience, is, in its very exclusiveness, proof of the Americans' complete loss of substantial connections with the Mexican locals. Needless to say, this race is held merely to kill time; the New York Kid and the 'Frisco Kid, despite staying at a tourist hotel, do not seem to go out very often for sightseeing but rather enter "a café about eight o'clock one morning . . . [and are] still at it about four-thirty" (26) the following morning. Another regular customer of the Casa Verde, Wilburson, is not a tourist but a "junior partner" of "the

Mexican end of a great importing house of New York" who "work[s]; not too much, though" (32) and idles away his leisure hours at the American pub. There seems to be no possibility that "anything can happen" between these Americans and the local inhabitants, even in terms of a brief confrontation. Therefore, the two Kids plan a pseudo-confrontation: a foot race within "the American colony" (26). Because "the news of this great race spread" among the compatriots, "they had come to witness the event" (34-35).

They scarcely care about the reactions of the Mexicans to this festivity or the fact that the latter have little interest in them except the cash nexus: "These Americans, who did all manner of strange things, nevertheless always paid well for it" (36). Thus, Mexican cabdrivers are happy to take the childishly excited Americans to the site of the competition, the Paseo de la Reforma:

> It is a broad fine avenue of macadam with a much greater quality of dignity than anything of the kind we possess in our own land. It seems of the Old World, where to the beauty of the thing itself is added the solemnity of tradition and history, the knowledge that feet in buskins trod the same stones, that cavalcades of street thundered there before the coming of carriages.
>
> When the Americans tumbled out of their cabs the giant bronzes of Aztec and Spaniard loomed dimly above them like towers. (35-36)

The peculiarly "solemn" description makes a sharp contrast with the Americans' comic movements (e.g., "tumbling out of the cabs"), thus exposing the incongruity between the characters and their circumstances. Their exhilaration at their fellow countrymen's race, heedless of the historical setting, reveals their deficient curiosity about the city's past and present. As in the two other stories, their monolingualism seems to contribute to that loss. Even Freddie, the owner of the Casa Verde, and presumably a long-time resident of this city, feels a real difficulty in understanding a policeman who addresses him "in swift Mexican" (35).

Little has been written about "The Wise Men" in comparison

with the two other pieces. Even Raymund Paredes, otherwise attentive to Crane's alleged racism, does not refer to this work.[14] This is, in a sense, understandable; ironically, the Americans reveal few discriminatory attitudes, which would have become more evident had they formed substantive connections with the locals. Moreover, Crane's description of the Americans is mainly external and comical. He rarely examines the psychological details of either the racers or the spectators. Due to this lack of insight into the Americans' internal experiences, this story offers few instances of the vivid Cranean impressionism observable in the two other works. The Americans' glee, further enhanced by the race's unexpected result, is genuinely self-complacent. Their "shouting, laughing, [and] wondering" (38) as they linger after the race paradoxically underline their alienation in a foreign city.

V

In his sketch "The Mexican Lower Classes," Crane stated the following about Mexico and its people:

> It perhaps might be said—if any one dared—that the most worthless literature of the world has been that which has been written by the men of one nation concerning the men of another. (8: 436)

Both Stanley Wertheim, who notes Crane's ethnic biases against the Mexicans, and Juan Alonzo, who insists that Crane is "less concerned with deriding" them, quote the above axiom by Crane in their discussions.[15] The problem is, then, to what extent Crane faithfully follows this axiom in his creative works or, more precisely, how he ironically distances himself from his prejudiced characters. His attitudes differ depending on the level of involvement. Whereas Crane as an omniscient observer usually maintains an objective posture toward his compatriots and the Mexicans, he does not remain so calm when he is directly involved with them or, at the most extreme, when he is in mortal danger at their hands. This inconsistency in attitudes is honestly expressed in both "One Dash—Horses" and "The Five White Mice." As the narrator, Crane emphatically renders the internal turmoil of those involved in unexpected contact with the locals.

The difficulty of knowing others, which is worsened by linguistic incompetence, tends to reveal racist tendencies, as ironically suggested by the objective narrator. The persistence of prejudice even tempts the omniscient narrator or the author to occasionally share his characters' feelings. The ironic "wisdom" of "The Wise Men" may be demonstrated in their escape from this temptation; they virtually sever the connection with their environment, thus suspending racial biases against it. This controversial "equal but separate" attitude unquestionably and paradoxically highlights the difficulty, especially for a person involved in another nation's society, of following the conclusions implied by the above axiom. My intention has been to specify one of the elements that make cross-cultural understanding difficult, the language barrier, a factor that critics have previously neglected in Crane's Mexican stories. In creative work, the language that should be spoken may occasionally be spared for the sake of convenience. However, such an omission may miss things of no small importance in hybrid presumptions, to which non-native English speakers (such as myself) may be more sensitive. This type of convenience may be what theories of metafiction have (or should have) questioned. I have no intention following second-rate postcolonial theory to evaluate Crane from the viewpoint of the "privilege" of non-English speakers, but he has been popular in the non-English-speaking world and is worthy of intercultural appraisal.

Crane straightforwardly treats the tragicomic outcome caused by mistranslation in his unfinished "The Fire-Tribe and the White-Face: Spitzbergen Tale." The protagonist, Timothy Lean, in addressing the alien fire-tribe, begins to believe, as a result of a series of mistranslation, that "there was not only in the world a code of conduct but that there were codes of conduct" (10: 183.) Ironically, this sense of "difference," like the "equality" that the Kid realizes in "The Five White Mice," leads Lean to despise the locals. Neither the sense of "difference" nor that of "equality" brings sympathy, presumably due to a lack of understanding of the local language, or in other words, due to the locals' lack of understanding of the actual universal language, English. Another example of "universality" can be

found in "The Fire-Tribe and the White-Face": Lean despises the fire-tribe especially because they helplessly surrender to the attraction of money. This story has a fictitious background of the places such as Spitzbergen and Rostina, which do not sound like parts of the English world. Crane is believed to have chosen such exotic names for the purpose of describing war more purely or abstractly without reference to specific cultures, but the currency is, after all, "dollars," with which the fire-tribe is fascinated. Crane realizes the power of American currency. In his Mexican sketch "Free Silver down in Mexico," he complains that American travelers do not benefit from the exchange rate. One may wonder whether in "The Fire-Tribe and the White-Face," the strength of dollars contributes to the protagonist's superior attitude toward the natives.

When compared with his contemporaries, Stephen Crane may be racially unprejudiced on the whole.[16] At the same time he seems to understand the difficulty of holding back judgment or prejudice against different races, cultures and languages. In other words, he realizes how difficult it is to make "something really happen" in a bilateral but monolingual racial context except in the arena of one party's complacent imagination. The reality is that "nothing is likely to happen" to most people in the real sense of cultural contacts or mutual understanding. The last sentence of "The Five White Mice"—"Nothing had happened."—can be applied not only to the lack of a violent showdown but also to the lack of substantial contact between the Americans and the Mexicans.

Notes

1. Jamie Robertson, "Stephen Crane, Eastern Outsider in the West and Mexico," *Western American Literature* 13 (1978): 243. Crane spent almost two months in Mexico.

2. *The University of Virginia Edition of the Works of Stephen Crane*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1969-1976), 8: 446. All further quotations will be taken from this edition. Volume (if different from the former quotation) and page

references will appear in parentheses after each quotation.

3. John Urry remarks that in tourism, one generally wants to "gaze upon or view a set of different scenes, of landscapes or townscapes which are out of the ordinary." John Urry, T*he Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1990), p.1. In short, tourists want to see something new, different and interesting.

4. His contradictory definition of tourism also holds true; ". . . people seek tourist experiences which are predictable. . . ." (Chris Rojek and John Urry, "Transformations of Travel and History," in *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, eds. Chris Rojek and John Urry [London and New York: Routledge, 1997], p. 3).

5. See Frank Bergon, S*tephen Crane's Artistry* (New York: Columbia UP, 1975), pp. 52-53; Milne Holton, *Cylinder of Vision: The Fiction and Journalistic Writings of Stephen Crane* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1972), p. 126; Chester L. Wolford, *Stephen Crane: A Study of the Short Fiction* (Boston: Twayne, 1989), p. 40.

6. For José's missed usefulness, see Juan Alonzo, *Badmen, Bandits, and Folk Heroes: The Ambivalence of Mexican American Identity in Literature and Film* (Tucson: U of Arizona P, 2009), pp. 26-29.

7. Glen M. Johnson, "Stephen Crane's 'One Dash—Horses': A Model of Realistic Irony," *Modern Fiction Studies* 23 (1977), 571-72; Robertson, 251.

8. See Raymund A. Paredes, "Stephen Crane and the Mexican," *Western American Literature* 6:1 (1971), 31-34. See also Stanley Wertheim, "Unraveling the Humanist: Stephen Crane and Ethnic Minorities," *American Literary Realism*, 30.3 (1998): 70-71.

9. Robertson, 248. Juan Alonzo criticizes Paredes' argument. See Juan Alonzo, "From Derision to Desire: The 'Greaser' in Stephen Crane's Mexican Stories and D. W. Griffith's Early Westerns," *Western American Literature* 38.4 (2004): 379-84.

10. Melani Budianta, "A Stained Glass Window: Stephen Crane's Cultural Translations," *American Studies International* 37.1 (1999): 75.

11. For example, see Holton, pp. 129-31; Charles W. Mayer, "Two Kids in the House of Chance: Crane's 'The Five White Mice,'" *Research Studies* 44 (1976): 52-55.

12. See Marston LaFrance, *A Reading of Stephen Crane* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), p. 180.

13. Leigh Johnson seems to admit The Kid's self-knowledge (though limited) of his position as a tourist in a foreign country after he finds "equality" with the locals. Such self-knowledge, however, can hardly be found in The Kid's consistently nonchalant attitude even after leaving the site of the standoff. Johnson does not refer to the abusive words that The Kid uses toward the Mexicans. See Leigh Johnson, "Foreign Incursions: Stephen Crane and Katherine Anne Porter's Tourist Violence in Mexico," *Journal of Postcolonial Cultures and Sciences* 2.1-2 (2011): 43.

14. Paredes duly points out a racial bias in "The Five White Mice." See Paredes, 34-35.

15. Stanley Wertheim, 70; Juan Alonzo, *Badmen, Bandits, and Folk Heroes*, p. 30.

16. In addition to Juan Alonzo, see Patrick K. Dooley, "Crane's Sociological Savvy: An Examination of His Mexican Travel Dispatches," *Stephen Crane Studies* 11:2 (2002): 2-10; Giorgio Mariani, *Spectacular Narratives: Representations of Class and War in Stephen Crane and the American 1890s* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), pp. 69-70. Mariani's praise of Crane's unprejudiced attitude is conditional in a context different from mine. See Mariani, pp. 70-72.

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Originally thought to have been written quickly throughout the first eleven months of 1899 (Holton 215), Crane's Whilomville stories have been problematic to scholars since their publication and thus largely ignored. Benfey, for example, claims "Crane wrote these rather sentimental stories for money, counting the words as he went along" (258), in fact, "[s]ure and quick money" according to a letter Crane wrote (Brown and Hernlund 116). Crane's seeming abandonment of his intensely critical satirical lens in these stories has traditionally caused scholars to dismiss them as simple "idylls of small-town life" that "sold easily to Harper's and to other family magazines" (258). Yet Paul Sorrentino's recent authoritative biography reexamines these dismissed stories, arguing they were "based on his youth" (10). "Whilom," after all, means "once upon a time" (264); Crane was, therefore, creating within readers nostalgia for their own childhoods "in order to address personal anxieties and frustrations" within his (265).

Outside of the biographical significance, however, most agree that because of Crane's rapidly decreasing health, the stories were "irregular in quality" and "too hastily written" with "inner relationships . . . not carefully worked out" (Holton 224). If discussed at all, Whilomville is typically in reference to *The Monster*, a novella for which Crane originally created the fictional town "to create a quiet backdrop for horrific events" (Benfey 258). However, precious few argue that the later collection of stories merit their own, separate analysis. Holton provides one such claim. He argues that had Crane's young life been prolonged, the Whilomville stories might have opened "the possibility of a subject which . . . could have been incredibly rich" (224). For Holton that subject is "apprehensional paralysis in the life of an American small town" evident through the relationships between children and both their peers and parents (224, 216). Each story, he claims, illustrates the supreme force of

"communal opinion" and how it "rigidly enforce[s], not only patterns of behavior, but patterns of imagination upon [its] members" (215). The conflicts of each story (usually resolved neatly by its end) are never cause for any character, adult or child, to "[assert] original fantasies or experiments with direct confrontations with reality or with new ways of seeing" (216). Instead, the inhabitants of Whilomville rely on the "banality and derivative nature" of their imaginations, or lack thereof (215). This reading of the stories, staunchly critical of the characters' blind adherence to a uninventive communal code, is a helpful place to begin.

Nearly all of the Whilomville stories, though certainly not Crane's crowning literary achievement, collectively provide a variance in the children of Crane's canon that settles in nicely behind the white picket fence that distances the stories from his more disquietous New York slums.[1] Though there are a few subtle hints of class anxiety hidden under the guise of a ladies' tea party in "The Stove," the Whilomville stories remain blissfully ignorant of both Riis's other half worlds away from their quiet suburbia. This, perhaps, only gives the stories a more authentic feel; this also facilitates nicely a comparison of the constant in their divergent worlds: violence.

According to E. Anthony Rotundo, boyhood in America in the late-nineteenth century was a time of play and freedom largely mediated by "head to head" activities of "hostile combat" (35). These games of "elaborate rules and complicated strategies [. . .] revealed many of the preoccupations of boy culture. A favorite subject in the improvised games was warfare" (36). Rotundo is careful to note that this violent boy culture was in direct opposition to the feminine domestic space of early childhood and suggests that "[t]he two worlds seemed almost to thrive on their opposition to each other" (37-38). Furthermore, because expression of emotion and other "weak feelings" was considered feminine, "ironically, some of boys' violence was an expression of their fondness for each other" (44, 45). It is important to note, however, that Rotundo's observations are specifically rooted in analysis of the middle class, the expected

norm. Thus, this standard provides an interesting basis of comparison for Crane's children.

Violence in the Whilomville stories is often presented as very purposeful and, in accordance with Rotundo's claims, almost a coming-of-age experience. For example, in "The Trial, Execution and Burial of Homer Phelps," the boys reenact a most grave adult practice of prosecution and sentencing. Amidst their fumbling attempts, comments like "Can't you play it right?" or "You've got to be seized, you know. That ain't the way" (143, 145) are strangely reminiscent of Tom Sawyer's attempts to convince the more realistic Huck Finn to join his never-ending tomfoolery. Because Homer Phelps balks, an understudy willingly steps in and the boys reach a guilty verdict and stage a mock execution. Later in the story Homer Phelps, in an effort to rejoin the group, is swindled into being buried, as he is already dead. Crane's depiction of his consent is pathetic:

> Little Phelps had now passed into that state which may be described as a curious and temporary childish fatalism. He still objected, but it was only feeble muttering, as if he did not know what he spoke. In some confusion they carried him to the rectangle of hemlock boughs and dropped him. Then they piled other boughs upon him until he was not to be seen. . . . There was a faint movement of the boughs, and then a perfect silence. (155-56)

Homer Phelps learns the price of admission into the group is a symbolic death of self, and "[t]he cruel ritual is chilling in its implications" (Holton 221). Questioning the rules is not allowed, for those who refuse are quickly replaced. Homer's replacement in this story is Jimmie Trescott, who as the primary protagonist throughout the Whilomville stories always finds a way to survive.

Jimmie learns to navigate the constantly fluctuating rules of the group of Whilomville boys with both his fists and his wit. In "The Lover and the Telltale," his fists are most handy. Jimmie is ridiculed for writing a love letter instead of his typical recess activity of "preying upon his weaker brethren with all the cruel disregard of a grown man" (31). A female classmate spreads word

of his transgression, and Jimmie must prove his masculinity. He first punches the "most pitiless of the boys near him" and soon "[lays] desperately into the whole world, striking out frenziedly in all directions" (36-37). For his efforts, Jimmie earns respect, "not [for] his prowess [but for] the soul he had infused into his gymnastics" (38). As a final gesture of magnanimity, Jimmie refuses to tell the obstinate teacher whom he has been fighting. By physically fighting, Jimmie regains his status among the schoolboys.

Jimmie's wit, however, saves him in "Showin' Off." In efforts to impress Abbie, with whom he had "exchanged glances at least two hundred times in every school-hour," he takes the long route home from school that coincidentally is right by her house. Accompanied by his "retainer," Jimmie challenges the child to a series of contests until his companion is "badly battered" (44). A random passing child poses an automatic threat to Jimmie's superiority and, of course, quickly becomes "mince-meat" (46). The final challenge is Horace Glenn, riding his new velocipede, which moves Jimmie "to a squalid secondary position" (48). Jimmie baits Horace into several contests by verbally claiming his prowess. In an effort to squash Horace's superiority once and for all, he challenges him to ride his tricycle down a steep bank and cleverly says he will go first if only Horace will lend him his velocipede. Predictably Horace denies the idea of lending Jimmie his bike and seizes the opportunity to win the battle; instead, all he wins is a shattered velocipede he pushes home with "[h]is chin . . . thrown high" for having chosen the better of two options: "to make gallant effort or to retreat" (53, 52).

Both stories support Holton's idea that a larger communal code is at work in Whilomville that requires physical proof of verbal claims of superiority. This code requires strict adherence and no deviation. If a character questions the role he is required to play, severe shame results. It is more noble to fight and lose than to run away (as Willie Dalzel learns in "The Fight"). Rotundo is also helpful here, for the in two examples Jimmie's juvenile expressions of love must be hidden behind a more socially appropriate masculine facade. What is it, Crane seems to be

asking, that requires the boys of Whilomville to adhere to such a set of requirements? Why do they all blindly acquiesce to the prescribed code? The answer is simple for Rotundo: a middle-class "boys' world was a culture governed by shame" (52).

Holton observes that Jimmie learns, if nothing else. "how to lie—how to misrepresent his intentions—to others and even to himself" (223). Thus, in the passing of two-and-a-half years,[2] Jimmie "becomes increasingly less autonomous [and instead] more duplicitous" (223). Crane's middle-class Whilomville world is a world of performance in which Jimmie engages in battle after battle in an effort to maintain his status. Rarely do adults interfere. In "Shame," after begging to go to a picnic and taking his required lunch in a tin pail, Jimmie is ridiculed by his peers for his "picnic in a pail" (70). Benevolently, a beautiful young lady "[flings] aside the luxuries of the spread cloth to sit with him, the exile" (75). Though her presence is a temporary comfort that rids "[h]is garment of shame," Jimmie wallows in his glory and even proposes marriage (76). Nonetheless, his shame is only temporarily suspended, for when the picnic ends, "[t]he children wished to resume their jeering" but are prohibited only by the presence of Miss Earl (77). Jimmie must return to the world of his peers, a world where "form exceeds content" (Holton 217).

Thomas Gullason asserts that "the cleverness . . . and the rhetorical flights of Crane's early writings" are replaced with a "natural and unaffected, direct and subdued" tone in these stories ("Introduction" 43). Yes, *Whilomville Stories* fails to live up to the lyrical power and narrative irony of Crane's other works, but its self-sustained concept of a world in which children learn to navigate relationships and ideas by engaging in coming-of-age experiences with their peers is the ideal foil for the Tommie sketches. The idea of a separate sphere known as a child's world in which violence is purposeful and a measure of power is vastly opposite than the adult world in which Tommie Johnson battles and violence needs no reason. Tommie is neither able to consistently outwit nor outfight his Bowery world. Though he too is presented with pseudo-coming-of-age moments such as the loss of the dark-brown dog, they do not arm him with the

experiences needed to successfully navigate his future. Instead, they encourage him to resign. Poverty steals Tommie's chance of experiencing a childhood world of necessary (although dangerous) middle-class play and instead places him in a foreign adult world of action and reaction, but ultimately no control.

One would be remiss, however, to completely neglect the overarching irony of Crane's child stories. For Crane, isolation is dangerous (Holton 215). Jimmie Trescott and his friends struggle daily to maintain their place in the child community. They are willing to sacrifice their autonomy for the redundant privilege of again tomorrow proving their worth. Their attempts to navigate their masculinity must balance precociously between the feminine sphere of home and masculine world of play that is to prepare them for manhood. Woven through the Whilomville stories is a thread of anxiety; these are not peaceful, idyllic stories of middle-class suburban life. Though the dialogue is often predictable and the characters largely underdeveloped, Crane is again walking the fine line between depicting reality and giving his middle-class *Harper's* readership what they desire. White middle-class illusions isolate Jimmie and blind the reader. The Whilomville stories are not without Cranean comment on the bleak nature of life regardless of class. Crane's children, children Crane curiously labels as "infants" in the climax of "The Fight," carry a heavy burden.

The Tommie stories were some of Crane's first; the Whilomville stories were near the last he wrote before his untimely death. With Tommie, Crane seems to have returned to the Bowery after *Maggie* to ponder again the fragile children that, if fortuitous enough, grew to be hardened adults. Christopher Benfey sees the presence of the "Whilomville idylls" at the end of Crane's life as his way of "look[ing] nostalgically backward" (262). If such is the case, then Crane's nostalgia was discomfiting. The lives of Crane's fictional children are anything but idyllic, and Crane remains carefully attuned to disparities of class.

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Notes

1. There is one story not like the others. “The Knife,”

a sketch centered around the "American negro's fondness for watermelons," reveals a parallel African-American community adjacent to Whilomville (100). Two men catch one another in Si Bryant's watermelon patch late at night, but one outsmarts the other. Later, the duped man outsmarts Si Bryant. At differing points in the sketch each black man experiences moments of debilitating panic and also moments of clever, sure-footed thinking in order to survive the conflict at hand. Their ethical maneuvering mimics that of the children in the other twelve stories: communal morality determines how they respond to debatable situations. Crane litters the story with mentions of their class, race, and religion, and by doing so establishes their community as different from the town. The presence of "The Knife" in the Whilomville stories adds a seriousness to the collection and demands, by its inclusion, that it be compared to the other sketches.

2. Holton maintains the Whilomville stories are "presented serially in chronological order" and traces the passing of seasons in order to come up with the passing of roughly two-and-a-half years (223, 322).

Stephen Crane: Some Unrecorded Newspaper Comments

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The novelist Henry James called them "Paragraphs," by which he meant those anonymous remarks used to stretch out columns of filler. More often than not snide or snarky, these unsigned comments were abhorred by James and undoubtedly by others subjected to such anonymous attack. Herewith is a sample of such anonymous commentary directed at Stephen Crane.

1. "A new poet has broken loose who affects the barbarous style of Walt Whitman. His name is Stephen Crane, and, like Whitman, he sings with neither rhyme nor reason. A recent criticism of his work disposes of him in the following manner: 'For a man of twenty four, the author 'The Black Rider' [sic] is a sad pessimist. What he needs is a course in light gymnastics or a job at haymaking—something to clear his liver, and, with it, his head and heart.'" (*Idaho Daily Statesman* [July 4, 1895], p. 2.)

2. "A poet by the name of Stephen Crane has blossomed on the poetical horizon. New York papers dub him as a cross between a genius and an ass. Here is a strain of his genius:

'I saw a man pursuing the horizon:
Round and round they sped.
I was disturbed at this.
I accosted the man.
"It is futile," I said:
"You lie," he said,
And ran on.'

The *Albuquerque Democrat*'s poet believes he has an even show with the new genius and gives vent to the following effusion:

'I saw a dog pursuing his tail;
Round and round they sped.
I was disturbed at this.
I accosted the dog:
"Get out you fool," I said,
"Wow, wow," said the dog,'
And ran on.'

We append one with about as much intelligence, but more to the point that Mr. Crane's.

'I saw a man chasing a "chippy":
Round and round they sped.
I was disturbed at this.
I accosted the man.
"You can't catch it,"
"The h__l I can't," he replied,
And he did it.

("The New Poet," *Arizona Weekly Journal-Miner* [July 31, 1895], p. 4.)

3. "Stephen Crane . . . is one of the most 'promising' of the younger writers. Mr. Howells gives him large space in Harper's Weekly, and the sedate Atlantic fills over a column of its priceless space with a review of his recent volume 'The Black Riders.' To be serious, I am nothing short of amazed to see the reverence with which his stuff is handled. The story of the roguish weavers who made for the vain king the magic of fabric, invisible only to unworthy eyes, certainly has its counterpart in reality here. It only needs the innocent child, it seems to me, to tell the turh. If there is anything immortal or even extraordinary in this I confess myself woefully obtuse:

'In the desert
I saw a creature, naked, bestial,
Who, squatting upon the ground.
Held his heart in his hands and ate of it.
I said, "Is it good, friend?"
"It is bitter—bitter," he answered;
"But I like it
Because it is bitter,
And because it is my heart."'

Who will dare say now there is no hope for North Carolina's bard? If there remains any doubt yet in your minds, this will remove it:

'Once there was a man—

Oh, so wise!
In all drink
He detected the bitter,
And in all toch
He found the sting
At last he cried thus:
"There is nothing—
No life,
No joy,
No pain—
There is nothing save opinion,
And opinion be damned."'
'Whatever flaws
One may choose
To pick in this poetry,
One thing
Remains as plain
As a bald head at
A concert—
And that
Of the
Last line
Is [sic] vigorous, if not
Positively convincing.'"
(*Daily Charlotte Observer* [North Carolina] [Feb. 2, 1896], p. 4.)

4. "We expect to find in the New York papers reports of yesterday's football games written by W. D. Howls, Bliss Motorman, Stevie Crane, and a dozen other literary beacons." (*Duluth News Tribune* [Nov. 27, 1896], p. 4.)

5. "Steve Crane, who is on the spot, should give the Greeks a few cuttings from his 'Red Badge of Courage.'" (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 10, 1897], p. 4.)

6. "The Greek soldiers evidently forgot that the I's of Steve Crane were upon them." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 13, 1897], p. 4.)

7. "What the 'new journalism' needs is less of the Steve Crane-Julian Ralph-Rudyard Kipling sort of war correspondence and more like George Alfred Townsend, 'Bull Run' Russell, Whitelaw Reed, A. D. Richardson, Murat Halstead, Joe McCullagh, Archibald Forbes, Charles Carleton Coffin, Januarius McGahan, and others who were genuine newspaper men and not novalists [sic] afflicted with egotism. What newspaper readers want is news, not impression; facts, not fancies." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 19, 1897], p. 4.)

8. "If a man who has fits is a fitist, Steve Crane is giving us a practical demonstration of the survival of the fittest." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 19, 1897], p. 4.)

9. "Marquis Ito, the famous Japanese statesman, will soon visit the United States. His name sounds like a cablegram from Steve Crane or Julian Ralph." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 21, 1897], p. 4.)

10. "Perhaps the Greeks refused to fight through sheer disgust at the idea of having their scrapping abilities submitted to the critical examination of such a war correspondent as Steve Crane." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 27, 1897], p. 4.)

11. "Steve Crane is out with a society poem on which the government ought to appoint a court of inquiry." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [May 27, 1897], p. 4

12."Sentences are being cut very short this fall, on account of the revival of the Stevie Crane fad, and it will involve some expense to authors who have work on the proofs to have it reshaped in the very smart and modish new style. I understand that Mr. Henry James, who is one of the best-groomed men of letters in London, went over the page proofs of his new novel the other day and took out over a bushel of 'ands' and 'buts.'" ("Books, Authors and Art," *Springfield Republican* [Nov. 14, 1897], p. 5.)

13. "The chief element of horror about the reports of further hostilities in Greece is that it will give Steve Crane and Julian Ralph an excuse for tearing off a few more years of the personal pronoun." (*Minneapolis Journal* [Mar. 1, 1898], p. 4.)

14. "Steve Crane seems to have forgotten all about red badges and everything else of a sanguinary tinge." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [Apr. 30, 1898], p. 4.)

15. "It is believed that the Hon. Steve Crane has both feet on the ground." Trenton, NJ *Daily State Gazette* [May 24, 1898], p. 4.)

16. "Mr. Kipling has put in two years on 'A Day's Work.' Steve Crane or Clint Ross would grind out two years' work in a day. It wouldn't be very good but the magazines would buy it." (*Duluth News Tribune* [Aug. 18, 1898], p. 4.)

17. "We cannot understand the temerity of John Bull in going after a lot of howling dervishes before sending notice to Dickie-boy Davis and Steve Crane." (Omaha *Morning World-Herald* [Sept. 9, 1898], p. 4.)

18. "Mr. Steve Crane's latest book of 'poems' leaves one in doubt as to the nature of his malady." (*Duluth News Tribune* [June 8, 1899], p. 4.)

19. "'The Ghost,' with a plot outlined by A. E. W. Mason, and dialogue contributed by Henry James, Robert Barr, George Gissing, Rider Haggard, Joseph Conrad, Marriott Watson, H. G. Wells, Edwin Paugh and Stephen Crane, was recently acted by amateurs at Stephen Crane's country place, Brede Place, Sussex, England." (*Pawtucket Times* [RI], [Feb. 10, 1900], p. 8.)

20. [1] "Crane had a water bottle with him on the day of the Guasimas fight, and as the party got near the field hospital a negro pushed forward and begged for a drink of water. There

was very little left in the bottle, but Crane let the negro drink it all. Then he remarked grimly: 'It's lucky for you, old man, that it wasn't beer. I don't mind sharing my last drop of water, with anybody, but I'd see you d_____ before I'd give you my last drop of beer.'"

[2] "After the surrender of Santiago two rival correspondents set sail on a yacht for Porto Rico. Their most treasured possessions were six bottles of beer. They agreed not to touch it until General Miles' expedition was sighted.

On the third day they sighted a tugboat, from which came the megaphoned inquiry:

'Say, have you fellows got any beer?'

Both correspondents sprang to their feet simultaneously, exclaiming, 'That's Crane.' Then, as loudly as the megaphone could make it, they shrieked: 'Not a drop!'

But Crane's thirst was not to be cut off so easily. In 10 minutes he was alongside in a rowboat.

'You fellows can carry me to St. Thomas if you like. I'm sick of that tugboat. It isn't congenial.'

Once on board, Crane announced that he was tired and went below. An hour later his hosts found him slumbering peacefully with the six empty bottles beside his trunk. Later on, when apologies might have been expected to be in order, Crane remarked briefly: 'Beer isn't good for you fellows, anyway; it would only make you fat.'"

[3] "During the fight at Guantanamo Dr. Gibbs, who was killed a few hours later in the engagement, Crane and three other correspondents who had just arrived as the battle began, were lying flat on their stomachs on the brow of the hill. The bullets were flying about pretty thick when one of the men who had known Crane in New York said:

'I say, Crane, how does this compare with your "Red Badge of Courage"?'

'Oh, _____!' said Crane. 'This isn't half as exciting.'"

("Three Stories of Stephen Crane [from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*]," Birmingham *Age-Herald* [July 2, 1900], p. 8.)

21. "It was but a few months ago—just after last Christmas—that Stephen Crane, whose death we announce to-day with great sorrow, produced at Brede Place n amazing play, acted by amateurs, and written by a set of famous writers, which included Henry James, Mr. Barrie and himself. The guests—and there were many of them—who journeyed down through the snow to the picturesque and remote old house could not fail to notice that Mr. Crane's mind was burning out his body. It was evidence of his kindly nature that he had charged himself with the support of the children of a friend, who were otherwise without means of support.—London Chronicle." "Notes of Books and Authors," (*Springfield Daily Republican* [July 5, 1900], p. 11.)

22. "Should authors read? It was said of the late Stephen Crane that he systematically avoided books to preserve his originality. Perhaps in the enlightened future authors will be educated by keeping them ignorant of the alphabet, which is indeed quite unnecessary for literary composition in these stenographic times." ("Books, Authors and Arts: As to 'Chatter About Books,'" *Springfield Sunday Republican* [Jan. 13, 1901], p. 15.)

23. "There is interest in the fact that the author of one of the two modern books which contain the most vivid and actual descriptions of battle to be found reported should never have seen a battle and that the other should probably have witnessed more battles than any other man alive. The first is Stephen Crane, author of 'The Red Badge of Courage,' the second is 'O,' author awhile ago of 'On the Heels of De Wet' and now of 'The Yellow War.'" ("Great Reporters of Battle," San José *Sunday Mercury and Herald* [June 25, 1905], p. 20.)

24. "Frank Norris did not get a single full-bodied woman on paper. He knew the relations of men and women to their surroundings, but he did not know men and women in their mutual relations or as they appear to themselves in the dark waste and middle of the night. The same applies to Stephen Crane. *Maggie* concerns the streets of New York at a particular

time, and the girl serves merely as a microscope for that study." (Charles Angoff, "Has American Fiction Failed to Produce Memorable Women?: Three Notes on American Literature," *North American Review* [Spring 1939], 247: 38-39.)

25. "Here is a description of a battle, as done into verse by Stephen Crane:

> Toward God a mighty hymn,
> A song of collisions and cries,
> Rumbling wheels, hoof beats, bells,
> Welcomes, farewells, love calls, and moans,
> Voices of joy, idiocy, warning, despair,
> The unknown appeals of brutes,
> The chanting of flowers,
> The screams of cut trees,
> The senseless babble of hens and wise men—
> A cluttered incoherency that says at the stars,
> O God, save us.

If God is merciful, He will most assuredly save us from the 'screams of cut trees,' 'the babble of hens' and more 'cluttered incoherency' from the pen of Mr. Crane."
(*Minneapolis Journal* [June 1, 1899], p. 4.)

26. "I.

> A hideous, screaming, scarlet story. Water on every side, dank, thrilling, liquid water.
> A laboring vessel, blubbering its way through the vast waste, shrieking at every joint.
> Night—and the end not near!
> II.
> Grinding crashes, blinding flashes.
> The huge engines of commerce wrenched in two.
> "I will escape!" screamed the Last Man as the mast snapped and he was freed.
> He sprang to the deck. The watery whirl swished past him uncaring.
> "Aha!" he cried, in glaring, happy triumph. "I have it."

Then—

III.
He climbed upon the bridge of the stately, sinking ship and walked ashore!

—*Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*." ('A la Stephen Crane," *Boston Daily Globe* [Aug. 29, 1897], p. 28.)

27. "McClure's Magazine offers an excellent bill of fare . . . 'In the Depths of a Coal Mine,' by Stephen Crane, the reader is afforded most vivid glimpses of life as it is in that underground, sunless and starless world. The miner's life is shown to be one of hardship and danger and should be well paid. It is well for the more fortunate to get a glimpse sometimes of how their less fortunate brothers live." ("Fresh Literature," *Los Angeles Times* [July 30, 1894], p. 5.)

28. "The student of contemporary American literature must have noted here and there gratifying signs of an increasing interest in portraying what is characteristic and national in our life. Hamlin Garland made too much of a splurge with his prairies tales, yet his idea was the right one. Stephen Crane had the right notion, too; his eye for color was marvelous, and he might have done something big in another decade." ("The Main Current of Fiction," *Springfield Sunday Republican* [July 29, 1900], p. 15.)

29. "The funniest thing in the world is to read the English journals on the subject of Mr. Stephen Crane's survival of the catastrophe which visited the ill-fated Commodore off the coast of Florida. Their solicitude is of course creditable to their humanity, and every right-minded person must rejoice that Mr. Crane escaped the perils of the vasty deep. But when these naïve admirers of his across the Atlantic hint of what a loss to literature might have been there—why, then, it is impossible not to smile. And they are already hoping that the experience will yield Mr. Crane some copy! Never fear. If the trip is not 'worked up' into some highly colored military Craneflated fiction then we very much

mistake Mr. Crane." ("Literary notes," *New York Tribune* [Feb. 6, 1897], p. 8.)

Contributors' Notes

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