Phalanx on a Hill: Responses to Fourierism in the Transcendentalist Circle

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PHALANX ON A HILL:
RESPONSES TO FOURIERISM IN THE TRANSCENDENTALIST CIRCLE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BY
WILLIAM HALL BROCK

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
MAY 1995
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the support of many others. First, it would be difficult to imagine a more supportive committee than Paul Jay, James E. Rocks, and Carl J. Guarneri. I am also indebted to many scholars, colleagues, and friends: Bin Liu, Paul Catterson, Frazier Cole, Suzanne Gossett, John Hoffman, Alan Kozlowski, Thomas Kaminski, Stephanie McIntyre, Jeff Nealon, Mike Perkovich, Joel Porte, Marian Staats, Steven Wartofsky, Christina Zwarg, and others. Most of the research was funded by a dissertation fellowship from Loyola University. My mother, Margaret Brock, and my in-laws, Robert and Mary Lou Nicolay, supported me in many ways. And to Claire Nicolay, I owe everything.
Schreber's 'rays of God' . . . are in reality nothing else than a concrete representation and projection outwards of libidinal cathexes; and they thus lend his delusions a striking conformity with our theory. . . . [The] details of Schreber's delusional structure sound almost like endopsychic perceptions of the processes whose existence I have assumed in these pages as the basis of our explanation of paranoia. . . . It remains for the future to decide whether there is more delusion in my theory than I should like to admit, or whether there is more truth in Schreber's delusion than other people are as yet prepared to believe.

—Sigmund Freud

Fourier je te salue du Grand Cañon du Colorado

—André Breton
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AN</td>
<td>Nathaniel Hawthorne, <em>American Notebooks</em></td>
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<td>BosQR</td>
<td><em>Boston Quarterly Review</em></td>
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<td>BrQR</td>
<td><em>Brownson's Quarterly Review</em></td>
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<td>CWRWE</td>
<td><em>The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson [1971-]</em></td>
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<td>DemRev</td>
<td><em>United States Magazine and Democratic Review</em></td>
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<td>EI</td>
<td>Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel, <em>The Ego Ideal</em></td>
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<td>FR?</td>
<td>Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel and Béla Grunberger, <em>Freud or Reich?</em></td>
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<td>JMN</td>
<td><em>Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson</em></td>
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<td>Parke Godwin, <em>A Popular View of the Doctrines of Charles Fourier</em></td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Alfred Habegger, <em>The Father: A Life of Henry James, Sr.</em></td>
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<td>H</td>
<td><em>The Harbinger</em></td>
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<td>LMF</td>
<td><em>The Letters of Margaret Fuller</em></td>
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<td>LPh</td>
<td><em>The London Phalanx</em></td>
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<td>LRWE</td>
<td><em>The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson</em></td>
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<td>MECW</td>
<td>Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: <em>Collected Works</em></td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>Nathaniel Hawthorne, <em>Novels</em> [Library of America]</td>
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<td>NMI</td>
<td>Charles Fourier, <em>Nouveau Monde Industriel [vol. 6 of OC]</em></td>
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See bibliography for full citations of the above texts.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

André Breton did not discover Fourier until 1940, when he was marooned in New York during World War II. In the summer of 1945, the surrealist poet threw Fourier’s collected works in the back seat and set out on a cross-country trip to Reno, where he would divorce, remarry, and begin the Ode à Charles Fourier. Later Breton suggested that the poem "contains something of the very strange atmosphere . . . where slot machines . . . line the walls of food-shops and post-offices alike, gathering round them in a vague kind of way the crowd of those aspiring to a new conjugal life, the cow-boys and the last gold prospectors" (qtd., White n.p.). Leaving Reno later that summer, Breton made a tour of Southwestern Pueblo communities. Presumably bypassing Los Alamos, he wandered through Arizona and New Mexico, all the while reading Fourier’s Théorie des Quatre Mouvements and continuing work on the Ode. Even as the events of that terrible year surfaced in the poem, Breton insisted upon Fourier’s relevance for his time—and for the land in which he found himself. One century earlier, in another time of crisis, there had been many Americans who would have agreed with him.
When the socialist Charles Fourier died in 1837, one might have supposed that his utopian dream would have perished with him. In fact, however, his French disciples successfully promoted Fourierism by stressing its critique of social structures that unjustly empowered a small class, its belief in the goodness of human passions, and its faith in Association, a new method of social organization that would give free rein to the passions and make work enjoyable. By implementing this reform, they hoped to create "Harmony," a perfectly-organized society.\textsuperscript{1} One such disciple was the American Albert Brisbane, a former student of Fourier's who introduced the movement to America with his popularization Social Destiny of Man (1840). His ensuing propaganda campaign created a small but influential American audience for Fourier's works. At this time, Fourier's three major works, originally published between 1808 and 1829, were republished by the French Fourierists: the aforementioned Quatre mouvements (1841); the Traité de l'Association Domestique Agricole, republished with the less unassuming title Théorie de l'Unité Universelle (4 vols., 1841-1843); and Le Nouveau

\textsuperscript{1}Throughout this dissertation, a general acquaintance with Fourier's theory and the history of the Fourierist movement is assumed. In English, the two best introductions to Fourier are Beecher's biography and the Beecher/Bienvenu anthology. On the French Fourierist movement, see Desroche, La Société festive [SF].
Monde Industriel et Société (1845). These volumes, as well as numerous tracts by Fourier's French disciples, were available in the United States, as evidenced by advertisements in the major American Fourierist periodicals, The Phalanx (1843-1845) and its successor, The Harbinger (1845-1849). Brisbane, ever the promoter, pushed copies into the hands of those he felt might be receptive.

In the early 1840s, several key American Fourierist, or Associationist, leaders, including Brisbane, Horace Greeley, and Parke Godwin, made the acquaintance of members of the Transcendentalist circle. In doing so, the Associationists were partially motivated by the desire to get free publicity. (Orestes Brownson edited his Boston Quarterly Review until 1842, then wrote for the Democratic Review, as did Nathaniel Hawthorne. The Dial, of course, was edited by Margaret Fuller, then Ralph Waldo Emerson. Henry James, Sr., wrote for, and underwrote, The Harbinger. All four magazines published articles by Brisbane.) Yet Brisbane also believed

2The republication history of Fourier's books is complex; see SF 14 for a useful schematic representation. Two other books by Fourier, Pièges et Charlatanisme des deux sectes Saint-Simon et Owen (1831) and La Fausse Industrie (1835-36), were not republished by the French Fourierists; note that the Anthropos edition of the Oeuvres complètes de Charles Fourier (1966-68; 12 vols.) does not include Pièges et Charlatanisme.

3Throughout this study, I use "Transcendentalist circle" in a sociological sense (roughly equivalent to "Emerson's circle").

4In chronological order: "Letter from Mr. Brisbane in reply to the Editor's remarks on Mr. Fourier's system," BosQR 4 (Oct. 1841); "On Association and Attractive Industry,"
that the Transcendentalists' interest in reform, typified by Ripley's Brook Farm experiment, made them potential recruits; indeed, Ripley, Charles A. Dana, John Sullivan Dwight, and William H. Channing led Brook Farm to Fourierism in 1844. Other candidates were not so eager: Brownson, Fuller, James, and Emerson were all exposed to the Fourierist blueprint for utopia, sometimes at great length and against their will.⁵

Despite their initial lack of enthusiasm, all these writers belonged to the select group of Fourier's American readers. In an 1844 letter, Fuller told Brownson that Brisbane had offered to lend her a volume of Fourier in Brownson's possession; she asked him to leave it for her at Elizabeth Palmer Peabody's (LMF 3:174). In September of the same year, Fuller read Nouveau monde industriel (LMF 3:175n). Emerson had dipped into Fourier's books in the early 1840s, then read several volumes in early 1845 and discussed them at length with Caroline Sturgis. In the spring of 1845, Sophia Hawthorne and her husband read Fourier's "fourth volume" in the original French; she found it "abominable, immoral,

⁵Emerson strongly suspected that Brisbane was attempting to manipulate the Transcendentalists for his own purposes. In a letter to Fuller dated March 10 and 12(?), 1842, he warns her that Brisbane wants to submit something for the Dial, "but that is because he wishes you to diffuse Fourierism, not because he has ever read or comprehended a syllable of yours" (LRWE, 5:30).
irreligious, and void of all delicate sentiment," adding that Nathaniel was "thoroughly disgusted" (J. Hawthorne 1:268-269). In August 1851, while The Blithedale Romance was still in its incubation period, Hawthorne borrowed "two or three volumes of Fourier's works" (AN 446). Six days later, his reading of Quatre Mouvements prompted a well-known journal entry, later incorporated into a conversation between Coverdale and Hollingsworth: "Fourier states that, in the progress of the world, the ocean is to lose its saltiness, and acquire the taste of a particularly flavored lemonade—limonade à cèdre."6

Carl J. Guarneri's The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth-Century America (1991), already acknowledged as the standard work on American Fourierism, suggests compelling reasons for studying the responses of the Transcendentalists. While it is true that the short-lived communitarian experiments of the Fourierists had little economic effect on American society, Guarneri argues that they made several major contributions to the antebellum reform debate. The Fourierists furnished a ground-breaking critique of American society from a sociological perspective; they proposed to "harness" the innovations of the Industrial Revolution "for group benefit rather than individual exploitation," rather than rejecting these innovations and championing a nostalgic neo-feudal agrarianism; and they offered a vision of universal

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6AN 310; for the original, see OC 1:45n. Fourier actually wrote "aigre 'de cèdre.'"
reform that was millenarian yet secular (6). One of my goals is to test Guarneri's claim that the Fourierists were "important participant[s]" in the struggle that led to the formation of an American industrial capitalist ideology, that they "played a key part in the dialectic out of which the national creed emerged, though they utterly failed to control the outcome of that dialectic" (6, 8-9).

In doing so, however, I will shift attention to the other side of the dialectic, the anti-Fourierists. These opponents included several members of the Transcendentalist circle, who, despite their expressions of sympathy for social reform and their friendships with the Brook Farmers, often attacked Fourierism. Fuller made fun of the Fourierists in her correspondence; Emerson and Hawthorne all eventually rejected the movement in harsher terms. Brownson, who became the nation's most vitriolic critic of world reform in any guise, even described Fourierism as Satan's handiwork.

But if synthesis requires change from both sides of the dialectic, then it should not be surprising that the attempt to draw a boundary between Fourier's admirers and his detractors is problematic. Over the years, many opponents of Fourierism in the Transcendentalist circle were at least partially seduced by the doctrine; others expressed initial enthusiasm before becoming disenchanted. Henry James's writings in the late 1840s were emphatically Fourierist; this label could arguably be stretched to include Fuller's post-
1843 writings. After his conversion to Catholicism, Brownson claimed that his earlier, erroneous socialist writings had "seized all the great principles of the practical part of Fourierism." Emerson, one of the harshest critics of the Fourierists, nevertheless praised Fourier in his journals for having "the immense merit of originality & hope" (JMN 9.104). Emerson was even married to a fellow-traveler. Lidian Jackson Emerson, in an 1848 letter to Waldo, wrote: "I shall feel bound to do all to promote the success of this blessed movement that my husband will sanction" (Carpenter 155). Many in the Transcendentalist circle evaluated Fourier dynamically, continually revising their earlier opinions.

This study examines American authors' responses to the writings of Fourier and the American Fourierists, paying particular attention to the responses of four members of the Transcendentalist circle: Brownson, Emerson, Henry James, Sr., and Fuller, and to the effect of Hawthorne's The Blithedale Romance on the posthumous reception of the movement. These writers' sporadic expressions of sympathy for Fourierism raise another set of questions. The Associationists were aware of

7"No Church, No Reform." BrQR (April, 1844) [WOAB 4:498].

8Of this group, only Emerson and Fuller are generally considered Transcendentalists; however, Brownson, Hawthorne, and James are among the authors given extensive coverage in Joel Myerson, ed., The Transcendentalists: A Review of Research and Criticism.
the "speculative"—that is, wildly irrational—elements of Fourierism and carefully excluded them from their "official" doctrine (Guarneri 98). For example, Fourier had insisted that the moon would be replaced by five brightly-colored satellites and that Harmonians would eventually grow prehensile tails. Other elements of Fourier's doctrine were generally considered scandalous, notably Fourier's plan to replace marriage with a carefully structured "free" love. Nevertheless, some Associationists, including Brisbane and Godwin, cautiously promulgated some of Fourier's most irrational notions. In fact, some Transcendentalists—for example, the Harbinger writers, Bronson Alcott, and Marianne Dwight—found this visionary Fourierism congenial. Emerson and Thoreau, on the other hand, were at first more likely to mock Fourier's Orphic moments than draw inspiration from them.

When and to what extent were the writers in the Transcendentalist circle aware of speculative Fourierism? And since this visionary socialism was in a sense encroaching on the Transcendentalists' own territory—that is, the universe and its Creator—I am interested in exploring how this knowledge affected their response to the movement.

The posthumous reception of American Fourierism raises yet another set of questions which I do not attempt to answer fully, but which the reader may wish to keep in mind. While the complex interrelationship between the Transcendentalists
and the Fourierists has not yet received the comprehensive treatment it deserves, it has certainly been discussed many times before. A influential characterization of the connections between the two movements is found in the introduction to F. O. Matthiessen's masterwork of canon-formation, *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (1941). Matthiessen defines his literary history by exclusion: it is neither an "intellectual history . . . of the breakdown of Puritan orthodoxy into Unitarianism, and of the quickening of the cool Unitarian strain into the spiritual and emotional fervor of transcendentalism," nor is it a critical history of the "interpretation our great authors gave of the economic and social forces of the time." While Matthiessen noted that these intellectual and social histories would necessarily be closely interrelated, he also insisted upon the distinctions between them:

The two books envisaged [above] might well be called *The Age of Swedenborg* and *The Age of Fourier*. Emerson said in 1854, 'The age is Swedenborg's,' by which he meant that it had embraced the subjective philosophy that 'the soul makes its own world.' That extreme development of idealism was what Emerson had found adumbrated in Channing's 'one sublime idea': the potential divinity of man. That religious assumption could also be social when it claimed the inalienable worth of the individual and his right to participate in whatever the community might

---

9The most comprehensive treatment to date is Guarneri 44-59; the most ambitious attempt to reconcile the two movements is Francis, "The Ideology of Brook Farm" (for other studies, see Guarneri 430n31, 432n58-59).
produce. Thus the transition from transcendentalism to Fourierism was made by many at the time, as by Henry James, Sr., and George Ripley and his loyal followers at Brook Farm. The Age of Fourier could by license be extended to take up a wider subject than utopian socialism; it could treat all the radical movements of the period; it would stress the fact that 1852 witnessed not only the appearance of Pierre but also Uncle Tom's Cabin; it would stress also what had been largely ignored until recently, the anticipation by Orestes Brownson of some of the Marxist analysis of the class controls of action.

But the age was also that of Emerson and Melville. (vii-ix)

Paradoxically, in labeling the antebellum years "The Age of Fourier," Matthiessen effectively excludes Fourierism from the narrative of American literary history. True, he admits that his aesthetic narrative is not comprehensive, yet it is incomparably finer than the two narratives that remain untold. One, "The Age of Swedenborg," would provide the intellectual (perhaps "visionary" or "mystical" would be more appropriate terms) background for the foregrounded American Renaissance, Channing's illuministic revelation. The other, "The Age of Fourier," would relate the comparatively straightforward attempt to make this revelation a material reality. Thus, for Matthiessen, the Age of Fourier was not the age of ideal form, but of pragmatic reform in the material world.

This compartmentalization of the two "Ages" has significance for American literary historiography. From Matthiessen's perspective, a major function of "The Age of Fourier" narrative is to provide the background for the
aesthetically inferior novels of popular culture. Thus, it is precisely his valorization of the Age of Swedenborg over the Age of Fourier that enables him to valorize permanent literature over transient literature, Pierre over Uncle Tom's Cabin, the decision that would eventually make him one of the New Historicians' favorite whipping-boys. Even Vernon Parrington's *The Romantic Revolution in America* (1927)—which established a criterion of "historical significance" rather than "aesthetic[s]" (i), and which argued that the "naturalization of French revolutionary theory," specifically including Fourierism, was the first stage of American romanticism (vi-vii)—fell into a similar reduction. Discussing the "Fourier Phalanx" at Brook Farm, Parrington observed that Brisbane had been successful in converting Ripley, "the least individualistic and most prosaic of the transcendental group," but had "got on badly with the others

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10 Cf. Matthiessen ix-xi. For another example, see Spiller et al., the narrative of their *Literary History of the United States* (1948) only mentions Fourierism in passing; the only substantive remarks are found in a bibliographical essay (3:349-350). The very organization of LHUS invites this foreground / background distinction.

11 Jane Tompkins's *Sensational Designs* (1985) is exemplary. While I am sympathetic to the New Historician critique of an American canon that "embodies the views of a very small, socially, culturally, geographically, and racially restricted elite" (Tompkins 200), I would also suggest that the gay socialist suicide has been more than sufficiently castigated for his political incorrectness. In suggesting that Matthiessen's presentation of Fourierism is misleading, I do not intend to mount yet another frontal assault upon his work, nor do I intend to imply that he was simply unaware of Fourierism's mystical tendencies.
who were too fluid to take a mechanical set" (350). Fluid, individualistic Transcendentalism trumps prosaic, mechanical Fourierism. Some version of this formula had been propounded by the three major Transcendentalists—Emerson, Fuller, and Thoreau. But Emerson and Fuller came to revise their earlier verdict, and rightly so. The Fourierism of Fourier was not a dry materialism, but rather, like Swedenborgianism and like New England Transcendentalism itself, strongly influenced by the illuministic tradition. In other words, no "transition from transcendentalism to Fourierism" was necessary, for the Fourierist ideology of perfectionism was intrinsically transcendental. Yet this dubious "Fourierism equals materialism" equation—a convenient one for the Cold War ideologue, Donald Pease might argue—has frequently been repeated by literary critics and cultural historians.  

Here, it might be appropriate to concede one of the inherent limitations of my approach. I focus upon a group of writers that scholars have placed at or near the heart of the American canon. (Brownson is a central figure in American intellectual history, and James is patriarch of America's most famous literary family.) But Fourierism also influenced other, less canonical antebellum writers who nevertheless had significant influence upon American culture, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and George Lippard (see D. Reynolds 80-84 and Hayden 50-51). The present study deliberately slights other American writers of the 1840s and 1850s—popular novelists, reform writers, feminists—who were influenced by Fourier. I made this decision reluctantly; to exclude these writers on formal grounds would be to adopt Matthiessen's ahistorical criterion of ambiguity, or to reify, paradoxically, the canon that "should" be undermined. Nevertheless, I chose to limit my scope for two very practical reasons. First, even after the long-touted "rediscovery" of historical approaches, there is a relative paucity of criticism on the noncanonical American writers influenced by Fourier. A more comprehensive treatment of
In his classic *The Age of Jackson* (1945), Arthur M. Schlesinger brutally dismissed American Fourierism as "the hobbyhorse of a decade." He characterized the movement as "a posture of romantic despair, assumed in terror before a few economic complexities, self-exposed at every crisis," and even argued for its "irrelevance" to history. Schlesinger's tirade against "the emotions of Utopia" is itself uncharacteristically overwrought—perhaps he saw an analogy between the Fourierists and his generation's Stalinist fellow-travelers. But irrational social movements are not necessarily inconsequential, a fact that is as obvious today as it should have been in 1945. Indeed, the recent studies by Guarneri and Sacvan Bercovitch have independently challenged Schlesinger's claim, arguing that the Fourierists played an important role in the formation of the American capitalist ideology. Bercovitch argues that Emerson's anti-socialist journal entries, which include frequent references to Fourierism, suggest that the nascent ideology of American individualism (or at least Emerson's substantial contribution to that ideology) was forged from "the confrontation between socialist and liberal ideologies in Jacksonian America."

Fourierism's literary influence, one that ventured outside the Transcendentalist circle, would have made this study much longer. Second, *Blithedale* aside, the extent of Fourierism's influence upon antebellum American literature is still relatively obscure. Though my subjects are familiar, most of their writings on Fourier are not.

13367-368. For references to similar critical judgments, see Guarneri 422n13.
When I first began to examine American Fourierism, I too felt that cultural historians had underestimated the movement's importance. The more I read, however, the more I became convinced that Schlesinger's caricature of the movement was not wholly incorrect. To put it bluntly, many American Fourierists were crackpots. This claim has a long and distinguished pedigree and is hardly news to the revisionists. Most of them, however, have contended that the Associationists largely succeeded in purging the wackiest of Fourier's tenets from their movement. This argument was first made by the influential communitarian scholar Arthur E. Bestor, Jr., in his essay, "Albert Brisbane—Propagandist for Socialism in the 1840's" (1947). Bestor held that Fourier's American disciple Brisbane had accomplished the "formidable task" of cull[ing] from the confused mass of Fourier's writings a simple, straight-forward, practicable plan of social action, divorced from all extravagancies and possible immoralities, yet sufficiently linked with Fourier's world-view so that the specific proposals would appear to follow logically (as Fourier and Brisbane believed they did) from a genuinely scientific analysis of the nature of man and society. (147-48)

Guarneri's study, which carefully traces the American movement's French roots, supports Bestor's interpretation (94); the absence of indexed references to Fourier in the final two-thirds of The Utopian Alternative suggests that, in many respects, Fourier's writings had become irrelevant to the...
Associationists. Paradoxically, according to the Bestor/Guarneri interpretation, Fourier's relative obscurity facilitated Brisbane's task, for his selective presentation of Fourier's theory largely controlled the American response. Chapter 2, however, presents evidence that some Americans were attracted to certain "insane" doctrines from the beginning of their interest in Fourierism. In Chapter 3, I suggest that these Americans found Fourierism attractive because of its insanity.

The reader may be curious to know how I came to adopt this psychoanalytic approach. The route was not a direct one. Originally, I had conceived of this project as a literary-historical hybrid. The subsequent publication of Guarneri's study was timely—or rather, I came to that view after a traumatic six weeks—for it relieved me of the burden of historical exposition, while leaving sufficient room for a study of Fourierism in American literature. And even though The Utopian Alternative is a remarkably comprehensive synthesis, some ground was left relatively uncovered. While Guarneri scrupulously documents the unconventional beliefs of many Fourierists during the 1840s, his emphasis is upon the links between Fourierist theory and communitarian practice. Thus, he understandably gives less attention to the impracticable elements of Fourier's doctrine. Indeed, a study with the express goal of "giv[ing] the Fourierists the serious hearing they deserve" can only mention the "copulation of
planets" so many times before subverting its own intentions (6, 19). And yet, these doctrines had provoked a wide range of responses within the Transcendentalist circle, from suspicion and revulsion to sympathy and even ecstasy. For these authors, as for other Americans of the 1840s, Fourierism served as a sort of Rorschach test. Granted, many people have strange beliefs. But why would so many of the New England and New York intelligentsia, accomplished and successful men and women, subscribe to the same set of strange beliefs? Ultimately, the data convinced me that a psychoanalytic approach is necessary. When I discovered Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel’s work, I was impressed by its ability to account for the Transcendentalist circle’s responses.

Chapter 4 examines Orestes Brownson’s prolonged anti-Fourierist crusade. In the early 1840s, Brownson had voiced friendly criticism of the American Fourierist movement, openly sympathizing with many of its goals. In 1842, however, at about the same time that Brownson began to lose faith in reform, his criticism grew more strident. By 1844, the year of his conversion to Catholicism, he had become Fourierism’s fiercest opponent in America. In the four years between the publication of "The Laboring Classes" and his conversion, Brownson wrote eight essays on Fourierism. Brownson’s writings suggest that his conversion to Catholicism was not simply the cause, but also in part the consequence, of his rejection of Fourierism.
Chapter 5 examines two of Sacvan Bercovitch's recent claims: that Emerson's "confrontation with the theory and practice of socialism" circa 1842 catalyzed the shift from his early radicalism to his later conservatism; and that Emerson's unideological ideology of individuality was developed out of his engagement with the "crazy" European socialists. In other words, Bercovitch argues that Emerson's "individuality" was the dialectical negation of European socialist ideology, and perhaps Fourierism in particular. But a closer examination shows that Emerson's reaction was far more complex. At roughly the same time that Brownson was learning to despise Fourier, Emerson was learning to admire the utopian. After reading several volumes of Fourier in early 1845, Emerson came to distinguish Fourier's original theory from adulterated American Associationism. While the mockery continued, it was now juxtaposed with profound, occasionally extravagant appreciations of Fourier's views on diverse topics: social reform, sexual liberation, economics, antislavery, human nature itself. Emerson's complex dialogue with Fourierism suggests that Emerson, in coming to distinguish Fourier from the Associationists, found more merit in the Frenchman's "crazy" thought than in the watered-down socialism of his American interpreters.

Because of deadline demands, the final three chapters are somewhat truncated, and will be more fully developed at a later date. Chapter 6 pushes the application of the ego ideal
theory to its limits, arguing that the elder Henry James's interest in Fourierism's most bizarre doctrines was the indirect result of his earlier psychic crisis. Yet the interest in Fourierism should not be reduced to a mere index of Transcendentalist insanity: Chapter 7 shows that Margaret Fuller's attitude towards Fourierist socialism followed a radically different trajectory, one that is difficult to explain within the psychoanalytic framework. The final chapter abandons Chasseguet-Smirgel in order to read The Blithedale Romance through the lens of another ghost story, Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx.
CHAPTER 2

THE "INSANITY" OF AMERICAN FOURIERISM

In October 1843, Albert Brisbane founded a new Fourierist journal, The Phalanx. His previous writings on Fourierism, which included several magazine articles, a widely-reprinted newspaper column in Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, and a pamphlet that sold 10,000 copies, had already done much to popularize Fourier's social theories (Guarneri 33). Now that he had given many Americans a cursory acquaintance with Fourierism, Brisbane had a more ambitious goal for The Phalanx, expressed in the journal's statement of editorial principles:

THE PHALANX . . . will enter into an exposition of the higher and more scientific parts of Fourier's discoveries, which have not been hitherto been made known in this country, or published to any extent in English.

It will contain copious translations from Fourier's works, the whole of which it is designed in time to give . . . . (Ph 1.1 (6 Oct. 1843): 1)

In the inaugural issue, the editors (Brisbane and Osborne Macdaniel) chose a logical beginning for this project: a serialized translation of Fourier's first major work, Théorie
In a chapter translated in The Phalanx's second number, "Prejudices of the Civilized World," Fourier had attempted to preempt his critics by identifying major obstacles to the theory's acceptance. One such obstacle was the "[s]cientific pride" of his competitors, the false philosophers. Fourier argued that sophists would attack him because, overcome by the theory's brilliance, they would be filled with professional jealousy:

A success of the kind is an affront for the existing generation; the benefits which it will secure are forgotten in thinking of the reproach which is cast upon the century which made it. This is a reason why the author of a brilliant discovery is often ridiculed and persecuted before his discovery is examined and judged.

A man like Newton is not exposed to this kind of jealousy, because his calculations are so transcendent that the scientific in general make no pretension to them; but a man like Christopher Columbus is attacked, vilified, because his idea of searching for a new continent was so simple that any one could have thought of it as well as he. As a result the discoverer is thwarted in his purposes and every effort is made to hinder a realization of his ideas. 15

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14 Hereafter referred to as Quatre mouvements in the text and TOM in the notes. Whenever possible, citations are taken from the standard 1966-1968 edition of Fourier's Oeuvres complètes, the first volume of which [OC 1] is based upon the Bureaux de la Phalangé and Librarie Sociétaires's third edition of TOM, published in 1846. The Phalanx's translation was based upon the 1841 edition. Both the 1841 and 1846 editions incorporate Fourier's manuscript corrections and additions to the 1808 edition, from which some of the following quotations are drawn.

Fourier's "brilliant discovery" would not merely identify the problems underlying the present organization of society, for its explicative power was not limited to the "Practical Part of Fourier's Social Science" that Brisbane had already set forth in his 1842 pamphlet. Fourier appended a lengthy note to this chapter that suggested some unexpected applications of the theory. Here is The Phalanx's reasonably accurate translation, which I quote at length, not for its manifest content, but for what it reveals about its author:

If I was dealing with an impartial age, which sought earnestly to penetrate the mysteries of Nature, it would be easy to prove that Newton and his followers have explained but a minor part of the laws of that branch of Movement, which they have treated, the Sidereal.

As a proof, interrogate astronomers upon the distributive system of the planets, and they will remain silent; their most learned men, Laplace for instance, cannot give the shadow of a solution to the following problems:

What are the laws of sidereal association, the ranks and positions assigned to various planets?
Why is Mercury the nearest to the sun?
Why is Herschel the most distant? being less than Jupiter and Saturn, should it not be nearer to the sun?
What is the cause of different degrees of eccentricity in the orbits of the planets?
What are the laws of astral affinity, or the grouping of satellites with planets?
Why do certain globes conjugate as moons upon a cardinal or pivotal planet, as the satellites of Jupiter, Saturn, and Herschel?
Why has Herschel, sixteen times smaller than Jupiter, six or eight satellites or moons, while Jupiter has only four? Would it not seem that Jupiter should carry the greatest number of moons? Being sixteen times larger than Herschel, might it not carry the greatest number of satellites? The fact of the enormous Jupiter carrying fewer moons than Herschel, is strangely out of proportion with the received theorem of "Gravitation in direct proportion to the mass, etc."
Why has Saturn luminous belts, besides the seven moons, while Jupiter has no luminous belts, though receiving less light from four moons than Saturn from his seven?
Why has Earth a moon, and Venus not?
Why has not our moon an atmosphere like Venus and the Earth?

What are the differences of function in the solar system, between satellites, and planets carrying them as moons, and those which do not carry moons, such as Venus, Mars, Mercury, and Vesta?

What are the changes which have already occurred or will occur, in the relative positions of the planets in our solar system?

What is the nature of the unknown planets? Where are they placed? How are we to discover them? What are their relative dimensions and their functions in the system?

To all these questions our men of science have no answers: they have no knowledge of the laws of distributive harmony. They are ignorant of the major parts of the law of sidereal movement, which they think they have explained.

And I, who am able to answer all these questions fully, since my later discoveries made in the year 1814, have I not completed the task commenced by Newton?

But this complete knowledge of the laws of sidereal movement, which I possess, only constitutes one of the cardinal branches of universal movement. The others still remain to be explained, particularly the pivotal or passional and social movement, on which depends the unitary organization of the human race and its final destiny on earth, which can only be discovered by studying the whole mechanism of universal unity, the causes and effects of all its branches, of which Newton and his followers have only discovered a single fragment, and that the least important to the happiness of man. (Ph 28)

In the third number of The Phalanx (5 Dec. 1843), the translation of Quatre mouvements was abruptly discontinued; in its place appeared excerpts from Fourier’s Treatise on Domestic and Agricultural Association (Traité de l’association domestique-agricole), with the following explanation:
[Because] the subsequent parts [of Theory of the Four Movements are] of a very profound and scientific character, we defer the publication of them to a future time when our readers will be more numerous and better prepared to understand them. (Ph 35)

What should we make of the decision offered by Brisbane and Macdaniel? Their suggestion that the serialization of Quatre mouvements was abandoned because of its overly "scientific character," or even because of its obscurity and bizarreness, fails to convince, if only because the Traité, despite Fourier's stated intentions, is equally bizarre and even more obscure (Beecher 116, 358-359). Indeed, The Phalanx's initial selection from the Traité was a jargon-laden exposition of the theory of series, virtually incomprehensible to the uninitiated. And even if Brisbane and Macdaniel had decided that Quatre mouvements was too difficult for most readers, were there not already a sufficient number of American students of Fourierism to justify an "exposition of the higher and more scientific parts of Fourier's discoveries"? For all its perceived defects, Quatre mouvements had the virtue of being much shorter than the four-volume Traité.

There was a more compelling reason to abandon the translation: of all Fourier's works, Quatre mouvements was the one "written under the least constraint."16 As Henri

16SF, 22. This lack of reticence made Fourier cautious: the title page of Quatre mouvements did not name the author and gave the place of publication as Leipzig. At the end of the book, the author is identified simply as "CHARLES, of
Desroche has argued, the "écriture sauvage" of Fourierism's early years was gradually supplanted by an "écriture censurée." This domestication of Fourier's wild thought took place on several levels: some texts were completely suppressed, notably *Le Nouveau Monde amoreux*, first published in 1967. In others, Fourier practiced self-censorship, often confessing to the reader that he was forced to exert circumspection on a particular doctrinal point. Posthumous editions were subjected to further censorship and reinterpretation by French disciples.\(^ {17}\) The essential point is that most French Fourierist writings were already heavily censored. Since *Quatre mouvements* was perhaps the least "repressed" of these texts, it created special problems for the American Fourierists.

Brisbane and Macdaniel may well have judged that passages like those quoted above were not likely to win over many converts to the American movement. They may have feared that the master appeared paranoid in his preemptive strike upon future critics, egomaniacal in his comparison of his discovery to those of Columbus and Newton, and megalomaniacal in his claim to have discovered a nineteenth-century version of a unified field theory that could be used not only to eliminate

\[^{17}\text{SF 19-20; for a fuller account of this complex history, see SF 19-49 and 159-192.}\]
all social ills, but also to explain the mysteries of the solar system in mind-numbing detail.

Of course, if Fourier's American students found his answers to the "sidereal" questions satisfactory, any objections to his self-glorifying rhetoric would be rendered moot. If the answers were unsatisfactory, however, they might have dismissed the theory as the work of an eccentric or even a madman. They would not have been alone. To be fair, most of Fourier's questions are quite rational—indeed, we now know that Jupiter has more than four moons, that Saturn is not the only planet with rings, and that there were indeed planets undiscovered in Fourier's era. On the other hand, Fourier's answers to these questions rely upon an irrational yet fantastically rationalistic theory of analogies. (For example, in the Théorie de l'Unité universelle, as the Traité was renamed, Fourier ventured to explain the relationship between the planets, the passions, and the fruits found in temperate zones: pears were created by Saturn, Cardinal of ambition, and its seven moons; red fruits by the Earth, planet of friendship, and its five moons; apricots and plums by Herschel, planet of love, and its eight moons.) Perhaps Brisbane and Macdaniel arrived at an intermediate position, deciding that Fourier was a brilliant social theorist whose

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18 See Riasanovsky 19-23 for a useful overview of the extensive critical debate concerning Fourier's sanity.

19 OC 4:243; see also Spencer 35-38.
writings on all other matters were unreliable. One can imagine them paging through *Quatre mouvements* nervously, realizing that in a few issues, they would have to translate Fourier's account of the sexual relations between heavenly bodies. It seems reasonable to postulate that *The Phalanx*’s editors ultimately decided that for the good of the movement, they would not present unabridged translations of Fourier to their American audience. Instead, they would keep the most controversial portions of the theory, as well as their own doubts, to themselves. This theory would seem to be supported by Brisbane’s publication, thirty-three years later, of a new translation of *Quatre mouvements* as the second part of his *General Introduction to Social Science* (1876). While Fourier’s rhetorical questions on sidereal movement are retained, several passages that make embarrassing references to the sexual proclivities of the planets—notably the chapter explaining how the stimulation and growth of Earth’s *couronne boréale* will lead to the regeneration of the Northern Hemisphere—are silently omitted.

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20 For *Quatre mouvements*’ hilarious explanation of each planet’s reproductive options and the role that sidereal copulation plays in the work of creation, see OC 1:38-41, translated in Beecher and Bienvenu’s anthology (402-406).

21 Brisbane modified Fourier’s title to "Social Destinies." Note that the 1976 Hyperion reprint of *General Introduction* erroneously states that the work translated is TUU.

22 *General Introduction* 22-24 n., second pagination.
The hypothesis just offered is consistent with the position championed by Bestor and Guarneri, who note that Brisbane and others promulgated an adulterated version of Fourier in America, one that often censored the master's most bizarre, most shocking, and most embarrassing claims. One could readily understand why Americans of the 1840s who were interested in aspects of the communitarian theory might have been embarrassed to embrace the totality of Fourier's utopian vision, which held that future residents of "Harmony" would grow prehensile tails, gaze at the rising of five multi-colored moons, and anticipate the serial reincarnation of their souls on a succession of planets. Because American proponents of social reform took pains to disassociate themselves from the relatively uncensored version of the theory presented by Fourier himself until his death in 1837, this "true" Fourierism has been considered irrelevant to American intellectual history.

Some American Fourierists went beyond Brisbane's strategy of silent suppression and publicly disassociated themselves from aspects of the theory. As Sterling F. Delano, among others, has noted, George Ripley and others distanced themselves from some of the more controversial Fourierist tenets. They rejected the "Fourierist" label, preferring to be called "Associationists," and in the pages of The Phalanx's successor journal, The Harbinger (1845-1849), they insisted upon the difference between the terms (Delano 18-19). While
the Associationists accepted Fourier's theory of communitarian social reform, they did not necessarily take Fourier's non-economic writings seriously. An 1846 Harbinger editorial elaborated upon this distinction:

As to Fourier's theories of Marriage, of Cosmogony, and the Immortality of the Soul, we do not accept them and this is the position which the Associative School in this country and in Europe, have [sic] always taken and never varied from. . . . . We consider Fourier as a servant to this cause [social reform], and not its master, and take from him such parts as he has demonstrated to our understandings, and no others. 23

As Guarneri has argued, the American Associationists learned from the example of the French Fourierists, who solved similar problems by writing their own theoretical treatises that presented carefully selected portions of Fourier. Brisbane's presentation in Social Destiny of Man, for example, is largely modeled after that of Victor Considerant's treatise Destinée sociale (1834-1842). 24 When The Phalanx and its successor The Harbinger translated large chunks of Fourier verbatim, as they often did, these passages were usually selected carefully. Despite the great interest in Fourierism, none of Fourier's major works was translated into English in its

23 Qtd. in Delano 19. Other English and American Fourierists had made the same distinction years earlier: for example, in the first issue of his journal The London Phalanx, the English Fourierist Hugh Doherty had noted that he advocated "the principles of ASSOCIATION AND ATTRACTIVE INDUSTRY," not Fourier's "purely conjectural" opinions (3 April 1841: 12).

24 Guarneri 94-95. For an account of Considerant's modifications of Fourierist doctrine in Destinée sociale and the book's reception, see Davidson 43-46.
entirety in the 1840s; obviously, Fourier's American audience was sharply restricted by the language barrier.\(^{25}\)

While I largely agree with the standard claim that the American influence of Fourier's writings was highly mediated, an important qualification is necessary: the fact that American Fourierists suppressed portions of Fourier's thought does not necessarily mean that they did so because they believed Fourier was in error. While it is true that Brisbane's wife Redelia, in her introduction to *Albert Brisbane: A Mental Biography* (1893), claims that Albert "did not, even in the beginning, accept all of Fourier" (14), anecdotal evidence suggests that he accepted some of the most outlandish tenets. The Brook Farmer Marianne Dwight related that at a party held in his honor, Brisbane "became speculative" and "talked of our meeting 35000 years hence under Saturn's ring; and we agreed to do so! 35000 years from that very evening."\(^{26}\) With somewhat less enthusiasm, the Brook Farm historian Lindsay Swift passed along an anecdote suggesting that Brisbane took Fourier's cosmological predictions seriously: "[A] group of Brook Farmers [were] lying out in the moonlight. 'What a heavenly moon!' said one.

\(^{25}\)For a fuller discussion of the differences between Fourier's theory and American Associationism, see Guarneri 93-134.

\(^{26}\)Marianne Dwight [Orvis] to Anna Q. T. Parsons, 8 & 10 April 1845, qtd., Orvis 93.
'Miserable world! Damned bad moon!' was poor Brisbane's reply" (Swift 272). This seemingly intemperate reaction would be consistent with a belief in Fourier's pronouncement that the moon was a contemptible dead star, a cadaver, and his prediction that in Harmony "the mummy Phóbé" would be replaced by "five living moons" (OC 4:262, 259). In 1843, Brisbane even lectured to Emerson on Fourier's "descriptions of the self augmenting potency of the solar system which is destined to contain 132 bodies" and on "our stellar duties." And finally, in an 1845 book review for the Harbinger, Brisbane displayed keen interest in the clairvoyant Andrew Jackson Davis's visions of life on Saturn. Davis described the Saturnians as beautiful intellectuals, with "skin so transparent that you can almost see their blood as it circulates in their veins." Like Swift's Houyhnhmns, they lived a long life (900 to 1,000 years) and a sinless one. Brisbane commented:

This description of the people of Saturn ... who live in bands of unity, worshipping God "all as one," instead of living in war and conflict, does not excite entire skepticism in our minds. Saturn we believe to be from various indications, in a state of harmony, having passed through the dark ages of ignorance and discord, which are attendant upon the social infancy or the commencement of the career of every Race upon every planet,—and in which we, as a Race, are still engaged,—and as a consequence some such condition of things must exist there. (Rev. of Lectures on Clairmativeness 203)

27Emerson to Thoreau, Feb. 9?, 10, and 11, 1843, LRWE 7:525. Note that this volume of LRWE was first published in 1990 and was thus unavailable to Bestor.
Michael Fellman has argued that Brisbane’s socialism was enthusiasm cloaked in rationalism. Indeed, Brisbane’s accounts of his first encounters with Fourier’s texts in 1832 indicate that his experience was, in Fellman’s words, "the secular equivalent of conversion"; Brisbane even came to believe that Fourier was a Messiah of sorts, "an almost disembodied intermediary between universal truth and men" (6). Because of this faith, Brisbane believed that Fourier’s communitarian plans had to be followed closely. He was a reluctant supporter of American attempts to realize the phalanx on a scale smaller than the prescribed 1,620 members; since no community ever attempted to follow Fourier’s blueprint exactly, he never joined any of them. In 1844, when Fourierism was at the height of its popularity, Brisbane returned to France in order to perfect his theoretical knowledge (Fellman 15-16). Redelia Brisbane’s account suggests that her husband preferred the speculative theorizing of Fourierist "science" to the American communitarians’ relative pragmatism:

Although [Albert’s] natural disposition led him to cherish his early hopes for rapid social transformation, he was not long in reaching the conviction that the experimental efforts of the reformatory world were ahead of time. His flexible mind was quick to perceive the want of science in all the practical essays of the "Associationists," and when he retired from that field it was to devote the remainder of his life to scientific research. (R. Brisbane 36)

By 1875, the wistful Brisbane had even come to regret the accommodations he had made in disseminating Fourierism:
I was influenced by a low practical ideal . . . little associations. . . . The grand idea was discredited. I should have preached the 'Divine Code,' the doctrine of the passions as a revelation of the human will; universal Association; the history of man as the Overseer of the globe. (qtd., Fellman 17).

Brisbane's self-criticism seems too harsh. While his writings of the 1840's may have pragmatically omitted any mention of the future flavor of the ocean, they did not betray Fourier's idealism. True, Brisbane tried to make this idealism as palatable as possible to his audience. The early chapters of Social Destiny of Man focused upon the practical benefits of Association. For example, such dry chapter titles as "Economies of Association," "Incoherence and Waste of the Present Order," and "Defects of Industry Exercised by Isolated Households" emphasized the economies of scale offered by communitarian living. But as Donald M'Laren noted in an 1844 anti-Fourierist pamphlet with the ominous title Boa Constrictor, Fourier's promise of a Harmonian climatological reform was tacitly endorsed in one of these chapters: Brisbane listed "Derangement of climate" as one of the listed scourges of civilization, and "Equilibrium of temperature and climate" as one of the "permanent benefits" to be derived from social reorganization (SDM 82-83). Some of the later chapters abandon arguments based on economic rationalism entirely; instead, they appeal to a quasi-Swedenborgian faith in correspondences. For example, Brisbane echoes Fourier's claim that a Law of Order permeates all creation, waiting to be
discovered: "The Duty of God is to compose a Social Code, and
to reveal it to man. . . . The duty of man is to search for
the Divine Code." In describing the proper method of
searching for this divinely-ordained socialist system, Fourier
(as presented by Brisbane) uncannily anticipates the radical
individualism of "Self-Reliance" (1841), even in its musical
metaphor of sympathetic vibrations:

The soul of man being a complete harmony, has
within itself the type of the harmonies of the
universe, and can, with the aid of those
proportional intellectual faculties, which have
been given it, elevate itself to comprehend their
system. . . . [T]here is a perfect correspondence
between the harmonies of the passions and those of
the material world . . . .

Brisbane even reaffirms one of Fourier's most radical claims,
that man's implementation of the Divine Code will transform
all the Universe into an Eden, because the destinies of
individuals, the human race, the planet, and the solar system
are all "closely connected" (SDM 244, qtd. in Fellman 13-14).
According to Brisbane's rendering, we are "planetary beings"
(SDM 244), and our "terrestrial Destiny . . . is to oversee the
globe" (SDM 239). By analogy, each planet is a "sideral
being" that "has its function to perform in its high sphere,
as we have ours to perform on its surface" (SDM 244); this

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28 Qtd. in Fellman 9.

29 SDM 209. Although Fourier does not appear to have read
any of the German Idealists, he may have borrowed the concept
of analogies from a second-hand account of Schelling (see
Beecher 346-347); thus, Fourierism and New England
Transcendentalism may share one important source.
mystical nineteenth-century version of the Gaia hypothesis is much more venturesome than the early chapters. Furthermore, in mentioning each planet's "aromal communications and functions with other planets" (SDM 245n), Brisbane even hints at Fourier’s doctrine of sexual relations between planets. In 1843, as editor of The Phalanx, Brisbane may have felt it necessary to distance himself from Fourier’s cosmology; in 1840, however, he had been somewhat less reticent.

One especially compelling piece of evidence for Brisbane’s continued interest in Fourierist arcana was discovered by Bestor himself.30 A friend of Whitman’s, the New York editor Henry Clapp, Jr.,31 translated Quatre mouvements in 1857; Clapp’s work appears to have been commissioned by Brisbane, or at least to have had his imprimatur, as one of Brisbane’s own treatises was published in the same volume.32 That Clapp was under Brisbane’s

30 The material in this paragraph and the following one is indebted to Bestor’s unpublished research: see Bestor Papers, Folder IV.E.28.

31 On Whitman’s acquaintance with Clapp, see Allen, The Solitary Singer 228-229, 260, 269.

32 The entire volume is hereafter referred to as 1857. Brisbane’s contribution to 1857, A Treatise on the Functions of the Human Passions . . . ., had first been published in the previous year with a slightly different title, Theory of the Functions of the Human Passions . . . . [1856]. The Treatise included in 1857 was printed from the same plates as 1856. Furthermore, Brisbane’s "Introduction to Fourier’s Theory of Social Organization," published as the first part of his General Introduction to Social Science [1876], was published from the same plates as pages 49 through 160 of 1856, as one can readily ascertain by comparing 1856 with 1876.
influence is suggested by the title of the translation, *The Social Destiny of Man, or Theory of the Four Movements*, a title borrowed from Brisbane's earlier book. Clapp's translation appears to be the most nearly complete edition of any of Fourier's major works that has ever been published in the United States. Furthermore, most of the "wacky" chapters are included; the abridgement may simply have been made for reasons of space. Far from suppressing all of Fourier's "extravagancies and possible immoralities," Clapp is remarkably faithful to *Quatre mouvements*.

This interest in Fourier's theory of cosmic unity was not limited to Brisbane alone. There were other disciples in the early 1840's who, like Brisbane, downplayed or even suppressed elements of Fourier's theory, yet simultaneously indicated their interest in visionary Fourierism. This veiled enthusiasm can be detected in two of the first books on Fourierism published in English, the 1841 and 1842 translations of Zoë Charlotte Gatti de Gamond's *Fourier et son système* (1838). The original French text and both English

Since 1856, 1857, and 1876 had three different New York publishers, it is obvious that Brisbane retained control of the plates before and after the publication of 1857. This is strong circumstantial evidence that Brisbane approved Clapp's translation.
translations were available in the United States in the early 1840s.\textsuperscript{33}

Gatti de Gamond's popular treatise made little attempt to conceal several of Fourier's most bizarre tenets. In the preface, the author admitted that Fourier's theories of cosmogony and the immortality of the soul had not been "rigorously demonstrated"; furthermore, she pointedly repeated Fourier's statement that his speculations could be separated from the "exact science" of Association (viii-ix). Although she made these qualifications, Gatti de Gamond did not distance herself from the more speculative portions of Fourier's theory, nor did she attempt to suppress them. Instead, the final chapter of \textit{Fourier et son système} explains these theories in detail. She justifies her decision in the last paragraph of the preface:

... I gave myself the task of presenting the system in its entirety and, to some extent, of taking the place of the author's works for those who might be frightened by their bulk and their scientific form. It was not my place to eliminate any essential part; I do not set myself up as a judge, I give an exposition; or, at least, if I

\textsuperscript{33}The New York bookseller J. S. Redfield sold the French edition: see the advertisement in \textit{Ph} 1.12 (15 June 1844): 180. It is likely that Gatti's book was available much earlier: an earlier ad states that in addition to Brisbane's works, Redfield sold "several other works on Association, in French and English": see \textit{Ph} 1.2 (4 November 1843): inside front cover. By September 1842, Emerson was acquainted with the 1841 translation: see "English Reformers" (E&L 1234). Harro Harring, a Danish expatriate, New York writer, and acquaintance of Emerson, not only read Gatti de Gamond in the original French, but replied by composing an anti-socialist poem—in German, no less—his \textit{Episteln an die Fourieristen} (1844).
embrace the doctrine of Association with the most complete conviction, I content myself, with respect to Fourier's magnificent predictions on the future of the globe and the destinies of souls, with repeating these words which terminate a remarkable article by the author of RICHE ET PAUVRE: *If this doctrine is not a providential revelation, surely it is proof of a powerful imagination.* (x, my trans.)

Gatti de Gamond's presentation was not completely frank, however. *Fourier et son systême* suppressed all mention of the Master's plans for sexual and gastronomical liberation, as an anonymous French anti-Fourierist tract of 1842 noted:

> The works of Fourier's disciples, . . . especially Madame Gatti de Gamond's, unanimously dissimulate the scandals of Fourier's system, and denature it by giving it an air of decency. (*Le Système de Fourier étudié dans ses propres écrits*, 55-56)

Both translations of *Fourier et son systême* were published in London. The first, *The Phalanstery, or Attractive Industry and Moral Harmony* (1841), was advertised in a journal familiar to the few American Fourierists of the day, Hugh Doherty's *London Phalanx*.34 The translator, Sophia Chichester, amplified Gatti de Gamond's enthusiasm for Fourier's "magnificent predictions." She is faithful to Gatti de Gamond when the latter vigorously champions the theory of Universal Unity, even claiming that Association is the

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34 A favorable notice of this 1841 translation appears in *LPh* 1.32 (6 November 1841): 506-508; the first two advertisements appeared one issue earlier, *LPh* 1.31 (30 Oct. 1841): 528.
necessary result of Christ's mission.\textsuperscript{35} This spiritualized socialism is preached with enthusiasm, sometimes in strikingly Whitmanesque language: "The Law of Attraction rules the universe, from the blade of grass, from the insect, to the stars revolving in their appointed orbits."\textsuperscript{36} By adding a long introduction in praise of universal unity, as well as numerous passages embroidering Gatti de Gamond's account of Harmonian life, and by deleting virtually all of Gatti de Gamond's first three chapters (her summary of Fourier's proto-Marxist critique of society), Chichester placed much more emphasis upon Fourierism's mystical aspects. Published only one year after Social Destiny of Man, this tract celebrated some of the tenets that British and American readers were most likely to find objectionable.

Yet Chichester's enthusiasm has its limits: she suppresses the theory's mysticism at the same time that she

\textsuperscript{35}The Phalanstery 1-2; cf. Gatti de Gamond, Fourier et son système 6-7. Note that this rhetoric of reconciliation was relatively unusual in the French Fourierist publications of the late 1830's. According to Frank Paul Bowman, most members of Considerant's "orthodox" group voiced anticlerical sentiments circa 1836, then maintained a relative silence on religious matters until 1840; French attempts to synthesize Fourierism and Christianity were not common until 1843 (28). Thus, Gatti de Gamond's unorthodox conservatism may explain why her treatise was relatively neglected by French Fourierists. (Most scholars of the movement have ignored it as well: Bourgin's 1905 study does not even mention it.) By the same token, Gatti de Gamond's respect for Christian tradition may explain why Fourier et son système was popular among English Fourierists: Doherty's London Phalanx also championed an Illuminist brand of Christian Fourierism (cf. Bowman 37-39).

\textsuperscript{36}The Phalanstery, 5; cf. Fourier et son système, 79-80.
embraces it, the same double gesture performed by Brisbane. For example, the final chapter of *The Phalanstery* is devoted to an exposition of Fourier’s theory of "the Melioration of Climates" (162), his belief that the implementation of social harmony would lead to a beneficial global warming. Chichester adds several pages of recent meteorological research to prove that "Fourier’s ideas on this subject are not Utopian" (172); however, both she and Gatti de Gamond fail to explain that, according to Fourier, the *couronne boréale* was to be the primary agent of this climactic change, and that the transformation of the aurora borealis into the *couronne boréale* was to have been the immediate result of the arrival of social Harmony (*OC* 1.41-52).

Granted, Chichester may not have been suppressing mention of the Boreal Crown, but simply had not read *Quatre mouvements*, a rare book prior to its 1841 republication. But there are other instances in which her discretion exceeded Gatti de Gamond’s. Later in the same chapter, for example, she silently omitted Gatti de Gamond’s footnote explaining that in the congenial climate of Harmony, the average person would live one hundred forty-four years.\(^{37}\) More significantly, Gatti de Gamond’s chapter on Fourier’s theory of cosmogonic metempsychosis—which held that each soul alternates between 810 incarnations in this world and an equal number of "extraterrestrial" incarnations before it, along the

\(^{37}\text{Cf. Gatti de Gamond 350-51 and *The Phalanstery*, 167-68.}\)
soul of each planet, eventually merges into the "great soul"—was censored in its entirety.\textsuperscript{38}

This revision indicates how far removed one English Fourierist was from practicing the "simple, straight-forward, practicable plan of social action, divorced from all extravagancies and possible immoralities" that Bestor characterized as typical of Brisbane and the American Fourierists. The numerous references to Gatti de Garnand in early American Fourierist writings strongly suggest that members of the American movement were influenced by these translations.

Interestingly, the first American tracts betray a similar tension between enthusiasm and embarrassment. For example, this tension is evident in the first American handbook "to furnish the public with a brief synthetic view of all the doctrines of Charles Fourier" (PV 5), Parke Godwin's \textit{A Popular View of the Doctrines of Charles Fourier} (1844). Godwin, who had taken over Brisbane's editorial work for \textit{Phalanx} in April 1844, published \textit{Popular View} in the spring of the same year (Guarneri 234). In its preface, Godwin takes pains to distinguish his presentation of Fourierism from Brisbane's: while the latter is credited for fully explaining "[t]he practical parts of the system and some of the higher questions," Godwin also notes that Brisbane had "judiciously" passed over "the abstruser points of inquiry

\textsuperscript{38}Qtd. in Gatti de Gamond 369 and 380.
... until public sentiment was prepared to distinguish between the practical and the purely theoretical doctrines."

While this silence may have been wise in 1840, Godwin argued, it was no longer useful, for Fourierism's enemies were misrepresenting the doctrine to the American public (6).

As with the English tracts, much of Popular View was a translation of a French Fourierist treatise, in this instance, Hippolyte Renaud's Solidarité: Vue synthétique sur la doctrine de Ch. Fourier (1842). Guarneri rightly observes that Godwin's reworking of Renaud's treatise "tone[d] down Fourier's sexual radicalism"; however, his claim that Godwin "repudiated" Fourier's futurology is only partly correct (97). It is true that Godwin, following Renaud, divides his book into two parts. The first explains the principles of Fourier's social science and their practical application in the phalanx; both Renaud and Godwin emphasize that these teachings are the only ones accepted by all Fourierists (PV 73; cf. Renaud 141-143); the second is devoted to the more speculative portions of Fourier's theory. In an "Intermediate" chapter placed between the two parts, Godwin emphasizes this distinction. He argues that Associationism's enemies act in bad faith when they accuse the "Societary or Phalansterian School" of planning "to abolish property, the family relation, and religion," as none of these teachings are part of the movement's creed:

*The School of Fourier proposes but one thing: the organization of labor in the township. It has no other*
object; no other faith, as a School. Individuals are, of course, always at liberty to promulgate whatever opinions they may see fit. (73)

As with the Harbinger editorial cited earlier, this passage is typical of the movement's propaganda: it insists that the Associationists should not be held responsible for any of Fourier's theories that do not directly address social reform. But there is an important distinction: the Harbinger editorialist categorically rejected the non-reform doctrines, while Godwin, writing two years earlier, clearly stated that members of the movement were free to make up their own minds. While Fourier's illuministic pronouncements were not articles of faith for Associationists, neither were they anathema.

In fact, Godwin, still drawing heavily from Renaud, went on to offer a strong argument for taking Fourier's non-social writings seriously:

But as it is obvious that Law, Government, Manners, and Religion, would all be more or less affected by a unitary regime of Industry, as they would all be influenced to bring themselves under the operation of some unitary law. Fourier has extended his researches, and uttered his thought, as to what would be the state of these Customs, Beliefs, etc., in the periods of social Harmony. These conjectures, in the domain of pure theory, and not followed by any proposition, are to be accepted or rejected by the generations of the future, according to the light which time and investigation may throw upon them.

It is from this point of view that the reader is requested to study the second part of this work, in which are elucidated those ideas only which Fourier himself has called his musings or fancies (reveries). These fancies, it is true, in the minds of many of us, possess a clear and signal
truth; but it is only, we repeat, the practical side of Fourier’s theory which is universally adopted and defended by the whole school of Societary Reformers. (PV 73-74)

In other words, Fourier’s speculations are consistent with the rest of his unified field theory. As they give evidence of "the magnificence of the intellect and the nobleness of the heart in which they were born," they should be respected until they are disproved. Godwin’s strategy was similar to Gatti de Gamond’s: he withheld few of the secrets of Fourierism, but disassociated himself from the most speculative portions of the theory. His disclaimer is less than categorical, however:

No one is asked to believe in this second part; we do not ourselves individually accept all of it; and it is given, as an amusement, solely to complete our plan. (PV 74)

Even as he suggested that the second part should not be taken seriously, Godwin left open the possibility that he finds some of Fourier’s conjectures congenial.

The second part of Popular View is indeed much more forthcoming about visionary Fourierism than either Brisbane or the English translators of Gatti de Gamond: the doctrines summarized by Godwin include Fourier’s theories of world government, climactic change, and sexual relations in Harmony,

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39The original version makes it clear that Renaud is among those who have complete faith in Fourier’s "musings": Ces reves, j’en conviens, sont pour moi de HAUTES ET LIMPIDES VERITES, auxquelles je crois avec toute l’energie d’une conviction raisonnee. (142-143, emphasis in original)
as well as his theories of cosmogony, metempsychosis, and universal analogy. Of this assortment, the only doctrine categorically rejected by Godwin was that of non-monogamous sexual relations in Harmony; even here, Godwin was careful to note that Fourier’s moral error was unintentional. In several other cases, Godwin essentially translates Renaud’s discussion, but adds an occasional comment to distance himself from Renaud’s enthusiasm. For example, in the discussion of Fourier’s climatological theories—specifically, his claims that the seasons can be regulated and the polar regions cultivated—Godwin follows Renaud in arguing that these theories are less bizarre than they seem. This argument, however, is prefaced by a deflating disclaimer. The first two sentences in the following quotation are direct translations (cf. Renaud 179); the last sentence, added by Godwin, lends credence to Guarneri’s argument that Godwin categorically rejected the impractical components of Fourier’s theory:

These bold affirmations are those which have led many to believe that Fourier allowed himself to be deluded by his imagination. Let us examine his predictions, and see whether they merit the raillery and disdain with which they have been treated. Let us see if there are not some faint grounds, at least, for the hope that his speculations were not altogether whimsical and crazy. (79)

Similarly, in the cosmogony chapter, Godwin translates Renaud’s claim that "moral proofs" support Fourier’s theory of metempsychosis, then adds a footnote reminding the reader that

40 pv 88-90; see also Guarneri 97.
"[t]his reasoning . . . is given as from Fourier, and not by
the author personally." These asides suggest that Godwin
regarded the entire second part of his book as an "amusement."

Yet not all of Godwin's additions suggested that he
rejected visionary Fourierism. Immediately following the
skeptical footnote cited above, Godwin translated Renaud's
claim that mesmerism and somnambulism offer evidence that
people can contact the "ultra-mundane" world (PV 96-97), then
amplified this claim by adding six paragraphs of his own
arguing that the prophets and geniuses of this world are those
who have a more fully-developed aptitude for contacting the
aromal realm. Godwin even argued that Swedenborg may be one
of the "modern prophets" sent "to lead Humanity through its
accidental destiny of Discord to its essential destiny of
Science and Harmony" (PV 97).

Further evidence of Swedenborgian influence can be found
in the following chapter. To Renaud's unintentionally amusing
examples of Fourier's theory of universal analogy, Godwin
added this footnote: "We are aware how fanciful and inadequate
these scattered instances must be. They may be wrong, even,
without invalidating the principle" (PV 103). He then
appended a six-page discussion comparing Fourierist and
Swedenborgian theories of universal analogy, his largest
substantive addition to Renaud's text. Although Godwin was
careful to note that the law of analogy was not accepted by

41PV 97; cf. Renaud 216.
all Fourierists (106), he also wrote that "it has something in it so captivating, that many persons have admitted it, even while rejecting other parts of Fourier's theory" (104). Godwin also faithfully and, apparently, unironically translated Renaud's defense of one of Fourier's most ridiculed predictions, the transformation of the animal kingdom that was to produce such species as "Anti-Lion, Anti-Tiger, Anti-Crocodile!" These new creatures were to be created through interplanetary intercourse: each planet has "sexual organs" so that the "fecundation of a planet by other planets" can occur (105).

Possibly, Godwin used this chapter to make good on his promise to amuse his audience; nevertheless, I suspect that he was at least partly serious. However risible universal analogy might seem, there were certainly Swedenborgians who were taking the concept seriously; as we shall see, some Americans were interested in Fourier's version as well. Even if Godwin himself was at that time a complete unbeliever in visionary Fourierism, he was careful to note that belief did not disqualify one from participating in the Associationist movement.

All three of these English-language Fourierist tracts (Social Destiny of Man, The Phalanstery, and Popular View) emphasized Fourier's program for radical social reform while

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42PV 105; cf. Renaud 256. This passage was dropped from the 1845 edition of Solidarité.
simultaneously suppressing (or, in the case of *Popular View*, devaluing) the theory's irrational content. To this extent, the traditional scholarly interpretation is correct; however, Bestor overstated the case when he argued that Brisbane succeeded in separating the theory's absurdities from its communitarian plan. In fact, as the "planetary beings" passage from *Social Destiny of Man* suggests, it would appear that Brisbane did not originally intend to divorce communitarian Fourierism from visionary Fourierism.
Janine Chassegue-Smirgel's psychoanalytic theories may be particularly useful in attempting to make sense of the chiliastic, anti-rational utopianism examined in the previous chapter. Chassegue-Smirgel herself has suggested that Fourier's utopian writings are symptomatic of the author's insanity, as well as that of his disciples. This chapter pleads the case for her analysis while simultaneously acknowledging its limitations. As Paul Ricoeur has argued, it is reductive to label Fourier and his ilk simply "sane" or simply "insane":

> The problem of utopias . . . is not only the margin between the unrealized and the impossible but also the margin between fiction, in a positive sense, and fancy, in a pathological sense. The utopian structure cheats our categorization of the difference between the sane and the insane. It contests their clear-cut distinction. (302)

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43Chassegue-Smirgel (b. 1928), a Freudian who is a former Vice-President of the International Psycho-Analytic Association, is best known in the United States for her book Female Sexuality: New Psychological Views. The references to Fourier in her work are brief: see "The Archaic Matrix of the Oedipus Complex in Utopia" 104-106 and EI 193-194.
To illustrate Ricoeur's proposition, one might note that Chasseguet-Smirgel's foregrounding of Fourierism's irrationality is at odds with Guarneri's argument that the American Fourierist movement was in many respects a rational response to problems in post-Jacksonian American culture. Neither approach can be rejected, because both are partially correct. Yet their assumptions are irreconcilable—Fourier's utopia "cheats" such categorization. Since Guarneri has amply demonstrated the rationality of American Fourierism, I will, for practical reasons, emphasize the movement's irrational aspects. Like the two possible readings of the Gestalt psychologist's figure/background diagram, neither of these readings is necessarily "truer" than the other.

Specifically, I would like to emphasize the peculiar resonance of Fourier's universal reform in the United States, the nation that came to believe in itself as the divinely-appointed agent of universal reform. Just as Emerson hoped that in America, "poetry will revive and lead in a new age," the citizens of the United States came to envision "America" as "the star in the constellation Harp, which . . . shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years." This pretty myth is, according to some, a prophecy recently fulfilled: in this post-1989 "new age," America is not merely the leader of the free world, but also the guardian of the New World Order at
Emerson's metaphor was even grander in scope: just as America was to surpass Europe, Vega was to succeed Polaris. As we have seen, many Fourierists believed that the connection between world reform and cosmic reform was more than metaphorical.

It is a critical commonplace that Thomas More's juxtaposition of England and Utopia in the text of Utopia made sixteenth-century England seem more unreal and the mythical isle more realistic (e.g., Greenblatt 34). A similar argument can be made for the juxtaposition of Fourierism and the United States in the 1840's: the writers of the Transcendentalist circle who attacked the Fourierist utopia for its unreality could not do so without also becoming aware—at some level—of a similar pathology in the ideology of "this new yet unapproachable America."

I.

Ironically, Bestor's essay on Albert Brisbane performed virtually the same critical task that he claimed Brisbane's Social Destiny of Man had performed. After dividing Fourierist theory into two compartments, the "sane" doctrines and the

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44 This sentence, written only two years ago, is already dated.

"insane" ones, Bestor focused on the former and suppressed the latter. An alternative approach, one that Schlesinger might find congenial, would be to foreground the "insanity" of Fourierism. A psychoanalytic approach, for example, might argue that certain American Fourierists engaged in similar patterns of apparently irrational behavior because they shared the same unconscious rationale.

Chasseguet-Smirgel's neo-Freudian theory, as well as its implications for the study of Fourierism, are set forth in her most important study, The Ego Ideal: A psychoanalytic essay on the Malady of the Ideal (1975, trans. 1985). In The Ego Ideal, she argues for a return to Freud's earlier conception of the ego ideal as an "autonomous [psychic] entity" formed prior to the superego. According to Chasseguet-Smirgel, the ego ideal's formation is part of the infant's response to his first crisis, his coming-to-awareness of his biological immaturity, the fact that he is helpless and must rely totally upon others. With the coming of critical judgment, the infant is eventually forced to acknowledge the limits of his powers, forced to admit that he is not co-extensive with the

46 In Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1923), Freud collapsed the distinction between "ego ideal" and "superego"; his earlier writings, however, notably "On Narcissism" (1914), had clearly differentiated the two terms (EI 1-3).

47 FR 38-39. I have retained the masculine pronoun used by Chasseguet-Smirgel, who follows Freud in taking the male infant as her normative case. A fully-articulated feminist critique of Chasseguet-Smirgel would be desirable (see Benjamin 320 ff.).
universe. However, this narcissistic fantasy is not wholly abandoned. Even as he reluctantly recognizes the "not-me," the infant projects onto his ego ideal, a psychic agency with the function of "substitut[ing] for primary narcissistic perfection," the narcissistic omnipotence he has just surrendered. From this omnipotence "he is henceforth divided by a gulf that he will spend the rest of his life trying to bridge," the gulf between ego and ego ideal (EI 5, 6). 48 Paradoxically, the infant's desire to regress—that is, to recapture the lost fantasy of omnipotence—can spur his development. In seeking to recover this perfection, the ego ideal's omnipotence is projected onto external models, beginning with the mother. But in emphasizing that the ego ideal cannot be reduced to a mere model, Chasseguet-Smirgel hypothesizes the existence of a "transcendent ego ideal over and above other temporary, and constantly revised, ideals" (EI 8).

Psychoanalytic approaches to literary criticism always run the risk of being crudely reductive; because of its relative simplicity, Chasseguet-Smirgel's theory may be

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48 Chasseguet-Smirgel places the onset of the infant's crisis at roughly six months; note the parallels to Lacan's famous paper on the mirror stage, which placed the "precipitat[ion]" of the ego into the "symbolic matrix" of the ego ideal at the same age. Like Chasseguet-Smirgel, he stressed the impossibility of fully healing the rift between the ego and its ideal (Lacan 2). Chasseguet-Smirgel is brusquely dismissive of Lacan (see, e.g., EI 11, 48; and the 1985 interview in Baruch and Serrano 110). However, the similarities between Lacan's asymptotic dialectic and her own theory of the maturation drive seem undeniable.
particularly dangerous in this respect. Yet this danger is partly offset by its explanatory potential. For example, it sheds light on a central theme of Romanticism, the individual’s recognition of a fall from grace, as exemplified by the Intimations Ode’s "Whither has fled the visionary gleam / Where is it now, the glory and the dream?" These lines may be read as a lament of the rift between ego and ego-ideal, in which Wordsworth’s narrator attempts to recapture the lost unity of the subjective "me" and the objective "not-me," of the narcissistic infant whose ego-"boundaries" are the universe. While the narrator eventually comes to realize that his original project of recapturing the lost unity is impossible, he retains the hope of achieving a different reconciliation in the future. Similarly, Chassegueut-Smirgel argues that the ego ideal is not simply regressive; instead, it "implies the idea of a project," which in turn implies the recognition of the reality principle: the child realizes he cannot become omnipotent overnight. Normally, he will continue to project his ego ideal onto other models, thus spurring his further development. Even if the child successfully imitates his model, however, the ego ideal will interpret this "success" as failure. For in its quest for omnipotence, the ego ideal "prefers absolute solutions" (EI 40-41). The tension between the ego and its ideal is only lessened with maturity, when the adult, having reached Freud’s "scientific" stage, acknowledges that omnipotence is
unattainable by anyone (EI 29-30). Chasseguet-Smirgel postulates that the ego ideal, by "impl[y]ing] the promise of a return to that primitive state of fusion" (EI 43), effectively functions as a "maturation drive" (qtd., EI 44).

Unfortunately, Chasseguet-Smirgel argues, environmental factors often interfere with the maturation drive. If the child's frustrations are too great, for example, reality-testing breaks down, and his "narcissism . . . remains split off from its instinctual life and cathects an exaggerated ego ideal" (EI 32):

[These frustrations] may cause a regression towards a more archaic form of 'narcissistic reinstatement,' or even towards psychotic megalomania in which the original lack of differentiation between internal and external perceptions recurs. (EI 28)

This lack of differentiation between inner and outer worlds may help to explain the paradox of Fourier: how could he have been a brilliant social critic (and thus necessarily an astute observer of the external world) and yet also have been unable to distinguish this analysis from his own megalomaniacal fantasies? Indeed, Fourier's reminiscences emphasized the frustration he had felt in his childhood; Beecher observes that "Fourier thought of himself as a martyr, tyrannized by parents and teachers" (25).

For our present purpose, however, it is less important to account for the genesis of Fourier's fantasies than to explain why others found them attractive. Chasseguet-Smirgel attempts the latter by arguing for the ego ideal theory's relevance to
She claims that the ego ideal "tends to reinstate Illusion," unlike the superego, which "[tends] to promote reality" (EI 76). Because of this fundamental opposition, the superego may be "swept away, as it were, by the sudden reactivation of the old wish for the union of ego and ideal." As Freud argued in Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, the authority of the group can easily be substituted for the conscience of the individual, thus removing the superego's inhibitions and licensing forbidden pleasures (EI 78-79). Taking the most notorious modern example of a group run amok, she argues that Hitler's function in Nazism was that of a "promotor of Illusion." Her explanation also suggests why some Fourierists may have found Fourier's cosmological fantasies appealing:

If one considers that [the leader's] promise [of the arrival of Illusion] stimulates the wish for the fusion of ego and ideal by way of regression and induces the ego to melt into the omnipotent primary object, to encompass the entire universe . . . one can understand, in a general way, that the propensity to a loss of the ego's boundaries makes the individual particularly liable to identify himself not only with each member of the group but with the group formation as a whole. His megalomania finds its expression in this, each person's ego being extended to the whole group. The members of the group lose their individuality and begin to resemble ants or termites. This loss

49 The epigraph to Chasseguet-Smirgel's chapter on group psychology comes from Flaubert's ironic account of Bouvard's reveries of Fourierist harmony in Bouvard and Pécuchet (EI 76). A few pages later, she cites the psychoanalyst's Didier Anzieu's argument that the group, like the dream, "has been imagined as this fabulous place in which all wishes will be satisfied"; the phalanstery is one of Anzieu's examples (qtd., EI 81).
of personal characteristics . . . thus allows each member to feel himself to be, not a minute, undifferentiated particle of a vast whole, but, on the contrary, identified with the totality of the group, thereby conferring on himself an omnipotent ego, a colossal body. (EI 85, emphasis added)

When this narcissistic illusion of omnipotence becomes operative in the group, the individual's agencies of psychic development—the superego and even the mature ego ideal—become "liabilit[ies]" because they are opposed to regression and therefore "may be violently and completely set aside." Such barriers are not merely removed in the individual member's psyche; all perceived enemies of the group's shared illusion must either be converted or eliminated (EI 83-84, 87). Thus, the theory of the ego ideal can be used not only to explain why the Nazis had to eliminate the Jews (whose very existence undermined the racial definition of German nationality), but also why the Fourierists had to eliminate inclement weather through the fable of the couronne boréale (since the mere possibility of, say, a tornado threatened the utopian illusion). This comparison—which is my own, not Chasseguet-Smirgel's—does not address the obvious differences between genocide and harmless fantasy; I make it to suggest the reductiveness of her otherwise convincing argument.  

50 For similar objections to Chasseguet-Smirgel's political reductionism, see Macey 79-80 and Whitebrook. In "The Archaic Matrix of the Oedipus Complex in Utopia" (1984), Chasseguet-Smirgel charges that Fourierism demonizes the Jews as the Other, citing TOM's claim that they were "the secret enemies of mankind" (qtd. 104-105). Indeed, the anti-Semitism of Fourier's writings between 1808 and 1833 has been extensively documented by Edmund Silberner. I think two
Keeping in mind that Chasseguet-Smirgel extends her theory not only to "actual groupings" such as Nazi Germany, but also to individuals "united by an identical . . . politico-mystical conviction" (EI 84-85), her hypothesis may help explain the appeal of "crackpot" Fourierism to some of the Associationists.

The political consequences of Chasseguet-Smirgel's theory was explored in her next book, *Freud or Reich?: Psychoanalysis and Illusion* (1975), a polemical attack on the work of the Freudo-Marxist Wilhelm Reich. In a sense, her attack was superfluous: Reich's theory of the orgone is too bizarre to require refutation. But Chasseguet-Smirgel and co-author Béla Grunberger (her husband and colleague) were more interested in analyzing the resurgence of interest in Reich and Freudo-Marxism after May 1968. *Freud or Reich?* argues for the political significance of the theory of the ego ideal. Casting a wide net off the port side, they dismiss Reich, Marcuse, Fourier, and Marx, among others, for promoting illusory systems, each of which is an "ideology" in the narrow qualifications are necessary, however. First, Fourier's anti-Semitism was not constitutive of the Harmonian illusion to the same extent that the "Jewish question" was constitutive of the Nazi illusion. Fourier far more frequently attacked the philosophes for promulgating false teachings that delayed the advent of Harmony. Second, while granting that Fourier's prejudices influenced later French socialists (Bourgin 531, 559), I am not aware of other virulent anti-Semites in the French or American movements.
sense of the word. That is, the authors' definition only includes those systems of thought

whose (unconscious) aim is the actualization of an illusion, of illusion par excellence, that the ego and its ideal can be reunited by a short-cut, via the pleasure principle. The pleasure principle entails the immediate and complete discharge of the drives without any of the deferments and detours that characterize the path of its opposite, the reality principle. (FR? 15-16)

As Chasseguet-Smirgel notes, this definition parallels Engels's: a "false consciousness" obscures the "real motive forces." She rejects the Marxian explanation of false consciousness, however:

the 'real motive forces' comprise the human wish to return to a lost unity (Marx's 'total man', if you like), rather than 'the material life conditions of the persons inside whose heads this process goes on' [Engels]. (FR? 16)

Returning to the argument of The Ego Ideal, Chasseguet-Smirgel and Grunberger claim that ideology, in projecting the internal rift between ego and ideal onto the external world, insists that "[e]verything which stands in the way of the realization of the illusion . . . has to be annihilated" (FR? 16).

From these foundational assumptions, Chasseguet-Smirgel argues that the very word "Freudo-Marxist" is an oxymoron. Utopians are compelled to break with Freudianism because it only offers relative improvement: "[i]t cannot return us to the omnipotence which we experienced as a foetus . . . when we felt that we were the centre of the world" (FR? 14).

Chasseguet-Smirgel's analysis of Reich, the Freudian dissident
who became an insane systematizer of the libido, explains why his orgonic theory collected followers despite its insanity:

[A]s in many cases of paranoia, the coherent and systematic appearance of ideas is a symptom which allows the subject to function in an apparently normal way. The internal necessity that forces paranoiacs to persuade others as to the reality of their system of belief results in their 'recruiting' converts. These disciples will tend to be seduced by the paranoiac's ideas in so far as these deny reality and mobilize illusion; an illusion which will be backed by manic rationalization. (FR? 109)

Here the parallels between Reich (and his twentieth-century followers) and Fourier (and his nineteenth-century followers) are in many respects uncannily close. Both found disciples all over the world, particularly in the United States (FR? 116-123). One was a Freudo-Marxist; the other has been hailed as the harbinger of Marx and Freud. Both were obsessive systematizers of the libido; despite this preoccupation, both denied the existence of infantile sexuality.51 Both were obsessed by the fear that others would claim the credit for his discoveries (FR? 116); both were anti-Semites (FR? 97-98). Fourier's Phalanx finds its parallel in Reich's utopian community, the "Organon" (FR? 117). Just as Fourier insisted that interplanetary sexual relations would produce the Boreal Crown, Reich contended that the aurora borealis was an divine emanation of orgonic energy (FR? 113, 118). Reich's final book, The Cosmic Superimposition (1955), even developed a "delusional

cosmology" similar to Fourier's, claiming, in Reich's own words, that the "orgone ocean" was "the primordial mover of the heavenly bodies."\(^{52}\)

In many respects, the fantasies of both Fourier and Reich resemble those of Judge Schreber:

> The culminating point of the patient's delusional system is his belief that he has the mission to redeem the world, and to restore mankind to their lost state of bliss. . . . The most essential part of his mission of redemption is that it must be preceded by his transformation into a woman. (Freud, SE 12:16-17)

Chasseguet-Smirgel points to the case of Schreber (1911) as an important anticipation of the ego ideal theory elaborated in "On Narcissism" (EI 225-229). Freud argued that paranoids constructed such delusional systems "as a means of warding off . . . [passive] homosexual wishful phantas[ies]" (SE 12:59). Compare Fourier's only declared sexual proclivity, his "mania of Sapphianism." He discovered this preference "by chance" at the age of thirty-five (OC 7:389; qtd., Beecher 84), or roughly one year before the publication of TOM. Also note Fourier's sadomasochistic fantasy of a "third sex" in the era between "Civilization" and Harmony. These hermaphrodites "would prove with a beating of rods that men as well as women are made for its pleasure" (OC 1:219; qtd., Manuel and Manuel 674).

To summarize the relevance of Freud or Reich\(^{52}\) to the study of Fourierism: the striking parallels between Fourier

\(^{52}\)Qtd., FR? 218-219.
and Reich strongly suggest that Fourier suffered from the narcissistic regression described by Chasseguet-Smirgel in her analysis of Reich, an interpretation that is consonant with her brief remarks on Fourier elsewhere. This psychic disorder manifested itself in Fourier's theoretical system, which proposed an illusory reform that would be rapid, permanent, and literally universal. Fourier's disciples, in accepting these reform schemes, participated in the group illusion.

The theory of the ego ideal can be used to construct a plausible explanation for the "insane" tenets of Fourier's writings, as well as for certain American Fourierists' otherwise puzzling enthusiasm for these tenets.\(^{53}\) In *Desire and the Political Unconscious in American Literature: Eros and Ideology* (1990), Sam B. Girgus deploys Chasseguet-Smirgel for a different end, arguing that in providing a psychic basis for ideological thought, the theory of the ego ideal has particular relevance for American literary history.\(^{54}\) If Girgus's claim has merit, then it is possible that Chasseguet-Smirgel's work may be particularly helpful in explaining American authors' responses to Fourierist texts. Before

\(^{53}\) That is, Brisbane's and Godwin's repression of certain utopian longings could be connected with homoerotic repression. Note, however, that because Chasseguet-Smirgel takes the male as the normative case, her theory does not readily account for Sophia Chichester.

\(^{54}\) I am particularly indebted to the first section of Girgus's book, "America and the Semantics of Desire" (1-46).
returning to the discussion of Fourierism's sanity, I would like to sketch brief psychoanalytic readings of three works from the canon of antebellum American literature. These readings offer suggestive parallels to the psychoanalytic reading of Fourier and Fourierism.

II.

The first of these texts, Edgar Allan Poe's *Eureka* (1848), actually included a brief examination of Fourier's cosmology. Poe dismissed it as the work of a second-rate philosopher "whose genius . . . has a strongly-pronounced washer-womanish bias, doing every thing up by the dozen" (1343). Like Chasseguet-Smirgel, Poe implied that Fourier's analogical cosmology was the product of a disordered intellect, one that had lost the "struggle against its propensity for analogical inference—against its monomaniac grasping at the infinite" (1342). His closing judgment, "It is hardly worthwhile, perhaps, even to sneer at the reveries of Fourier" (1343), may seem like the level-headed opinion of a seeker of scientific truth. In an earlier passage, Poe had rejected "fantastic efforts" to explain the principle underlying the law of gravitation made by the adherents of "Magnetism, or Mesmerism, or Swedenborgianism, or Transcendentalism, or some other equally delicious ism of the same species" (1289).
Indeed, while Fourier's law of passionate attraction was founded upon a pseudoscientific analogy with Newtonian attraction, Poe could have argued that his own cosmology was based on the work of respectable nineteenth-century scientists. One of Poe's major sources was an influential popular treatise by the British astronomer John Nichol that summarized Pierre-Simon Laplace's nebular hypothesis. Poe also appropriated Nichol's prediction that gravitational attraction would eventually contract all the matter in the universe into a single mass.\textsuperscript{55} As its dedication to Alexander von Humboldt signals, \textit{Eureka} paid tribute to several well-known scientists of the era. Furthermore, some of Poe's scientific speculations hold up surprisingly well. For example, he partially anticipated Maxwell's unified electromagnetic field theory (1281); one can also find proto-Einsteinian arguments for the space-time continuum (1340), against the ether hypothesis (1349-1352), and for the identity of mass and energy (1355). Poe even offers a Big Bang-like account of the formation of the visible universe (1276-1280). While Poe's scientific reputation may not deserve rehabilitation, many of his speculations were reasonable; his frequent citation of authorities and his arguments against pseudoscience added a veneer of respectability to \textit{Eureka}. 

\textsuperscript{55}Silverman 531-532; for a discussion of the influence of Laplace's nebular hypothesis upon \textit{Eureka}, see Chai 123-129.
As many readers have noted, however, Eureka echoes Auguste Dupin's argument in "The Purloined Letter" for the mathematician-poet's superiority to the mere mathematician; Poe launched a similar tirade against those scientists who were "mathematicians solely" and lacked "Imagination" (1290). Despite the scientific plausibility of many of Poe's cosmological speculations, Eureka is also a self-proclaimed "Prose Poem" that explicates his personal theology. Poe's pantheistic God created the material world in order to scatter His Being throughout the expanding universe in "almost Infinite Self-Diffusion." The creatures in this universe were not just part of the Divine Being; collectively, they comprised the Divine Life:

"The general sum of [these creatures'] sensations is precisely that amount of Happiness which appertains by right to the Divine Being when concentrated within Himself. (Poe 1358)

This theo-mathematics became the basis for Poe's wacky cosmogony. He held that our universe would not expand forever because its intelligent creatures eventually become aware of their "identity with God" and long to restore the Divine Being's "Concentrated Self" (1358). With this coming-to-consciousness, the expansion of the material universe would end and Poe's version of the Big Crunch would begin, activated by matter's "inclination for Unity" (1353), each atom's "sympathiz[ing] with the most delicate movements of every other atom" (1286). Poe claimed to have discovered the principle underlying Newtonian physics: particles of matter
gravitated towards each other because they wanted to! Despite Poe's renunciation of Fourier, his delusional theory of the universe remarkably resembles Fourier's. The utopian socialist claimed that the passions attract us to our destiny in a fashion analogous to gravity; Poe claimed that passional attraction was the principle underlying gravitational attraction.

_Eureka_ offers evidence that Poe had undergone the narcissistic regression described by Chasseguet-Smirgel. Kenneth Silverman's excellent biography similarly argues that _Eureka_ 's pathology is revealed by its opening and closing references to the death of its author. See, for example, the final note⁵⁶:

> The pain of the consideration that we shall lose our individual identity, ceases at once when we reflect further that the process, as above described, is, neither more nor less than that of the absorption, by each individual intelligence, of all other intelligences (that is, of the Universe) into its own. That God may be all in all, each must become God. (Poe 1359n)

For Silverman, _Eureka_ is symptomatic of Poe's refusal to accept the reality principle, specifically, the reality of death: his "cosmological theorizing lends itself readily to gratifying consolatory fantasies of divinity and omnipotence" (Silverman 534). I would add that Poe's very title suggests more than a hint of megalomania. So does the philosophical

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⁵⁶This note does not appear in all editions of _Eureka_: I cite the Library of America text, which is based on Roland W. Nelson's critical edition.
digression preceding the exposition of Poe's cosmology, a "letter" from the year 2848 refuting the philosophical errors of previous millennia (1263-1271). The correspondent from the future argues for the superiority of the analogical method over the deductive philosophy of "Aries Tottle" and the inductive philosophy of "Hog" [i.e., Bacon]. In both substance and tone, Poe's irreverent dismissal of the two received philosophical methods is reminiscent of Fourier's splenetic rejection of the "uncertain sciences" in the introduction to *Quatre mouvements* (OC 1:14-19). In addition to Poe's obsession with analogy, one shared with Fourier, Silverman also notes the recurrence of the theme of Universal Unity (531-532). Such fixations, especially in conjunction with Poe's claims that he was carrying on the work of Newton and that matter has a "desire . . . to return into the Unity whence it was diffused," are strikingly reminiscent of Fourier. Like Fourier, Poe saw the present state of the universe as "abnormal" and predicted a "return into Unity" (1278).

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57 In his sympathetic discussion of Poe as scientific theorist, Leon Chai cites Einstein's defense of analogical "free creations of thought" (108n). I think Chai is stretching the point, however. It is one matter to affirm that all scientific truth is necessarily theoretically elegant (Chai 106); it is quite another to make the Keatsian claim that such an aesthetic judgment is sufficient to determine scientific truth. Poe claimed that "the Beauty that abounds" in the "Truth" of *Eureka* was sufficient to "constitut[e] it true" (1259).

58 Poe 1296; cf. Silverman 339, 532.
While Fourier does not seem to have been a significant influence upon Poe, Eureka is congruent with Chasseguet-Smirgel's theory of regression to primary narcissism. Of course, one could run virtually any nineteenth-century Romantic text through this psychoanalytic reading machine, grind it up, and stuff it into the (appropriately phallocentric) sausage-casing of the ego ideal theory. But this theory offers a sensible explanation for some otherwise bizarre coincidences between Fourier's writings and Eureka: both championed a vitalist cosmology which insisted upon the analogy between gravitational attraction and volition, both barely concealed their authors' megalomania, both rejected received philosophy, both expressed dissatisfaction with the present order of things, and both searched for a Universal Unity to be achieved by a merger of all beings into the Godhead.

While Eureka did not inspire a social movement, one can hypothesize that a vision of social unity in which all people were to become part of the "One Man" might be regarded as an intermediate step in achieving cosmic unity. The potential relevance of Chasseguet-Smirgel's analysis to Whitman's "Song of Myself" has already been implied by Girgus (20-25). Indeed, Whitman's desires for cosmic, cultural, and psychic unity are inextricably knotted. Note, for example, the sequence of the poem's initial mystical vision. Whitman's
narrator first rejects much of American society as the Other: "Trippers and askers surround me / [. . . . ] / But they are not the Me myself" (29-30, 11. 55-65), thus projecting the "tripping and asking" part of the narrator's psyche (in Chasseguet-Smirgel's terms, the ego conscious of having fallen short of its ideal) onto the American body politic. This projection and rejection is immediately followed by the epiphanic reunion of the narrator's "my soul" with his "the other I am" (30, 1. 73)—the reunion of ego and ideal—which in turn precipitates the orgasmic utopia of cosmic, social, and natural oneness (30-31; 11. 82-89). As the distinctions between birth, copulation, and death collapse in the vision of universal unity, the narrator reassures us, "Who need be afraid of the merge?" (31-33; 11. 101-136), a line that would not be out of place in Eureka. In the middle of another famous passage, one montage of images offers striking support for this psychoanalytic reading:

Through me many long dumb voices,
[... . ]
Voices of cycles of preparation and accretion,
And of the threads that connect the stars—and of wombs, and of the fatherstuff (50; 11. 509, 513-514)

The heretofore repressed "threads that connect the stars" suggest a very Fourierist vision of interstellar intercourse. In the same line, the narrator discloses his seemingly incongruous desire to speak for womb and semen, which signals the ultimate regression fantasy: regression to the moment of conception. The juxtaposition of these two desires further
suggests the equivalence of the individual and the stars, paralleling Fourier's theory of cosmogonic metempsychosis. Furthermore, the immediate context connects this cosmic fantasy of regression with the project of social reform: Walt also speaks the password primeval not just for the threads that connect the stars, but also for slaves, prostitutes, and deformed persons. Granted, these passages were probably not directly influenced by Fourier. On the other hand, Gay Wilson Allen has suggested Social Destiny of Man as a possible source for the cosmic imagery in the 1855 edition.\(^{59}\)

Nor would I suggest that "Song of Myself," for all its wackiness, is "insane" in the clinical sense. It seems to me, however, that this always-fuzzy distinction can only be sustained on aesthetic grounds—if schizophrenia is bad poetry, then Whitman is very healthy. Even as Eureka dispenses with the narrative frame in presenting the same bizarre pseudo-scientific theories advanced and defended by the historical Poe (Silverman 338, 342), the text repeatedly insists upon its literary status as "prose poem," thus undermining those critics (myself included) who collapse the distinction between author and narrator. Conversely, if we argue that the textual "Walt" is more self-conscious of his self-projection than the the "Poe" of Eureka—knows he is proclaiming himself a "kosmos," knows he is taking himself "the exact dimensions of

\(^{59}\)Solitary Singer 129-130. While Whitman was a friend of both Brisbane and Henry Clapp, he was hostile to Fourierist doctrine. See Solitary Singer 228-229, 370.
Jehovah"⁶⁰—then does this self-consciousness make him less or more deluded than Eureka's narrator?

Another, possibly more fruitful distinction can be drawn between the two texts. Eureka, like many of Poe's other writings, made virtually no reference to American culture. In contrast, the 1855 "Song of Myself" was the first installment of Whitman's national poem; Walt is "an American, one of the roughs" before he is "a kosmos." Girgus's line of reasoning suggests that the very "American-ness" of a text with utopian tendencies may have significance for a psychoanalytic reading. As evidence, I offer a group of Hawthorne's tales published in 1843-1844—the period when American interest in Fourierism was at its peak. Like "Song of Myself," these tales—"The Hall of Fantasy," "The Procession of Life," "The Celestial Rail-road," and "Earth's Holocaust"—are self-conscious about their nationality. They were formally self-conscious as well: in her insightful study of spiritualism in antebellum literature, Carolyn Karcher points to them as the beginning of a new genre, the antireform satire (69). But I would suggest that the self-conscious detachment of these tales is their most important trait. That is, while the lay analysis conducted above treats Fourier's, Poe's, and Whitman's writings as "patients," Hawthorne's narrator is not merely another object for analysis. He performs the analyst's task, with America as

⁶⁰"Song" 50, 1. 499; 73, 1. 1023.
his patient.\textsuperscript{61} In this respect, Hawthorne's critique is more radical than Whitman's: it suggests that the American experiment in government may be an illusory reform.

None of the allegorical tales named above mention Fourier or his American followers\textsuperscript{62}; the occasional snide references to French philosophy in these stories are probably aimed at Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Encyclopedists rather than at the nineteenth-century socialists. Yet in all of these stories, Hawthorne's narrator attacks the perfectionism of the era as regressive. For example, the "self-styled reformers" found in the Hall of Fantasy include "innumerable theorists" with "schemes for a better life" that are "as wild as fancy could make [them]"; they "look [at the whole external world] through pictured windows" and "mistake" their view "for the whitest sunshine" (\textit{Tales} 741). Each of the reformers in the Procession of Life "is apt . . . to fancy that there is no other good to be done on earth but that self-same good to which he has put his hand" and that "his scheme must be wrought out . . . or the world is no longer worthy of a position in the universe" (\textit{Tales} 803-804). A closely related subgenre, Hawthorne's mad scientist tales, may be read as

\textsuperscript{61}Of course, the 1855 "Song of Myself" contains specific criticisms of American culture, but it ultimately affirms the entire American project, and does not call "America" into question in the way that, say, \textit{Democratic Vistas} does.

\textsuperscript{62}These tales do mock other contemporary reform groups, however. For example, the "The Hall of Fantasy" and "The New Adam and Eve" took potshots at the millenarian Millerites (\textit{Tales} 741-745, 746).
allegorical proof that reformers are doomed by their perverse desires. Aylmer ("The Birth-mark") and Rappaccini practice perfectionism on a microcosmic level, ultimately killing their beloved subjects. The upshot of the social experiment in Rappaccini's Paduan garden—a microcosmic representation of America—suggests that Eden cannot be recovered by giving free rein to the passions. Thus, Hawthorne wrote several variations on The Blithedale Romance's major theme in the period of Fourierism's greatest popularity, some eight years before he began Blithedale. In both the anti-reform satires and the mad-scientist tales, a supposedly perfectionistic reform ultimately reveals its true, regressive nature. Furthermore, several of these tales were published in John L. O'Sullivan's Democratic Review, a major forum for debates on the Fourierist program.

Of all Hawthorne's anti-reform allegories, perhaps "The Celestial Rail-road" most closely parallels Chasseguet-Smirgel's critique of utopianism. In this high-tech rewrite of Pilgrim's Progress, Mr. Smooth-it-away's railroad offers the narrator a effortless ride, with the Celestial City as its ostensible destination. Ultimately, Mr. Smooth-it-away reveals himself to be the Devil, and his railroad has actually delivered its passengers to the ferry bound for Hell. The allegory, a didactic and mildly amusing variation on Bunyan's Christian typology, also has resonance in secular contexts. On one level, "The Celestial Rail-road" warns against placing
too much faith in technological progress. The Devil's very pseudonym promises that all former difficulties can be smoothed away in the Industrial Age. But those who believe in painless progress eventually find themselves in a dystopia.

An alternative reading might borrow from Leo Marx in mapping Hawthorne's use of the railroad metaphor onto "the landscape of the psyche" (27-28). If we anachronistically read Pilgrim's Progress as an allegory of Chasseguet-Smirgel's theory, the Christian pilgrim becomes the ego (the pilgrim's sense of fallenness standing in for the ego's awareness of having lost the state of primary narcissism), the Celestial City becomes the ego ideal, and the pilgrim's long and difficult journey symbolizes the maturation of the ego. In "The Celestial Rail-road," Mr. Smooth-it-away has glad tidings for the pilgrims: they no longer must endure the painful maturation process. Many new conveniences ease the pilgrims' progress: they can use a new bridge to cross Bunyan's Slough of Despond (808-809); they can take their burdens off their shoulders and deposit them "snugly" in the baggage-car (810); and, instead of making an arduous climb up the Hill Difficulty, they can relax while the train travels through a recently-bored tunnel. As Hawthorne's narrator half-perceives, however, these shortcuts offer no real progress. The bridge across the Slough of Despond "vibrated and heaved up and down, in a very formidable manner." At the end of the line, the pilgrims must retrieve their burdens from the
Hawthorne's narrator implies doubt about the tunnel's sturdiness in typically ironic fashion: "unless the rocks and earth should chance to crumble down, it will remain an eternal monument of the builder's skill and enterprise" (813). In the end, the illusory nature of all these reforms is revealed. In reading "The Celestial Rail-road" as a psychoanalytic morality tale, we learn that true progress can only be made by accepting the Freudian project and acknowledging the reality principle. Readers in the age of freedom's ferment might well have inferred a more specific moral: world-reformers such as Fourier offer nothing but mirages.

The application of this reading to all of Hawthorne's anti-reform tales has a blind spot, however. It fails to account for the narrator's occasional expressions of sympathy for reformers. For example, the visitor to the Hall of Fantasy praises all reformers for their idealism. Whether they are inspired or misguided, he "love[s] and honor[s] such men" (Tales 740). Another tale from this period, "The New Adam and Eve," shows that an unfallen couple would find existing social institutions disagreeable. The conflict between noble passions and ignoble culture is a quintessentially Fourierist theme. Likewise, the narrator of "The Procession of Life" appeals to our "innate sense of something wrong" with all past and present schemes of organizing humanity. He describes his
tale as a speculative attempt to make "a true classification of society" (Tales 795), a goal for which Fourier also strove.

Hawthorne's critique of utopian alternatives in these self-referential American tales implicitly underwrites his audience's faith in the cultural status quo. At the same time, his praise of visionary utopians has the potential to undermine his audience's faith in the ultimate success of the American experiment. In asking what Chasseguet-Smirgel's analysis of Fourier omits, I will argue for Fourierism's relevance to the American ideology.

II.

After reading "The Celestial Rail-road" through Chasseguet-Smirgel's framework, one might offer the tale as a post-Cold War allegory. Hawthorne's narrator suddenly wakes from his dream to discover that he has barely escaped being delivered to the Dark Valley. Similarly, Chasseguet-Smirgel implies that socialist history is a nightmare from which we should be trying to awake. From this perspective, Fourierism becomes a particularly convenient ideological opponent, easily debunked and useful in calling its socialist progeny into question. Daniel Bell, for example, who has articulated a narrow definition of "ideology" similar to Chasseguet-Smirgel's, has also written one of the most strident attacks upon Fourierism. The opening sentences of Bell's well-

known essay on American Marxism, reprinted in *The End of Ideology*, mock utopian longing: "Socialism was an unbounded dream. Fourier promised that under socialism people would be at least ten feet tall" ("Background" 1:215).

Even self-proclaimed socialists have resorted to the strategy of rejecting alternative socialisms by associating them with Fourierism. The nineteenth-century German socialist Eugen Dühring dismissed Saint-Simon, Enfantin, and Owen, but reserved his most contemptuous remarks for Fourier, as a contemporary critic noted:

> With Fourier [. . .] Herr Dühring completely loses patience. For Fourier "revealed every element of insanity . . . ideas which one would normally have most expected to find in madhouses . . . the wildest dreams . . . products of delirium . . . ." "The unspeakably silly Fourier," this "infantile mind," this "idiot" is withal not even a socialist; his phalanstery is absolutely not a piece of rational socialism, but "a caricature constructed on the pattern of everyday commerce."

> And finally: "Anyone who does not find these effusions" (of Fourier's, concerning Newton) ". . . sufficient to convince himself that in Fourier's name and in the whole of Fourierism it is only the first syllable" (fou—crazy) "that has any truth in it, should himself be classed under some category of idiots." (MECW 25:31)

Indeed, Fourier's profound influence upon the early writings of Marx and Engels—even upon the *Manifesto*, despite its critique of the utopian socialists—has been taken as an manifestation of the implausibility, impossibility, or even lunacy of Marxism, if not of socialism in general. 64 Indeed,

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64 For this argument, see Bowles, "The Marxian Adaptation of the Ideology of Fourier."
The German Ideology is peppered with favorable allusions to Fourierism, including Marx and Engels's attack upon the "true socialist" Karl Grün for his misreading of Fourier (MECW 5:510-519). Fourier's parallel critique of mercantilism and marriage was the model for The German Ideology's comparison of the exploitation of labor in the family with that of the social order.⁶⁵ This dual critique became the theoretical basis for the Manifesto's call for the abolition of the family in the classless society. Even Marx's utopia, in which the unalienated laborer would be able to hunt, fish, rear cattle, and criticize in the same workday "without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd, or critic" (MECW 5:47), was inspired by Fourier's plan for serial labor. In the Phalanx, all work was to be done in two-hour shifts in order to satisfy the alternating, or "butterfly" passion's need for variety (Beecher 294). And what overarching passion is communist society designed to satisfy if not Fourierist "unityism"?

But there is a fundamental problem with the attempt to tar Marxism with the insanity of Fourierism. The critic who cited Dühring's dismissal of Fourier was, of course, Engels in his Anti-Dühring (1878). It was here that Engels introduced the distinction between "scientific" and "utopian" socialism and emphatically rejected the latter as counterproductive. Yet Engels defended Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, arguing

⁶⁵ Cf. MECW 5:46 with Beecher's summary of the Fourierist critiques of commerce and marriage (197-208).
that they could not have been expected to transcend their historical situation: "To the crude conditions of capitalist production and the crude class conditions corresponded crude theories" (MECW 25:246). Engels even singled out Fourier's "criticism of the existing conditions of society" for praise. In his eyes, Fourier was a brilliant economic satirist and the first feminist theorist. Most significantly from the Marxist perspective, Engels lauded Fourier for developing a theory of history that, in "prov[ing] . . . that civilisation moves in a 'vicious circle,' in contradictions which it constantly reproduces without being able to solve them . . . . uses the dialectic method in the same masterly way as his contemporary Hegel" (MECW 25:247-248).

How could Engels reconcile this portrait of Fourier the "masterly" dialectician with that of the crackpot visionary? He had first addressed this question more than thirty years earlier, in his 1846 translation of "A Fragment of Fourier's on Trade."\(^{66}\) In the introduction, Engels faulted the overtheoretical, "Hegelianised" German socialists for only paying attention to "what is worst and most theoretical" in

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\(^{66}\)The fragment selected by Engels examined the evils of mercantilism, with particular attention devoted to fraudulent commercial bankruptcies. This translation was the first and only contribution to Marx and Engels's projected "Library of the Best Foreign Socialist Writers." (MECW 4:713n204). The translation also included one of the most anti-Semitic passages in Fourier's writings, the tale of the "Jewish blackguard" Judas Iscariot, whose dishonest bankruptcy led to the ruin of six more reputable merchants (MECW 4:633-634; cf. QC 1:348-351).
French socialism. He cited Fourier as an exemplary socialist critic, but with the qualification that his social writings needed to be divorced from his "speculative constructions":

It is true that Fourier did not start out from the Hegelian theory and for this reason unfortunately could not attain knowledge of absolute truth, not even of absolute socialism. It is true that owing to this shortcoming Fourier unfortunately allowed himself to be led astray and to substitute the method of series for the absolute method and thereby arrived at such speculative constructions as the conversion of the sea into lemonade, the couronnes boréale and australe, the anti-lion, and the conjunction of the planets. But, if it has to be, I shall prefer to believe with the cheerful Fourier in all these stories rather than in the realm of the absolute spirit, where there is no lemonade at all, in the identity of Being and Nothing and the conjunction of the eternal categories. French nonsense is at least cheerful, while German nonsense is gloomy and profound. (MECW 4:614-615)

Even as Engels praised Fourierism's cosmogonic nonsense for being "cheerful," he acknowledged that it was nonsense.

Engels's reading succeeds in overcoming an inherent limitation of Chasseguet-Smirgel's analysis, its failure to explain the dual status of Fourier's texts. The theory of the ego ideal accounts for Fourier's monomaniacal fantasies, but only at the cost of ignoring his often lucid economic analysis of mercantile society. Chasseguet-Smirgel's omission can largely be attributed to her particular conception of ideology, which assumes that a non-ideological, "scientific" system of thought exists. From this assumption, she

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67 For the distinction between the "particular" and "total" conceptions of ideology, see Mannheim 55-59.
reaffirms the orthodox Freudian faith in a "scientific" worldview, as first elaborated by Freud himself in "The Question of a Weltanschauung." After poststructuralist debunkings of Freudian and Marxist claims to "objectivity," however, many would find such a claim untenable. The American psychoanalyst Muriel Dimen, for example, has faulted Chasseguet-Smirgel for her belief that psychoanalytic theory "is a true description of human nature" rather than a "cultural description" (375). If Dimen is right to note that Freudianism is culturally constructed—that is, ideological—then Chasseguet-Smirgel's theory of the ego ideal can be subjected to a similar critique, one that will reveal its limitations.

In their attempts to interpret Fourier's writings, Chasseguet-Smirgel and Engels employ a methodology similar to Bestor's: they split Fourier's writings into two parts—"sane" and "insane"—then discount the half that does not suit their purposes. Thus, each of the two ideologies fails to account for the entire content of Fourier's utopia. Paul Ricoeur offers an alternative approach in his Lectures on Ideology and Utopia. He argues that the sanity/insanity problematic is a feature common to utopias, all of which "have the ambiguity of claiming to be realizable but at the same time of being works of fancy, the impossible" (301).
I would add that some utopian texts are more ambiguous— and consequently more utopian— than others. For no claim of realizability can be made in an ahistorical vacuum: it must be made by someone to someone. Therefore, those texts whose utopianism is denied by their authors and audiences are, paradoxically, the most utopian texts. Most of Fourier’s readers found the Harmonian Big Rock Candy Mountain transparently and hilariously unrealizable, a reaction exemplified by Grandville’s famous caricatures in *Un autre monde* (1844). Because Fourier so stridently denied the fictitiousness of his fanciful writings, *Quatre mouvements* approaches the ultimate in utopianism.

If we further assume that Fourier unironically believed in all of his prophecies, then how does Ricoeur propose that we should escape passing judgment on Fourier’s sanity, as well as the sanity of his followers? He does so by problematizing the sanity of the perspective from which we judge the sanity of utopia, a perspective which is necessarily

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68 On Grandville’s skewering of Fourier’s dreams of wish-fulfillment, see Buck-Morss 110-120, 149-158.

69 This point cannot be assumed with complete certainty. In an 1816 manuscript, "Le Sphinx sans Oedipe, ou l’énigme des Quatre mouvements," Fourier described *Quatre mouvements* as a book whose "bizarreness" was "affected and exaggerated," making its presentation of his discoveries "a sort of parody published before the play" (qtd., Beecher 120, 525n12). While Beecher disagrees with Frank Manuel’s contention that Fourier needed a rationalization for the critical derision that had been heaped upon *Quatre mouvements*, both agree that Fourier believed the "bizarreness" was in the presentation of the doctrine and not in the doctrine itself.
ideological. Ricoeur argues that "utopia" and "ideology" are polarities. A utopia, on the one hand, is always a text: it is "advocated by [its] own [author]" and it belongs to "a specific literary genre." An ideology, on the other hand, "is always a polemical concept":

The ideological is never one's own position; it is always the stance of someone else, always their ideology. . . . Thus, the linguistic presence of ideology and utopia is not at all the same. Utopias are assumed by their authors, while ideologies are denied by theirs. (Ricoeur 2)

Fourier's writings not only meet Ricoeur's formulation of "utopia," but they also deny the literary genre to which they belong.70 In stridently asserting their eu-topian status and in rejecting all other utopias as ou-topian, Fourier's texts again represent an extreme case of utopianism. These texts claim that competing utopias cheat the categories of "utopia" and "ideology" in the same way that they themselves cheat the categories of "sane" and "insane."

Ricoeur also adopts Karl Mannheim's well-known description of ideology and utopia as competing states of mind: while the former legitimates the social status quo, utopia "tend[s] to shatter, either partially or wholly, the order of things prevailing at the time" (Mannheim 192). While agreeing that ideology and utopia represent the polarities of a social imagination, Ricoeur reformulates Mannheim's claim that the social imagination is pathologically incongruous with

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70 For references to Fourier's critiques of competing utopias in OC, see the entry for utopie in Silberling.
reality. This incongruity is only a partial truth; the social imagination is also "constitutive of social reality" (3). While social critics as disparate as Marx and Daniel Bell have argued that ideology distorts reality, Ricoeur's redefinition ascribes a positive function to ideology as well. In arguing that ideology and utopia are complementary functions, he suggests that it may be possible to "cure" the pathology of ideology with the constitutive function of utopia (17).

Guarneri's study, which takes Mannheim's formulation as one of its epigraphs, suggests that for all its wackiness, Fourierism had such a constitutive function in the American society of the 1840's. Guarneri argues that the American Associationists—many of whom were presumably unaware of or uninterested in Fourierist arcana—were attracted to the movement as "a coherent, historically informed critique of social structures" (65). These reformers saw Fourier's communitarianism as a rational response to the economic crises brought on by the rapid urbanization and industrialization of American society, as well as the increasing class stratification wrought by the capitalist economy (Guarneri 62-67). Central to Guarneri's study is the claim that the Fourierists made several major contributions to the antebellum reform debate: they furnished a ground-breaking critique of American society from a sociological perspective; they proposed to "harness" the innovations of the Industrial Revolution "for group benefit rather than individual
exploitation`; and they offered a vision of universal reform that was millenarian yet secular (Guarneri 6). In other words, Fourierism offered many Americans a new and more satisfactory way to make sense of the new industrial world, one that gave them a broader perspective upon the nascent capitalist ideology, as well as compelling reasons for challenging that ideology. Even though Americans ultimately rejected Fourierism, Guarneri argues that Fourierism contributed to the maturation of the American social imagination. Note the close parallel between the functional descriptions of Ricoeur’s utopia and Chasseguet-Smirgel’s ego ideal: just as the unachievable ego ideal can assist in the maturation of the individual, the unachievable utopia can assist in the maturation of the society.71

As we saw above, this reduction of Fourierism to its rational content was advocated by Engels; it should be emphasized, however, that he did not condemn its irrational content in the same way that Chasseguet-Smirgel has. Rather, Engels suggested that the irrational content could simply be discarded. In an 1843 article for an Owenite journal, Engels praised Fourier as a hard-headed analyst:

[W]e read [Fourier’s] works with greater pleasure, and find more real value in them, than in those of the [Saint-Simonian] school. There is mysticism, too, and as extravagant as any, but this you may cut off and throw it aside, and there will remain something not to be found among the Saint-

71 Compare the ego ideal to the sociologist’s "utopian mentality" (Mannheim) or "utopian propensity."
Simonians—scientific research, cool, unbiased, systematic thought; in short, social philosophy; whilst Saint-Simonism can only be called social poetry. ("Progress of Social Reform on the Continent," MECW 3:394)

In essence, Brisbane chose to "cut off" and "throw aside" Fourier's mysticism in his public presentations.

But a radically different method of reading Fourier was recommended in The German Ideology. In response to the "true socialists," who had charged that Fourier and Saint-Simon had produced "crude" and "dogmatic" systems, Marx and Engels even suggested an alternative reading that not only tolerated the irrational content of Fourierism, but embraced it:

[The systems that] appeared in the early days of the communist movement . . . had at that time propaganda value as popular novels, which corresponded perfectly to the still undeveloped consciousness of the proletarians, who were then beginning to play an active part. . . . In some of these novels, e.g., Fourier's system, there is a vein of true poetry . . . (German Ideology, MECW 5:461)

When Fourier's writings are read not as an ahistorical and universal socialist system but as a literary work that includes a historically and culturally determined critique, the problem of Fourier's sanity disappears. So does the problem of utopia's realizability: the reader is free to choose what she wishes from the plans for the Phalanx while rejecting the rest. Unfortunately for Fourier's reputation, such an aesthetic reading is difficult to sustain. Flaubert complained that reading Fourier was pure tedium, as does
Hawthorne's Coverdale; on average, the *Oeuvres complètes* may have only slightly more aesthetic merit than *Eureka*.

But a reading of Fourier that ignores aesthetic considerations is even worse than one that foregrounds his artistic merit. This was the error of the Fourierist movement, Marx and Engels argued: its members mistook the historically and culturally determined "novels" for ahistorical and universal "systems." Stripped of their poetry and transformed into an "-ism," these writings lost much of their critical value as well:

Fourier's orthodox disciples of the *Démocratie pacifique* show most clearly how little the real content of these systems is found in their systematic form; they are, for all their orthodoxy, doctrinaire bourgeois, the very antipodes of Fourier. All epoch-making systems have as their real content the needs of the time in which they arose.\(^72\)

To follow this line of reasoning leads to the apparently paradoxical argument that Fourier's orthodox disciples—Considerant and his American counterpart Brisbane—betrayed Fourier by being too faithful to his writings. First, a critique of French society in the Napoleonic era would necessarily fail to address "needs of the time" in the France of 1848, let alone those of America. Second, in the case of the American Associationists, the

\(^{72}\)MECW 5:462. Earlier, in *The Holy Family*, Marx and Engels had described the "diluted Fourierism" of Victor Considerant's *Démocratie pacifique* as "nothing but the social doctrine of a section of the philanthropic bourgeoisie" (*MECW* 4:152-153).
writings that were strategically suppressed were among Fourier's most poetic; the remainder of the doctrine was largely dry and arithmetic. Perhaps the 1855 *Leaves of Grass* or such "social poetry" as John Humphrey Noyes's Oneida or Joseph Smith's Nauvoo were truer to Fourierism's real content than any of Brisbane's writings.

Let us search for an alternative to Bestor's reading. As we saw in the previous section, Hawthorne's tales in the "anti-reform" subgenre actually express ambivalent attitudes towards reform movements. This equivocation is symptomatic of a concern frequently expressed in the works of the American literary renaissance, a concern for the future of the *novus ordo seclorum*. Would the United States, like Fourierism, prove to be a false reform, a regressive fantasy?

Chasseguet-Smirgel briefly addresses this question in "The Archaic Matrix of the Oedipus Complex in Utopia." (This essay also includes Chasseguet-Smirgel's unsympathetic reading of *Quatre mouvements*—see 48n.) In a footnote, she exempts America from her utopian critique:

> The projects which gave birth to the United States are not, in my opinion, utopias, properly speaking. They set out to find the solution to concrete problems and are far from being abstract and idealized wishful thinking even if dreams have their part in them. (149n)

I partially agree with Chasseguet-Smirgel: certainly Fourier's conception of human nature was more sanguine and less pragmatic than that of the framers of the Constitution. For
example, one of the Federalists' argument for the Constitutional separation of powers was that the nation needed a safeguard against a depraved Chief Executive's attempt to usurp power. Similarly, Hamilton in *Federalist* No. 6 argued that "[a] man must be far gone in Utopian speculations" to think that the thirteen disunited states could coexist peacefully. He predicted that "frequent and violent contests" would be the inevitable result of disunion because men are "ambitious, vindictive, and rapacious." These statements were not necessarily grounded in a pessimistic conception of human nature; however, they appeal to history's empirical evidence. The Federalists' pragmatic precautions sharply contrast with Fourier's belief that no restraint on human nature would be necessary in the perfectly-organized society. Thus, the United States can be regarded as a society with a view of human nature that is "scientific" in the Freudian sense. The idealism expressed in the Declaration of Independence is tempered by an acceptance of human imperfection, and the nation seeks to maintain an environment in which its citizens will have the relative freedom to pursue a reasonable degree of happiness.

Without rejecting this pragmatic interpretation, I would like to emphasize that Chasseguet-Smirgel ignores an alternative tradition of "idealized wishful thinking"—the perfectionistic vision of America which has been conjured by the Puritans and the Transcendentalists, the Kennedys and
Reagan. In his introduction to *The Rites of Assent* (1993), Sacvan Bercovitch explains how bizarre he found that vision in his graduate student days, when he found himself an outsider looking in on American culture. Having lived in Canada, "a country without a mythology," he could not avoid seeing the United States as Canada's "antithesis, the example par excellence of collective fantasy" (Bercovitch, *Rites* 6). As an example of this national illusion, Bercovitch cites the myth of Puritan origins, an ideology constructed on extremely shaky historical evidence. He might have added that the Puritan myth is in turn the ground for the greatest American fantasy, the myth of theological exceptionalism, the nation's belief in its sacred mission as Redeemer Nation to transform the world in the name of Christ (see Tuveson). As we shall see in the next chapter, Orestes Brownson, who after his conversion to Catholicism became one of the most fervent nineteenth-century proponents of America's sacred mission, also became the most fervent opponent of American Fourierism.
CHAPTER 4

UNPARDONABLE SINS:
ORESTES BROWNSON'S CRUSADE AGAINST FOURIERISM

I.

In the early 1840s, Orestes Brownson used the pages of his Boston Quarterly Review to voice friendly criticism of the American Fourierist movement. While Brownson never endorsed the Associationist platform, he openly sympathized with many of its goals. Well before 1840, the year Brisbane began his propaganda campaign, Brownson's social theories had already paralleled Fourier's in several respects. As early as 1829, Brownson had expressed sympathy for his friend Fanny Wright's aborted experiment in communitarianism at Nashoba; Wright had proposed interracial marriage and even a redefinition of the marriage institution itself. Brownson came to advocate "a radical reform of the American people themselves"\(^{73}\); the failure of Nashoba and other Owenite experiments of the 1820s inspired him to look for alternatives. In 1836, Brownson set forth his program for universal reform in *New Views of*...

\(^{73}\)On Wright and Nashoba, see Bestor, *Backwoods Utopias* 219-227, as well as Spurlock 39-40. Nashoba's influence upon Brownson is discussed in Sveino 44-47. For Brownson's own account, see *The Convert*, 121-124, 247-248 (the passage quoted is from page 123).
Christianity, Society, and the Church. Despite the title's conscious echo of Owen's *A New View of Society*, *New Views* freely adapted the spiritualized socialism of Saint-Simon's *Nouveau Christianisme*. Mimicking the strategy of Saint-Simon's disciple Prosper Enfantin, Brownson attempted to meld Christian and socialist ideologies, anticipating similar efforts by French and American Associationists of the 1840s.

Brownson's most famous essay, "The Laboring Classes" (1840), further elaborated the *New Views* platform through an economic critique of society that bore striking similarities to Fourier's (Schlesinger, *A Pilgrim's Progress* 96-99). Four years later, in an account of the evolution of his radical thought, Brownson explained that he had once hoped that communitarian reforms would make class warfare completely unnecessary. In this new society, laborers would also be capitalists; therefore, they would be assured of a fair share of the profits, and would have an interest in making their work "pleasant and attractive." As Brownson notes, his solution was remarkably similar to Fourier's plan for "ASSOCIATION and ATTRACTIVE INDUSTRY," and he claimed "to have seized all the great principles of the practical part of Fourierism, long before Fourier's name was heard of in this country" ("No Church, No Reform" 177). While Fourierism had no apparent effect upon the development of Brownson's social
thought prior to 1840, he was favorably inclined towards Brisbane's campaign in its first two years.

In 1842, however, at about the same time that Brownson began to lose faith in the New Views program, his criticism of the Fourierists grew less friendly and more strident. By 1844, the year of his conversion to Catholicism, he had become Fourierism's fiercest opponent in America, charging that the social movement was literally the devil's work. Brownson's belligerence stood the test of time: the narrator of his 1854 novel The Spirit-Rapper concluded that Fourierists, mesmerists, women's rights advocates, and the European revolutionaries of 1848 had all been part of a Satanic "grand conspiracy to overthrow Christianity and the social order" (Guarneri 353).

How are we to account for Brownson's relatively rapid change in attitude towards Fourierism? Strangely, this question has never received much attention before, even though Brownson wrote eight essays on Fourierism in the four years between the publication of "The Laboring Classes" and his conversion, the period of his life that has received the most critical attention. But the relative neglect of Brownson's feud with the Fourierists is not wholly without cause. In the 1850's, Brownson downplayed Fourierism's influence on his

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74 Several Brownson scholars, including Schlesinger (A Pilgrim's Progress 167), Sveino (281), and, most recently, Butler (125-133) have acknowledged the importance of Brownson's contretemps with the Fourierists, but without examining the public debate in any detail.
thought, and after The Spirit-Rapper, he had little more to say about the movement. His 1857 autobiography The Convert, for example, discussed at length the influence of Owen and Saint-Simon on the evolution of his thought, but did not mention Fourier by name.\textsuperscript{75} It is also possible that twentieth-century critics have ignored some of Brownson's articles on Fourierism because of their relative obscurity: even the twenty-volume \textit{Works of Orestes A. Brownson} (1882-1887) omits several crucial essays.

The fact that Brownson continued to write about Fourierism for years after his conversion suggests another, less forgivable, reason to ignore these articles. In her valuable dissertation, Patricia O'Connell Killen has noted the "bifurcation" of approach typical of Brownson scholarship. Some overly partisan Catholic scholars (joined, one might add, by some overly zealous conservatives) have devalued Brownson's pre-conversion writings, while some secular scholars have discounted Brownson's post-conversion writings for similar reasons. Killen astutely notes that each camp's prejudices "reduc[e] Brownson's significance as a thinker even before the discussion begins" (2-3). As Brownson's own critique of Fourierism—before and after his conversion—insisted upon the inseparability of his theological and sociopolitical thought,

\textsuperscript{75}Brownson briefly mentions the supporters of "phalansteries" as being among the few groups to oppose the Boston Quarterly Review's advocacy of a "Christian State" (The Convert 245-246).
reductionists in either camp might have difficulty explaining why Browson's animus predated his conversion by two years.76

But I would not argue that every scholar who ignored Browson's feud with the Fourierists was motivated by blind partisanship; such a paranoid claim would be worthy of Fourier himself. Reasonable hypotheses can easily be constructed: for example, critics may have dismissed Browson's change of heart as yet another of the about-faces for which he was famous. Even in the Transcendentalist circle, where the hobgoblin of consistency was generally scorned, no one had made as many stops as Brownson the "ecclesiastical recidivist" had in his *Wanderjahre* (Swift 246). Similarly, Brownson continually shifted his philosophical worldview. In the *BosQR* and later in John O'Sullivan's *Democratic Review*, he had advocated several of the latest French intellectual fashions, only to turn against them later: from Benjamin Constant to Saint-Simon to Victor Cousin to Cousin's most adamant critic, Pierre Leroux. If Brownson had briefly flirted with Fourierism, then perhaps he had simply grown tired of it. And once the feud began, the Fourierists gave Brownson sufficient reason to take it personally. Brownson was frequently rebuked for his alleged misinterpretations of Associationist doctrine; in 1844, one of *The Phalanx*'s editors (probably Parke Godwin)

76See my review of Butler.
called Brownson "ignorant" and "malignant." Such sniping, combined with Brownson's constitutional propensity to repudiate his former positions, may well have made his counterattacks more vitriolic. But while this explanation is plausible, it does not account for his sustaining the anti-Fourierist offensive for a full decade, several years after virtually every American phalanx had failed.

Another reasonable hypothesis, that Brownson's repudiation of Fourierism was the natural result of his conversion, is not supported by the chronology. This is not to say that his repudiation and his conversion were wholly independent events, for Catholics of the 1840s had sufficient cause to reject the utopian theory. Like Saint-Simon, Fourier had been a harsh critic of organized religion in general, and of the Roman Church in particular. While he had made no systematic ideological critique of institutional Christianity, he had frequently noted Catholicism's crucial role in perpetuating social injustices. These attacks did not escape notice: the Church placed Fourier's *Nouveau Monde Industriel* on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* in January 1835. Had Fourier's parodies of Catholic doctrine in the suppressed manuscript of *Le Nouveau Monde Amoureux* been known, Catholic opposition to Fourierism would undoubtedly have been even

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77 In the note accompanying Hugh Doherty's "Letter to the Swedenborgians," 261.

78 NMI is the only one of Fourier's books on the 1841 edition of the *Index* (147). See also Riasanovsky 152-153.
Many of Fourier's disciples shared his dislike of institutional religion. For example, Victor Considerant made no effort to conceal his anti-clericalism in Destinée sociale. In September 1836, this popular and influential treatise—an important source, as the title suggests, for Brisbane's Social Destiny of Man—was also placed on the Index.

Nevertheless, the mutual hostilities between French Catholics and French Fourierists were counterbalanced by mutual attractions. Jean-Baptiste Duroselle and Henri Desroche have shown that in the years before 1848, many individuals declared simultaneous passions for Fourierism and Catholicism. Some Fourierists converted to Catholicism without renouncing Fourier, while some Catholics became Fourierists without leaving the Church. In the years after Brownson's conversion, the journals of the American Associationists reported the transatlantic efforts to


80 Some members of the movement were even more radically anti-clerical. In the weeks after Fourier's death, Considerant was criticized for his role in arranging a Catholic funeral for the Master. This episode nicely illustrates the tension between the Fourierists' advocacy of Christianity and their hostility towards the institutional Church (SF 171-177).

81 Index 91; Davidson 35, 46; Guarneri 94-95.

82 Duroselle 120-153; SF 185-192. This summary of their research is taken from Bowman 28.
reconcile Catholicism and Fourierism. Doctrinal differences notwithstanding, the existence of Catholic Fourierists in Catholic France is not surprising. It is bizarre, however, that the Transcendentalists of post-Calvinist New England were also subject to this dual attraction, especially since neither the Church nor the social movement had played a major role in New England intellectual life prior to the 1840s.

Brownson's writings suggest that his conversion to Catholicism was not simply the cause, but also in part the consequence, of his rejection of Fourierism. The attempt to understand Brownson's response to Fourierism is important not only because it sheds light on the relationship between his theological and his sociopolitical writings, but also because it helps to explain the Transcendentalist interest in "catholicity."

II.

Like many other Americans of the 1840s, Brownson's BosQR insisted upon the interconnectedness of reform efforts in the spiritual and material realms. But his earliest published

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83In 1846, for example, The Harbinger printed translations of two articles from the Fourierist journal La Démocratie pacifique, both of which were entitled "The Catholics and Associationists." The first, unattributed article argued that "Fourier is the greatest servant and disciple of Christ" (103); the second, by Frédéric Arnaud, that "[t]he moment has come when Catholics and liberals, separated for a day, may unite to labor together for the common cause" (194).
discussions of Fourierism examined the visionary plan almost exclusively from a pragmatic materialist perspective. Brownson’s first mention of Fourier is found in a January 1840 editorial, published six months before "The Laboring Classes." In setting forth his vision of an America in which social inequality no longer existed, in which "the relations of master and slave, and of proprietor and workman, or employer and employed, shall be unknown," Brownson admitted that this vision might be dismissed as a "Utopian dream." He feared that some would even regard him as "insane, fit only for a madhouse" for announcing the coming of new social order. He further acknowledged that he knew of no way to realize this ideal, as he balanced proto-Marxist yearnings for social reform with conservative fears of "strife":

I have no plan of a world-reform for you to adopt, for I have not yet found one that I could adopt for myself. I have paid some attention to the schemes of world-reformers, from Plato down to Robert Owen and M. Fourier, but none of them seem to me of any great value. ("Introductory Statement" 16-17)

Brownson knew of Fourier almost a year before Brisbane began his propaganda campaign, at a time when only a handful of Americans had heard of the utopian theory (Guarneri 31-32). This knowledge was probably gleaned from his reading of the Saint-Simonians.\(^{84}\) Despite his preemptive dismissal,

\(^{84}\) Many scholars have discussed the connections between the Saint-Simonian and Fourierist movements in France. Desroche’s comparative study in Les Dieux rêvés deserves special mention; for a useful overview of other work, see Guarneri 20-22. On Brownson’s role in introducing Saint-Simon to America, see Sveino 125-131 and Guarneri 46. For
Brownson was searching for a world-reform program remarkably similar to Fourier's. Brownson believed that a society properly modelled upon the "elements" of "human nature" would achieve "the most perfect state to which the human race can aspire" ("Introductory" 18-19).

Given this shared goal, it is understandable that Brownson responded favorably to Brisbane's propaganda campaign. Brownson's brief review of Social Destiny of Man (January 1841) unreservedly recommended Brisbane's book as being of "extreme interest" to reformers. This review was written in the aftermath of one of the most fiercely ideological elections in American history: as virtually every Brownson scholar has noted, he was bitterly disillusioned by the Democratic defeat and by what he perceived as the irresponsibility of the electorate. By 1843, he would even proclaim the failure of American democracy itself.85 But in

Brownson's post-conversion assessment of his Saint-Simonian experience, see The Convert 198-217.

While Brownson's 1842 essay "Church of the Future" would reaffirm his faith in his modified Saint-Simonian program, he had already distanced himself from the excesses of "Père Enfantin's" cult. His April 1840 review of Michel Chevalier's Society, Manners, and Politics in the United States even discredited the author's arguments in favor of the United States Bank by noting that Chevalier, a former Saint-Simonian leader, was still influenced by their economic theories. Brownson then smeared the Saint-Simonian economic platform by associating it with the bizarre doctrines of Enfantin (217-222). On Chevalier's diluted Saint-Simonianism, see Manuel, Prophets 189-191.

85 In "Democracy and Liberty," Brownson would suggest that the American people were not "competent" to govern themselves (382). This position led to a public disagreement with John L. O'Sullivan that hastened the end of Brownson's relationship
1841, Brownson was not yet that pessimistic. Instead, he grew more sympathetic to the Fourierists' argument that political reforms could not succeed without a fundamental social reform. In the review, he praised Brisbane for distinguishing social from political evils:

The state is the mere agent of society, and will always be what the will of society ordains. If society be right, if its institutions be founded in justice, the state will be just and beneficent; if society be wrong, founded on false principles, and sustained by unequal, and therefore unjust, institutions, it is in vain, that you seek to reform your government, or perfect its administration. (rev. of SDM, 127-28)

In the same review, Brownson argued that Fourierist communitarianism, because it affirmed the right to individual property, was more realistic (!) than Owenite communism. As investors in the Phalanx were to receive a handsome return, capitalists need not feel threatened. Therefore, Fourierism might be able to reconcile class interests peacefully, solving the dilemma outlined in "The Laboring Classes." Brownson closed by blessing Brisbane's efforts to spread the Fourierist gospel and wishing him success (128-129).

Six months later, however, this praise was abruptly withdrawn. Brownson's "Social Evils, and their Remedy" (BosQR, July 1841) marked the beginning of a long and eventually acrimonious debate. While the perspective of "Social Evils" was essentially secular, its thesis anticipated Brownson's later theological critiques. Too many of the
nation's would-be reformers, he argued, had made the error of "contemplat[ing] a perfection, to which neither human nature nor human society can attain." Fourier's "scheme of passional harmonies," as presented by Brisbane, was guilty of this naive perfectionism ("SE&TR" 265, 268-269). In Brownson's view, there was an insuperable flaw in human nature, overlooked by Fourier, that made moral perfection unattainable. A particular passion could not be gratified "without thwarting another"—benevolence and acquisitiveness, for example, were contrary impulses that could never be completely reconciled. While granting Fourier's claim that the end of each passion is a good, Brownson argued that the "disharmony" of any individual's competing passions "can never be entirely overcome" (269); thus, the passions alone are not sufficient to regulate human conduct:

The harmony of the passions, so far as attainable, is to be obtained not by gratifying the desires of each, but by denying to each its special gratification, whenever its special gratification would lead to disorder, either in the bosom of the individual or that of society; that is, by following the Christian rule, deny thyself, which we shall find but poorly substituted by Mr. Fourier's rule,—please thyself. . . . But in all self-denial there is antagonism. ("SE&TR" 269-270)

Such philosophical objections to Fourierism led Brownson closer to the traditional Christian doctrine of Original Sin and the concomitant assertion of "self-denial" as duty. (This potent argument can be restated in psychoanalytic terms, if allowances are made for the incongruity of the Freudian and Christian worldviews: the submission of every individual to
the pleasure principle would lead to chaos; therefore, a certain degree of repression is necessary to maintain social order.) Yet in denying the trustworthiness of the passions, Brownson was not retreating into seventeenth-century Calvinist orthodoxy. In *New Views*, he had already rejected the doctrine of "hereditary total depravity" and, waxing Transcendental, had found "divinity in humanity, and humanity in divinity" (*WOAB* 4:37, 4:34). Brownson would later reaffirm this radical perfectionism in a January 1842 *BosQR* article, "Church of the Future." Nevertheless, Brownson's rejection of the Fourierist conception of human nature may well have eventually led him to question the similar positions he had expressed in *New Views*.

Brisbane responded to Brownson's essay in uncharacteristically indiscreet fashion. In *Social Destiny of Man* (1840) and most of his subsequent propaganda efforts, Brisbane had been careful not to draw attention to the contradictions between Fourierism and Christian orthodoxy. But Brisbane's October 1841 letter to the *BosQR* not only admitted that Fourier rejected the orthodox Christian doctrine of original sin, but praised the Master for doing so. Thus, evil existed only because humans did not understand the divine plan (497-498); the "fall" of Man "was in the social or political world . . . not in his organic nature" (507). In retrospect, Brisbane's admission of Fourierism's heterodoxy may seem like a major strategic blunder. However, he may well
have calculated that he could speak frankly in Brownson's reformist journal, given that its editor, and many of its readers, were theological liberals. Indeed, Brownson's immediate response was to temper his criticism. In an endnote to Brisbane's letter, he reiterated his reservations about Fourier's conception of human nature, but added praise for Brisbane's "zeal in the cause of social reform." Brownson then endorsed several planks of the Associationists' platform. Furthermore, he even claimed to have "advocated [attractive industry] in our own writings years before we had heard of Mr. Fourier," avowing his "full and decided conviction, that a system of attractive industry, must embrace the principle of association . . . ." However, he refused to endorse the entire Fourierist plan, and saw no necessity in working to establish new communities: "It seems to us that when the world is ripe for them, they will form themselves, spontaneously as it were. They must come, whenever they do come, as the necessary development of that which immediately precedes" ("Letter from Mr. Brisbane" [Brownson's note], 512). Brownson's response was mildly Marxist avant la lettre in its emphasis upon the similarity between chattel slavery and wage slavery and, more significantly, in setting forth this theory of historical necessity. (Fourier also saw the transition from "Civilization" to Harmony as inevitable, but he believed that human effort could hasten the transformation.) With this proclamation of faith in the inevitability of utopia, Brownson
proposed to set aside the reform debate. He believed that the reform question would eventually answer itself.

It would be an exaggeration to call the Brownson of 1841 a Fourierist fellow-traveler, but he was a friendly critic of the movement. He took pains to express his sympathy for Associationists and noted the beliefs he shared with them. Brownson even "wish[ed] all success" to prospective phalansterians and promised to do "all in our power" to aid them ("Letter from Mr. Brisbane" [Brownson’s note] 512). Accordingly, he ran another article by Brisbane in the April 1842 BosQR, an exposition of some of the less-controversial economic elements of Associationism that covered much the same ground as Brisbane’s New York Tribune columns.

But the cordial entente was short-lived. By the time he published Brisbane’s article, Brownson had already fallen under the influence of another French socialist, the former Saint-Simonian Pierre Leroux, author of De l’Humanité (1840). From Leroux’s doctrine of "solidarity"—summarized by Guarneri as "a mystical bond of divine life link[ing] persons throughout time and space, demonstrating both the interdependence of humanity and the reality of racial progress" (55)—Brownson would develop an idiosyncratic philosophical system that he would later use to justify his conversion. This worldview would take several years to ripen, however. In fact, his article for the July 1842 BosQR, "Leroux on Humanity," expressed anti-Catholic sentiments.
Brownson argued that the confusion of Christianity with Roman Catholicism had been among the "follies" of the Saint-Simonians and approvingly cited a Saint-Simonian leader's claim that the *nouveau christianisme* would "rule the future more completely ... even than Catholicism ruled the middle ages" ("Leroux" 259; qtd., 260).

Leroux's book had a more direct effect upon Brownson: it made him increasingly critical of Fourierism. According to Brownson, Leroux held that no man could exist outside of his context, no "me" without a "not-me." Furthermore, the Whitmanesque "communion" of the "me" and the "not-me" was necessary for human happiness. Leroux believed that this communion was facilitated by existing social institutions. Brownson seconded Leroux's statement that the institutions of family and country allowed the individual to commune with the rest of the race, as well as Leroux's more problematic claim that the institution of private property facilitated the individual's communion with nature ("Leroux" 283-285). Having accepted Leroux's trinity of institutions—family, country, property—Brownson immediately shifted into an attack upon "zealous world-reformers" who sought to destroy one of these institutions. Among those he attacked were the Owenite opponents of private property, the anarchical "New England non-resistants," and the Associationist enemies of family values. Brownson argued that the Fourierists unjustly criticized the institution of marriage, proposed to liberalize
the divorce laws, and advocated replacing individual households with the phalanx. Interestingly, Brownson included the communitarianism of his former ally Fanny Wright in the same anti-family charge ("Leroux" 285-286). For the first time, Brownson’s critique of Fourier was bound up with a overt critique of his own former positions. A similar self-critique can be found later in the essay: Brownson, one of the earliest members of the Transcendentalist circle, argued that the "self-culture" of the Transcendentalists promoted a selfish individualism opposed to all forms of "communion" ("Leroux" 292-293). Such claims suggest that Leroux’s primary effect upon Brownson was to restore his faith in traditional social institutions. In "Leroux on Humanity" and subsequent essays, Brownson would simultaneously criticize the anti-institutional tendencies of the Fourierists and the Transcendentalists.

In September 1842, having negotiated an agreement to write for John O’Sullivan’s Democratic Review, Brownson discontinued the BosQR. November saw the publication of his first Democratic Review article, "Brook Farm." Despite the

86Burke’s useful dissertation ascribes the anonymous essay "Albert Brisbane," published in the September 1842 DemRev, to Brownson (Burke 269n). There is no reference to this article in extant letters from the Brownson-O’Sullivan correspondence, however. The flattering profile of Brisbane may well have been written by O’Sullivan himself. Its tone is consistent with his editorial policy of maintaining friendly but distant relations with the Fourierists. Cf. the editor’s notes accompanying the following articles: [Brisbane]. Rev. of Social Destiny of Man (Nov. 1840): 431n, and [Brisbane] "On Association and Attractive Industry" (Jan. 1842): 30n. Even when attacks upon the Associationists had become more fashionable, O’Sullivan refrained: a May 1844 notice "strongly
growing influence of Leroux on his thought, Brownson continued to champion much of the Fourierists' agenda. For example, he still identified social inequality as the era's most serious problem, he still believed that the clergy's advice to seek happiness in the hereafter did not excuse humanity from its responsibility to strive for justice in this world, and he still argued that ethical, political, and economic reforms were only limited solutions ("Brook Farm" 481-486). He praised Brook Farm as a paradigm for a new type of social institution. The anomie brought on by industrial capitalism could not be cured, he argued, by eliminating the social institutions deemed useful by Leroux (Brownson had added a fourth institution, the church, to Leroux's list). Instead, communities like Brook Farm should supplement the work of traditional institutions by bridging the chasm between public, private, and spiritual lives. Brownson's rhetoric waxed mystical: "the community [is] more than an aggregation of families, it is a one body [sic], has life and unity of its own; but is, after all, like the family, a member of the larger whole" ("Brook Farm" 489). Brownson believed that Brook Farm could evolve into a fifth type of institution, one that would promote the solidarity of the race without threatening the family.

recommend[ed]" A Popular View of the Doctrines of Charles Fourier, even though the "reviewer" had not read Godwin's book (547-548).
Even as he celebrated the West Roxbury community's potential to effect social reform, Brownson dismissed Associationism as "mechanical." He argued that while Brook Farm was a "living organism," Fourier's phalanx was nothing but a "huge machine" ("Brook Farm" 488), a formulation that echoed "Fourierism and the Socialists," Emerson's Dial essay published four months earlier. In drawing theological conclusions from assumptions that closely paralleled Emerson's, Brownson became one of the first Americans to attack socialism for its godlessness:

Of Fourier I must speak with some diffidence, not having as yet been able to submit to the drudgery of fully mastering his system. . . . [H]is metaphysics, though broad and comprehensive, are often unsound; and his theodicea, or theodicy, is, if we understand it, nothing but material pantheism, a polite name for atheism. He denies, at least according to his able and indefatigable American interpreter, Mr. Brisbane, the progress of humanity, and proceeds on the assumption of that greatest of all absurdities, the perfection of nature. (487)

Given Brownson's prose style, any book that drove him to complain about "drudgery" certainly must have deserved the charge. Atheism was a more serious accusation, however, one that could not be ignored.

Upon the publication of "Brook Farm," Brownson's heretofore friendly debate with the Fourierists began to turn bitter. O'Sullivan, who apparently wanted to retain amicable

87 But not the first: similar charges against the Owenites had been published in the United States as early as 1817; see Bestor, Backwoods Utopias, 124-128, 130-132.
relations with the social movement, printed letters from two Fourierists in rebuttal of the new contributor's charge. Both correspondents were less interested in the "mechanical" aspects of Fourierism. The first, Charles Julius Hempel, argued that Brownson's professed ignorance should discredit all his complaints, and announced that his forthcoming book on Swedenborg and Fourier would prove that Fourierism was not "practical atheism" but "living Christianity". Yet Hempel did not want to alienate Brownson completely, and invited him to assist the Associationists in searching for the best way to put Fourier's theories into practice ("Protest" 648). A second letter, from the Irish Fourierist Hugh Doherty, editor of The London Phalanx, also rejected Brownson's specific charges as "absolutely erroneous." Like Hempel, Doherty offered back-handed praise to Brownson for his independent discovery of Fourierism's most important elements, despite his complete failure to comprehend Fourierist theory. In noting the probable cause of Brownson's misreading, Doherty

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88See the editor's note accompanying Hempel's letter [DemRev n.s. 11 (Dec. 1842): 646n], which referred to the Fourierists as a "respectable school of opinion", but implied that their complaints were based on a misunderstanding of Brownson's article.

89Hempel, "A Protest of Fourierism" 646. This book was finally published six years later as The True Organization of the New Church, as Indicated in the Writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg, and Demonstrated by Charles Fourier.

90320, 321. O'Sullivan noted Doherty's rhetorical strategy in a 12 February 1843 letter to Brownson, explaining that he had decided to publish Doherty's letter "for the sake of its complimentary character to you" (Brownson Papers).
obliquely criticized the leader of the American Fourierists: "[Brisbane] confine[d] himself almost exclusively to the exposition of the practical parts of Fourier's views, not being conversant with all the various doctrines of Divinity in Christendom" (321). Like Hempel, Doherty had studied the writings of both Fourier and Swedenborg; both disciples were undoubtedly annoyed with "the thoroughly secular version of Fourier" set forth in Brisbane's publications (Guarneri 116).

Brownson's response was prompt. In "The Community System," published in the February 1843 Democratic Review (two months after Hempel's letter and one month before Doherty's), he used Leroux's metaphysics to develop a more rounded critique of Fourierism. His first assertion was that any communitarian system should be judged by comparing it "to the first principles of human nature," "the essential, permanent, and indestructible nature of man" ("Community System" 129). Following Leroux, Brownson postulated that man exists not only as an individual, but also as part of the genus "humanity," the transcendental idea of man: "Man's existence is then to be contemplated as IDEAL and ACTUAL, and Ideal and Actual answer precisely to his existence as the kind, and as an individual" (129). Because "[h]umanity is in some sort itself an individual," each person has a "two-fold BEING" and a "two-fold LIFE" (130, 131). Unlike the Transcendentalist version of

91See Doherty, "A Reply to the Swedenborgians."
this tale, the "One Man" fable of "The American Scholar," Brownson stressed that the fable was more than a fable, that the "transcendental" unity of humanity had "real" consequences: "It is on [the unity of humanity] that society rests for its basis; and it is from this unity that society derives its power and its right to found the State, to institute civil government, and to demand and even enforce the obedience of its members" ("Community System" 131). Brownson eloquently argued that the ideal society must allow both human natures to flourish concurrently, rather than cultivating one at the other’s expense.

Community without Individuality is TYRANNY, the fruits of which are oppression, degradation, and immobility, the synonym of death. Individuality without community, is INDIVIDUALISM, the fruits of which are dissolution, isolation, selfishness, war; which again attains to death on the opposite side. . . . What we need, then, is not Communism, nor Individualism, the two forms in which the principle manifests itself, but Community and Individuality harmonized, or as we may say, atoned. ("Community System" 134)

Unfortunately, Brownson continued, all communities to date were flawed, "if the establishment at Brook Farm be excepted," because "the ruling thought is Community for the sake of Community, not Community for the sake of Individuality" (135). Brownson’s argument took an even more mystical turn as he argued that for a community to nurture individuality, it must provide its members with the social institutions that provide opportunities for Leroux’s "communion" with other people, with God, and with nature. From this defense of existing social
institutions, Brownson repeated his earlier attack upon the communitarian theories that proposed their eradication. Once again he singled out communitarian theories that would modify or eradicate the institution of marriage. Brownson argued that love, while undoubtedly the most desirable foundation for a marriage, was not necessarily exclusive; therefore, it could not replace marriage as the basis of the family. If society were to implement this misguided reform, he predicted disastrous results: "[W]e should render the family indefinite, which would be seeking to realize the indefinite in the indefinite,—a mistake no less fatal than that of seeking to realize the definite in the definite" ("Community System" 139). To recast this abstract argument in blunter terms, Brownson was arguing that if Love were to become the basis of the family, then the resultant communal orgy would dilute, if not destroy, family identity. Any modification of existing divorce laws, he concluded, would "dissipate the domestic life and affections, the household virtues, and therefore defeat the very end for which the family exists" (140).

While this argument was not directed specifically against the Fourierists, Brownson levelled another charge against them later in the essay. Even as he again conceded the need for a communitarian institution modelled upon Brook Farm to bridge the "too great" distance "between the Family and the Nation," he simultaneously warned against utopian attempts to replace the institution of the state. If Fourier's plan were adopted,
the abolition of the state would lead to disruption of trade between communities, thus decreasing both material wealth and the feeling of universal unity (143-144). By implication, the Fourierist movement was a potential threat to the government of the United States.92

The charge was unwarranted: in fact, Fourier had made considerable (albeit fanciful) plans for regional, national, and world government. But whatever deficiencies there were in Brownson's knowledge of socialist literature, he now knew enough to argue that Fourierism was wildly irrational: "Do these disciples anticipate that . . . they can grow rice and cotton on our granite cliffs of New England, and enable the polar bear to luxuriate under the equator?" ("Community System" 144)

For some time, "The Community System" appeared to be Brownson's last word on Fourierism, if not on communitarianism in general. Indeed, he did not return to either subject in his published writings between February 1843 and April 1844.93 On the other hand, despite his total rejection of Fourierism, he continued to read the literature of the

92 He was not the only anti-Fourierist express such fears. The following year, Donald M'Laren's ominously-titled pamphlet Boa Constrictor charged that Fourierism was a capitalist plot to overthrow the United States government and replace it with a neo-feudal system (30).

93 Brownson's favorable review of Carlyle's Past and Present in the July 1843 DemRev makes a passing reference to Fourierism as one of the "isms" which signal "that men are beginning to feel that the present industrial relations are becoming quite unbearable" (37).
At least one advocate of social reform was dismayed. In the 15 October 1843 issue of his new journal, *The Present*, William Henry Channing called the late *BosQR* "the best journal this country ever produced" and praised the further evolution of Brownson’s thought in his *Democratic Review* articles. But Channing, who was rapidly growing closer to the Fourierist camp (as evidenced by the translation from *Destinée sociale* appearing in the same issue), said that "the present state of the public mind" called for "a full exhibition of Mr. Brownson’s views of Communities."  

Brownson’s silence on the subject of Fourierism can be at least partially explained by the spiritual crisis he was undergoing. In "The Community System," he had forsaken the critique of historical Christianity, the central thesis of *New Views*, and had begun to advocate the necessity of the Church as a social institution. However, he was still uncertain which Christian sect would be "the" Church to realize the

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94 Brownson had requested Brisbane’s help in obtaining certain back numbers of the Fourierist *Démocratie pacifique* (Brisbane to Brownson, 21 Feb. 1844, Brownson Papers). Brisbane had also lent an unspecified volume of Fourier’s works to Brownson. Two letters request the return of the loaned book (Brisbane to Brownson, [1844?], and Margaret Fuller to Brownson, 28 Jan. 1844, both in Brownson Papers). Hudspeth has suggested that the book may have been *NMI*, which Fuller eventually read in September 1844 (*LMF* 3:175n).

95 "The Democratic Review and O. A. Brownson": 72. At about the same time, Channing gave a sermon that expressed enthusiasm for Brownson’s essays on the "Origin and Ground of Government." Brownson learned of Channing’s praise in a letter from Hecker, 16 Oct. 1843 (*B-H* 74-75).
transcendental unity of Humanity. It would have been understandable if this search had crowded further consideration of Fourierism out of his life. Surprisingly, the opposite occurred. As Brownson became increasingly preoccupied with his quest for the true Church, he returned to his critique of Fourierism. In 1844, the year of his conversion, he wrote three separate articles on the subject for Brownson's Quarterly Review.

As early as the fall of 1843, Brownson had come to see communitarianism in general, and Fourierism in particular, as a false alternative to the "true Church." He was not alone: in the letters he exchanged with Isaac Hecker in late 1843 and early 1844, both correspondents fervently insisted upon this fundamental opposition. For example, Brownson expressed relief when his young friend had decided to forsake Brook Farm and Fruitlands for his home: 96

These Communities after all are humbugs. We must rehabilitate the Church, and work under its direction. Brisbane has been here lecturing, and has produced no sensation. Fourierism will not take with us, and Brisbane will not recommend it. (Brownson to Hecker, 2 Sept. 1843, B-H 66)

Brownson had not yet determined which "Church" was to be rehabilitated; elsewhere in the same letter, he denied his intention to "g[o] over to the Roman Catholics." But by now, he was disenchanted with Brook Farm, which he had associated

96In the first half of 1843, Hecker had studied and boarded at Brook Farm for several months, then spent fifteen days at Fruitlands before returning to New York City (B-H 14-15).
with Brisbane and the Fourierists several months before the community's official "conversion." Hecker, who continued to follow the communitarians' activities closely, came to agree that Fourierism was humbuggery. He argued that the "Church movement" was "of infinite more importance . . . than these personal, social, and political reforms, it being the soul centre of all life, and reform" (Hecker to Brownson, 16 Oct. 1843; B-H 74). In his reply, Brownson voiced his objections to Channing's attempts to found a universal church, the same institution young Brownson had advocated in New Views:

[Channing's] theory of Christian union is beautiful, nay true; but he will fail. For to succeed he must institute a New Church, and to do that he must be a New Christ, and even greater than Christ. . . . The principle of union, he says, is love, nothing more true. Therefore, if you love, you will all be one, nothing again more true. But, the precise difficulty is men do not love, and it is because they do not love that they are alienated, and divided. . . . So far from seeking Christian love as the basis of the union of the Church, we must seek the unity of the Church as the condition of creating Christian love. These Unitarians are exceedingly suspicious. They worship the means. . . . They do not believe in the Mediator. (Brownson to Hecker, 8 Nov. 1843; B-H 76)

97Two of Hecker's letters to Brownson in the autumn of 1843 mention three Fourierist leaders. One letter noted that the first issue of Channing's The Present was about to appear (14 Sept. 1843; B-H 71). Another mentioned Greeley's review of Brownson's address "The Scholar's Mission" (16 Oct. 1843; for Greeley's review, see the New York Tribune, 10 Oct. 1843). In the same letter, Hecker reported that he had given a copy of the address to Parke Godwin (B-H 74-75).
Channing's vision of the unity of humanity—the nineteenth-century equivalent of a Saatchi & Saatchi commercial for British Airways—was not deficient, Brownson argued. Rather, it was hopelessly utopian, for "men do not love." In Brownson's view, such a society could only be achieved through the mediation of the Church, the institution founded by the ultimate "Mediator." Although Brownson's thought was still clearly marked by Leroux's influence, such an argument represented a fundamental break with the worldview of De l'Humanité. As A. Robert Caponigri has noted, the pantheist Leroux found the divine beneficence in all the religions of humanity, while Brownson insisted upon the uniqueness of the Providential God-Man and the Church that he had founded (Caponigri 107-111).

Although Brownson's letter to Hecker also included a lukewarm recommendation of the Episcopal Church—"If I was in it I would not go out of it; but being as I am I cannot go in it" (B-H 76)—its theology was unmistakably Catholic. His argument not only foreshadows his conversion but also helps to explain its connection with his rejection of Transcendentalism. Brownson came to believe that Emersonian self-reliance, in its insistence upon a direct, unmediated relationship between Man and God, was the ne plus ultra of Protestantism.
III.

But why would Brownson's rejection of Fourierism follow from the same theological premises that led to his rejection of Transcendentalism? This question may best be answered by first posing another: what relationship did the Transcendentalists of the 1840s perceive between Catholicism and Fourierism?

Several of the Brook Farm Fourierists were fascinated by Catholicism, including W. H. Channing, the Ripleys, Hecker, John Sullivan Dwight, and Georgiana Bruce. The Unitarian minister Channing was the first to express interest in Catholicism. According to O. B. Frothingham's biography, Channing almost converted in 1835; his 1840 short story "Ernest the Seeker," serialized in the first two issues of The Dial, drew a sympathetic portrait of a convert to Catholicism who defended the Church from its Protestant critics.\(^98\) For most of the Brook Farmers, however, their interest in Catholicism peaked soon after their enthusiasm for Fourierism waned. Sophia Ripley converted in 1847; Hecker, an 1844 convert, would become the most famous American priest of the nineteenth century.\(^99\) And in her social history of


\(^99\)Guarneri 136-137 and Sveino 279-281; for an account of Hecker's conversion from a perspective sympathetic to the Transcendentalists, see Swift 94-109. Sophia's conversion is recounted in Crowe, George Ripley, 178-179, 224-226; on George's attitude towards Catholicism, see 237-238.
Transcendentalism, Anne C. Rose notes that at least two other Brook Farmers also converted (196n).

What attracted some members of the Transcendentalist community to Catholicism? Among other factors, Guarneri points to the Church’s "mystery" (137). Orthodox Unitarians believed that Jesus had performed miracles to prove his divine office. Even though many Transcendentalists shared Emerson’s disdain for this perceived trivialization of the miraculous, they had a thirst for sacred mysteries. Indeed, the cabalistically inclined might interpret the Transcendentalist faith in "unity in variety" as a Unitarian reworking of Catholicism’s central mystery, the unity-in-diversity of the Trinity. (Channing would later borrow this famous phrase from Nature in making his case for a universal Church to succeed Rome ["Unity in Catholicity in the Church"].) Those attracted to "unity in variety" were likely to be William James’s "decided monists," temperamentally inclined towards the One rather than the Many. In their attempt to overcome metaphysical dualism, they could draw inspiration from another of Nature’s theses, "Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact" (E&L 20). In this sense, as F. O. Matthiessen

The Brook Farmers’ experience suggests that the progression from Fourierism to Catholicism was the most common. One exception was Andrew B. Smolnikar, an Austrian Benedictine monk and divinity professor. Smolnikar left the Church and later became a Fourierist leader in America. Billing himself as a "Messenger of the Dispensation of Fulness of Times," Smolnikar preached to reform conventions on preparing for the "New Era of Universal Peace." See Guarneri 71 and Perry 30.
suggested in American Renaissance, the Brook Farmers' original mission was to turn the Transcendental Ideal of "The Age of Swedenborg" into the natural fact of "The Age of Fourier" (viii). The Brook Farmers may even be said to have taken Emerson's dictum one step further, turning the doctrine of correspondences into a moral imperative to leave no spiritual fact unmaterialized. Per Sveino has usefully compared the Brook Farm community to the institutional Church, arguing that the former attempted the historical realization of the Transcendental Ideal, while the latter strives to realize the Christian Ideal in secular time (279).

As we have already seen, Leroux's defense of social institutions eventually inspired Brownson to attribute this latter function to the institutional Church. But years earlier, the Unitarian Brownson had attributed the same function to his New Church (Sveino 278-279). He had reaffirmed this position as late as 1842, in an essay written shortly before Leroux's influence began to pervade his thought: "The church is the organization of mankind for the peaceable, orderly, and successful realization of the Christian Ideal, or the Ideal as beheld by the early followers of Jesus" ("Church of the Future" 5). After declaring that no existing denomination had set its sights high enough and that all of them had fulfilled their historical mission, Brownson had repeated New Views's call for a "NEW CHURCH" to realize the true Christian Ideal of Christ himself: "It shall become a
really Catholic Church, a Church truly universal, and finally
gather the vast family of man into one universal association"
("Church of the Future" 6, 24).

Anticipating Channing, Brownson predicted that this
"really Catholic Church" would replace Rome. Furthermore, it
had the same goal as Fourierism, "universal association."
Understandably, many students of the self-proclaimed science
of "Universal Unity" would also be attracted to the literal
"catholicity" of a Universal Church like Brownson's. In
"Unity in Catholicity in the Church," Channing would call for
such a Church as a refuge from the "sectarian bondage" of the
day. He felt that his fellow Unitarians, by practicing their
motto, "HOLINESS, LIBERTY, LOVE," could bring into being an
institution in which all Christians would "be in living
communion with the Divine Spirit," "live in relations of love
with all men," and enjoy the freedom "to seek on all sides for
manifestations of the Divine Will" ("Unity" 366-367). Yet
Channing's "catholicity," like Brownson's in New Views, was
not bound by the past. The religious liberty that Channing
demanded from the universal Church would include each
individual's freedom to reject or accept the creeds of past
generations. He specifically rejected the priesthood as an
unnecessary "medium," as well as claims to legitimacy based
upon "Ecclesiastical Organizations," "Bishops," and "Forms"
(367). Instead, Channing's definition of true Christianity as
the "spirit of Humanity" combined the Transcendentalist and social reform platforms:

[This Spirit] worships no past creeds, but announces that every human being, every society of human beings, the Race at large is called to realize by experience the Mystery of God incarnating himself in Man. It asks no stately cathedrals, and magnificent rites, and splendor of worship; but summons Christian nations to put away, once and forever, War, Slavery, Caste, Oppression, Inequality, Injustice, and every form of human degradation . . .; calls upon each Christian person to link hands with his neighbor in one grand cooperative effort to introduce the reign of Heaven, which is the Liberty of Love. (366-367)

In accordance with these beliefs, Channing's "First Church of Humanity," founded the following year, simply required prospective members to pledge their commitment to "universal unity." 100

Certainly the quest for "catholicity" was not new to New England. Channing's and Brownson's visions of a communal reform made possible by the faith of the community both echoed the founding text of American theological exceptionalism. John Winthrop had also argued that an American society could

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100 For the history of Channing's church, see Crowe, "Christian Socialism and the First Church of Humanity," and Guarneri 278-283. Although there were only about one hundred communicants at the Church's peak, members included Brisbane, George Ripley, John Sullivan Dwight, the sculptor William Wetmore Story, and Elizabeth Palmer Peabody. Fuller, then in Europe, was a nominal member (Crowe, "Christian Socialism" 103).

For Brownson's critique of the Church of Humanity, see his 1849 BRQR articles on "Channing on Christendom and Socialism." Butler argues that in these articles, Brownson proved that "the personal spiritual tragedy of the transcendentalist would become social in scope" (126)—a debatable claim that reduces Transcendentalism to a monolith.
only succeed if bonded by mutual love within the mystical body of Christ, "knitt together in this worke as one man" (198). Even as mid-nineteenth-century New England Protestants followed the Puritans in demonizing Rome, many of them regretted that the Reformation splintered of the Body of Christ into various sects, all competing for the claim to "catholicity." Like Henry Adams at Chartres, American visitors to one of the great European cathedrals often used the occasion to mourn this lost unity. Even Albert Brisbane said that the Strasbourg cathedral made him feel that Protestantism was "meager, and starved" (qtd., Guarneri 136-137). As Guarneri, among others, has noted, such yearning for a paradise lost was reflected in Fourier's theory of history: Harmony was to be the complex restoration of an simple Edenic society that had lapsed into "Civilization." Just as many Associationists searched for the return to Eden, they also sought to recapture the past unity of Christianity. Most of them, including Brisbane, Channing, and Godwin, felt that Rome could not be the "true" Catholic Church, if only because the social conditions in Catholic countries proved that the Church was not an effective agent for social reform.  

101 Changing immigration patterns, combined with the increasing class stratification of New England society, also gave anti-Catholicism an economic motive. See Rose 74n9.

102 Godwin, for example, characterized most Catholics as pitiful wretches who dragg[ed] out life in rags and wretchedness, . . . with most imperfect education, half the time starving, and but for the Temperance Society—out of
arbitrary the resemblances between Catholicism and Fourierism may seem in retrospect, it was a commonplace among many members of the Transcendentalist circle. At the same time, many of them denied the "catholicity" of the Roman Catholic Church.

Just as the Associationists were generally opposed to the Roman Church, yet interested in it, Hecker felt a similar ambivalence towards Fourierism. In an April 1844 letter to Brownson, he contended that Fourierism could play a useful role in spiritual reform, as its "doctrine of unity and diversity" was essentially "Catholicity in the industrial world" (B-H 91). Even though he had already followed Brownson in rejecting Fourierism, he still found that the Brook Farm Phalanx had exerted a positive spiritual effect upon its residents:

It has rid them of their transcendentalism, of their protestantism and most of their pernicious results. It seems to me I have greater hopes of Mr Ripley than I ever had. He is now laboring on the results which the Catholic Church of Christ is destined to realize in time, not on the cause which only can do this. . . . I firmly believe it will be the means of opening their eyes to those Catholic principles developed in the history of the Church. . . . Ripley has spoken once or twice with an earnestness and enthusiasm very great. This is his apprenticeship for the priesthood.103

103 Hecker to Brownson, 6 April 1844, B-H 92. Three days later, Hecker again expressed his hopes for George Ripley, but pronounced Channing a lost cause (9 April 1844; B-H 94-95).
While Hecker praised Fourier's other-reliant communitarianism for drawing the Brook Farmers away from Emersonian Transcendentalism's self-reliant "protestantism," he reassured Brownson that he did not "believe in the innumerable speculations of Fourier or that these men in their present movement will effect much by their plans" (B-H 91-92). Brownson came to the same conclusion. He argued that Fourierism, unlike the "True Church," was unable to transform its ideals into a material reality. In effect, Brownson had appropriated Emerson's memorable one-liner, "Fourier had skipped no fact but one, namely, Life," and recast it in a Christian context: Fourier had skipped no fact but the Holy Spirit.

Despite their hopes, Brownson and Hecker could not convince their acquaintances to follow them to Rome en masse.104 From their perspective, 1844 was the year in which their contemporaries chose the false path to reform; Brook Farm, the model for Brownson's proposed new social institution, was now in the Fourierist camp. This loss, like the Van Buren-Harrison election in 1840, must have been especially disheartening. In another letter, Hecker, after

Incidentally, Hecker would come to see Transcendentalism and Fourierism in a similar light. According to Glen M. Johnson, by the time the Paulist priest called on Emerson in 1863, he believed that Transcendentalism was "a symptom of spiritual longing that could be directed toward Catholicism" (60).

104See Hecker to Brownson, [9 Mar 1844]; B-H 83.
discussing his search for the "correct" branch of Christianity to join (by this time, he had narrowed the candidates down to the Catholics and Anglicans), made a seemingly abrupt change of subject:

There is some talk of Channing's giving up his efforts here and going on to Brook Farm this summer. Last Sunday morning the text of his sermon was first seek the Kingdom of Heaven and then all things will be added there with. His sermon was first seek all outward things and the Kingdom of Heaven will come. Fourierism. (Hecker to Brownson, 15 Mar. 1844; B-H 86-87)

For Hecker and Brownson, this shift in topic was not at all abrupt. After all, the question of the age-posed separately by Fourier and Hegel in 1808, then by Saint-Simon, by Leroux, by Emerson in "The American Scholar," by Marx in the 1844 Manuscripts, and by Brownson himself in "The Community System"—was how best to restore the alienated individual to its mystical communion with the genus "Humanity." Several competing schemes appealed to the communitarian fantasy of the "colossal body." Viewed through the lens of Chasseguet-Smirgel's ego ideal theory, the chiliastic utopia of Brownson's New Church was psychically regressive. On the other hand, communion in the Roman Catholic Church, the mystical Body of Christ, would require the ego to abandon its own dreams of omnipotence. (That is, the quest for salvation would require great effort on the individual's part—implying tacit recognition of the reality principle—and would therefore not be in immediate conflict with the ego ideal's maturation drive.) Therefore, the Church
could satisfy the same narcissistic desires as Brownson's New Church, but in a less regressive fashion. Indeed, Brownson came to believe that Catholicism was the true answer, and that Fourierism was not, because of the latter's confusion of ends, the "Kingdom of Heaven," with the "outward means," the Church.

IV.

Brownson's new theological views were not fully revealed to the public until the spring of 1844. Ironically, less than one month beforehand, Brisbane had published a favorable notice of the inaugural number of BrQR in The Phalanx. Brisbane stressed the compatibility between Fourierism's goals and Brownson's desire to transcend the schisms in Christianity: "... Mr Brownson advocates forcibly the UNITY OF THE CHURCH ... not by giving supremacy to any existing party or creed in the Church, but by bringing together all parties on a HIGHER GROUND OF UNITY, which shall conciliate and absorb all minor differences" (Ph 1.6 [1 March 1844]: 84). In a letter advising Brownson of the forthcoming notice, Brisbane implied that Fourierism was a necessary precursor of such a universal Church:

You have [a] great cause to contend for—the Unity of the Church. But I believe that there can be no unity until all members are educated morally and intellectually developed, supplied with abundance, so that we may have a Humanity with one heart and one mind. You cannot have the same religion, except in name and in form, as an European peasant or a poor Hindo, because your intellectual development is universally greater. We must educate the low and ignorant, or oppress the more
educated and intelligent, before we can have unity of religious belief. (Brisbane to Brownson, 21 Feb. 1844, Brownson Papers)

Brownson rejected this vision of universal conciliation in "No Church, No Reform," published in the April 1844 BrQR. Hecker wrote approvingly that with this essay, Brownson had "[brought the Fourierists’] well meant theories to an end in the public mind." 

"No Church" also played a crucial role in the development of Brownson's theological worldview: Killen calls it his "first piece of Catholic social theory" (315).

Brownson opened the essay by explaining why he had renounced his youthful "passion for social reform" ("NCNR" 176). He had realized that most people were unwilling to act selflessly; therefore, a community which united the interests of all classes could never come into being ("NCNR" 178). As was previously noted, Brownson eventually came to the conclusion that Christianity offered the sole escape from this Catch-22, that the Christian life was an end in itself, not merely a means to social reform, that only the grace of the Divine Mediator could make its practice possible ("NCNR" 181). Furthermore, since the Church instituted by Christ was the instrument of that grace—the manifestation of the Divine Logos, "truth itself, the Real Presence" ("NCNR" 181)—it was also essential. All that remained for Brownson was to decide which branch of Christianity was the One True Church. Although "No Church, No Reform" had been written several

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105 Hecker to Brownson, 28 Mar. 1844; B-H 90.
months before Brownson began formal preparations for conversion, he had already adopted the Catholic perspective of his time, arguing that the attempted reforms of "[a]ll Protestant sects" had failed because they were purely theoretical, rather than "a living institution" ("NCNR" 185).

In sum, Brownson argued that no reform plan can be realized outside of "an institution embodying the Holy Ghost, and able to communicate the Holy Ghost" ("NCNR" 186). By using this religious criterion to test the secular social reform movements of the day—taking Fourierism as his example—Brownson came to the conclusion that the Catholic Church, as the Body of Christ, was the only possible "embodiment" of social reform:

[Fourierism] proposes to reform the world by means of Association or Attractive Industry. Well, is Fourierism truth, or is it only a doctrine of truth? Is the truth, of which it is a doctrine, embodied, instituted, on the earth? No. Then Fourierism, granting it to be a just view of truth, a true account, as it professes to be, of the laws of the Creator, will amount to nothing. . . .

But assuming Fourierism to be truth, and not a mere theory of truth, it could not answer your purpose; for it is, at best, merely truth in the abstract, truth unembodied. It was not born, as is the living child, the union of spirit and body; it was not born, as was the church, the Spirit of Truth that leadeth into all truth embodied, or instituted; therefore, was not born a living thing. ("NCNR" 186-187)

While I grant that Brownson's obsession with overcoming metaphysical dualism was hardly typical, his appeal echoes earlier American insistences upon the inseparability of religion and reform. Writing more than two centuries later,
from quite another theological context, Brownson could have well lamented America's failure to heed Winthrop's counsel. In 1844, he could detect no progress in the American attempt to fashion a secular reform of society, and he predicted that the phalanx on a hill would also fail:

Here is the fundamental vice of all modern schemes of reform. All our reformers proceed on the false assumption that man is sufficient for his own redemption, and, therefore, are trying always with man alone to recover the long lost Eden, or to carry us forward to a better Eden. Here is the terrible sin of modern times. We vote God out of the state; we vote him out of our communities; and we concede him only a figurative, a symbolical relation with our churches, denying almost universally the Real Presence, and sneering at it as a Popish error; we plant ourselves on the all-sufficiency of man, and then wonder that we fail . . . . ("NCNR" 189)

This passage is explosive in its political implications. Just as Brownson denied the efficacy of Fourierist reforms and the Reformation, so did he imply that the American experiment was a failure: "after three hundred years of efforts at reform, nothing is gained, and a true state of society seems to be as far off as ever" ("NCNR" 189-190). True, the United States was not specifically faulted, but in an 1848 review of a Fourierist treatise, Brownson would make the parallel explicit. After accusing Fourier of "egotism" and "insanity," after mocking his plan "to harmonize the globe which he inhabits with himself, to harmonize it with the sideral heavens, and the sideral heavens with the universe, so that all discord shall cease, and there shall be universal
harmony," Brownson refuted the Fourierists' faith in progress by citing the example of American politics:

The progress under human institutions is always downwards . . . . Mark the difference between the men who made our Revolution and the men of to-day. Between George Washington and James K. Polk there is a distance; and there would have been a greater distance still, if it had not been for the continued operation of causes not introduced or essentially affected by our Revolution. (rev. of Organization of Labor and Association 92-93)

This lack of faith in American government would later be moderated in The American Republic. Even then, however, Brownson would argue that if American remained outside the Universal Church, it would fail in its mission as redeemer of the world.

Brownson's next anti-Fourierist tirade, "Church Unity and Social Amelioration" (July 1844), launched an acrimonious debate with Parke Godwin, whose lengthy point-by-point refutation was laced with ad hominem attacks. In his prompt parry, "Fourierism Repugnant to Christianity," Brownson suggested that Godwin had overreacted, since his critique of Fourierism in "Church Unity" had been incidental to his purpose ("Fourierism Repugnant" 450). But this claim was disingenuous. The Fourierists were the only "sect" discussed at length in "Church Unity"; furthermore, "No Church, No

106 Godwin, rev. of "Church Unity and Social Amelioration."
Reform" had borne the subtitle, "Addressed especially to the Fourierists."

It is true, however, that Brownson had a larger target than the Fourierists in these articles: American religious tolerance. He lamented that many Americans no longer believed in a "true church communion, separation from which constitutes sectarianism" ("Church Unity," 310), and blamed this attitude on a general lack of faith, in which the Church was regarded as a "purely human" institution (311). "Church Unity" opened with a thinly-veiled slap at the Unitarians: Brownson complained that misguided theological liberals had replaced the true Church with a "cold, freezing rationalism" that masqueraded under Christianity's name.

While these words may seem to echo the young Unitarians' complaint against Unitarian orthodoxy, Brownson paradoxically proceeded to attack the younger generation's anti-rationalism. The Fourierists were among the worst threats to church unity, he argued, since Fourier's passional theories contradicted the Christian doctrine that "evil comes from within." While granting their good intentions, Brownson accused the speakers at the recently-concluded Associationist convention in New York City—a group that included Brownson's "old and intimate friend" George Ripley—of telling an untruth when they proclaimed the compatibility of Fourierism and

\[107\] Brownson would later recant this extreme position in The American Republic; see Butler 171 ff.
Christianity. With righteous wrath, Brownson assailed this claim:

[W]ho has constituted you judges of what is Christianity, and who will vouch for your own Christian faith, or be our surety that you yourselves are not, under the name of Christianity, setting forth as rank infidelity as was ever set forth by Paine, Volney, or Baron d’Holbach? We see in your speeches nothing but a subtle pantheism, or a disguised Epicureanism. Your very starting-point is at the opposite pole from Christianity, and your method is directly the reverse of that enjoined by the ever-blessed Son of God. You assume the perfection of human nature, the essential holiness of all man’s instincts, passions, and tendencies, and contend that the evil in the world comes from causes extraneous to man. . . . ("CUSA" 312)

To his previous arguments against extra-ecclesiastical reform movements, "Church Unity" added the charge that Fourierist perfectionism was fundamentally opposed to Christian reform. Godwin defended Fourier by emphasizing the distinction between the passions' "subversive destinies" in "Civilization" and their "harmonic destinies" in the coming society. In a rationally-organized society, he argued, Epicureanism would contribute to the common good. Brownson retorted that this theory of passional "duplicity of action" was internally inconsistent with Fourier’s theodicy.

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108"CUSA" 312; Ripley is not mentioned by name: cf. Crowe, George Ripley 203.

109"Mr. Brownson’s Notions," 200; for an fuller explanation of this Fourierist doctrine, see Beecher 228-229, 238-240.
Manichean dualism—good passions subverted by a bad society—contradicted the theory of Universal Unity.\footnote{Fourierism Repugnant" 464-465. Godwin admitted that some members of the Associationist school (presumably referring to Brisbane) had erred in renouncing the doctrine of original sin. He claimed, however, that Fourier himself had affirmed the Fall, defining the Adamic sin as the rejection of socialism, or "the substitution, by [Man], of individual selfishness for general benevolence" ("Mr. Brownson’s" 199). But Brownson responded by quoting Godwin’s own argument against human sinfulness in the recently-published Popular View. ("Fourierism Repugnant," 453-454; cf. PV 42-43).}

Brownson’s second major charge was that the Fourierists’ mistaken belief in human perfection had caused them to invert the order in which reform was to be implemented. Rather than beginning with the institution, Brownson, like the heretic Emerson ("Shall I raise the siege of this hencoop, and march away to a pretended siege of Babylon?"), insisted that true reform must begin with the individual:

[Christianity] would correct the outward by first correcting the inward, bring man into universal harmony by bringing him spiritually into union with God. . . . You [Fourierists] reverse this . . . . Instead of saying, DENY THYSELF; you say, very properly, taking your point of departure, PLEASE THYSELF; and if thou canst not do it in society as it is, then reform, remodel, reorganize society, so thou canst please thyself, gratify to the fullest each and all of thy passions. ("CUSA" 313-314)

Godwin argued that self-reform and world-reform were inseparable projects: for example, the working classes would not be susceptible to moral reform before their material circumstances were improved ("Mr. Brownson’s" 199-200). Brownson, however, focused upon a Fourierist reform that was acutely embarrassing to most American Associationists, the
modification of "civilized" marriage. In plain fashion, Brownson restated the case that he had first made—obliquely—in "The Community System." The phalanx bestowed a "Christian character" upon adultery, he thundered, so that "thou mayest, without fear or reproach, indulge thy taste for variety and change, to thy heart's content" ("CUSA" 314).

Fourier's non-repressive society was intended to satisfy the very "love of pleasure" in an un-Christian fashion. Thus, Brownson argued, nothing in Fourierism was "incompatible with the most perfect Epicureanism, save that the individuals who are seeking to introduce the reform are not necessarily selfish, but may be disinterested." And a social theory founded upon purely selfish interests must necessarily come from the Devil himself, as Brownson made manifest in this remarkable passage:

But what, save Epicurean motives, do they hold out to induce us to join them? ... They undertake to show the capitalist that it will be a profitable investment of capital, and the laborer, that it will be a profitable investment of labor, and the voluptuary that he will there find a pleasing gratification for all his senses. The devil has grown bold, in very sooth, and no longer takes even the trouble to put on a disguise. ... [H]e may venture forth in his own person, with his cloven foot and trident tail and all, and men will follow him in crowds, and swear he is a Divinity; nay, the Divinity; and cry, "All hail, great Prince of Darkness! Welcome, thrice welcome among us!" ("CUSA" 316)

Predictably, Godwin replied that Brownson had "put forth as gross a misrepresentation as was ever coined" ("Mr. Brownson's Notions," 200) and claimed that self-denial, "the essence of
religion," was an integral part of Fourier's scheme. 111

Once again, Brownson refuted Godwin by citing Popular View to prove that Fourier's "sexual indulgence . . . beyond the Christian rule" had been admitted by Godwin himself. 112

Brownson then charged that the Fourierists had redefined the concepts of "God" and "Church" so as to make them meaningless. As the latest form of infidelity, it had attempted to depersonalize and idealize the Godhead in a manner strikingly similar to that of Emersonian Transcendentalism:

We know very well that Fourierists speak of God, of Christ, of revelation, and even of the church; but what do they mean by these awful, sublime words? Mean? Why God is the force acting in our passions and instincts, blossoming in the trees, glowing in the stars, and constituting the sum and substance of what is; Christ is the ideal of perfect manhood,

111 216. When Harmonians chose the path of self-denial, they were to be amply rewarded for their pains. Those adolescents who chose to postpone sexual gratification by joining the "Vestalate" class, for example, were to receive special honors. Note, however, that no moral stigma was to be attached to the alternative of immediate sexual gratification. Thus, Brownson was correct in claiming that self-sacrifice was not a moral imperative for the Fourierists.

112 "Fourierism Repugnant," 479-480; cf. PV 84-90. Godwin's attempt to graft the concept of self-denial onto Fourierism had been anticipated several months earlier by William Henry Channing. As Richard Francis has argued in "The Ideology of Brook Farm," Channing reworked Fourier by adding the Christian theme of infinite Good coming out of finite Evil, thus making the individual's decision to join the Phalanx an act of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation [see Channing, "Heaven on Earth," Present 1 (1 March 1844): 298; qtd. in Francis 37]. The Godwin-Brownson debate provides further evidence for Francis's argument. Since Channing closely followed Brownson's writings on reform, his development of a "Christianized" Fourierism may have been a partial response to Brownson's attacks.
which, at the same time, is the ideal of perfect
Godhood, and his significance is the identity of
the human nature with the divine; and revelation
means, that, inasmuch as the force acting in us, in
our instincts, passions, &c, is God, what these
crave must needs be the revelation or manifestation
of the will of God. ("CUSA" 316-317)

Just as God had been abstracted by the Fourierists, so had the
Church, to the point, Brownson alleged, that the Fourierists
held that their Master's theories were virtually synonymous
with the divinely-instituted Church:

So they are not only Christians, but Catholics; who, then, shall dare, henceforth, to question
their orthodoxy, or hesitate to receive them as
competent witnesses and judges of the orthodoxy of
Fourierism? . . . But, good friends, the church,
that is, the church of God, if it be any thing, is
an institution founded by God himself for man, not
an institution developed from man, or gradually
formed through the workings of men's notions of
Christian truth . . . . ("CUSA" 317)

Brownson added that this nineteenth-century infidelity was
worse than the "open, avowed, unblushing" atheism of the Age
of Reason precisely because it mistakenly believed that it was
upholding the faith ("CUSA" 318).

Godwin stridently denied that Fourierism was itself a
religion, noting that the Associationists enforced no party
line on religious disputes.\(^1\)\(^1\)\(^3\) While Fourierism was
religious in spirit, the American Associationists only
recommended reform on scientific grounds. Nonetheless, Godwin
also argued that Associationism was the necessary complement

\(^1\)\(^1\)\(^3\)The following passages were drawn from Godwin's
address to the Convention of Associationists in New York, also
excerpted in Noyes 217-21.
to religion, "the true form for the practical embodiment of truth and love . . . . [W]ithout the Body the Spirit cannot be fully manifested on Earth" (qtd., "Mr. Brownson's" 201). Just as Brownson had claimed that the Church was the tangible manifestation of the Spirit, Godwin's address had made the same claim for Associationism as the material Body of the Christian Spirit. In an audacious prophecy, he linked Fourierist Harmony with the Second Coming:

"It is verily in Harmony, in Associative Unity, that God will manifest to us the immensity of this Providence, and that the Saviour will come according to his word, in 'all the glory of his Father': it is the Kingdom of Heaven that comes to us in this terrestrial world; it is the reign of Christ; he has conquered Evil. Christus regnat, vincit, imperat. 114 Then will the Cross have accomplished its two-fold destiny, that of Consolation during the reign of Sin, and that of Universal Banner, when human reason shall have accomplished the task imposed upon it by the Creator. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness'—the harmony of the passions in Associative Unity. Then will the Banner of the Cross display with glory its device, the augury of victory; in Hoc Signo Vinces . . . . (qtd., "Mr. Brownson's" 201)

Rather than refuting Brownson's charge, Godwin had inadvertently ceded the point: the Fourierist Millennium was to be realized by Associationism Militant. 115

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114 The last two sentences are a translation of OC 6:380.

115 Godwin's defense of Christianity as "the alone fully true, absolute, universal religion" is worth noting: Christ is the sun of the spiritual world, and as our sun is the pivot of the planetary world, so He is the pivot around which all spiritual planets and satellites must revolve, drawing all the light and life there is in them, from his infinite fulness. ("Mr. Brownson's" 202)
Brownson closed his debate with Godwin by alluding to several of Fourier's most bizarre doctrines and suggesting that "their author was, on some points at least, hardly sane" ("Fourierism Repugnant" 483). As late as the fall of 1844, Brownson was still relying heavily on secondary sources for his knowledge of Fourier (in addition to Godwin's and Brisbane's writings, he also cited Charles Pellarin's biography). Nevertheless, the number of sources cited suggests that he had indeed taken "considerable pains" to study Fourierism ("Fourierism Repugnant," 484)

V.

Brownson had decided to portray Fourierism as the devil's work. He found the social movement a most convenient enemy, a caricature of the reform platform that he had previously espoused. It would be mistaken, however, to reduce Brownson's position to an identification of socialism with the Antichrist. In the examples of "Epicurean motives" cited above, selfishness encompasses not only the Fourierist's "gratification of the senses," but also "profitable" returns on both capital and labor. To Brownson, hedonism was satanic in both its socialist and its capitalist guises. If the excesses of the European revolutions of 1848 were attributable to the Evil One (as Brownson would soon claim), then, by the

The "planetary" rhetoric invoked here was typical of Fourier and his followers; compare Nathan's compilation of interplanetary speculations among French Fourierists.
same logic, the excesses of American capitalism equally deserved damnation.

Indeed, Brownson would elaborate such a position in an August 1844 address at Wesleyan University, later published as the pamphlet *Social Reform*. In attacking Fourierism as one of several examples of "the genus QUACK REFORMERS" (10), Brownson became the first American to mention the three utopian socialists in one breath (13-14). After dismissing Owenite communism and Saint-Simonian sectarianism as equally unworkable, Brownson directed his ire at Fourier once again as "the vogue, the fashionable nostrum, the reigning 'Morrison pill' of the hour" (16). However, Brownson had prefaced this attack by returning to the anti-capitalist theme that he had emphasized so forcefully in 1840, the "great and manifold evils . . . throughout Christendom" that had moved people to seek reform. Chief of these evils was the modern tendency "to reduce the price of labor to the mere minimum of human subsistence, if not to a lower point still" (2-3). While Brownson's political thought is generally supposed to have drifted steadily to the right in the years 1840-1844, this address begins with a brief but brilliant anticipation of the *Manifesto*—even more impressive than that of "The Laboring Classes." Brownson argued that industrialization had led to class stratification and that because of market pressures

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upon capitalists, wages had tended to approach the subsistence level. This much can be found in "The Laboring Classes" as well, but Brownson went on to modify his previous call for *laissez faire*. He now believed that the excess capacity resulting from industrialization would necessarily lead to a structural economic crisis deflating wages even further, thus creating the conditions for revolution (5-6). Brownson aptly summarized the still-relevant paradox of industrial capitalism: "The more we produce the more destitute we are" (8).

Brownson had come to see the Church as the refuge from both Fourierist socialism and industrial capitalism. He closed the address in fire-and-brimstone fashion, recommending a spiritual awakening that would counteract the Fourierist and capitalist emphasis upon Mammon with the Sermon on the Mount's "Blessed are the poor" (34, 36-37). Unfortunately, Brownson did not succeed in finding the middle ground between Christian Socialist and Christian reactionary. His rejection of secular reform and his concomitant belief that the proletariat could be comforted by a pie-in-the-sky gospel amounted in practice—though this was certainly not his intention—to a tacit endorsement of the capitalist ideology that he condemned so forcefully.

Brownson’s response to American Fourierism may seem an idiosyncratic response to the pragmatic social reforms
proposed by Brisbane. While correctly noting irreconcilable differences between Fourierist and Catholic doctrine, he also condemned it on other grounds that did not necessarily follow from the Catholic social thought of the 1840s, even from its relatively conservative mainstream. But I would suggest that it is possible to reconcile Brownson’s theological critique of Fourierism with his theological critique of American exceptionalism.

Leonard Gilhooley’s *Contradiction and Dilemma* has made the case for Brownson as the nineteenth-century critic who most rigorously examined the idea of American exceptionalism. Gilhooley argues that Brownson challenged received post-Jacksonian notions of America: that the Founders’ dream of a classless democratic state had been realized, that the American experiment in self-government was an unqualified success, and that the only historical mission left for America to perform was the reformation of the rest of the world in its image (1-2). Brownson’s political writings offered an extended critique of the self-proclaimed American mission to spread the gospel of democracy to the rest of the world (cf. Tuveson).

This teleology of America is closely paralleled in Fourierist ideology. Just as the discovery of America was to have begun the unfolding of a divine plan that would lead to the redemption of humanity, Fourier’s discovery of God’s plan for humanity, once realized in the phalanx, would lead to the
reformation of the universe. Fourierism shared many of the American ideology's foundational assumptions, including an Enlightenment optimism, a faith in progress, and a Christological vision (cf. Gilhooley 7, 13-14). Brownson came to argue that the Fourierist belief in societal perfectibility and the Christian vision of a world in need of divine redemption were in fundamental conflict. While he may not have been fully conscious of these parallels between Fourierism and American exceptionalism, the logic that led Brownson to reject Fourierist ideology as an un-Christian, extra-ecclesiastical reform also led him to reject the nascent American capitalist ideology for the same reason. His argument against the selfishness of Fourierist libertinism can easily be turned against laissez-faire libertarianism, the foundation of American capitalist ideology. If Brownson was right to claim that the passions are not a reliable guide and that "evil originates in man's abuse of his freedom" ("CUSA" 313), then Adam Smith's hidden hand was guilty of the same self-abuse.

VI.

Brownson's theological critique of Fourierism, as first fully elaborated in 1844, held that no reform plan, sacred or secular, could be realized outside of "an institution embodying the Holy Ghost, and able to communicate the Holy Ghost" ("No Church, No Reform" 186). Brownson did not use the
word "embodying" as a mere trope: for him, the Church, the Body of Christ, was the only possible "embodiment" of social reform. To hold otherwise, Brownson believed, was to risk committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, the Unpardonable Sin.

While American religious leaders of the 1840s had little difficulty finding sufficient theological grounds for rejecting Fourierism, Brownson's argument may strike the reader as more idiosyncratic than most. I would suggest, however, that this reading was closer to the mainstream than it may seem, for Christian conservatives and Christian socialists were battling over the meaning of the "Unpardonable Sin," a phrase with prophetic resonances. The immediate reference, of course, is to Jesus' warning in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke that "whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come" (Matt. 12:31-32, RSV). This proclamation was made in a revolutionary context: Jesus had just challenged the Pharisees' interpretation of Mosaic law by gathering grain, healing the sick, and casting out demons on the Sabbath. To justify these transgressions, he argued that the work of the Spirit superseded obedience to the letter of the Law. Furthermore, Jesus implicitly accused the Pharisees of "the blasphemy against the Spirit" (Matt. 12:31). This distinction between forgivable violations of the Law and unforgivable
blasphemies against its Spirit was itself a strong misreading, in Harold Bloom's sense, of the Old Testament.

Trinitarians, who interpreted Matthew 12 as one of the few Biblical references to the nature of the Godhead, also found in it a prophecy of "the age to come." They believed that Jesus foretold a historical epoch that would correspond to the Third Person of the Trinity, the coming Age of the Spirit. The most influential of these was the twelfth-century monk Joachim of Fiore, who had divided secular time into three epochs. In the past, the Age of the Father, each individual was governed by his or her fear of God. In the present, the Age of the Son, faith in Christ was the governing principle. In the earthly paradise to come, the Age of the Holy Ghost, all humans would be governed by love of each other and love of God. Joachim's theory of history was radically utopian: it argued for "a transcendence that links earth and heaven rather than irreconcilably separating them" (Kumar 16-17).

Some seven centuries after Joachim, Prosper Enfantin, a disciple of Saint-Simon, reworked the Trinitarian theory of history to further the cause of the socialist millennium. The anti-Catholicism of Saint-Simon's Nouveau Christianisme (1825), which had attacked the Roman Church as a "degenerate" "Christian heresy" (qtd., Manuel, New World 355), was supplanted by his disciple's strong misreading, which attempted to effect a reconciliation of Saint-Simonian and Catholic doctrine. Enfantin's narrative of the history of
Christianity, usefully characterized by Frank E. Manuel as a Hegelian "dialectical triad," held that the thesis of the First Age of Christianity had been Catholicism, the establishment of a universal church. Its antithesis, the Second Age, had been the Protestant Reformation's "new spirit of particularization, specialization, individuation" (Manuel, Prophets 145). According to Enfantin's reading, Saint-Simon called for a Third Age of Christianity, a socialist era in which the individualist and the universalist tendencies would be synthesized in a pseudo-Hegelian end of history. This schema appealed to temperaments as diverse as George Sand and the young Brownson, who used their own work to argue for the Trinitarian theory of history.\textsuperscript{117} Less than a decade after New Views, however, Brownson would reject the socialist version of the Trinitarian theory of history, with its critique of Catholicism, as heretical.\textsuperscript{118}

Brownson might well have found the same heresy in Fourier's millenarian socialism, as the following quotation from Le Nouveau Monde Industriel (1829) indicates:

> He who offends the Father or the Son by blasphemies only does harm to himself, but the philosophe who outrages the Holy Spirit in opposing the calculus of attractions does harm to all humanity . . . he shall not find grace, neither in this world, nor in the other. (OC 6:366-367)

\textsuperscript{117}On the Saint-Simonian origins of the Trinitarian theory, see Manuel's The New World of Henri Saint-Simon, 360-363, as well as his Prophets, 145-147.

\textsuperscript{118}Butler's 1992 study traces essentially the same genealogy.
Although Fourier's equation of his socialist utopia upon the Age of the Spirit was more likely the result of the Zeitgeist rather than of any direct influence by the Saint-Simonians,¹¹⁹ his words can be read as an incomplete draft of Enfantin's theory. While Fourier's own theory of historical necessity had thirty-two ages, and thus did not adhere to the Trinitarian model, his references to the Father and the Son allegorically corresponded to Enfantin's first two ages of Christianity. The "calculus of attractions," the divinely-ordained science that Fourier claimed to have discovered, was to usher in an age of Harmony between individual passions and universal humanity, the Age of the Spirit. Finally, Fourier's pointed reference to Matthew 12 generated yet another strong misreading, one that redefined the Unpardonable Sin as opposition to the new social science.

Some fifteen years later, Fourier's American disciples would often refer to him as the harbinger ("le fourrier") of the Age of the Spirit.¹²⁰ Fourier himself was careful to avoid proclaiming himself a second Christ, preferring the role of John the Baptist (see Bowman). Nevertheless, many Associationists found uncanny parallels between Fourier's mission and Jesus'. Other Americans, even those ignorant of Fourierism, similarly identified the socialist movement in

¹¹⁹Fourier's brief correspondence with Enfantin in 1829 began only after the publication of NMI (see Beecher 415).

¹²⁰E.g., Godwin in PV 28; The Harbinger's very title is a covert tribute to the Master.
general with the coming of a new age; they found the "blasphemy against the Spirit" passage particularly resonant. For example, well before Brook Farm had fallen under Fourierist influence, one anonymous correspondent also cited Matthew 12 in wondering whether one had a religious obligation to join the new community:

How dare I oppose the unfolding of the spiritual progress of my whole race, by all the force of my personal selfishness and indolence? ... [I]s it not the sin against the Holy Ghost ... to hesitate to enter immediately upon the immortal life?

The writer went on to hail Brook Farm as "that very rectification of things which Mr. Brownson in his Article on the Laboring Classes is understood to declare will require a bloody revolution" ("The Community at West Roxbury" 6). In 1843, *The Phalanx* reprinted Hugh Doherty's more abrasive version of the same argument: "[T]o persevere in obstinate indifference to the causes and effects of evil in society ... is nothing less than what has been denounced by Jesus Christ as the great sin against the Holy Ghost; i.e. an obstinate and wilful disbelief in truth and justice when revealed in science through the influence of the Holy Spirit of enlightenment and faith" ("Impossibility" 23). Thus, the Fourierists and their opponents charged each other with subverting God's plan for humanity.

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The certitude expressed by the Fourierists and their opponents suggests that both parties had a limited capacity for introspection. Hawthorne would play with this theme in *The Blithedale Romance*. Hollingsworth's denunciation of Fourier, for example, is Brownsonesque: "I never will forgive this fellow [Fourier]! He has committed the Unpardonable Sin!" That is, Fourier had irrevocably erred in his Babel-like attempt to realize his own ideals, rather than those of the Holy Spirit. As *Blithedale's* readers discover, the obsessive prison-reform projector is guilty of the same "sin" that he accused Fourier of committing. Furthermore, his complicity in a potentially incestuous love-triangle makes Hollingsworth’s censure doubly ironic. Did Hollingsworth condemn Fourier’s amorous science, which had planned to lift the incest taboo, for fostering the "vile, petty, sordid, filthy, bestial, and abominable corruptions" of human nature (N 678), a none-too-oblique reference to sexual promiscuity in Harmony? Does Hollingsworth mean that Fourier had irrevocably erred in his Babel-like attempt to realize his own ideals, rather than those of the Holy Spirit? In either case, Hollingsworth is again guilty of the same sin.

In the 1840s, then, there were two conflicting interpretations of the Trinitarian theory of history: one urged the individual to follow Jesus through the institutional Church, the other called on the individual to heed Père Enfantin’s or Fourier’s call to realize practical Christianity
on Earth. Outside the Trinitarian schema, a third alternative was becoming available. Emerson’s pragmatic perfectionism did not hesitate to point out the shortcomings of either institutional Christianity or institutional socialism:

[Let us be lovers and servants of that which is just; and straightaway every man becomes a centre of a holy and beneficent republic, which he sees to include all men in its law, like that of Plato, and of Christ. Before such a man the whole world becomes Fourierized or Christized or humanized, and in the obedience to his most private being, he finds himself, according to his presentiment, though against all sensuous probability, acting in strict concert with all others who followed their private light. ("Fourierism and the Socialists," E&L 1208)]

Generations later, D. H. Lawrence would offer another version of Emerson’s anti-systematic critique in a shrewd quasi-Freudian reading of Blithedale. Lawrence invoked the "Holy Ghost" not as the third Person of the Christian Trinity, but rather "the real human soul," the untamable id. Secularizing the theological objections to Fourier and Hollingsworth, Lawrence argued that these doctrinal "bookfarmers" had denied their "dual consciousness" and thus committed the Emersonian version of the Unpardonable Sin—failure to heed the voice within (109-112).

Just as Emerson and his heirs were capable of dismissing Fourierist and Christian institutions simultaneously, Christianity could be deployed to rebuke both Transcendentalism and Fourierism. Back in 1845, Brownson had closed the circle of recriminations by turning Emerson’s anti-rational critique against itself. The Transcendentalists, he
claimed, had placed "the impersonal nature . . . at the summit of the psychical hierarchy," just as the Fourierists had insisted upon the primacy of the individual's "passional nature":

[The Fourierists] contend that man's good consists not in controlling his passions, but in harmonizing them, and that they are to be harmonized not by being crucified, but by having all things so arranged as to secure their free and full satisfaction. . . . Fourierism is nothing but a form of Transcendentalism, as may be inferred from the fact that nearly all the Transcendentalists are either avowed Fourierists or very favorable to them. Fourierism is simply an attempt to realize in society the leading principles of Transcendentalism; and if some Transcendentalists reject it, it is not because they question the philosophy on which it rests, but because they doubt its competency, as a practical scheme of social organization, to secure the end proposed. ("Transcendentalism, or the Latest Form of Infidelity" 310)

Whatever the merits of Brownson's argument, it is remarkable that his rejection of Fourierist socialism became inextricably knotted with his rejection of the anti-Fourierist individualism professed by Emerson.

If one could hasten the millenium by making a correct decision and acting upon it, one might also lose one's soul by making an incorrect wager. From any of these three perspectives—Christian, socialist, or self-reliant—Brownson had either damned himself or come perilously close.
"IS THE THING REALLY DESIRABLE?":

EMERSON'S RECEPTION OF FOURIERISM

I.

"... Fourier had skipped no fact but one, namely Life." When Ralph Waldo Emerson penned this devastating line for his 1842 Dial essay "Fourierism and the Socialists," he may have lifted the underlying idea from Thomas Carlyle. If so, the theft was pardonable, for it had been Emerson who had moved Carlyle to damn Fourier in the first place. In his introduction to the British edition of Emerson's 1841 Essays, Carlyle had hailed his American friend as an alternative to the moribund movements of the day:

While so many Benthamisms, Socialisms, Fourierisms, professing to have no soul, go staggering and lowing like monstrous moon-calves, the product of a heavy moonstruck age ... shall not any voice of a living man be welcome to us, even because it was alive?  

Carlyle was not alone in his opinion. Other friends of Emerson, even those with one foot in the Fourierist camp, portrayed him as an anti-Fourierist. In Summer on the Lakes, for example, Margaret Fuller staged an imaginary debate on the

utility of mesmerism. Fuller, as the allegorical character Free Hope, argued that mesmerism might give the mind a window into a higher mode of being, Fourier's "aromal state." Another character, Self-Poise, disagreed, and advised Free Hope to steer clear of "nonsense." Self-Poise's advice ends with an unacknowledged quotation of Emerson's 11 April 1844 letter advising her to steer clear of the "farcical" reforms of the day, including Fourierism. On a second occasion more than two decades later, Emerson's Fourierist friend Henry James, Sr., having heard one of Emerson's lectures, wrote that he was "shocked and chagrined" by "the monstrous misrepresentation Mr Emerson gave of Fourier's books." The Boston Commonwealth's correspondent "Warrington" [William S. Robinson] reported James's visceral reaction:

Henry James, somebody says, 'is very mad about Emerson's criticism on Fourier; he says Emerson knew nothing about Fourier, and has confessed to him that he never read his works, but only knows of them from extracts which Mrs Emerson read to him while he was shaving.'

James repudiated the details of this account, claiming that he was misquoted, but affirmed the substance of the story: "[I]t is true . . . that I complain of Emerson's incompetence to criticize Fourier on his present basis of knowledge, and to none more frankly than to Emerson himself . . . ." All

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123EssMF 145-148; Zwarg, "Footnoting the Sublime" 632-633; Emerson to Fuller, 11 Apr. 1844, LRWE 3:246.

124James, "Emerson, Fourier, and 'Warrington'" 2; Burkholder and Myerson 150.
of the foregoing suggests that Emerson had from the outset ridiculed Fourier and his bizarre tenets. The James anecdote further suggests that Emerson considered Fourierism too outlandish to merit more than passing consideration.

But a closer examination shows that Emerson's reaction was far more complex. At roughly the same time that Orestes Brownson was learning to despise Fourier, Emerson was learning to admire the utopian. It is true that from 1842 to 1844, when most of Emerson's knowledge of Fourierism was gleaned from Albert Brisbane, his comments on the movement were overwhelmingly negative, often mocking. After reading several volumes of the *Oeuvres complètes* in early 1845, however, Emerson came to distinguish Fourier's original theory from adulterated American Associationism. The mockery continued, but it was now juxtaposed with profound, occasionally extravagant appreciations of Fourier's views on diverse topics: social reform, sexual liberation, economics, antislavery, human nature itself. Emerson's complex dialogue with Fourierism suggests that Emerson, in coming to distinguish Fourier from the Associationists, found more merit in the Frenchman's "crazy" thought than in the watered-down socialism of his American interpreters. And in Fourier, Emerson also found an uncanny echo of himself.

To understand what Fourierism had meant to Emerson in the 1840s, it may be useful to begin by asking what Emerson's
postbellum audience thought it had meant to him. Their prevailing assumption—that Emerson had had little use for Fourier—was rapidly incorporated into the myth of Emerson as the ideal of American individualism. The day after Emerson’s death, two obituaries highlighted his critique of socialism. The *Daily Evening Traveller*’s necrology implied that the publication of "Fourierism and the Socialists" in the July 1842 *Dial*, Emerson’s first issue as editor, signalled his desire to move the journal in a different direction (rpt., Cameron, *Emerson, Thoreau and Concord* 37). Similarly, the *New York World*’s obituary emphasized the disagreements between the pragmatic individualist and his socialist friends:

> [Emerson protested] especially against the phalansteries of Fourier and insist[ed] that it was individualism rather than communism of which men had the greatest need. The strong Yankee sagacity which was no less a characteristic of the man than his poetic imagination doubtless impelled him in this matter. (rpt., Cameron ET&C 28)

The two obituaries had independently come to similar conclusions, hailing Emerson’s rejection of Fourierism, first made some four decades earlier, as proof of his common sense. While Emerson might have had flights of fancy, his idealism was counterbalanced by "Yankee sagacity," making him safe for American consumption.

Emerson’s final public lecture did much to sanction this interpretation of his career. "Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England," first published posthumously in 1883, had been written and delivered years earlier, perhaps as early
as 1867 (see WRWE 10:572-573); it may well have occasioned James's 1868 complaint. Emerson delivered "Historic Notes" at the Concord Lyceum on February 4, 1880, the last speaking engagement of his life. One reporter's account intimated that all present had found the history of American socialism too absurd to be taken seriously, remarking that Emerson's "incidental comment on the theories of Owen, Fourier, and other socialistic reformers . . . . was evidently designed to be amusing, and called forth the laughter of the audience" (unidentified newspaper clipping, rpt., Cameron, ET&C 121). The lecture recycled several paragraphs from "Fourierism and the Socialists." This self-plagiarism might well be offered as evidence for the position promulgated by historians of Transcendentalism from O. B. Frothingham onwards: in thirty-eight years, they maintained, Emerson had not wavered in his repudiation of Fourierism.

More recently, however, Sacvan Bercovitch has shown that Emerson, in rejecting Fourierist theory as impracticable, did not dismiss the movement itself as counter-productive.¹²⁵ "Historic Notes" argued that America had derived "practical lessons" from the communitarian folly of the 1840s, specifically including associationism:

[These philanthropists] were not the creators that they believed themselves, but they were the unconscious prophets of a true state of

¹²⁵"Emerson, Individualism, and Liberal Dissent" (1993), cited hereafter as "EILD"; earlier versions of this essay were published in 1990 and 1991.
society. . . . The large cities are phalansteries; and the theorists drew all their argument from facts already taking place in our experience.\textsuperscript{126} The cheap way is to make every man do what he was born for. (\textit{WRWE} 10:357-358)

The patriarch of American culture closed "Historic Notes"—and his career—by bestowing his blessing upon the "quiet power" of "our American mind," which had begun to realize a vision less "eccentric" and "rude" than European socialism, and "whose genius is not a lucky accident, but normal, and with broad foundation of culture, and so inspires the hope of steady strength advancing on itself, and a day without night" (\textit{WRWE} 10:369-370). In celebrating America’s potential to breed an exceptional race, Emerson was constructing a self-mythologizing continuum. Now the nation he had prophesied in 1837 was dawning, and those who had developed a home-grown pragmatic alternative to flighty European idealism deserved credit for the success of American culture. In particular, Emerson himself had helped his nation learn from the flawed utopianism of the 1840s while steering it towards "the cheap way" of laissez faire. Thus, the amusing social reform movements of the 1840s—and perhaps the Fourierists in particular—were to be credited for making an "unconscious" contribution to the dialectic that ultimately produced the American ideology of the Gilded Age. This passage closely parallels Guarneri’s argument for the significance of American

\textsuperscript{126}Cf. \textit{JMN} 11:242: "Phalanstery means, the use which a wise man makes of a large city."
Fourierism; indeed, Bercovitch acknowledges the potential importance of The Utopian Alternative for his own study in the preface to The Rites of Assent.

In claiming that "Historic Notes" was a relatively accurate "glance backward" over young Emerson's road, Bercovitch advances his central thesis, that Emerson's "confrontation with the theory and practice of socialism" circa 1842 catalyzed the shift from his early radicalism to his later conservatism ("EILD" 341, 318). Bercovitch juxtaposes Emerson's hostility towards European socialists (who had coined "individualism" as a pejorative) with his simultaneous rejection of the Jacksonian alternative, the attempt to establish "individualism" as a political structure. Instead, Emerson created a third way, the unstructured play of a utopian "individuality," as exemplified in this famous journal entry from late 1842:

The world is waking up to the idea of Union and already we have Communities, Phalanxes and Aesthetic Families, & Pestalozzian institutions. It is & will be magic. Men will live & communicate & ride & plough & reap & govern as by lightning and galvanic & etherial power; as now by respiration & expiration exactly together they lift a heavy man from the ground by the little finger only, & without a sense of weight. But this union is to be reached by a reverse of the methods they use. It is spiritual and must not be actualized. The Union

Bercovitch follows Bestor in tracing the birth of the word "individualism" to French socialists, who used the term as a pejorative. In 1840, Tocqueville's translator introduced "individualism" into English; and the London Phalanx and Brisbane were among the first to use it. See LPh 1 (3 Apr. 1841), 10, as well as DemRev 10 (Jan. 1844) 44 (Bestor, "The Evolution of the Socialist Vocabulary 282-283).
is only perfect when all the Uniters are absolutely isolated [. . . .]
union ideal,—in actual individualism, actual union (JMN 8:251)

Bercovitch persuasively argues that Emerson here embraced the goals of Fourierism and similar social reforms—specifically, "union"—while simultaneously rejecting the magical methods of the socialists as "the dreams of Bedlam" ("EILD" 310-318). Bercovitch further proposes that Emerson's unideological ideology of individuality was developed out of his engagement with the "crazy" (Emerson's word) European socialists: Leroux, Saint Simon, Chartists, and, Bercovitch suggests, "perhaps Fourier in particular" (JMN 9:402; "EILD" 330). In other words, Bercovitch argues that Emerson's "individuality" was the dialectical negation of European socialist ideology, especially that of Fourierism.

It is not difficult to find support for Bercovitch's claim in Emerson's writings. Clearly he thought the otherworldly Associationists did not see what was under their noses: "What room for Fourier phalanxes, for large & remote schemes of happiness when I may be in any moment surprized by contentment?" (JMN 8:216). He playfully considered the possibility of banding together with a few close friends to form a "Sacred Phalanx" for the self-reliant, a "Concord Socialism" devoted to "the most holy Trinity Truth, Goodness, & Beauty" (Emerson to Elizabeth Hoar, 31 Aug. 1843, LRWE 3:203). But although Bercovitch's argument is generally compelling, it does not fully account for Emerson's specific
responses to Fourierism, particularly in the years after 1844. As we shall see, Emerson's continual engagement with Fourier's ideas outlasted the collapse of Associationism as a national socialist movement.

II.

While Emerson's first reference to Fourierism dates from 1842, he would have known of the movement from an unsigned one-paragraph notice of *Social Destiny of Man* that appeared in the October 1840 *Dial*, a mere month after the book was published. The author was almost certainly George Ripley, who had learned of Brisbane's communitarian plans several months earlier from a mutual acquaintance, James Freeman Clarke's mother (Myerson, *New England Transcendentalists and the Dial* 200). Ripley's interest was relatively pragmatic: he did

128 While The Dial's review of *Social Destiny of Man* has been attributed to Emerson, Ripley is now considered the most likely author, an ascription first made by Bestor "partly on the ground of RWE to William Emerson, 19 Oct. 1840 [LRWE 2:348], and partly on the negative evidence that Emerson nowhere else mentions either Brisbane or Fourier until considerably later" (draft of 1940 letter to Ralph L. Rusk, Bestor papers, Folder IV.A.35; cf. Bestor, "American Phalanxes" 2:9). Other scholars have seconded the attribution to Ripley (Crowe, "Fourierism and the Founding of Brook Farm" 88n15; Myerson, "An Annotated List of Contributions to the Boston Dial" 141; Guarneri 439n73; Joel Porte, personal communication).

Since the Emerson canon is not Sacred Scripture, the reader may wonder whether the authorship of this unremarkable one-paragraph squib (slightly shorter than this footnote) really matters. I think it does: had the Emerson of 1840 been looking to socialism to prevent class warfare in the U.S., his subsequent change of heart would have been as dramatic as Brownson's.
not mention any of Fourier's grand ambitions beyond the "improvement and elevation of productive industry" (E&L 1175). Like Brownson, Ripley originally read Fourierism through a proto-Marxist lens, valuing the theory for its "scientific" attempt to solve the "great question" of healing the rapidly-widening rift between capital and labor. Of course, it was also in October 1840 that the Ripleys, Fuller, and Alcott had visited Emerson to discuss the plans for Brook Farm. It seems likely that Fourierism was discussed in some general fashion; in a letter from this period, Fuller derided Brisbane's scheme in passing.\textsuperscript{129} One year later, Emerson doubtless read Elizabeth Palmer Peabody's \textit{Dial} article on communitarianism, "A Glimpse of Christ's Idea for Society." Peabody argued that Brisbane's Fourierism lacked "spiritual depth" and failed to take into account the human capacity for evil, but nevertheless praised its "valuable thought" (225).

Beyond his ties to the Brook Farmers, Emerson had reason to take note of the nascent Associationist movement. From the late 1830s, his lectures had often expressed dissatisfaction with the hollowness of early industrial capitalist society, as in the "One Man" fable of "The American Scholar": "The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but

\textsuperscript{129} Fuller to William H. Channing [?], ca. 31 Oct 1840, LMF 2:178-180.
never a man" (54). To cure Americans of such profound alienation, extreme measures might be required. In the 1841 address "Man the Reformer," Emerson asked his working-class audience whether the wealth of civilization was so "tainted" that it must be wholly "renounced" in favor of a return to "the manual labor of the world" (139). This faintly Maoist proposal, made a few years before Thoreau's sojourn at Walden Pond, found a partial parallel in Brisbane's diagnosis of American anomie and his marketing of agricultural Association as its cure. But prior to 1842, there is no evidence of any direct influence: Emerson's knowledge of Fourierism was probably slight.

Emerson's first recorded contact with American Fourierists came in late February 1842: at the beginning of his New York City lecture series, he met and dined with Brisbane and Greeley. Barely a month had passed since his son Waldo's death, and Emerson was not favorably disposed towards sunnily utopian schemes. As he would write later that spring in "Threnody," "if I repine / . . . / 'Tis because a general hope / Was quenched." The crestfallen Emerson found his new acquaintances particularly annoying:

Mr Brisbane promised me a full exposition of the principles of Fourierism & Association [. . . .] Il faut soumettre: Yet I foresaw in the moment when I encountered these two new friends here, that I cannot content them. They are bent on popular action: I am in all my theory, ethics & politics a poet and of no more use to them in their New York than a rainbow or firefly [. . . .]. One of these days shall we not have new laws forbidding solitude; and severe penalties on all separatists &
unsocial thinkers?  (Emerson to Lydia Jackson
Emerson, 1 Mar. 1842, LRWE 3:18)

Consistently with his evolving anti-socialist stance, Emerson argued that Brisbane and Greeley's new doctrine—whatever its specifics might happen to be—was a potential threat to the self-reliant. Emerson further objected to the Fourierists' reduction of his own thought to a competing system "whereof you know I am wholly guiltless, and which is spoken of as a known & fixed element like salt and meal" (LRWE 3:18).

But Emerson himself, not yet initiated into Fourierist arcana, had also misunderstood Brisbane and Greeley. The two men, despite their long and vigorous propaganda campaign for Associationism, were hardly "bent on popular action"; their socialist praxis, like that of Fourier himself, was essentially limited to the promulgation of the theory. Thus it is amusing that Emerson paints these utopian dreamers as pragmatists, and himself as the fanciful idealist. Emerson elaborated this faulty opposition in another letter written that day:

Alas, how shall I content Mr Brisbane? [. . .] These kindly but too determinate persons, the air of Wall Street, the expression of the faces of all the male & female crowd in Broadway, the endless rustle of newspapers all make me feel not the value of their classes but of my own class—the supreme need of the few worshippers of the Muse—wild & sacred—as counteraction to this world of material & ephemeral interest.130

130 Emerson to Margaret Fuller, 1 Mar. 1842, LRWE 3:19-20. Fuller seconded Emerson's judgment in her reply: "Tell me more about those dim New Yorkers" (17? Mar. 1842, LMF 3:52).
Emerson saw Brisbane and Greeley as half-formed: a capitalist and a journalist, quotidian trippers and askers. On Emerson's side, one might place the traditional heroes of the American Renaissance, those egotists who preferred not to.

Emerson's initial error—his confusion of Fourierism with vulgar materialism—was the understandable result of Brisbane's rhetorical strategy. Lloyd E. Rohler, Jr. has observed that the arrangement of material in Social Destiny of Man strategically reversed Fourier's order of presentation in Quatre mouvements; that is, Brisbane placed the sane communitarianism before the wacky passional calculus (31-32). While Brisbane's initial appeal to rationalism may have made Fourierism more palatable to most Americans, this approach actually alienated Emerson.

Emerson finally submitted to Brisbane's indoctrination in the "high mysteries of 'Attractive Industry.'" The two men discussed Fourier at least twice, on March 3 and 4, 1842. From Emerson's subsequent account in "Fourierism and the Socialists," Brisbane stressed the visionary aspects of Fourier's theory. While this new tack forced Emerson to revise his initial understanding of Fourier, he remained unimpressed. In fact, he admired his brand-new friend, Henry James, Sr.—not yet converted to the Fourierist fold—for

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131 The independently wealthy Brisbane (who would inherit almost $250,000 when his father died in 1851) was not the Wall Street player that Emerson took him for, but he was a speculator in New York real estate (Guarneri 26; Bestor, "Albert Brisbane" 139).
"[telling Brisbane] the truth a good deal better than I probably should have done" (Emerson to Lydia Jackson Emerson, 3 and 5 Mar. 1842, LRWE 20-21, 23).

In fact, Brisbane's sermonizing disgusted Emerson. He blasted the Fourierist apostle's "insincere enthusiasm," calling it "the abomination of desolation" (JMN 8:416). By using the King James Version's phrase for the desecration of the Holy of Holies—another Unpardonable Sin—Emerson implicitly equated Fourierism with self-desecration. Another entry compared Fourier to the quack scholar of Browning's Paracelsus (JMN 8:304-305; cf. 8:303). And Brisbane was doubtless foremost in Emerson's mind when he wrote that "[t]he propagandists of Fourierism whom I have seen are military minds, & their conversation is always insulting, for they have no other end than to make a tool of their companion." 132

Obviously Emerson resented the manipulation of Brisbane the propagandist.

Emerson's public criticism in "Fourierism and the Socialists" was more guarded yet equally pointed: "Mr. Brisbane pushes his doctrine with all the force of memory, talent, honest faith, and importunacy" ("F&S" 1205). The verb

132 JMN 10:377. Emerson had earlier warned Fuller that Brisbane wanted to submit an article to the Dial, "but that is because he wishes you to diffuse Fourierism, not because he has ever read or comprehended a syllable of yours" (10? and 12? Mar. 1842, LRWE 3:30). Apparently Brisbane was not the only propagandist that Emerson found annoying. The following year, he would complain to Fuller: "Fourierists wish to indoctrinate me & give me 'short notes on commerce' of 14 sheets to read" (12 Feb. 1843, LRWE 3:146).
choice is telling, and Emerson had toned down the first draft: "importunacy" had originally been "impudence" (JMN 8:208).
Another excised passage suggested that Brisbane was an unlikely proponent of "passional attraction":

[He] seems as one who should laboriously arrange a heap of shavings of steel by hand in the direction of their magnetic poles instead of thrusting a needle into the heap, and instantaneously they are magnets. (JMN 8:210)

"Fourierism and the Socialists" was an occasional essay, introducing the only article by Brisbane ever published in The Dial, the grandiosely-titled "Means for Effecting a Final Reconciliation between Religion and Science." Brisbane had altered his usual sales pitch for metaphysically-minded Dial readers. He argued that faith was more important than reason, yet insufficient in itself; fortunately, Fourier had made it possible to harmonize religion and science through his science of "the nature of the soul" (91-92). To make this harmony universal, the social condition of the masses must first be improved, and another precondition had to be met: "A great Genius must arise, who, piercing the veil that covers the mysteries of the Universe, will discover, or prepare the way to the discovery of the nature and essence of God" (94-95).
Brisbane assured his readers that Fourier had been that man; therefore, the Harmonian millennium was imminent. Emerson's introduction had approvingly quoted Brisbane's call to the intelligentsia: "What is more futile than barren philosophical speculation, that leads to no great practical results?"
this anticipation of the final thesis on Feuerbach was
certainly no anticipation of Marxist thought. Instead,
Brisbane was offering yet another magical version of the
socialist millennium achieved by dialectical synthesis, with
Fourier as its Messiah.

Although such bombast was not difficult to skewer,
"Fourierism and the Socialists" performed the task with
elegance. With tongue in cheek, Emerson praised Fourier’s
system as "the perfection of arrangement and contrivance
... . Mechanics were pushed so far as to fairly meet
spiritualism" (E&L, 1205-1206; cf. JMN 8:208)—faint praise
tantamount to dismissal.133 Playfully slipping from
appreciation to satire and back again, Emerson transformed the
Fourierist plan for curing "the disorders of the planet" into
a burlesque:

"Attractive Industry" would speedily subdue [...] the
pestilential tracts; would equalize
temperature, give health to the globe, and cause
the earth to yield 'healthy imponderable fluids' to
the solar system, as it now yields noxious fluids.
The hyena, the jackal, the gnat, the bug, the flea,
were all beneficent parts of the system, but the
good Fourier knew what those creatures should have
been, had not the mould slipped, caused, no doubt,
by those same vicious imponderable fluids. (E&L
1206)

133In his journal, Emerson more bluntly rejected
Fourier’s materialism:
The good Fourier does not go for virtue beyond his
nose. The highest word I find in his vocabulary is
the Aromal, under which, spiritual distinctions
such as he can recognize, should fall. (JMN 9:172)
In their March meetings, Brisbane had indoctrinated Emerson in several of Fourier's most bizarre prophecies—the changes in climate, the aromal fluids, the reformation of the solar system, the anti-creatures of the Harmonian creation. Brisbane's selective presentation to the public did not imply his rejection of visionary Fourierism.

Emerson's ridicule signals a rapid shift in the ground of his critique. After he assailed the theory for its pedantic coherence, Emerson then shifted from Orphic to Yankee gear to lampoon the incoherence of Fourierism. The rhetorical strategy is interesting. After the virtuoso sendup from a commonsense perspective ("Genius, grace, art, abound, and it is not to be doubted but that [JMN: Mr. Brisbane does not doubt that], in the reign of "Attractive Industry," all men will speak in blank verse."), the charge against Fourier is transformed once again, from insanity back to spiritual inanity. Specifically, Fourier had erred in insisting that there was only one path to the Over-Soul "to be . . . carried into rigid execution" (E&L 1207-1208). Emerson's distaste for such spiritual totalitarianism is the point of his "namely, Life" jibe.135

134E&L 1207; JMN 8:209.

135E&L 1207. Throughout his career, Emerson would continue to complain about Fourier's sterile and overdetermined systematizing. He was particularly repulsed by Fourier's cabalistic fetish for quantifying his ideas—the 12 passions, the 810 serial reincarnations, the 70,000 years of Harmony, the 72 varieties of cuckolds in the "Hierarchy of Cuckoldom." One 1845 journal entry damned Fourier as an
It may seem peculiar that Emerson, immediately after having bashed Fourier's vulgar materialism, suddenly turned on the two great systems of Western idealism. This move has its underlying logic, however, for Emerson was not rejecting the materialist perspective per se, but rather all systematic thought. The anti-rational voice of Emerson reasserts itself:

[L]et us be lovers and servants of that which is just; and straightaway every man becomes a centre of a holy and beneficent republic, which he sees to include all men in its law, like that of Plato, and of Christ. Before such a man the whole world becomes Fourierized or Christized or humanized, and in the obedience to his most private being, he finds himself, according to his presentiment, though against all sensuous probability, acting in strict concert with all others who followed their private light. (E&L 1208)

Fourier provided Emerson with an opportunity to repeat his paradoxical claim in "Self-Reliance," that the unideological "obedience to [one's] most private being" will somehow result "arithmetician" and called "ciphering" a quintessentially French vice (JMN 9:159). He singled out Fourier's catalogue of personality types:

Will they, one of these days, at Fourierville, make boys & girls to order & pattern? I want, Mr Christmas office, a boy, between No 17 & No 134, half & half of both; or you might add a trace of 113. I want another girl like the one I took yesterday only you can put in a leetle more of the devil. (JMN 10:359; cf. JMN 10:100)

But as we shall see, Emerson later came to appreciate Fourier's theory of personality types. As late as 1851, however, he dismissed Fourier's criticism of civilization: "An accountant was required, & a dancer got the place" (JMN 11:336). In the same year, he labelled Fourier as the antithesis of both his representative Poet, Shakespeare, and his representative Transcendentalist, Thoreau (JMN 11:438). Several other journal entries disparage Fourier's passion for quantification: see JMN 9:172, 9:327, and 9:334.
in the most highly ordered society possible. This declaration, repeated decades later in "Historic Notes," nicely summarizes Emerson's crucial contribution to the American capitalist ideology—the mapping of the economic doctrine of the hidden hand onto the metaphysical realm.

While the material we have examined so far largely supports Bercovitch's argument, Emerson's response to Fourierism was even more complex than Bercovitch allows. The call to obey the voice within becomes problematic in an essay intended to refute Fourierism, for reliance on this inner voice is also the cornerstone of Fourier's passional ideology. Fourier's first "scientific discovery" was that each person had an accurate moral compass within, the compass of desire: "if God has given so much influence to passional attraction and so little to reason, its enemy, He did this to lead us to this order of progressive [series] that satisfy attraction in every sense" (OC 1:11).

This unacknowledged congruence may explain why Emerson reconsidered his rejection of Fourier in his next Dial essay, "English Reformers." Bronson Alcott, idiosyncratic even by Transcendentalist standards, had become interested in Fourierism during his 1842 tour of England.\(^{136}\) Alcott had

\(^{136}\) Alcott's journals from this period have been lost, but his interest in Fourier prior to the Fruitlands experiment is suggested by circumstantial evidence. His advocacy of the London Phalanx was probably the result of a meeting with Hugh Doherty (cf. LRWE 4:75). In 1851, Alcott would describe Swedenborg and Fourier as "sovereigns of manifold thought" (Alcott 257). And Emerson twice criticized Alcott and Fourier
hoped to meet his most ardent trans-Atlantic admirer, the recently deceased James Pierrepont Greaves, who had developed his own doctrine of "celestial socialism" as early as 1825 (Brewer 263), but found a worthy disciple in Greaves's friend Charles Lane. Alcott sent a large sampling of social reform publications, including some "Phalansterian Gazettes," home to his sponsor Emerson. Among the essays Emerson singled out for praise was Lane's "The Third Dispensation," Lane's introduction to Sophia Chichester's 1841 translation of Gatti de Gamond's Fourierist treatise. Lane advanced yet another version of the Trinitarian, pseudo-Hegelian theory of history discussed earlier. Lane argued that civilization's progress to date could be attributed to two quantum leaps: "Family Union" and "National Union." According to Emerson's summary, both the tribal and the national systems of social organization were only relative improvements over barbarism; they were "themselves barbarism, in contrast with the third [Dispensation], or Universal Union" ("ER" 1234). The "Uniting Spirit" would soon lead humanity out of "intensely false" Civilization into a new order, into the union of the "spiritual or theoretic" world with the "practical or actual world" in "True Harmonic Association" (qtd., "ER" 1234-35). Only one issue after his scathing satire of Fourierism, Emerson praised Lane's Fourier-influenced schema: "His words come to us like the voices of home out of a far country" (E&L in the same journal entry (JMN 8:305-306, 9:50).
Perhaps because of Emerson's praise, Lane's essay did not go unnoticed in circles sympathetic to the Fourierists: in November 1842, William Henry Channing reprinted it in *The Present*.

Perhaps Emerson approved of Lane's schema because he detected some general similarities between it and his own doctrine of the Over-Soul. Indeed, Doherty's *London Phalanx*, which Emerson had complimented, had previously cited a passage from "The Over-Soul" with approval: ". . . . All reform aims, in some one particular, to let the great soul have its way through us; in other words, to engage us to obey." 137 In 1842, Emerson was more favorably inclined towards Lane, Doherty, and other members of the English Fourierist movement than he was towards Brisbane and the American Fourierists. His personal distaste for Brisbane was certainly a contributing factor, and it is conceivable that Emerson tolerated the British socialists simply because Alcott had served as the intermediary. The most likely hypothesis is also the most interesting: Emerson may have preferred the British Fourierists because they did not attempt to conceal their interest in metaphysical Fourierism. As was noted in the previous chapter, Doherty even criticized Brisbane's

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137 "Fourierism and the Socialists," *E&L* 1205; "English Reformers," *E&L* 1237; *LPh* 1.32 (6 Nov. 1841): 527. Larry J. Reynolds notes that Emerson later met Doherty in Paris and was unimpressed (31); Emerson also reversed his opinion of Doherty's prose, "which exceeds in woody deadness all possibility of rivalry" (*JMN* 11:334).
writings for focusing too exclusively on the "practical parts" of Fourier's teachings. If Emerson had a similar complaint, one could understand why he called Brisbane a hypocrite.

But in his private audiences with Emerson, Brisbane was able to overcome his inhibitions. Almost a year after their first meeting, Emerson found himself once again subjected to Brisbane's long theoretical exposition of Fourier. Emerson's account reveals, contra Bestor, that Brisbane did not purge Fourierism of its most ludicrous doctrines, but embraced them wholeheartedly:

Mr Brisbane . . . shames truer men by his fidelity & zeal, and already begins to hear the reverberations of his single voice from most of the states of the Union. . . . I laugh incredulous while he recites (for it seems always as if he was repeating passages out of his master's book) descriptions of the self augmenting potency of the solar system which is destined to contain 132 bodies I believe and his urgent inculcation of our stellar duties. But it has its kernel of sound truth and its insanity is so wide of New York insanities that it is virtue and honor. 138

Furthermore, this letter shows that Emerson was no longer confusing Fourierism with materialism and other "New York insanities." He was moving towards a holistic interpretation, one that appreciated Brisbane's propaganda campaign as proof of the power of the individual, one that would simultaneously recognize the doctrine's "insanity" and its "kernel of sound truth."

138 Emerson to Thoreau, Feb. 9?, 10, and 11, 1843, LRWE 7:525. Note that this volume of LRWE was first published in 1990 and was thus unavailable to Bestor.
But Emerson would not become this venturesome until 1845. Through 1844, Emerson interrogated the viability of Fourierism as a pragmatic plan for social reform, as Bercovitch has shown. His lecture on "The Young American," delivered in February 1844, less than a month after the Fourierizing of Brook Farm, anticipated "Historic Notes" in arguing that the communitarian groundswell was one of several harbingers of a coming "revolution." However, Emerson argued that the agent of the race's manifest destiny would not be Fourier but America, the "home of man" (E&L 224, 228). Emerson was already sketching a caricature of the next century's major ideological conflict—American individualism and European socialism battling for the right to determine the fate of humanity.

At the same time, Emerson admitted that the economies of scale afforded by the phalanx might force a reorganization of labor. He was impressed by Fourier's proposed "Sacred Band" (not to be confused with the "Little Horde" of manure-loving boys) and predicted that Fourierism would force a reorganization of American agriculture (E&L 223). Even book clubs and boarding houses suggested that "society [was] trying Fourierism in small pieces" (JMN 9:371; cf. Beecher 287-292).

Fuller's interest in Fourier's doctrine of the "aromalous state" led her to develop a critique of Emerson's social conservatism in Summer on the Lakes (Zwarg, "Footnoting the Sublime" 629-633). Emerson's difference of opinion with
Fuller may have contributed to the rigidification of his public opposition to Fourier in the 1844 Essays, in which he once again mounted an attack upon Associationist doctrine. In musing upon the relative merits of the particular and the universal, Emerson wrote that "Mesmerism, Swedenborgism, Fourierism, and the Millennial Church . . . are poor pretensions enough, but good criticism on the science, philosophy, and preaching of the day. ("Nominalist and Realist," E&L 580) This verdict is similar to that of Engels: both men praised Fourier's diagnosis of society's disease, but dismissed the movement's proposed cure. Even if communitarianism was ineffective, Emerson added, it might offer a welcome diversion: "Why have only two or three ways of life, and not thousands? Every man is wanted, and no man is wanted much" (E&L 583). In private, Emerson was even more dismissive: he cautioned Fuller that the Associationists' experiments were no better than other pseudoscientific fads popular among her New York friends. Such theories might furnish "novelty and recreation," he argued, but could not "heal us of our deep wound":

I think it is part of our lesson to give a formal consent to what is farcical, and to pick up our living & our virtue amidst what is so ridiculous, hardly deigning a smile, and certainly not vexed. (11 Apr. 1844, LRWE 3:246)

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139 See Chapter 6; Zwarg treats the Emerson/Fuller debate over Fourier at length in her Feminist Conversations (Cornell UP, forthcoming).
Apparently Emerson was already feeling the need to warn Fuller from edging towards the Fourierist camp.

Indeed, Emerson had already mounted another full-scale assault upon the Fourierists in his March 1844 lecture at Boston's Amory Hall, "New England Reformers." Linck C. Johnson's "Reforming the Reformers" (1991) reconstructs the forgotten context of Emerson's lecture, demonstrating that his audience was a potentially hostile group of radical reformers. Emerson may have been alarmed to find that Fourier's more risible doctrines were attracting American adherents. For example, only a few days after Emerson spoke at Amory Hall, Dana announced that the adoption of industrial association would ultimately lead to a "Heaven on Earth":

the conversion of this globe, now exhaling pestilential vapors and possessed by unnatural climates, into the abode of beauty and health, and the restitution to Humanity of the Divine Image, now so long lost and forgotten. ("Association, in its Connection with Religion," qtd., L. Johnson 252-253)

In 1844, Emerson doubted the wisdom of political engagement in general, and had absolutely no faith in Fourier's plan to renovate our "pestilential" world—Emerson had already appropriated this Fourierist term of art in his *Dial* satire (E&L 1206). An attack on Fourierism would separate him from the other speakers (excepting of course Thoreau). Emerson might also have been anxious to correct misconceptions about where his sympathies lay in the reform debate. Two days before he spoke, an article on Brook Farm had referred to the
Dial as "the organ of the community party" (qtd., L. Johnson 254).

In his lecture, which drew heavily from the anti-socialist journal entries examined by Bercovitch, Emerson assailed "piecemeal" reformers—those who were obsessed with only one of many social evils. Here the American Fourierists would have no quarrel: at the Boston convention, they had agreed that such competing movements as abolition and temperance were too narrowly focused. But Emerson had equally harsh words for those who replaced self-reliance with "reliance on Association" (E&L 597). As Bercovitch rightly notes, Emerson sympathized with the socialists' attempt to restore the fractioned, alienated individual to a sense of wholeness, but he simultaneously rejected the Fourierists' proposed means, fearing that it would "mortgag[e]" the individual to the community (E&L 598). Thoreau was in full agreement on this point, as Emerson noted with satisfaction: "H.D.T. said that the Fourierists had a sense of duty which led them to devote themselves to their second-best" (JMN 9:166). In 1844, Emerson would grudgingly admit that the

140 E&L 596-597; "Social Reform Convention at Boston" 278-279. See also Guarneri 79-80.

141 The MS for Thoreau's Amory Hall lecture, "The Conservative and the Reformer," remains unpublished, even though portions of it were worked into the conclusion of Walden. For a summary, see L. Johnson 269 ff. Note in particular that Thoreau followed Emerson in defining his worldview in opposition to the Associationist ideology (L. Johnson 275-279).
potential economies of scale to be afforded by association might mean that Fourier's theory had limited practical value. At the same time, he, like Thoreau, was convinced that proponents of Association were running away from the divine voice within.

III.

So far, we have been reviewing familiar ground: it is hardly news to claim that Emerson distrusted socialism in general, that he repudiated Fourierism in particular, or that he disliked many of the Fourierists. But these received opinions are not the whole truth, and they have obscured the complexity of Emerson's ongoing dialogue with Fourierism—indeed, the very existence of that dialogue.

One might begin this excavation process by noting one baffling reaction to Essays: Second Series. Despite Emerson's clear rejection of Fourierism, many allies of the mid-1840s—in sharp contrast to his postbellum audience—continued to link him to the movement. For example, one self-described "Disciple," in reviewing the 1844 Essays for the June 1845 Democratic Review, argued that "[t]he great truth to which all Emerson's affirmations point is Absolute Identity—the unity of all things in God." The Transcendentalist ditto-head then hailed the same tendency in Schelling, Hegel, Saint Simon, and two others:

The idea of Absolute Identity furnishes the type, in conformity with which thought develops itself
in all the master spirits of the time. It suggested to Swedenborg his doctrine of correspondences—to Fourier his doctrine of "universal unity" and "universal analogy" . . . . ("A Disciple," "Emerson's Essays" 595)

Emerson's enemies also linked him to Fourier. In an essay published one month after the Democratic Review article, Brownson the convert claimed that the assumptions underpinning Transcendentalism and Fourierism were identical:

The Fourierists all place, confessedly, the passional nature, which corresponds exactly to the impersonal nature of the transcendentalists, at the summit of the psychical hierarchy, and contend that man's good consists not in controlling his passions, but in harmonizing them, and that they are to be harmonized not by being crucified, but by having all things so arranged as to secure their free and full satisfaction. . . . Fourierism is nothing but a form of transcendentalism, as may be inferred from the fact that nearly all the transcendentalists are either avowed Fourierists or very favorable to them. Fourierism is simply an attempt to realize in society the leading principles of transcendentalism; and if some transcendentalists reject it, it is not because they question the philosophy on which it rests, but because they doubt its competency, as a practical scheme of social organization, to secure the end proposed. ("Transcendentalism, or the Latest Form of Infidelity" 310)

The final sentence, with its transparent allusion to Emerson's criticism of Fourier in the 1844 Essays, smacks of Brownsonian hyperbole, but Brownson was not alone in making the charge. As late as 1852, John Custis Darby launched a scathing attack on Emerson for attempting
to carry back the American mind from the noon-day light of Gospel truth, and of Anglo-Saxon thought, to the mysteries of Egypt, the naturalism of Germany and the Fourierism of France. (149)
Darby branded Emerson a heretic for denying "a personal Deity" and "the fall of man"—typical anti-Fourierist rhetoric. And after reading the Swedenborg lecture in Representative Men, he even accused Emerson of being a libertine who "adopts the Fourrier and Eugene Sue doctrine of marriage" (154). Even if Brownson's and Darby's charges were misguided, they suggest why Emerson came to reconsider his anti-Fourierist stance. The ideological base for Brisbane's "practical scheme of social organization," his adulterated version of Fourier's socialist praxis, was the vision of Universal Unity.

Granted, Emerson never collapsed the difference between Transcendentalism and Fourierism. In his dealings with Associationists, he always remained aloof from their publications. For example, he declined John Sullivan Dwight's 1845 invitation to write for The Harbinger, explaining that he did not want to associated with its "sectarian" platform. If civilization truly needed reforming, he argued, Fourier might well contribute as a "subordinate coadjutor," but Emerson believed that the utopian was "deficient in the first faculty." 142

Nevertheless, Emerson would come to see the Associationists as potentially useful allies. As early as 1843, he noted a Fourierist interest in Transcendentalism independent from the Brook Farm venture. Of the three European periodicals that wanted to exchange free

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142 Emerson to Dwight, 20 Apr. 1845, LRWE 8:21-22.
subscriptions with The Dial, two—the London Phalanx and La Démocratie pacifique, were Fourierist. In 1847, when the London editor John A. Heraud asked Emerson to suggest possible American contributors to his new magazine, his first choice was the Fourierist editor of the Boston Daily Chronotype, Elizur Wright. Emerson specifically praised Wright's "catholicity"—the antonym of sectarianism. Also in 1847, Emerson praised the "victorious tone" of the Chronotype (JMN 10:46). And in 1849, when Theodore Parker invited Emerson to review Thoreau's A Week for the Massachusetts Quarterly Review, Emerson advised Parker to choose a "good foreigner" instead, and suggested five writers, three of whom (James, Godwin, and Dana) were Fourierists (LRWE 4:151).

These brief favorable allusions to Fourierist writers and publications suggest another metamorphosis in Emerson's attitude towards Fourierism. This rethinking may well have begun in 1844, when Godwin's Popular View and similar publications made Fourier's worldview widely accessible. This

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143 Emerson to Samuel Gray Ward, 23 Oct. 1843 (LRWE 7:572); Emerson to Thoreau, 25 Oct. 1843 (LRWE 7:573). Emerson and Thoreau may have disposed of the London Phalanx subscription by donating it to the Concord Athenaeum (Harding, Days of Henry David Thoreau 142).

144 In a draft of this letter, Emerson also recommended Dana's New York Tribune column for its combination of "force" and "catholicity." Dana's and Wright's totalizing critiques struck more deeply than the piecemeal reforms proposed by anti-slavery activists: "The abolition movement ... already seems to have ripened a few minds to the degree that the abolition of slavery no longer seems to them the only duty for which man was created." (LRWE 8:104)
grandiose Fourierism—far more ambitious than the socialist doctrine promulgated in the New York Tribune—had been generally known to the Transcendentalist circle for some time. Months before Godwin’s book was published, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody had published a second Dial article that accurately characterized Fourier’s project—the attempt to discern the divinely-ordained plan that would allow the earth to play its part in the "Sidereal Universe" ("Fourierism" 434, 437). While Brisbane had given Emerson a private, partial initiation into these secret doctrines, it seems likely that Emerson did not at first fully comprehend the Fourierist cosmogony. JMN suggests that in early 1845—roughly the same time that Marx and Engels were dismissing the French Fourierists as "doctrinaire bourgeois, the very antipodes of Fourier"—Emerson began to distinguish Fourier’s theory from Brisbane’s interpretation.

It would have been difficult to do so without French texts of Fourier. In January 1843, The Dial acknowledged receipt of an 1840 edition of Nouveau monde industriel (416); Emerson may well have browsed this copy. The Ecole Sociétaire’s publication of Fourier’s Oeuvres complètes in 1841-45 made the three major treatises more accessible to American readers. In the April 1845 letter to Dwight mentioned above, Emerson said that he had "looked a little into [Fourier’s] books" (LRWE 8:22). Decades later, in "Historic Notes," he would charge the "charlatans" at the head
of the Associationist movement with misrepresenting their Master's doctrines: "It argued singular courage, the adoption of Fourier's system, to even a limited extent, with his books lying before the world only defended by the thin veil of the French language" (WRWE 12: ???). One may reasonably infer that Emerson had taken the trouble to discover what the American Associationists were conceal.

The Associationist leaders had a lot to hide. Whatever their private beliefs, Brisbane, Greeley, and Ripley were anxious to avoid drawing too much attention to the embarrassing metasocialist cosmogony. But they also attempted to defer public discussion of Fourier's views on another topic likely to arouse interest: marital reform. The official Associationist platform hinted at the existence of the *nouveau monde amoureux*, but avoided sanctioning extramarital sexuality. Opponents of Associationism denied the validity of this distinction, equating the Fourierist term of art "passional attraction" with carnal desire. After the New York journalist Henry J. Raymond made this charge in a public debate, for example, Greeley was forced to distance himself from Fourier. In any case, whatever the Fourierist influence was on the free-love radicals of the 1850s, the movement posed no immediate threat to the conventional sexual mores of the 1840s. At the Brook Farm Phalanx, for example, young singles

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145 Guarneri 274-276; Greeley and Raymond 52 ff.
were apparently guilty of nothing more than promiscuous flirting (see Guarneri 197-203).

But outsiders' suspicions were not wholly unwarranted. Other Fourierists were less inhibited, if only in theory, than Greeley and the Brook Farmers. By 1857, Brisbane was willing to collaborate with Henry Clapp on a translation of *Quatre mouvements* that neither concealed nor disavowed Fourier's sexual reforms. One passage forthrightly mocked the absurd ideas of love advocated by "Civilizees": "They preach nothing but exclusiveness and constancy, which are incompatible with the desires of Nature, and to which no one submits, when he possesses full liberty" (1857, 70). Even when Brisbane later censored this translation for republication in the 1870s, he coyly instructed the printer to replace this passage with a string of asterisks certain to pique the reader's curiosity.¹⁴⁶

John Spurlock has argued that the Fourierist and Transcendentalist critiques of marriage in the 1840s paved the way for the free-love movements of the 1850s (43-72). As we shall see in later chapters, some members of the Transcendentalist circle had difficulty concealing their enthusiasm when contemplating sexual liberation. Emerson was not quite so emancipated. He had had some inkling of Fourier's amorous utopianism as early as 1843, when the

¹⁴⁶Brisbane's with his pencilled instructions to the printer for the 1876 edition is at the Illinois Historical Survey, University of Illinois.
"magnificent dreamer" Alcott had spoken to him of the "secret doctrines of Fourier." At that time, Emerson professed a lack of interest, rejecting Alcott's proposal quickly:

I replied, as usual—that, I thought no man could be trusted with [reform of the marriage institution]; the formation of new alliances is so delicious to the imagination, that St Paul & St John would be riotous; and that we cannot spare the coarsest muniment of virtue. (JMN 9:50)

For all his anti-institutional rhetoric, Emerson was a bluenose on the subject of marital reform. (This was, after all, the man who would advise Whitman to tone down Leaves of Grass.) True, Emerson followed Fourier in condemning those hypocritical opponents of sexual freedom who countenanced the rise of prostitution in the city:

Society lives on the system of money & woman comes at money & money's worth through compliment. I should not dare to be woman. Plainly they are created for that better system which supersedes money. But today, _________. On our civilization her position is often pathetic. . . (JMN 10:392)

But throughout his career, Emerson would avoid taking issue with the institution of matrimony, even when he was only able to half-heartedly defend it as the least of evils: "[Marriage] is bad enough, but is far the best solution that has yet been offered of the woman's problem. Fourierism, or Mormonism, or the New York Socialism, are not solutions that any high woman will accept as even approximate to her ideas of well-being" (JMN 14:13).

If Emerson's conservatism here was not the result of his faith in the sexual order, perhaps he felt the need to
maintain self-control. If even a St. Paul would be riotous on a Saturday night in the phalanstery, then Emerson might be forgiven for finding the prospect "delicious" in both theory and practice. Soon after recording his reply to Alcott, Emerson observed (perhaps with Shakespeare's "Th'expense of spirit" in mind) "that indulgence always effeminates. I have organs too & delight in pleasure, but I have experience also that this pleasure is the bait of a trap." However, he was willing to consider the possibility that Fourier, like Swedenborg before him, had been an idealist, and was presently mischaracterized as a hedonist:

Fourier said, Man exists to gratify his twelve passions: and he proposes to remove the barriers which false philosophy & religion & prudence have built against indulgence. . . . Well, Swedenborg too wandered through the Universe and found not only heavenly societies but horrid cavernous regions where imps & dragons delighted themselves in all bestialities and he said these too enjoyed their condition & recreations, as well as the cherubim theirs. Fourier too has a sacred legion and an order called sacred, of Chastity, Virgins & bachelors; a lower order of husbands & wife; a lower of free companions & harlots. In having that higher order he gives all up. For the vulgar world not yet emancipated from prejudice replies to his invitation, Well, I will select only that part from your system, and leave the sty to those who like it. (JMN 9:115)

Just as a democracy might work if its citizens were virtuous enough, so might free love in a society populated by "sacred"

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147 In Representative Men, Emerson would chide Swedenborg for his obsession with sex, at least in the Platonic realm. According to Conjugial Love, two kindred spirits in heaven would share eternal orgasm. (Spurlock 90; E&L 679-680; Allen, Waldo 457).
rather than "vulgar" individuals. By this logic, such a failure would not be the fault of Fourierism per se, but of the second-rate materials used to construct the society—individuals unworthy of utopia. Such reasoning might explain why Emerson, who would undoubtedly have considered himself as worthy of utopia as any other candidate, could privately defend Fourier's moral purity against the Swedenborgian New Church's charge of licentiousness:

It is but a few years ago that Swedenborgism was exhibited to our people in a pamphlet of garbled extracts from Swedenborg's writings as a red rag of whoredom [. . . .] Now Fourier is represented in the same light as the Swedenborgians, who get their revenge so. (JMN 9:188-189; cf. Rohler 125-126)

But Emerson's ultimate verdict on Fourier's free love, drawn from other journal entries circa 1845 and later published in "Historic Notes," broadened the attack from Fourier's licentious followers to include the Master himself. He feared that if Fourier's second French Revolution brought about a chaotic sexual mobocracy, then a reign of amorous terror would follow. While acknowledging the appeal of Fourier's "fine system," Emerson rejected Fourierism because of its potential for sexual anarchy:

The Stoic said, forbear, Fourier said, Indulge. Fourier was of the opinion of St Evremond; abstinence from pleasure appeared to him a great sin. He labored under a misapprehension of the nature of women. The Fourier marriage was a calculation how to secure the greatest amount of kissing that the infirmity of human constitution admitted. It was false and prurient, full of absurd French superstitions about women; ignorant how serious and how moral their nature always is; how chaste their organization, how lawful a
It was easy to see what must be the fate of this fine system in any serious and comprehensive attempt to set it on foot in this country. As soon as our people got wind of the doctrine of Marriage held by this master, it would fall at once into the hands of a lawless crew who would flock in troops to see so fair a game, and, like the dreams of poetic people on the first outbreak of the old French Revolution, so theirs would disappear in a mire of slime and blood. (LRWE 12:???; cf. JMN 9:378; 9:188-189)

This journal entry is remarkable for juxtaposing an utter lack of faith in Americans' ability to govern their own bodies (let alone their nation) with complete faith in woman's purity.

In *Education of the Senses*, Peter Gay claims that men of the Victorian age often made similar sweeping generalizations about woman's circumscribed sexual desire; he further argues that they did so to repress their knowledge of the truth. In the present instance, Gay's repressive hypothesis fits nicely. Emerson's correspondence with his young friend Caroline Sturgis, who praised Fourier effusively, might well have led Emerson to conclude that she, for one, was neither a "chaste" nor a "lawful" theoretician of sexual reform. Instead, Emerson repressed the contradiction. Their 1845 letters, relatively inaccessible until the recent publication of Eleanor L. Tilton's impressive supplement to LRWE, also

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148 Emerson similarly insisted that Fuller's sexual desires were bounded by social convention. While preparing *The Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, Emerson rejected William H. Channing's suggestion that Fuller had decided not to marry Ossoli, arguing that she would have set aside theories of marital reform and submitted to "public opinion, too vast to brave" (JMN 11:463).
document Emerson's extensive, albeit superficial, acquaintance with Fourier's books.

On 1 February 1845, Emerson returned an unspecified volume of the *Oeuvres complètes* to Sturgis. He wrote that he had read it "with surprising ease, considering what courage it cost to begin." In closing, Emerson asked Sturgis to lend him this volume once again on behalf of his friend, the Swedenborgian Sampson Reed. The body of the letter repeated many of his earlier complaints against Fourier, yet lauded him as a brilliant "new Napoleon, so able, so equal, so full of resources, & so just in his criticism on existing society" (*LRWE* 8:4-6):

> If we were permitted to make experiments, I would enlist for five years under this gay oriflamme. But there is an immense presumption against every experiment in morals. We must not overstep our sphere or system to gratify hopes & wishes which as such decorate our days like rainbows but could only be realized by violence. In all Arcadia it is against the law to crush butterflies.

But Emerson went beyond rehashing old complaints. As he dismissed Fourier the visionary, he admitted an interest in

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149 In two subsequent letters (16 Mar. and 15 Sept. 1845), Emerson refers to a volume that Sturgis loaned to Reed as "your 1st volume" and "Fourier One" (*LRWE* 8:16, 8:54; cf. 8:50n164). Therefore, it is likely that the book in question was the first volume of *OC*, *Quatre mouvements*. But in light of *JMN* 9:6-7, which refers to Volume 5 of *OC* as "Tome IV" of *Théorie de l'unité universelle*, the book in question may have been the first volume of *TUU* (*OC* 2). But it is unlikely that the pathologically recondite *TUU* was the first book he received, given Emerson's remark that the second volume he read was "not so easy to read as the last" (*LRWE* 8:8; cf. *LRWE* 8:12-13).
Fourier’s critique of marriage and his proposed proto-feminist reforms:

Do not imagine that I forget the loneliness and privation of women, of those who are the boast & excellency of their sex,—I regard it as a postponed good which puts the gods in their debt, and not as a mean fast which can be broken at the first tavern. How many things are there not, my dear friend, which dear friends cannot say to each other; but the wise world will answer all questions at last. Let it tell you how heartily I am yours. (LRWE 8:6)

Wrenched out of context, the first sentence might be read simply as an acknowledgement of the validity of Fuller’s critique in "The Great Lawsuit," and final two sentences as a conventional yet sincere pledge of affection from one friend to another. But beneath this manifest content, Emerson was also attempting to dissuade Sturgis from advocating the Fourierist agenda, arguing that certain reforms could never be implemented in their age and must therefore be "postponed." Fourier’s social radicalism attracted Emerson even as he rejected it. Emerson’s pointed allusion to "things . . . which dear friends cannot say to each other" self-consciously highlights the most obvious lacuna in their discussion of Fourier. Despite Emerson’s moralizing and his constant reminders to Sturgis of the platonic nature of their friendship—or, rather, precisely because of these denials—the undercurrent of sexual tension is unmistakable. Throughout their long correspondence, as Gay Wilson Allen has observed, Emerson was "emotionally excited" by Sturgis, "doubtless more than he realized," and "took pains to warn her against the
possibility" of falling in love with him (Waldo 351-352). In this letter, Emerson may have been unconsciously telling Sturgis that if they were to find themselves in Fourier’s utopia of sexual freedom, they would be lovers.

If this was Emerson’s coded message, then Sturgis’s reply may be read as a not-so-discreet acknowledgement. She suggested that Emerson had arbitrarily decided not to attack certain institutions, and she argued that his insistence upon the mutual exclusivity of communitarianism and individuality was logically flawed:

Still seizing everything in the claws of morality, dear Waldo? Why may we not live like grasshoppers? Must we be so good? Planets and potatoes, seas & soapbubbles, all things are made for man, and how can we be lost? . . .

Why not wish Fourier to make the finest arrangements possible!—we must eat dinners every day, why not eat them in the best way? . . . Everything is for me—why should I renounce anything? If I cannot have what I must have in this world why not go to another—can man or angel make objection. . . . Can any outward arrangement supersede the laws of individual being? . . . Would there be any moralist if all were in harmony with all; do puritans sit with keen grey eyes around the angels with their heavenly harps. Let us learn the scales here & tune our instruments for the great symphonies.

Furthermore, Sturgis identified Emerson’s preoccupation with "morality" as a symptom of his "manliness," a trait that led him to overlook Fourier’s central message:

I am always so happy because joy seems upon the very threshold, or unhappy because it is so far away, that I am like one tossed upon the sea,—now plunged in dark hollows, now riding the high waves. Thus is it with all women however they may seek to veil their weakness in incessant gossip, bread-making, and literary manias, except a few who have
retired upon their sorrows. Is it because we cannot look straight-forward like men, or that men do not need to love. Only to join my hands and place them in another's would be happiness. Why is it that men do not believe in love? The few who seem to do so, mistake passion or philanthropy for it—they do not see that love is the Open Sesame of the Universe. They seize hammer & spear and go about striking and piercing: they burst open the gates of life, the shattered gates fall upon them and they lose that which they would find. (LRWE 8:4-5n13)

To support her thesis, she offers their mutual friend Giles Waldo as an example; Sturgis may well have chosen him because he shared a name with Emerson:

It may be that G. W. only 'flies from love' because he has no one to love him. Friends are nothing: only to be in love is the desire. If a woman should love him he would no longer wish to be left alone, for then he would know that all could be forgiven, that he would be loved for himself, not for his qualities... .

In distinguishing universal love from mere physical passion, Sturgis hinted that Emerson had made the typically male error of focusing too exclusively on Fourier's sexual reform. Here Sturgis may have half-realized her implication that more than one Waldo might be in need of a lover, for a partial recantation follows:

I should not say friends are nothing, it is so good for me that you are my friend. This becomes always more real, while almost everything else becomes every day more unreal. The most splendid systems cannot equal one friend, but must we not accept these systems also, for they will help us find the balance in ourselves.

You are eager for Fourier as the Caliph was to hear every night the tales of the genii, & so I will send you the second vol. . . .
Did Sturgis see herself as Emerson's Scheherazade, the "wife" of an evening who seeks a long-term relationship with him in a less patriarchal society? This speculation may not be so far-fetched, given that the frank, uninhibited Quatre mouvements is the most likely subject of their debate.

In acknowledging Sturgis's "spirited defense of Fourier," Emerson steered the conversation back to more conventional ground:

Yet the moral sentiment always nerves us; the indulgence always effeminates: and from Sparta down to Boston—but the sermon is a long one—you shall not have it from me. I am quite of the other persuasion. Only I have heard traditions from poets & spirits, seen them in pictures & statues, gazed at them in dear faces & manners which I cannot keep entirely out of my head, and which taught another doctrine than this Frenchman, and just for taste & for beauty, which should rest on strength, I should think things would go better in an austerer society—and the roads would be safer.

In the next breath, however, Emerson acknowledged the attractions Fourier's theory held for him:

I am somewhat puritanical in my way of living, you would think; but I am not in my theory: yet if I should calculate like these French people, I should say, let me be the only libertine in a restrained society, to reach the heaven of Epicurus. In a libertine society, all falls abroad to grossness—it is the universal thaw and dissolution of things. And that seems to me the open tendency of these gay arrangements. Perhaps I slander the divine man, the beginner of the new French Revolution, which we will hope will end better than the others, but afar off this smells furiously of the guillotine. (LRWE 8:8)

Perhaps the pleasure of Fourier's texts enabled Emerson to revel in a libertinism of the imagination. Because it would only be realized in the mind, it could never fall into
"grossness." One could have emotionally satisfying liaisons without the complications of sexuality, the innocent adultery of Platonic forms—a Transcendentalist's version of free love.

Emerson's response to Sturgis has significance beyond its defense of Fourier's good intentions. It suggests that Emerson saw Fourier as an archetype: a self-proclaimed prophet who had been misrepresented by his putative apostles. The resultant public outcry had then made it difficult to recover the prophet's actual message. (Emerson similarly interpreted the reception of Swedenborg's message, and he might have been thinking of his own relation to the American public in these terms.) Given the relative inaccessibility of unmediated Fourierism, how could one read the prophet without betrayal? In an 1847 entry, Emerson fantasized that the new "science" of mesmerism might offer a solution:

Each man has facts that I want, &, though I talk with him, I cannot get at them for want of the clue. He does not know what to do with his facts; I know. If I could draw them from him, it must be with his keys, arrangements & reserves.

Emerson went on to list several desiderata—a merchant's knowledge of Boston, the Adamses' knowledge of American history—then continued:

Here is all Fourier in Brisbane's head; . . . . all Swedenborg in [Sampson] Reed's . . . and I cannot appropriate any fragment of all their experience. I would fain see their picture-books as they exist. Now if I could cast a spell on this man at my side & see his pictures without his intervention or organs, and, having learned that lesson, turn the spell on another, lift up the cover of another hive & see the cells & suck the honey, & so without
Here, instead of mocking Brisbane’s childish faith in Fourier, as Emerson had done a few years earlier, he expressed impatience with Brisbane for failing to render Fourier’s "picture-books" faithfully. Emerson’s fantasy even suggests that he envied Brisbane’s knowledge of Fourier; such enthusiasm cannot be found in Emerson’s pre-1845 remarks on Fourierism.¹⁵⁰

What was Fourier’s "honey"? While Emerson felt some ambivalence about the call for sexual liberation, he came to recognize other virtues in the utopian theory. His distrust of partial reform movements such as abolitionism attracted him to Fourier’s total critique of society. In Fourier, Emerson could find an echo of the universal reform first articulated in "The Method of Nature" (1841):

> He who aims at progress, should aim at an infinite, not a special benefit. The reforms whose fame now fills the land with Temperance, Anti-Slavery, Non-Resistance, No Government, Equal Labor, fair and generous as each appears, are poor bitter things when prosecuted for themselves as an end. (E&L 127)

Brisbane had made the same point a year earlier. Social Destiny of Man had faithfully presented Fourier’s theory as a totalizing critique, arguing, for example, that abolitionism

¹⁵⁰Compare Emerson’s approval of the advice given by Brisbane—the former student of Cousin, Hegel, Guizot, Michelet, and Fourier (Bestor, "Albert Brisbane" 132)—to study with the best teachers (JMN 11:33—perhaps the only mention of Brisbane in JMN without an undercurrent of contempt).
was fanatical, not because it proposed to eradicate chattel slavery, but because it would leave all other American social injustices untouched.¹⁵¹ In a journal entry circa 1844-45, Emerson endorsed a similar worldview and described Fourier's project as a Neoplatonic unveiling of the ideal realm:

Fourier has the immense merit of originality & hope. Whilst society is distracted with disputes concerning the negro race, he comes to prescribe the methods of removing this mask & caricature of humanity, by bringing out the true & real form from underneath. (JMN 9:104)

Emerson's seemingly flippant dismissal of the abolition debate, while troubling, is counterbalanced by his optative approval of Fourier's determination to eliminate all forms of slavery: chattel, wage, and patriarchal.

Emerson was not only interested in Fourier's critique of "Civilization's" incomplete reforms, but also in his lamentations of the incompleteness of individual "Civilizees." This interest is evidenced by his translation of a passage from Théorie de l'unité universelle that praised Napoleon's grand ambition, but derided his failure to "provide for the conserving of conquests":

Never man since the existence of societies has possessed like Napoleon the means of conquering & conserving the sceptre of the world. He would have succeeded, if he had not been checked by the French spirit. France has reproached him with the education she gave him: He had reason to reproach France with the education he had received from her. Would you make an abortion of one whom nature has

¹⁵¹SDM 109-111; 97-100; in a prescient moment, Brisbane predicted that the abolitionists' efforts would lead to secession and Civil War.
moulded for a great man? It suffices to rear him in France, to fashion him on the taste of the arbitrary, of confusion, of imprudence & other vices which constitute the national character of the French. (OC 5:407; trans. Emerson, JMN 9:6-7)

Note that Fourier's critique of "simplism" (that is, the cultivation of one attribute at the expense of all others) closely parallels Emerson's critique of the "degenerate state" in "The American Scholar." Napoleon, who had had the potential to become "Man Conquering" (perhaps even "Man Omniarching"), had reduced himself to a mere conqueror. Emerson, who would also explore the abuse of one-sided genius in Representative Men, agreed that national character was crucial in the formation of personality—witness "The American Scholar," "Historic Notes . . .," and the very title English Traits.

After his 1845 reading of Fourier, Emerson often continued to acknowledge the usefulness of his criticism of existing society. Now, however, Emerson was also capable of lauding him as a theorist of the ideal society. His original outline for the Representative Men lectures, made circa September 1845, is striking. Not only was Fourier included with the likes of Plato, Shakespeare, and Napoleon, but he was even assigned the final lecture (JMN 12:580, qtd. in CWRWE 4:xviii). Sometimes the Frenchman was hailed as a philosopher for the ages:

The Scholar's courage may be measured by his power to give an opinion of Aristotle, Bacon, Jordano Bruno, Swedenborg, Fourier. If he has nothing to
say to these systems let him not pretend to skill in reading. (JMN 10:28)

But Emerson’s opinion seemed to shift from day to day, for this earnest appreciation was soon recast in unflattering terms:

Let the scholar measure his valour by his power to cope with intellectual giants. . . . Can he weigh Plato? judge of the probabilities of Laplace’s hypothesis? give me a considered opinion on the modern cosmogonies; & know Newton & Humboldt; criticize Swedenborg; dispose of Fourier? (JMN 10:42-43)

Emerson tried to come to an understanding of Fourier through Plato, as he had attempted once before in "Fourierism and the Socialists." In fact, the retraction of his most extravagant appreciations of Fourier may have been catalyzed by his rereading of the Dialogues. After reading Gorgias, for example, Emerson observed that Socrates’ amoral opponent Callicles "anticipates Fourier & says ‘Gratify’" (JMN 10:484). This analogy is flimsy: Callicles had argued that "justice" is, and should be, constructed by the powerful in order to exploit the weak, while Fourier had planned to maximize the happiness of all Harmonians. But Emerson’s misreading is not as interesting as the fact that he had tried to reconcile Fourier and Plato in the first place. Perhaps the project interested him because he believed that the philosopher and the socialist shared his own faith in human nature. Immediately after the above entry, Emerson wrote a version of Fourier’s first principle under the heading "Plato": "Men are not moved except rightly no more than stones fall without
gravity" (JMN 10:485). But Emerson agreed with Plato that moral people would be unable to establish a perfectly just society. He found The Republic more attractive than the Fourierist utopia, if only because the former could not be actualized:

All philosophers believe in some remote place where the dream is realized. Plato in some far East, Swedenborg in Africa, Fourier in harmonic planets. But Plato wiselier, "which tho' it be not our earth must have a pattern of it laid up in heaven for him who wishes to behold it, & beholding, resolves to dwell there." (JMN 10:485)

For all his hatred of slavery, for all his distrust of established institutions, the Emerson of the 1840s was a quietist. Because he was avoiding activism, he found Plato both "wiselier" and more reassuring.

In the Europe of 1848, a different kind of attempt was made to realize the social dream. As Larry J. Reynolds has already shown in European Revolutions and the American Literary Renaissance, Emerson’s 1847-48 voyage gave him yet another perspective from which he could re-evaluate Fourierism.¹⁵² This time, his analysis foregrounded socialism instead of free love or metaphysics; in so doing, he would repeat many of the objections he had made to the Brook Farm experiment.

¹⁵²My examination of Emerson’s response to the events of 1848 draws heavily from L. Reynolds 25-43.
In a sense, he had come to Britain to celebrate individualism: most of the lectures he delivered between November 1847 and February 1848 were from the "Representative Men" series, which advanced the proposition that social progress came only from genius (L. Reynolds 25-26). Emerson summarized this point of view in a journal entry from late 1847, cited by both Reynolds and Bercovitch:

> Individualism has never been tried. . . . [N]ow, when a few began to think of the celestial Enterprise, sounds this tin trumpet of a French Phalanstery and the newsboys throw up their caps & cry, Egotism is exploded; now for communism! But all that is valuable in the Phalanstery comes of individualism. (JMN 10:154)

Emerson found a receptive audience in the English bourgeoisie, haunted by the specter of Chartism. As might be expected, Emerson initially sided with the anti-Chartists; he even took pleasure in the failure of the 10 April 1848 Chartist demonstration (L. Reynolds 28-29).

The foreigner Emerson can be forgiven for failing to differentiate the various radical movements of pre-1848 France: no distinction is made between the "Phalanstery" and "communism." Given Fourier's utter disdain for 1789 and its aftermath, he surely would have rejected any sort of class struggle. His followers were not so doctrinaire. Hugh Doherty was part of the crowd that stormed the Tuileries (he would meet both Emerson and Fuller during their visits), and the National Assembly counted Victor Considerant among its members. Despite their claims of influence, however, the
Fourierists had virtually no control over the course of events, as Brisbane and Dana would later discover when they came to revolutionary Paris (Guarneri 336-338).

Perceptions are often more important than realities, however. Many Americans believed that Fourierism had helped to precipitate the February revolution. In the Associationist camp, Parke Godwin argued that the revolutions might hasten the coming of Universal Unity, speculating that the provisional government might be in a position to put Fourierism into practice. He chided American newspaper editors who were suspicious of the government's "Fourieristic leanings" ("The Fourierism of the French Revolution" 187). Emerson, who was also viewing events in France through the lens of Fourierist ideology, decided to visit Paris in May. Garth Wilkinson (now won over from the Swedenborgian to the Fourierist camp—a change of allegiance Emerson had noted with disapproval) reported to The Harbinger that Emerson "was quite willing to see whatever there is in this same Association, and I am sure to help it with his own earnest soul." Wilkinson gave him a letter of introduction to Doherty.153

In fact, Wilkinson's optimistic prophecy did not go completely unfulfilled. Emerson wrote that the revolutionary clubs were the most interesting thing he had seen in his first ten days in Paris. He had been particularly impressed by the

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153 Wilkinson, "Letter from London" (written 11 Apr. 1848; pub. 6 May 1848); L. Reynolds 31.
"deep sincerity" of the socialists, "who are studying how to secure a fair share of bread to every man, and to get the God's justice done throughout the land" (Emerson to Lydia Jackson Emerson, 17 May 1848, LRWE 4:73-74). One week later, Emerson invoked the Fourierist vocabulary once more to describe a massive procession in celebration of the new society:

I witnessed the great national Fete on Sunday last when 1200000 people stood in the Champs de Mars and it was like an immense family the perfect good humour & fellowship is so habitual to them all. At night the illumination in the Champs Elysées was delicious they understand all the capabilities of the place & of the whole city as well as you do your parlour and make a carcanet of jewels of it all. The skill with festal chandeliers were hung all up & down a mile of avenue gave it all the appearance of an immense ballroom in which the countless crowds of men & women walked with ease & pleasure. It was easy to see that France is far nearer to Socialism than England & it would be a short step to convert Paris into a phalanstery.  

Reynolds concludes that while Emerson's visit to Paris did not reconcile him to the Chartists and their "gross & bloody chiefs", he came to despise the "oppression & hopeless selfishness" of the wealthy anti-Chartists. Emerson attempted

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154 Emerson to Lydia Jackson Emerson, 24 and 25 May 1848, LRWE 4:76-77. A loosely similar scene occurs in Henry Russell, an 1846 propaganda novel written by an anonymous American Fourierist. Three million delegates to a "World Convention" (who have come to New York City to legislate an end to war, slavery, poverty, and ignorance) form an "ocean of humanity" as they parade to the assembly tent, "as exciting a spectacle as there ever was" (105). It is unlikely that Emerson knew of this deservedly obscure novel, but such descriptions of peaceful mass gatherings were one way of depicting the brotherhood of man.
to fashion an independent position, one of "armed neutrality, abhoring the crimes" of both camps: "Then I shall not have forfeited my right to speak & act for the Movement party" (JMN 8:325-26, qtd. L. Reynolds 36).

Back in London, Emerson advocated such detachment in the "Minds and Manners in the Nineteenth Century" lectures (Reynolds 36-43). Fourier was mentioned favorably in the first and fourth lectures. According to one account of the first lecture, "Powers and Laws of Thought," Emerson used Fourier's application of musical harmony to the "whole body of science" to illustrate the theory of correspondences.¹⁵⁵ Henry Crabb Robinson, who had attended the latter lecture, "Politics and Socialism," recorded his impressions in his diary: "[Emerson] praised Owen and called Fourier a great man; yet he seemed to speak of all their efforts as hitherto unsuccessful. Wilkinson whispered to me "All lies. . . ."¹⁵⁶ The same lecture was later delivered in New York to an audience that included Greeley and the clairvoyant Andrew Jackson Davis. One listener wrote that Emerson had "spoke[n] with reverential admiration of the Apostleships of Fourier and Owen—lauding these reformers so highly, indeed, as to draw a murmur of satisfaction from the Listen-to-reason-dom

¹⁵⁵ "Mr. Emerson's Lectures." The Daguerrototype 2 (12 Aug. 1848): 467-473; qtd. Cameron, Emerson among... 20

¹⁵⁶ Henry Crabb Robinson, Diary, June 13, 1848, qtd. in Bestor Papers I.A.35
which formed the greater part of his audience, and hisses from the true believers in things as they are . . . ."157

Remarkably, at the same time that revolutionary Paris was moving Waldo Emerson to yet another reconsideration of Fourier, Lydia Emerson was converting to the Associationist cause. In June 1848, she wrote a letter urging Waldo to visit George Sand and disclosing her new faith: "I have become really interested in her through a newly acquired knowledge, though a superficial one, of the real principles of the Associationists."158 Lydia's claim that Sand's socialist fiction had been inspired by Fourier was a commonplace in the Associationist circle, and a translation of Consuelo was serialized in The Harbinger.159 Then Lydia revealed her initiation into High Associationism:

I believe the world will be in time really regenerated through [the Associationists'] promulgation—and that W. H. Channing is really an inspired prophet of this new gospel—or rather this actual application to practice of the old one.

Given Waldo's public pronouncements, Lydia's letter was a remarkable act of independence. While carefully acknowledging

157N. Parker Willis [1851], qtd. in Cameron, Emerson among . . . . 67-70.

1584 June 1848, qtd. in Carpenter 154-155.

her husband's patriarchal authority, she made her determination clear:

It seems to me, that this cause of humanity-in-general as undertaken by the Associationists, is the one cause to which we need not fear giving too large a share of our attention or aid; and besides that the cause is so good the spirit in which it is conducted seems to me, as far as I have seen its manifestations; to be the true "spirit of love and of a sound mind" for which we have looked in vain for the advocates of other good causes—and which of course must be a spirit of "power." I shall feel bound to do all to promote the success of this blessed movement that my husband will sanction.

Waldo had found Fourierism spiritless in 1842; now Lydia claimed that it was the one true manifestation of spirit. She credited her "conversion" to Elizabeth Marston Davis Sturgis, the mother of Waldo's correspondent, Caroline (Sturgis) Tappan, and informed Waldo that Mrs. Sturgis had invited her to visit during Election Week for the purpose of attending Associationist meetings. (The timing of the meetings may be significant: Election Day sermons were typically devoted to an exegesis of America's role in God's plan for humanity.)

However admirable one may find Lydia's declaration of (relative) independence, it is difficult to take her sisters' scheme for world-salvation too seriously:

I cannot but revere the zeal and self-devotion of Miss [Anna Q. T.] Parsons (the Seeress)—and some other young ladies, who seem to have consecrated their time, talents, strength—indeed, their whole

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160 While I have not had the opportunity to consult the MS, the context makes Carpenter's transcription, "conversation," unlikely.
being—to the cause of what they with calm enthusiasm believe to be the regeneration of the human race. They are doing something to this end which will serve the end you have had so much at heart—begun to keep a refreshment room as you have wished Mrs Goodwin to establish. . . . They keep ice cream and cakes & I think, coffee. (4 June 1848, Carpenter 154-55)

Lydia was undoubtedly referring to the efforts of the Woman’s Associative Union, a Boston-based organization founded in late 1847 and aptly characterized by Guarneri as a "socialist ladies’ auxiliary" (244-247). The establishment of a good café was a less grandiose scheme than the establishment of a model phalanx, yet the ultimate goal—"the regeneration of the human race"—had somehow remained intact.

Just as interest in Fourierist communitarianism had rapidly declined after its peak in the mid-1840s, the spate of interest in Fourierist metaphysics during the late 1840s would not last forever. Lydia Emerson may have kept her faith in the socialist gospel, as is suggested by the elder James’s "shaving" anecdote. However, there are no subsequent references to Fourier in Delores Bird Carpenter’s edition of her letters. If the February revolution had inspired Lydia, the June Days may well have disillusioned her.

Waldo’s fleeting faith in socialism was also shaken; "Politics and Socialism" praised Fourier, but ultimately rejected his grandiose plans. But in 1855, Emerson would invoke Fourier in proposing a solution to the slavery question. This claim may seem paradoxical: not only in light
of Emerson's earlier public anti-Fourierism, but also because of the strained relations between the Associationists and the antislavery movement. Roughly a decade after Emerson had hailed the "originality & hope" of the Fourierist alternative to abolition, his 25 January 1855 "American Slavery Address" at Tremont Temple, Boston, praised Fourier's faith in the goodness of humanity:

Every wise man delights in the powers of many people. Fourier noting that one man had one talent, another another, compute[s ma]n must collect 1800 or 2000 souls to make one complete man. (Laughter) We shall need to call them out [. . . .]

Men inspire each other. The affections are nurses [JMN: The affections are muses]. Hope is. Love is. Despair is none. Selfishness drives away the angels. It is delicious to act with great masses to great aims, for instance, the summary or gradual abolition of slavery [. . . .]

[. . . .] We shall one day bring the states shoulder to shoulder & the citizens man to man to exterminate slavery. It is said to cost a thousand, then twelve hundred, and it is now said that it will cost two thousand millions of dollars.

Well, was there ever any contribution so enthusiastically paid as this will be? We will have a chimney tax. [. . . .] We will call on those rich benefactors who found asylums, athenæums, lyceums, city libraries—we shall call on wealthy bachelors and maidens to make the State their heirs, as they were wont in Rome. The mechanics will give; the children will have cent societies. (Laughter and applause)

Emerson's vision of a peaceful, harmonious eradication of slavery, his championing of Eros as the motive force for the

161I have not yet consulted the MS for this address (Houghton Library, Harvard); I quote the transcription published in the 26 Jan. 1855 Boston Evening Traveller. The quoted passages are closely paralleled by JMN 14:400.
just society, and his appeal to the humanity of capitalists all distinctly echo Fourier; his Bellamyesque call to the "great masses" was certainly inspired by Fourier's industrial army. Fourierist ideas are indeed being used as pawns here, but pawns in the service of antislavery. True, Emerson did not long advocate this kindler, gentler abolitionism: "Bleeding Kansas" nudged him closer to the radical abolitionists and further from the orthodox Fourierist position on chattel slavery (Gougeon 217-220). Nevertheless, Fourierism appears to have played a role in shaping Emerson's views on the slavery question between 1844 and 1856.

One might object that Emerson's allusion to Fourier in "American Slavery" was tongue-in-cheek: after all, his audience did laugh. And even if Emerson's praise of Fourier had been sincere, he changed his mind in the 1860s. By the time he had cannibalized his fragmentary journal entries on Fourier for "Historic Notes," he had decided that Fourierism was not only impractical, but less than sane. Even so, Emerson continued to rework Fourier's notion of Harmonian man as a social being. In an 1863 journal entry later incorporated in "Historic Notes," he called this spiritual socialism the antidote to "Illusion":

The youth longs for a friend: when he forms a friendship, he fills up the unknown parts of his friend's character with all virtues of man. The lover idealizes the maid, in like manner. The virtues & graces which they thus attribute, but fail to find in their chosen companions, belong to
man & woman, & are therefore legitimately required, but are only really ripened, here one, & there the other, distributed in scattered individuals in a wide population. Fourier meant this, when he said, "it took 1728 men to make a human phalanx, or one man."

But this illusion is constant,—a siren song in the ears of every susceptible youth. (JMN 15:376-377; cf. "Historic Notes," WRWE 10:350)

The perfection of the individual—the romantic fantasy celebrated and dissected at length in Representative Men—is ultimately set aside for Fourier's romantic socialism, the perfection of the entire community.

Whether the phalanx should consist of "1728 men," as above, "1760 men" (JMN 13:340), "1800 or 2000 souls," as in "American Slavery," or the 1620 actually prescribed by Fourier is of course unimportant—although the issue interested Emerson enough for him to hypothesize that 1728—the twelve passions cubed—was the correct number (JMN 13:454). What is crucial is that Emerson adopted Fourier's poetic vision of social unity to revise his call in "The American Scholar" for the end of alienation's "degenerate state." In 1837, he had complained that "[t]he state of society is one which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man." Paradoxically, the Emerson of the 1860s became capitalism's cheerleader. How did he reconcile himself to the increasing division of labor wrought by industrialization? He may have found the answer in Fourier's theory of the passions: specialization need not lead to
alienation, as long as there was a personality type that enjoyed the task.

IV.

It is not difficult to fashion Emerson's comments on Fourier from 1842 to 1844 into a coherent narrative, and in fact, Bercovitch has done this admirably. Nevertheless, we have also seen that Emerson's later celebrations and deprecations of Fourier not only contradict his earlier comments, they sometimes contradict his opinion of the previous day. For more than a decade, Emerson couldn't decide whether to take Fourier seriously or dismiss him as irrelevant, praise him or poke fun at him.

Why was Emerson confused? The answer is suggested by a crucial sentence in "Fourierism and the Socialists": "One could not but be struck by strange coincidences betwixt Fourier and Swedenborg." Crucial, because Emerson, like Henry James Sr. after him, saw both Fourier and Swedenborg as systematizers of the spirit world. The mysticism thinly concealed in Fourier's theory finds its parallels not only in Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences but in Transcendentalism itself: the physical world is purely symbolic of the spirit world; life equals spirit; and immanence of the spirit is Transcendentalism in a nutshell.
Long before he heard of Fourier, young Emerson had familiarized himself with Swedenborgian literature; these readings helped fuel cosmic ambitions that rivaled the Frenchman's. Indeed, Emerson's reception of Swedenborg in the 1820s prefigured New Englanders' reception of Fourier in the 1840s. Emerson read Sampson Reed's *Observations on the Growth of the Mind* (1826) less than a month after its publication, and its influence on his thought is well-known. He praised Reed's "noble pamphlet after my own heart" as being "in my poor judgment the best thing since Plato of Plato's kind" (qtd., Strauch vi). A few months later, Emerson observed that one of the "Peculiarities of the Present Age" was "Transcendentalism"—the earliest use of the word in his journals—and identified Reed as its American exponent (*JMN* 3:70). Recall that in 1845, after reading Caroline Sturgis's volume of Fourier, Emerson immediately made arrangements for the book to be loaned to Reed. Apparently Emerson detected similar Transcendental peculiarities in Fourier.

Reed's popularization of Swedenborg anticipated many of the themes in Brisbane's popularization of Fourier. In *Growth of the Mind*, Reed had explained the sorry state of humanity in terms that appealed to Emerson the Neoplatonist: "the laws of the mind are as fixed and perfect as the laws of matter; but they are laws from which we have wandered" (6). Despite mankind's erring, Reed, like Fourier, held that postlapsarian man required no external Savior. Instead, people could decide
to obey the divine law on their own. In propounding this Theory of Everything, Reed's rhetorical excesses occasionally approached Fourier's. In the introduction to the 1838 edition, Reed characterized himself as "only a medium of truth from the one only Source of truth" (iii)—arrogance with a veneer of humility. And just as Brisbane believed that Fourier had been anointed, Reed believed that Swedenborg was the prophet chosen by the Lord to reveal "the truths of the spiritual sense of the Sacred Scripture" (vi). Reed's faith was absolute: he claimed that Swedenborg's writings "are so perfect in their method and logic, that the rationality of the community [i.e., the New Church] will bear testimony that there is no insanity" (S. Reed v). Just as Social Destiny of Man seemed far more levelheaded than any of Fourier's major works, Growth of the Mind suppressed wacky Swedenborgianism.

Again, Chasseguet-Smirgel's work suggests a possible explanation for these bizarre enthusiasms. Young Emerson's narcissism may not have been as pronounced, as permanent, or as unconscious as that of Swedenborg, Fourier, or their respective followers, but one would be hard-pressed to deny its pervasiveness, as in this megalomaniac journal entry from 1823:

I say to the Universe, Mighty one! thou art not my mother; Return to chaos, if thou wilt, I shall still exist. I live. If I owe my being, it is to a destiny greater than thine. Star by star, world by world, system by system shall be crushed,—but I shall live. (JMN 2:190)
Emerson was not always so expansive, and it would be misleading to claim that he lived in a state of perpetual Orphism. Nevertheless, it is clear that Emerson's reading of \textit{Growth of the Mind} helped fuel his narcissistic idealism. In its first full articulation, the unified-field theory of \textit{Nature} (1836)—which, like "The American Scholar," openly acknowledges its debt to Swedenborg—one can find striking parallels to Fourier's thinly-disguised fantasies of omnipotence. During the "transparent eye-ball" soliloquy, to take the most obvious example, the ego boundaries fall and the self becomes the cosmos: "I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God" (E&L 10).

Between 1842 and 1844, Emerson lambasted Fourier's idealism as hopelessly unrealistic. This criticism could easily have been turned against \textit{Nature}: Christopher Cranch's famous caricature of the "transparent-eyeball man" would not have been out of place in the Harmonian menagerie. But Emerson the pragmatist also turned against his earlier self, developing a critique of primary narcissism and its resultant ideologies that anticipates Chassegueut-Smirgel. Witness this journal entry from the 1840s: "Little men just born, Copernicise. They cannot radiate as suns or revolve as planets, and so they do it in effigy, by building the orrery in their brain" (JMN 10:35-36).
As Emerson's choice of words suggests, he did not overlook his socialist friends' penchant for inventing new cosmologies and cosmogonies. In the fall of 1842, Alcott, Lane, and Henry Wright met at Emerson's home in order to "unfold as far as they can their idea of a true social institution" (Nathaniel Hawthorne and George Ripley were among the other guests). Emerson later complained to Fuller that Alcott and Wright droned on about "A New Solar System & the propsective Education in the Nebulae. All day all night they hold perpetual Parliament" (16 Nov. 1842, LRWE 3:96). Emerson's partial retreat from his own "Copernicising" and his criticism of the same tendency in others can be seen as a crucial stage in his psychic maturation—his acceptance of the reality principle. As in the case of Brownson, Emerson's criticism of Fourier in the years 1842-1844 was a relatively painless substitute for self-criticism.

Unlike Brownson, however, Emerson did not ultimately insist that one had to choose between accepting and rejecting Fourier. Brownson's inability to perceive shades of gray had always annoyed Emerson; in 1850, he observed that "[t]he Elephantiasis or conceit, which destroys so many fine wits, as Brownson, . . . sends us back with new thankfulness to the Socratic wisdom, that the Pythian oracle pronounced him the wisest, because he knew that he knew nothing" (JMN 13:???).

162 Emerson to Theodore Parker, 7 Nov. 1842, LRWE 3:95; Emerson to Frederic Henry Hedge, 21 and 25 Nov. 1842, LRWE 3:98.
As we have seen, Emerson's rejection of Fourier was provisional, subject to continual revision. Even the respectable bourgeois Emerson of the 1850s, the aficionado of brandy and cigars, could for a time succumb to the spell of the optative Fourier:

The power of assimilation. Swedenborg took up the whole underworld into his head & gave it a tongue. Fourier is immensely rich & joyous with his ranges & gradations of power. It suffices him to say, Nature has made it; so I know there is a turnpike-way out. Is the thing really desirable? then there is a way to it. (JMN 11:390-391)

But only one land has a turnpike leading to all things desirable: the narcissist's utopia, with its pleasure principle Autobahn. It seems unlikely that Emerson would argue (to invent an example) that all who desired prehensile tails would have one someday. The key word is "really," which implies that the "desirable" is not determined by whim, but has been foreordained by Nature.

The mission of society, then, is comparable to Fourier's quest: to discover what is "really desirable." This exploration is not a passive process, but an act of creation in which the poet plays a leading role. In another journal entry from the early 1850s, Emerson claimed divine powers for Fourier's "procreant" urges, in an uncanny anticipation of Whitman:

Poet sees the stars, because he makes them. Perception makes. We can only see what we make, all our destinies are procreant. Perception has a destiny. So Fourier's attractions proportioned to destinies.
I notice that all poetry comes or all becomes poetry when we look from within & are using all as if the mind made it

Poet fundamental (JMN 13:51)

Fundamental, in the same sense that the American Scholar was fundamental—as the head of the social organism. Emerson even compared himself to this standard, wondering if had delivered a perception comparable to that of Fourier and other one-idea people:

Owen existed to say, "Given the circumstances the man is given. I can educate a tiger."

Swedenborg, that inner & outer correspond.

Fourier, that the destinies are proportioned to the attractions. [. . . .]

But what do you exist to say? (JMN 13:265)

Such self-doubt may have been one of the factors that led him to set aside his distaste for reductive reform movements and belatedly assume a leading role in the anti-slavery movement.

A comparative reading of Fourier's and Emerson's Orphic writings would be beyond the scope of the present study. Some preliminary conclusions can be drawn, however. Certainly Emerson had done more than enough to earn his anti-Fourierist reputation, and Bercovitch's thesis, that Emerson's individualism was the product of his negation of French socialism, is not only fascinating, it largely accounts for his thoughts on Fourier through 1844. But I would suggest that the mature Emerson came to recognize Fourier's thinly-disguised fantasies of omnipotence, if only because he had entertained the same fantasies himself, first vicariously through his readings in Swedenborgian literature, then as the
self-anointed prophet of Nature. (Granted, Emerson's wishfulfillment vision is of a different order; recalling Engels's distinction between the "cheerful" nonsense of the Frenchman and the "gloomy and profound" German nonsense of Hegel, one can see in Nature the beginning of a new philosophical genre: cheerful and profound American nonsense.) Because the mature Emerson had moved away from the Neoplatonic idealism of his youth without rejecting it, he found it especially difficult to come to terms with Fourier, whose searing social criticism and optative prophecies contradicted each other in a familiar fashion. Emerson was forced to master his idealism once again: from the mid-1840s to the mid-1850s and beyond, his conflicting statements on Fourier reflect this inner struggle. The "Historic Notes" lecture then functions as a sort of cover-up operation, Emerson's unconscious attempt to conceal the extent to which he had taken Fourier seriously.
CHAPTER 6
THE SWEDENBORGIANIZED FOURIERISM OF HENRY JAMES, SR.:
A STUDY IN PATHOLOGY

I.

Henry James, Sr., was a derivative iconoclast, one who presented the ideas of others in original combinations. His first biographer, Austin Warren, identified four pivotal influences upon James's intellectual career: Robert Sandeman (the eighteenth-century critic of institutional religion), his friend Emerson, Swedenborg, and Fourier. Of these influences, Swedenborg was the most important (see Deck), but throughout his public life, James remained a staunch Harmonian partisan. Only recently has Alfred Habegger's The Father revealed the full extent of James's commitment to Fourier, a commitment that became James's full-time occupation in the late 1840s. This fascinating biography leaves one question unanswered: why was James obsessed with Fourier?

In the two previous chapters, I argued that Chasseguet-Smirgel's theory of the ego ideal suggested why Brownson and Emerson evinced interest in, then turned upon, Fourierism. But while these psychoanalytic readings are suggestive, some readers might argue that they are not indispensable. However,
I believe that a psychoanalytic approach is necessary to make sense of the strange case of James. Relying heaving on Habegger's excellent biography, this chapter attempts to explain the phenomenon of Swedenborgian Fourierism in the 1840s—and particularly James's idiosyncratic version—through Chasseguet-Smirgel's ego ideal hypothesis.

As we saw in the last chapter, James thought little of Fourier's teachings in 1842, when he vigorously refuted Brisbane's presentation to Emerson. But this opinion soon changed. Late in 1843, he and his family travelled to England; after passing the winter in London (and considerable time with Carlyle), they established residence in Windsor, where James immersed himself in his heterodox theological studies. In May 1844, James underwent a strange spiritual crisis which plunged him into despair—in Habegger's words, a "complete psychological collapse" (F 6). By James's own account, his recovery began when a friend of the family, Sophia Chichester, diagnosed his malaise as a Swedenborgian "vastation" and recommended Swedenborg's works. James followed her advice and was rapidly converted to the cause. At this time, he also befriended the English Swedenborgian James John Garth Wilkinson, for whom he and Mary would name their third son.

163 Emerson to Lydia Jackson Emerson, 3 and 5 Mar. 1842, LWRE 20-21, 23.
Later in 1844, James returned to his native Albany, where he continued his Swedenborgian studies and corresponded with Wilkinson. James's interest in Fourier may have been sparked by his meeting with the New York City banker Edmund Tweedy, a major financial backer of the American Union of Associationists, in the winter of 1845-46 (Habegger, F 248). The train of events is not clear, but by mid-1846, James was sufficiently interested in Fourierism to explore the possibility of starting a Associationist journal with the Swedenborgians George Bush and B. F. Barrett (F 255). By late 1846, he was reading one of the Fourierist tracts discussed in Chapter 2, The Phalanstery, the 1841 translation of Gatti de Gamond mentioned by Emerson in "English Reformers." Coincidentally, the translator had been James's friend Chichester, the same woman who had introduced him to Swedenborg. Fourier's vision made an indelible impression upon the Jameses, as Mary related:

[M]y dear Henry and I have lately been receiving a whole flood of light and joy and hope . . . by an insight into the glorious plans and prospects which Fourier opens for the world. . . . As fiction it is more beautiful than any romance I have ever read, but if true (and I feel that it must be so, or if not, as my hopeful loving Henry says, something much better must be) it will not only banish from the world, poverty with its long list of debasing evils, but it will remove every motive to cruelty, injustice and oppression to which the present disordered state of society has given birth and nourished in the selfish heart of man. . . . (Mary James to Emma Wilkinson, 29 Nov. 1846, qtd., Edel 45)
Soon afterwards, Henry's December 1846 lecture on "A True Education" employed a quasi-Fourierist narrative of historical necessity: just as patriarchal unity was superseded by national unity, national unity will give way to universal unity (F 250-251). James may well have borrowed this schema from Charles Lane's introduction to Chichester's translation. In mid-1847, James moved back to Manhattan; during that summer, Wilkinson declared his new allegiance to Association, "the morning brightness of the world's day."

James would soon have the opportunity to share his developing interpretations of Fourier and Swedenborg with a wider audience. A few months later, in the wake of the dissolution of Brook Farm, The Harbinger also moved to New York. The wealthy James's willingness to provide financial support for the struggling periodical, his subsequent activities in the New-York Union of Associationists, and his friendship with editor Parke Godwin, a fellow Princeton Theological Seminary dropout, all eased his access to The Harbinger's pages.

At this time, Fourier's writings on sexual reform were subverting the Associationists' propaganda efforts. Brisbane had hoped to keep these "secret doctrines" under wraps. Even two years after Godwin had offered a partial exposition of the "ralliements d'amour," Brisbane attempted to conceal the truth. For example, in an 1846 article defending Fourier

\[\text{164 Wilkinson to James, 17 Jul. 1847, qtd., F 248-249.}\]
against the Democratic Review’s charge of immorality, Brisbane resorted to a strategic untruth:

[Fourier] has said very little about the relation of the sexes, and what he has said is stated in such extremely technical language, and so vague and general, that it is impossible to arrive at a clear knowledge of the system which he had in view. ("The American Associationists" 202)

Possibly Brisbane had been given access to the Nouveau Monde amoreux manuscripts during his 1844 sabbatical in Paris; if so, his lie was particularly brazen. In any case, the Greeley-Raymond debate soon made such evasions impractical. From across the Atlantic, the new convert Wilkinson urged James to eschew "Jesuitical timidity" and present Fourier’s doctrine to the public in unadulterated form. Indeed, James’s doctrinal purity on sexuality exceeded that of other American Fourierist leaders. He alone endorsed the doctrines on marital reform that had been excluded from the Associationists’ public platform and recently renounced by Greeley. Soon after James’s anonymous translation of Victor Hennequin’s Love in the Phalanstery went on sale in the fall of 1848, the New York Observer charged that "Fourierism is only another name for promiscuity." James, under the transparent cover of his Harbinger pseudonym "Y.S.,” disingenuously responded that he had intended neither to endorse nor discredit Fourier’s teachings, but to endorse his

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165 Wilkinson to James, 18 Oct 1847, qtd. Habegger, F 278.
critique of existing sexuality. Throughout the final months of The Harbinger, James engaged in an unpleasant, repetitive hissing match with opponents of Fourierist free love. Criticisms came from other liberals as well, particularly the New Churchmen, who had endured a barrage of criticism relating to Swedenborg’s limited endorsement of concubinage in Conjugial Love. As Emerson noted in his journal, they enjoyed taking vicarious "revenge" on Fourier, who had strayed even further from conventional morality. Even John Humphrey Noyes, sympathetic to James’s cause, allowed that the sexual reform debate had hastened the journal’s demise (F 284).

James eventually backed down from many of his most radical positions in the 1850s. But he never renounced his commitment to the new society envisioned by Fourier, as evidenced by his reaction to Emerson’s criticism of Fourier in 1868. Despite his public denial, the "shaving" anecdote recounted in the last chapter may well have been accurate. After having heard Emerson’s lecture, James wrote an angry letter to Caroline [Sturgis] Tappan, the woman who had introduced Emerson to ‘true’ Fourierism more than twenty-three years earlier. James complained that Emerson’s "unprincipled


167 Block 49-51; JMN 9:188-189.
(because ignorant) denunciation of Fourier" was "intellectual slip-slop of the poorest kind" (28 Oct. 1868, qtd. H 463).

What had transformed the anti-Fourierist of 1842 into the Fourierist propagandist of the late 1840s? While James paid lip service to Fourier's appeals to economic common sense—for example, the critique of the structural inefficiencies and inequities of "Civilization," or the demonstration of the phalanx's economies of scale—Warren rightly observes that James considered these relatively practical details unworthy of his attention. Witness his 1850 treatise Moralism and Christianity, which had recommended the "marvellous literature of Socialism," particularly Fourier's, to all readers who believe in humanity's future. These books, James continued, were fundamentally paradoxical. In the realm of knowledge, Fourier offers both crystalline "criticism and constructive science" and opaque "apostolic hardness to the understanding"; in the realm of morality, the "startl[ing]" and "disgust[ing]," but also "glimpses . . . of God's ravishing harmonies yet to ensue on earth." Startling, disgusting, ravishing: the constellation suggests paroxysmal sexual transgression. Indeed, James found himself caught up in the jouissance of the Fourierist text: "your imagination will

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168 Warren 102; James affirmed his belief in Industrial Association in his preface to Love in the Phalanstery (vi).
fairly ache with contentment, and plead to be let off." Whether one labels this experience sexual or mystical, it seems clear that Fourier's appeal to James was not based on rational grounds.

II.

From 1844 to 1847, James assiduously absorbed Swedenborgian, then Fourierist literature. At the same time, several New Englanders were making similar attempts to update the doctrines of eighteenth-century theologian by melding them with the nineteenth-century socialist's thought. It is understandable that they felt a need to update Swedenborg, for the New Church was no longer brand-new, even in the U.S. Founded by English Swedenborgians in 1787, it had established small congregations in the major American cities soon afterwards (see Block 73-111). The leading American New Church publication, Boston's New Jerusalem Magazine, had been founded in 1827, the year after the publication of Sampson Reed's Observations of the Growth of the Mind.

Other Americans viewed Swedenborg with suspicion. At Princeton Theological Seminary, a bastion of Presbyterian orthodoxy, James may have heard Prof. Samuel Miller's lecture on Swedenborg's "SERIOUS, PIOUS, PHILOSOPHIC INSANITY" (qtd., F 229). Even Emerson, despite his admiration for and

\[16992-93;\] compare Barthes, Sade, Fourier, Loyola, 90-95. Incidentally, Barthes' passing remarks on Fourier in The Pleasure of the Text are far more interesting.
emulation of Swedenborg, had similarly contrasted the seer's claims to have conversed with angels with others made more "sanely." However, Emerson also insisted upon a doubleness in both Swedenborg's psyche and writings. While conceding the mystic's "deranged balance," he maintained that Swedenborg's "principal powers continued to maintain a healthy action." George Ripley found the same admixture of sanity and irrationality in Swedenborg's thought. Reviewing an anti-Swedenborgian tract for the Harbinger, Ripley complained that the orthodox writers had emphasized the "heresies as to the relations of the sexes" and the "delights of insanity" while glossing over Swedenborg's more refined teachings (rev. of Swedenborgianism Reviewed . . . and Lectures on Swedenborgianism, 217).

Of course, Fourier's readers had had to face similar interpretative difficulties. Fourier's first disciple, Just Muiron, had noticed the similarities and brought Swedenborgian ideas to the annoyed Master's attention. As early as 1839, French Swedenborgians expressed cautious interest in Fourier; in the early 1840s, the London Phalanx had praised Swedenborg. After Emerson, a reader of Doherty's magazine, called attention to "the strange coincidences betwixt Fourier and Swedenborg" in The Dial, other American journals followed suit. In 1843, comparisons were made in W.

170Gladish 32n6; there may be earlier references in French Fourierist publications of the 1830s.
H. Channing's *The Present* as well as *The Retina*, a short-lived New Church weekly edited by William Dean Howells's father. In an 1844 *Dial* article, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody pointed out the likenesses between Fourier's passional system and Swedenborg's doctrine of Uses. Brisbane's *Phalanx* listed two New Church clergymen, B. F. Barrett & Solyman Brown, among its principal contributors, and made "numerous indirect references" to the New Church (Gladish 32-34). And the first American tract to present Fourierism holistically, Godwin's *Popular View*, had proclaimed Swedenborg and Fourier "THE TWO commissioned by the Great Leader of the Christian Israel, to spy out the Promised Land of Peace and Blessedness." In devoting a full chapter to Fourier's doctrine of Universal Analogy and Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences, Godwin suggested that each had arrived at the same truth by different means: "strict scientific synthesis" in the case of Fourier, "Divine Illumination" in the case of Swedenborg (106).

Many of *The Harbinger's* most prolific contributors—Godwin, Charles A. Dana, Channing, Ripley, and John Sullivan Dwight—attempted a synthesis of the two thinkers. A contemporary reader who glanced at the 14 June 1845 inaugural issue might easily have mistaken *The Harbinger* for a Swedenborgian journal. Its motto—"All things, at the present day, stand provided and prepared, and await the light"—was borrowed from Swedenborg, while no mention was made of Fourier in the introductory notice (8-10). Throughout the
Brook Farm years, Harbinger writers yoked Swedenborg and Fourier together frequently. John Sullivan Dwight argued that Fourier's method was closer to Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondences than to Newton's science ("Fourier's Writings" 333). Soon afterwards appeared a prospectus for Godwin's proposed book (never published) on Swedenborg, Fourier, and Goethe. Its thesis had Hegelian overtones: "These leaders are those in whom the time . . . most clearly comes to a consciousness of itself." 171 Even Brisbane, the arbiter of Associationist orthodoxy, freely admitted that Swedenborg had anticipated some of Fourier's most important ideas. 172 And The Harbinger's editors were even willing to print praise of Swedenborg at Fourier's expense, such as the not-yet-enlightened Wilkinson's claim that Swedenborg was a more important thinker than either Bacon or the braggart Fourier. 173

The Swedenborgian tendency grew more pronounced in The Harbinger's second year (1846-47), as Dana began to review Swedenborgian publications on a regular basis. He lavished the highest praise on Wilkinson's ongoing translations of

171 Godwin (or his spokesman) emphasized "[Fourier's] singular appearance in history, both as to time and manner," making the parallel to the other great philosopher of 1808 more uncanny ("The Teachers of the Nineteenth Century" 400).

172 Brisbane, "Theory of the Human Passions" 400; Brisbane, "The American Associationists" 201.

173 [Wilkinson], "Fourier Compared with Bacon and Swedenborg" 335; on the grounds for ascription, see Gladish 77-78.
Swedenborg, arguing that they were the most important publications of last 50 years, with one predictable exception. According to Wilkinson's reading of the mystic, "the doctrine of society" was "the key to the other sciences"; Dana commented, "Every student of Fourier will recognize the thoughts they express" ("Swedenborg’s Scientific Writings" 71, 73). In another review, Dana condemned apocalyptic Christianity as un-Swedenborgian, while borrowing his counterexample from Fourier's teleology: "A planet, or a universe is a natural growth as much as an animal or a tree. Like all other things it has its origin, its periods of vigor and of decay, and its end, in regular and orderly succession."174 Even though neither prophet foretold a cataclysmic end to the planet, both agreed that Earth was in unusually poor health. At the same time, they expressed unlimited optimism for the planet's future. In his 1846 Christmas sermon, William H. Channing blasted the U.S. intervention in Mexico as symptomatic of the world's evils, confessing that he was tempted to agree with Swedenborg that Earth was the "most debased planet in the Universe" and with Fourier that the world's illnesses appeared incurable. Yet Channing shared his heroes' overriding faith in an efficacious spirit that was working to unite humanity ("Gloria in Excelsis" 59). Though Swedenborg emphasized theology, and

174 Rev. of The Swedenborg Library, Nos. 23 and 24, 140.
Fourier sociology, most Harbinger writers believed that the two were delivering the same message of hope.

The grand synthesis was even being made outside the editorial offices of The Harbinger. When the spiritualist Andrew Jackson Davis appropriated Fourier and Swedenborg for his own purposes, he yoked them together by foregrounding some of their wackiest doctrines. In The Principles of Nature (1847), the transcription of Davis's visions, the young channeler had judged the relative merits of Jesus, Confucius, Plato, Mohammed, and Luther, among others. While complaining that most of these teachers had only revealed partial truths, Davis found the doctrines of Fourier to be "the most useful, most truthful, and exceedingly sublime, even as seeking a level with, and being confirmed by, the teachings of Jesus."¹⁷⁵ For example, the clairvoyant confirmed Fourier's thesis that the planetary hierarchy was emblematic both of universal harmony and the coming social harmony:

[Fourier] ... mathematically ... proves that the mental advancement of the inhabitants of each [planet in our solar system] must necessarily constitute such a Brotherhood and such an association of congenial parts as to render the whole an harmonious existence, such as he expended his powers to have accomplished on earth. And I have the means of knowing that his general conceptions were strictly true as regards the inhabitants of the planets belonging to our solar system.

(The "means" were of course earlier séances, during which Davis had provided a detailed description of the other planets

¹⁷⁵Davis, The Principles of Nature 585; see also 590-591.
and their inhabitants; an encomium was reserved for his favorite extraterrestrials, the beautiful, brilliant, virtuous, psychic Saturnians. Immediately after lauding Fourier, Davis praised Swedenborg in less generous terms: the latter's revelations were too obscure and only "qualifiedly true." But while others believed that Swedenborg had committed to paper "the wildest hallucinations of a misdirected and inflated mind," Davis confirmed his predecessor's belief that the superior "inhabitants of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn" could and did commune with Earthlings.

Ridiculous, to be sure. But even if young Davis had been consciously deceiving his gullible elders—including Brisbane, Ripley, and Godwin (Guarneri 349)—he was profoundly sensitive to his audience's psychic needs. For in the spring of 1846, while Davis was communing with the Saturnians, Hugh Doherty was working on a similar project on the other side of the Atlantic. In La Phalange, a journal more open to visionary Fourierism than Considerant's Démocratie pacifique, Doherty foregrounded Swedenborg's and Fourier's esoteric theories of the composition of the solar system. According to Doherty, Fourier's metempsychosis and Swedenborg's vision of heaven had made the prospect of death appealing. One might be reincarnated as a superior being on another planet, or

176 Davis 159-215, esp. 180-183; see also F 269-270.
177 Davis 159n, 203n; Nathan 93-96.
even—rapturous joy!—as another planet, preferably one adequately adorned with rings and moons:

Death, or the sloughing off of a body of whatever nature, is nothing but the sign of the resurrection of the soul in another milieu, and the external bodies, which can thus be cast off and donned again alternatively, are not the interior, personal bodies of the soul, but the corporal matter of the triniverses, biniverses, universes, solar systems in which the soul dwells for a portion of its eternal career. (Doherty [Mar. 1846], qtd. in Nathan 96, my trans.)

Nor was Doherty alone in his beliefs. Paul Bénichou has observed that similar wacky syntheses of Fourier with Illuminist writers were characteristic of La Phalange between 1845 and 1848. Even on the eve of the Revolution, Fourierists continued to spin their esoteric theories. The postulate of godlike beings on another planet suggested the conclusion that "God is man and man is God" (Bénichou, qtd. in Nathan 97). As Chasseguet-Smirgel suggests, such a fantasy can act as balm for even the largest narcissistic wound.

But as Doherty admitted in an 1845 article, not every Swedenborgian nor every Fourierist approved of the comparison (qtd., Nathan 185n33). New Churchmen were most likely to stress the differences. Doherty had already become embroiled in a controversy with the New Jerusalem Magazine. In the December 1843 issue, their London correspondent, the energetic Wilkinson, complained that no provision had been made for the New Church in Harmony, and that Fourier's "doctrines of Transmigration of Souls, Transmutation of Sex, the conscious life of the Planets . . . generally" conflicted with the New
Church's teachings. Doherty's rebuttal, which was not accepted for publication by the New Jerusalem editors, eventually appeared in The Phalanx. Thus, the esoteric battle between the rival camps of disciples had spilled over into America. A detailed account of this voluminous, tedious, often ludicrous debate is unnecessary here. But James's writings cannot be understood unless one is aware of this context. Others before him had attempted a synthesis of the two grand theories, and the project had been controversial from the outset.

The mystical tendencies of some Fourierists were becoming more pronounced as the communitarian movement sputtered: seven phalanxes folded in 1845, three in 1846, six in 1847 (Guarneri 407-408). As Guarneri notes, some Fourierists—the "guarantist" reformers—took the more pragmatic approach of accepting these temporary setbacks and "retreat[ing] to more limited and gradual reforms" (283). But another wing of the movement chose the pleasure principle as its guiding star,

178 Wilkinson, qtd. in Gladish 36-37; Doherty, "A Reply to the Swedenborgians."

179 A 1983 monograph published by the Swedenborg Scientific Association, Robert W. Gladish's Swedenborg, Fourier, and the America of the 1840's, understandably suffers from a lack of critical distance. Nevertheless, it is a useful guide to the periodical debate.

180 Grand theories engender turf battles. Those readers who view Freud as a shaman might enjoy noting the similarities between the pure Swedenborgians' efforts to debunk Swedenborgianized Fourierism and Chasseguet-Smirgel's debunking of Freudo-Marxism.
"[taking] on the characteristics of a sect" and placing greater emphasis on "Fourier's arcane theories of analogy and cosmology" (278). These tensions between pragmatists and spiritualists were evident in the final years of The Harbinger. In his November 1847 prospectus for the journal's New York incarnation, Godwin promised to reduce the number of abstract theoretical articles. The change to a newsheet format signalled the new editor's intention to focus on current events (Gohdes 105-106). But the contributions of James, their new correspondent, took The Harbinger in quite another direction.

III.

One of James's first Harbinger pieces, a November 1847 review of Horace Bushnell's tract on raising Christian children, suggests that James had already begun his synthesis of Swedenborgian and Fourierist doctrine. Just as Bushnell insisted that parental discipline was necessary to mold children, James argued that the "DIVINE SOCIETY" of the "Associationist" was needed to mold adults, even as he dropped such Swedenborgian buzzwords as "instrumentalities" and "uses" (rev. of Views of Christian Nurture, 5). In the next Harbinger, James criticized the worldliness of the Presbyterians, calling for "radical reform in the religious sphere" ("Disease in the Church" 12).
James's friend George Bush had strained his relations with the New Church when he vouched for the authenticity of Davis the clairvoyant revelations. After reading *The Principles of Nature*, Bush realized that Davis's revelations were inconsistent with those of Swedenborg, and publicly recanted his endorsement of Davis in the book *"Davis's Revelations" Revealed*, co-authored with Barrett. James leapt to Davis's defense in a November 1847 *Harbinger* review, arguing that Swedenborg had no more authority than Davis. Thus, visions that were inconsistent with those of the Swedish seer were not necessarily of "Satanic origin." James then introduced a counterargument that Habegger rightly labels "very strange" (F 270): just as all men are both good and evil, God comprises both Heaven and Hell. Even if Davis's book were from Hell, James concluded, it would ultimately be from God (rev. of *"Davis's Revelations" Revealed* 15). Logical contortions are to be expected when the subject is the origin of evil, but it is bizarre that in transcending good and evil, James retained the categories of Heaven and Hell. In response, a *New Jerusalem* writer complained that James had not "begun to understand [Swedenborg]," and charged him with borrowing "the idea, that good and evil are divinely united" from Fourier.181 James replied that Swedenborg himself had

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181 Qtd. in James, rev. of *The New Jerusalem Magazine*, Dec. 1847, 54.
had the same insight: when each individual began to live "the universal life" as well, sin would be an obsolete concept.

James assured his readers that the Transcendentalist movement’s progenitor, William Ellery Channing, had "died . . . in the faith of ASSOCIATION" (rev. of Memoirs of William Ellery Channing, 23). Yet James argued that Channing’s socialist faith was not enough—as a reformer, "always motivated by 'duty'", he had not realized "the true divine life in man" because he had lived for others rather than for himself. James had nothing against virtue; he simply felt that "self-denial" was not the path to our fullest realization ("Dr. Channing and the Moral Life" 29). In a July 1848 article on "The Divine Life in Man," James went on to explain that this life required "the harmony of [man’s] passions and his intellect, in the unity of his will and understanding," and that this harmony was only achieved through "our aesthetic activity[,] which avouches a divine presence and power within us" (69).

In proposing to replace self-flagellating disquisitions on human depravity with a celebration of human potential, James’s philosophy would have meshed well with son William’s "Religion of Healthy-Mindedness"—to a point. In the August 1848 articles on "Human Freedom," James went beyond that point when he posited that "[t]he true and vital selfhood . . . of man is God"—that is, not from God, but identical to God (133).
Further, the realization of Fourier's plan was a necessary step in realizing one's own divinity:

the creature, in order to become divinely conscious, in order to become conscious of his true divine selfhood, is bound to experience in himself this unity of the universal and individual elements. . . . ("Human Freedom" 134)

Here, as in the "American Scholar," it is the Godlike creator, the creature who experiences universal unity, who is exalted by James. And like Poe in Eureka (published earlier that year), James verges upon declaring his own divinity. But keeping in mind that James was writing on the eve of his public declaration of support for sexual reform, there is another, more striking analogue to "Human Freedom" in the America of the 1840s. Joseph Smith had already outlined man's path to Godhood through sexual license. Since direct influence is impossible, Smith's and James's models of reality may have had similar psychological sources.

As he defended Fourier's morality, James drew fire from both the religious Left and the religious Right. The Harbinger correspondent "E. A. F." accused James and other Associationists of "subvert[ing] the foundations of

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182 Lawrence Foster summarizes the secret "final corollaries" to Joseph Smith's sealing doctrines for the spiritual wife system: "If marriage with one wife, sealed for eternity under the authority of the Mormon priesthood, could bring ultimate godhood for men, then having more than one wife [accelerated] the process . . . ." (133).

183 Probably the New Church minister Alfred E. Ford, the correspondent "A. E. F." of the Harbinger's last numbers (Guarneri 355; E 282).
morality" by following Fourier's advice to indulge one's passions (qtd., "Practical Morality and Association" 100). James offered the orthodox Fourierist response, that in the Harmonian regime, the passions would be a reliable guide.

James also returned fire, intensifying his attacks on the New Church's claim to catholicity. These attacks, which had begun with his Letter to a Swedenborgian (1847) and which would eventually culminate in his 1854 book The Church of Christ Not an Ecclesiasticism, were reinforced by the publication of Charles Julius Hempel's long-contemplated synthesis of Swedenborg and Fourier, The True Organization of the New Church (1848). Hempel argued that Swedenborg had prophesied the new order, but its full elaboration had only been made by Fourier:

[T]he science of Association as discovered by Charles Fourier, is the divine arrangement of Society to which Swedenborg alludes in No. 4266 of the Arc[ana coelestia], the true science of correspondence, the science of uses, of charity, the science of the conjunction of the external with the internal man . . . . (Hempel, "A Reply to the Repository" 101)

Hempel's thesis was not original: a version had first been advanced by Just Muiron (Beecher 163, 166). But to the members of the institutional New Church, Hempel's argument was more than an irritant, for it challenged their claim to be the fulfillment of Swedenborg's visions. Hempel had even had the effrontery to ask them to re-examine their flawed understanding of Swedenborg in the light of Association:
[Y]ou have not comprehended the whole scope of the doctrines of your Master, that Man's regeneration is impossible without a true organization of Society and the Church, based upon the law of Divine Order, which is the Series of Groups, and that this Serial law has therefore to be discovered and applied by Man before the inauguration of Peace, the Sabbath, the Conjunction of the Good and the True, can take place upon earth . . . .

[U]nless the writings of Swedenborg are illustrated by the sublime teachings of Fourier, the "Heavenly Arcana" will remain a mystical doctrine, and the glorious truths contained in those unknown and derided volumes will never have any important bearing upon the social progress of Humanity.

. . . . You, men of bad faith, who, knowing better, accuse Fourier of infidelity; you, noisy controversists . . . ; to you all I would say, that Fourier's Science was necessary to complete the mission of Christ. (Hempel, True Org. 24)

James, who had read the proof sheets, quoted the above passage in a rave review for The Harbinger.\(^{184}\) When Hempel's book was attacked in the New Jerusalem Magazine, James counterpunched furiously. He complained that American Swedenborgians had too long been allowed to "play new church," and he called the reviewer, Caleb Reed, a "mere ecclesiastical zany" with no claim to divine revelation.\(^{185}\) But Barrett's review of Hempel scored more substantive points.\(^{186}\) He

\(^{184}\)James, "Fourier and Swedenborg" 132 [26 Feb. 1848]; a continuation, "Swedenborg and Fourier," appeared in the following issue.

\(^{185}\)James, rev. of Swedenborg's Posthumous Philosophical Tracts, No. 1; [. . . ] New Jerusalem Magazine, June 1848; [. . . ]: 78.

\(^{186}\)James had recently exchanged words with his former friend (F 263): see "The Harbinger and Sectarianism" and "The Harbinger and 'B. F. B.'", published 12 August and 2 September 1848, respectively (F 271).
suggested that only a Fourierist believer in the supremacy of self-love could hold that "... Christ and the Devil are the fundamental constituents of the Divine Principle, and will ultimately coalesce into ONE COMPOUND UNIT."\textsuperscript{187} (Note that Hempel's thesis was essentially James's, recast to maximized its shock value.) Furthermore, Hempel had offered a qualified endorsement of Fourier's theory of transmigration of souls—balking only at endowing planets with souls—as well as a passionate argument for the necessity of the Boreal Crown.\textsuperscript{188} Barrett closed by reprimanding James for his failure to examine Hempel's book "critically" in his *Harbinger* reviews (610). Another possibility, less charitable and, in my opinion, more probable, was that James had noted Hempel's bizarre positions and privately endorsed them.

In other essays from this period, James was becoming more daring, more expansive. In the September 1848 article "Is Human Nature Positively Evil," James asked why the New Church objected to Fourier's project of reconciling self-love with universal love. In affirming this project, he depicts Fourier, or rather Fourier's message, as a second Messiah:

Human life was in the main so ugly and disreputable, that you could not point to any man, ... and say—Behold the creature of a perfect creator. In the universal absence of the marks of such creatureship, you were obliged to postulate the Christ, or a COMING man, as the only true son of God, and affirming the evil of all other men,

\textsuperscript{187}Hempel, *True Org.* 52; Barrett 539.

\textsuperscript{188}Hempel, *True Org.* 132-144, 233-236; Barrett 599.
suspend their sonship wholly upon a gradual conformity to his spirit. But this man so long coming, is at length with us, not indeed in any precise fleshly limitations which shall justify us in saying—Lo here! or, Lo there!—but as a spirit diffusing itself among all hearts, and going on to the empire of the whole earth. He is no longer a merely finite corporeity, . . . he is a most living and present spirit, authenticated in all the forms of divine and multifarious Art, and by the whole strain of our nascent social science. (173)

This was James's vision of Fourierism when he translated Victor Hennequin's *Love in the Phalanstery*, a prophecy of the forthright pleasures of the new sexual order. In the phalanx, the "féate," a class of benevolent panderers, would make it their business to "bring together sympathetic natures, and make it their business to appreciate one another" (Hennequin 19). The young members of the "faquirate" would gladly satisfy the sexual needs of the elderly (19-20). The "pivotale" series—by Fourier's definition, the most important series for its historical epoch—was not fully elaborated: readers were discreetly referred to the analysis in *Quatre mouvements* of the "Method of union between the sexes in the seventh period." While Hennequin's subsequent celebration of the Harmonian "bacchante" made his meaning clear to the uninitiated (22-23), the relevant passage in Fourier makes it clear what degree of sexual license he, and his translator James, were advocating for the coming order:

A woman can simultaneously have: 1° a Husband with whom she has two children; 2° a Begetter with whom she only has one child; 3° a Favorite who has lived with her and retains the title; as well as some simple possessors, who are nothing before the law. This gradation of titles establishes a noble
courtesy and a great fidelity towards one's obligations. A woman can refuse the title of Begetter to a Favorite who has impregnated her; she can, in case of displeasure, also refuse a superior title to these assorted aspirants. Men will treat their diverse wives in similar fashion. This method completely prevents the hypocrisy that marriage engenders. (OC 1:125-126, my trans.)

Even more restraints were to be lifted in full Harmony: as Hennequin confirms, the seventh period is merely the "germ" of Harmonian sexual relations. In the unpublished Nouveau Monde amoreux, Fourier offhandedly predicted the eventual eradication of the ultimate taboo: "... [Harmonians] will proceed only by degrees in religious and moral innovations, such as incest for example, which might be offensive."

While less controversial, Hennequin's general defense of Fourierism was equally striking. He divided Fourier's theory into three parts: industrial association, a "poetic and stupendous cosmogony," and the sexual reforms (2). Before beginning his defense of the sexual reforms, Hennequin argued that neither they nor the cosmogony required a defense:

Certainly the advantages offered to the world by carrying out the principle of Industrial Association, are sufficiently great, without rendering it needful to inquire into the sidereal key, and the phanerogamic corporations . . . .

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189 Hennequin 22; cf. OC 1:125n.


191 Hennequin 4. Fourier had borrowed the botanical term "phanerogamic" to describe the open organization of love in a society (e.g., OC 6:424). The prefix phanero- means "obvious" (the reproductive organs of flowers are in plain sight); through its antonym, crypto-, it recalls the hypocrisy of sexual relations in "Civilization."
Nevertheless, Hennequin (as translated by James) went on to defend the cosmogony as an illustration of "the idea of the universal Life." Even though the cosmogony was not taught as part of Associationist doctrine, the recent discovery of the planet Le Verrier (Neptune) supported Fourier's theory that there were "gaps (lacunes) of our sideral key" waiting to be filled—in other words, that Neptune was a missing note in the harmonic chord of the solar system. Furthermore, Hennequin observed, recent experiments "confirm the celebrated hypothesis of the Boreal Crown" (4).

Of course, James the translator may not have agreed with every one of Hennequin's positions. But this translation was a strategic intervention in the public debate on Associationism, and in the ensuing mêlée, James did not contradict any of Hennequin's claims. Had James felt that the cosmogony could be easily refuted, then why would he have risked undermining his stated purpose, "to provoke the attention of honest minds to the truths involved in [Fourier's] views" (vi)? Furthermore, James had gone out of his way to defend Hempel, whose book had also insisted upon the reality of the Boreal Crown. How did James come to hold such bizarre views?

IV.

By his own account, his conversion to Fourierism was the indirect result of the pivotal event of his adult life, the
bizarre spiritual crisis he had undergone one afternoon in the spring of 1844. He recalled this episode decades later:

[H]aving eaten a comfortable dinner, I remained sitting at the table after the family had dispersed, idly gazing at the embers in the grate, thinking of nothing, and feeling only the exhilaration incident to a good digestion, when suddenly—in a lightning-flash as it were—"fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake." To all appearance it was a perfectly insane and abject terror, without ostensible cause, and only to be accounted for, to my perplexed imagination, by some damned shape squatting invisible to me within the precincts of the room, and raying out from his fetid personality influences fatal to life. The thing had not lasted ten seconds before I felt myself a wreck, that is, reduced from a state of firm, vigorous, joyful, manhood to one of almost helpless infancy. The only self-control I was capable of exerting was to keep my seat. I felt the greatest desire to run incontinently to the foot of the stairs and shout for help to my wife,—to run to the roadside even, and appeal to the public to protect me; but by an immense effort I controlled these frenzied impulses, and determined not to budge from my chair till I had recovered my lost self-possession. This purpose I held to for a good long hour, as I reckoned time, beat upon meanwhile by an ever-growing tempest of doubt, anxiety, and despair, with absolutely no relief from any truth I had ever encountered save a most pale and distant glimmer of the divine existence, when I resolved to abandon the vain struggle, and communicate without more ado what seemed my sudden burden of inmost, implacable unrest to my wife.

Now, to make a long story short, this ghastly condition of mind continued with me, with gradually lengthening intervals of relief, for two years, and even longer. (qtd. in Literary Remaings, 59-60)

This may seem like a typical nineteenth-century hysterical episode, but James's intuition of the "damned shape" is especially interesting. He had elsewhere hinted at a long and probably unsuccessful struggle to suppress his sexual desires, even suggesting that he had been deluded to think that his
wife would not "exhaust [his] capacity of desire." Habegger suggests that the beast was nothing other than the obsessively metaphysical James's monstrous carnality, projected and exorcised. The beast's "raying out" is itself a metaphor for projection; compare Judge Schreber's belief that "Rays of God" were mocking him for having fallen into sexual disgrace (qtd., SE 12:20). Whether James had actually had extramarital relations is less important than his obsession with them, as evidenced by his hyperactive defense of Love in the Phalanstery. Note further that at the onset of his crisis, James was immediately "reduced from a state of firm, vigorous, joyful, manhood," which sounds suspiciously like a definition of detumescence.

But James's impotence was not merely a function of his adult sexual experiences, for he found himself in "almost helpless infancy." Indeed, he responded as a baby might have, unsuccessfully struggling to suppress his desire to cry for the wife/mother, unsuccessfully struggling to control his own body. (James uses the word "incontinently" in an otherwise curious context.) This full-blown regression suggests the relevance of Chasseguet-Smirgel's interpretative framework:

192 Qtd., F 470; for James's hint at past sexual misconduct, see F 113n.

193 "The Lessons of the Father" 10-11. One might object that James, a relative newlywed, ex-seminarian, and self-conscious amputee, seems an unlikely candidate for the role of Casanova. Any sexual adventures most likely occurred during or soon after his dissolute days at Union College (cf. Habegger, F 83-100; see also 454-457).
1) "[T]he oedipal tragedy arises largely from the *chronological time-lag* that exists between the emergence of the boy’s desire for his mother and the attainment of his full genital capacity."

2) The small boy faces the "*perversion temptation*\textsuperscript{194} ... to accept pregenital desire and satisfactions ... as being equal, or even superior, to genital desires and satisfactions (attainable only by the father)."

3) Each adult also has a latent "*perversion core"* ("Perversion and the Universal Law" 293-294).

I would argue that prior to his crisis, James had succumbed to the so-called "*perversion temptation*"—which in James’s case was linked with the acceptance of pregenital satisfactions that were not manifestly sexual (to be explained presently). But James’s illusory satisfaction collapsed, precipitating his crisis—the temporary regression to the state of *Hilflösigkeit* (the term denotes not so much helplessness as his coming-to-awareness of this immaturity). He was forced, in other words, to "recognize the not-me," to cede "*narcissistic omnipotence*" by "[projecting it] on to the object, the infant’s first ego ideal" (\textit{EI} 6).

What omnipotence would the 32-year-old James have been ceding? Possibly that of his work-in-process, which had hubristically aimed, in the manner of Fourier and Swedenborg,\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{194}This unfortunate phrase muddles the clinical sense of perversion—a literal turning away from the normative path—with a moral overlay, as if the subject were always free to choose.
at nothing less than deciphering the Divine will: "[Circa 1841-1842] I had made an important discovery . . .; namely, that the book of Genesis . . . was an altogether mystical or symbolic record of the laws of God's spiritual creation" (qtd., Literary Remains 59) James's belief that the keys to the universe were embroidered into the narrative of the wanderings of Israel's patriarchs smacks of paranoia. So does James's 1843 letter to his former teacher, the physicist Joseph Henry, naively requesting the book that proves "the fundamental unity of the sciences" (qtd., E 204). James's grand delusion, his hyperrationalistic interpretation of God's plan, verse by painstaking verse, suggests that on the eve of his breakdown, he had not abandoned the illusion of narcissistic omnipotence. As Chasseguet-Smirgel observes,

[The future paranoid] has not been able to go through the phase of idealization of the father . . . necessary . . . [to] oedipal identifications . . . . [He will] idealize his own ego, this idealization representing the first fruits of his uncontrolled megalomania. (EI 121)

But James suddenly became aware of the futility of his project, a realization preserved in his later account: "... I had made an important discovery, as I fancied . . . .," which in turn seems to have precipitated his nervous breakdown.195 The young adult's infantile dreams of omnipotence were dashed.

Following Chasseguet-Smirgel's case study of August Strindberg, one which bears remarkable similarities to

195 Qtd., Literary Remains 58, emphasis added. Cf. EI 128.
James's, it would seem that James's subsequent attachment to Swedenborg was indeed a step on the road to recovery. It is relative progress, she suggests, to idealize a father figure, even a ludicrous "divine figure" idealized through "mystic paranoia," rather than to continue idealizing oneself (EI 121). One striking coincidence deserves attention: Swedenborg had succeeded in the very project at which James had failed. In the eight-volume Arcana coelestia, Swedenborg had deciphered the mystical sense of the Book of Genesis by linking Hebrew vowel sounds to correspondences in the spiritual world; for good measure, he translated the hieroglyphics of Exodus as well (Block 13, 23-30; Jonsson 138-143).

Chasseguet-Smirgel argues that such obsessively detailed anality is the mainspring of "mystic paranoia":

The wish to acquire a magic, autonomous phallus . . . is seemingly able to reverse the direction of anal persecution which tends to debase the world and render it fecal, transforming it into a 'hell of excrement'. This is the name given by Strindberg to the mad world in which he found himself during the time of his 'scientific' researches [in alchemy]. . . . The term 'hell of excrement' is borrowed from Swedenborg . . . . (EI 126, emphasis added)

Chasseguet-Smirgel argues that the paranoid must hide his fakery from himself—a process modelled, she postulates, on the idealized fecal penis (excrement gilded by the imagination).

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196See EI 95-146, "The Ego Ideal, Sublimation, and the Creative Process." In the mid-1890s, Strindberg had a nervous breakdown and suffered from hallucinations, studying both Swedenborg and alchemy during this period.
This phallus, the only adequate one at the infant male's disposal, tries to masquerade as superior to the genital penis. Furthermore, the fascination of this "fake" is analogous to the fascination of ideologies—in both, the hope for a quick reunification of ego and ego ideal is aroused. (For example, the boy's fantasy of instant sexual maturity is analogous to Fourier's fantasy of instant Harmony without a transitional Guarantist era.)

Swedenborg's "hell of excrement" is also the hell of carnal sexuality. Knowing well where Love's mansion was pitched, Swedenborg wanted a more fitting residence. Conjugial Love was based upon this very opposition: the magic pleasures of heavenly love are contrasted to the debased "Pleasures of Insanity as to Scortatory Love"—the adjective (from the Greek skōr, "dung") was introduced into English by Swedenborg's translators. In a defense of Love in the

197EI 114, 127. Note that these themes, the idealization of the fecal penis and the sexualization of the anus, refer back to the controversial central hypothesis of Schreber, that paranoia in males is symptomatic of repressed homosexual desire (SE 12:60).

198"Scortatory," OED (1st ed.); Block 49-50. Recalling Norman O. Brown's famous essay on Swift, I do not mean to imply that scatology in itself indicates madness. In fact, Swift's excremental vision cannot repress the truth, as when the young lover Cassinus realizes his beloved Caelia falls short of the Platonic ideal:

Nor wonder how I lost my Wits;
Oh! Caelia, Caelia Caelia sh—. (gtd., 189)

This de-idealization (gold turning to excrement) is the inverse of Swedenborg's idealization (Brown 179-201). Note, incidentally, that Brown's "Studies in Anality" are immediately followed by "The Way Out," his call for a mystical utopian solution to our world's problems. Brown even summons
Phalanstery in the penultimate issue of The Harbinger, James discussed "scortatory love," correctly noting that Swedenborg expressly had not equated it with fornication, concubinage, and "the milder forms of adultery." In fact, James concluded, Fourier's reforms would do away with the one thing—"deliberate adultery"—that Swedenborg had rejected ("Reply to A.E.F.'s Article of last week" 107). The very ferocity of James's, Hennequin's, and, of course, Fourier's diatribes against the multitudinous sins of "Civilization" is an index of their desire to "destro[y] reality, thereby creating a new one, that of the anal universe where all differences are abolished" ("Perversion" 294). Unlike Sade, Chasseguet-Smirgel's subject in this essay, the universe of Fourier and Swedenborg is that of the idealized fecal penis—not dreck, but gilded dreck. In Fourier's Harmony, 'shit' itself no longer exists: excrement has become a golden plaything for the Little Hordes. Further, Chasseguet-Smirgel postulates that arguments equating good and evil have the same underlying goal: "to reduce the universe to faeces" through the annihilation of genital difference and its replacement by the homogeneity of the anal universe ("Perversion" 295). James himself had made this equation in his review of "Davis's Revelations" Revealed, as had Hempel in True Organization of the New Church.

Granted, a case based on this parallel alone would be a slender branch on which to hang such a heavy Freudian weight.

Fourier as an exemplar for this project (318)
But Habegger has already shown, and rightly emphasized, that James, like Swedenborg, played on the same opposition of the heavenly and the excremental. For example, one of James's arguments for socialism was that human nobility resided only in the shared nature of the race. Since "the subjective element, the personal element" is impure, he argued, we must "defecate ourselves of private or subjective ambition" (qtd., F 181-182). Habegger claims (rightly, I believe) that this is the arcane etymological significance of Swedenborg's vastation: in voiding lustful waste, James "had defecated himself." 199

After Sophia Chichester had diagnosed the "vastation," James's cure began the very moment he began to study Swedenborg's books:

I read from the first with palpitating interest. My heart divined, even before my intelligence was prepared to do justice to the books, the unequalled amount of truth to be found in them. Imagine a fever patient, sufficiently restored of his malady to be able to think of something beside himself, suddenly transported where the free airs of heaven blow upon him . . . and you have a feeble image of my delight in reading. Or, better still, imagine a subject of some petty despotism condemned to die, and with (what is more and worse) a sentiment of death pervading all his consciousness, lifted by a sudden miracle into felt harmony with universal man, and filled to the brim with the sentiment of indestructible life instead; and you will have a true picture of my emancipated condition. (qtd. in Literary Remains, 66-67)

199F 232-233. In an unpublished review, James would later criticize Whitman's sensual poetry as "stercoracious" (qtd., Father 343-344).
However one classifies Swedenborg's writings themselves, James's first readings in them obviously precipitated a conversion experience, a reaction that, by his own account, had little to do with their manifest content. Furthermore, judging from Mary James's account, Henry Sr. may have had a second such emotional experience upon reading Fourier. (Recall that Brisbane was similarly overwhelmed by his first encounter with Fourier's writings [Fellman 6].)

Fortunately for James and for American literary history, his near-total immersion in this fantasy world was relatively brief. But even if one is not completely convinced by Chasseguet-Smirgel—I must admit I harbor reservations—her model suggests what Swedenborg, and later Fourier, had to offer James. The omniscience that he had failed to achieve on his own was attained in a roundabout fashion: first by projection onto Swedenborg (later Fourier), the new ego ideal; then by identification with his new hero. Through Swedenborgianized Fourierism, James straddled the cosmos.
CHAPTER 7
MARGARET FULLER, PRAGMATIC FOURIERIST

Throughout the 1840s, Fuller travelled in Fourierist circles. Her close friends in the movement included William H. Channing, Marcus and Rebecca Spring of the North American Phalanx, and Sarah Shaw, whose husband Francis industriously translated French socialist literature to further the cause. In more than twenty months on the Tribune staff, she developed a close friendship with her employer Greeley; her articles filled the space formerly occupied by Brisbane's column. Later, as the Tribune's European correspondent, she would meet Hugh Doherty and Garth Wilkinson in London; she later associated with Victor Considerant, Clarisse Vigoreux, and Doherty in Paris. Socialism played a prominent role in her Tribune dispatches; by the end of 1847, she argued that America's future rested in "voluntary association" (qtd., L. Reynolds).

200 Here are representative snippets from Fuller's correspondence: "I hear much of Frank [Francis G. Shaw] in Fourierite Association" (Fuller to Sarah Shaw, 25 Feb. 1845, LMF 4:51). "My dear Marcus . . . . I have become an enthusiastic Socialist; elsewhere is no comfort, no solution for the problems of the times" (Fuller to Marcus and Rebecca Buffum Spring, 12 Dec. 1849, LMF 5:295).

201 Fuller to Evert A. Duyckinck, 30 Oct. 1846, LMF 4:235; L. Reynolds 60.
Reynolds 65). By May 1848, she was declaring herself "as great an Associationist as W. Channing himself, that is to say as firm a believer that the next form society will take . . . will be voluntary association in small communities." In the same letter, Fuller even contemplated writing a book on Associationism; it is conceivable that portions were incorporated into her lost history of the Italian Revolution. Like Marx and Engels, she had little use for orthodox Fourierists, but she celebrated the socialist’s grand vision:

I see the future dawning; it is in important aspects Fourier’s future. But I like no Fourierites; they are terribly wearisome here in Europe; the tide of things does not wash through them as violently as with us, and they have time to run in the tread-mill of system. Still, they serve this great future which I shall not live to see. I must be born again. (Fuller to W. H. Channing, 7 May 1847, LMF 4:271)

In previous chapters, I argued that Brownson’s and Emerson’s grappling with Fourier had been unduly neglected, and that the extent of Fourier’s influence on the elder James had not been uncovered until Habegger’s recent work. But a similar charge cannot be levelled against contemporary studies of Fuller: Bell Gale Chevigny, Christina Zwarg, and Reynolds, among others, have all emphasized Fourier’s influence. Chevigny, a self-described Marxist-feminist (xix), is understandably interested in Fourier’s influence as a "pioneering radical feminist"; she further speculates that Fuller, as a result of her experiences in Europe, "wanted and

\[\text{Fuller to Mary Rotch, 29 May 1848, LMF 5:71.}\]
increasingly needed to accept a system of values similar to Fourierism (383). It is well known that Fuller's reading of Fourier in fall of 1844 had a profound influence on the final form of Woman in the Nineteenth Century (Urbanski 57). As we shall see presently, Zwarg's "Footnoting the Sublime" has established an even earlier date for Fourier's influence on Fuller. In a separate study of Fuller's writings for Greeley's Tribune, Zwarg praises them as an engaged cultural criticism that is nevertheless sensitive to aesthetic perspectives. She argues that Fuller's journalism was "dedicated to the 'transitional' state of the culture"; that its seeming incoherence was the result of Fuller's ambitious attempt to report on the "multiple fronts" of cultural change, a project inspired in part by Fourier's totalizing worldview. Two forthcoming studies will shed more light on Fuller's involvement with Fourier: Zwarg's Feminist Conversations (Cornell UP, 1995), and, doubtless, the second volume of Charles Capper's excellent biography.

Given all this scholarly attention, it is ironic that Fuller had much less to say about Fourier than had Brownson,

203 "Reading Before Marx" 232-234. Zwarg may overreach when she proceeds to draw comparisons between Fourier's cultural criticism and that of the two historians of the Risorgimento, Fuller and Antonio Gramsci. Fourier believed his social science marked the end of ideology, a less supple formulation than the Gramscian "return to ideology."

204 I regret not having the opportunity to consult the recently-published final volume of Robert N. Hudspeth's Letters of Margaret Fuller.
Emerson, or James. Then again, the evolution of her attitude towards Fourierist socialism followed a radically different trajectory. Like Emerson—indeed, before Emerson—she had expressed her disdain for Brisbane's communitarian pipe dreams. As Guarneri observes, however, Fuller eventually came to have more faith in Fourierism than some Fourierists. While Brisbane dismissed the revolutions of 1848 as superficially political, she insisted upon their socialist identity (Guarneri 489n19). It is particularly interesting that Fuller's early interest in Fourier's visionary metaphysics led to her eventual advocacy of a socialist praxis influenced by Fourierism.

As with Emerson, Fuller's first mention of Fourierism was accompanied by her supercilious dismissal. In an 1840 letter, probably to William H. Channing, Fuller painted a picture of her ideal community, far more pleasant and natural than the one proposed by "your Mr Brisbane":

> A few friends should wander along a little stream like this, seeking the homesteads. Some should be farmers, some woodmen, others bakers, millers &c By land they should carry to one another the commoditie[s] on the river they should meet solely for society. At sunset many of course would be out in their boats, but they would love the hour too much ever to disturb one another. . . . When we wished to have merely playful chat, or talk on politics or social reform, we would gather in the mill, and arrange those affairs while grinding the corn. What a happy place for children to grow up in! Would it not suit little _____ to go to school to the cardinal flowers in her boat, beneath the great oak-tree? I think she would learn more than in a phalanx of juvenile florists. . . . Can
we not people the banks of some such affectionate little stream? I distrust ambitious plans, such as Phalansterian organizations! (LMF 2:179-180)

Fuller went on to wish George Ripley and like-minded social reformers success in their attempts to "throw off a part, at least, of these terrible weights of the social contract." But these good wishes were embedded in a quintessentially Emersonian confession: "I do not feel the same interest in these plans . . . ."205 Channing himself was still a "confirmed Socialist" at the time he co-edited the Memoirs; therefore, he would have been inclined to enlist her memory in his camp to the fullest extent possible. In discussing her visits to Brook Farm, Channing allowed that Fuller had had a "catholic sympathy" for the movement and a general faith in the advent of "Harmony." But he conceded that she had found Fourier's "organization by 'Groups and Series'" too mechanical: "[A]t this period, Margaret was in spirit and in thought preeminently a Transcendentalist" (MemoMF 79-80). Just as Emerson had once wryly advocated "Concord Socialism" for individualists, Fuller mused in her journals about "an association, if not of efforts, yet of destinies," and

205 LMF 2:180. Fuller's familiarity with such an amusing detail as the "phalanx of juvenile florists" suggests that Brisbane had already begun his propaganda campaign. Social Destiny of Man had been published on 15 September 1840, while Hudspeth has tentatively dated Fuller's letter a mere six weeks later (Bestor, "Albert Brisbane" 150). Fuller's parallel dismissal of Brisbane and Ripley, in conjunction with the latter's October 1840 Dial review of Brisbane's book, further suggests that the Fourierist influence upon Ripley's initials plans for the "Transcendentalist" Brook Farm may be greater than previously acknowledged.
declared, "It is a constellation, not a phalanx, to which I belong" (MemoMF 73).

Apparently it took years for Fuller to develop her appreciation for Fourier; she agreed with Emerson that Greeley and Brisbane were "dim New Yorkers" (17? Mar. 1842, LMF 3:52). And after the December 1843 Fourier convention, Fuller complained to her "Aunt" Mary Rotch about the public's anti-intellectualism:

The Boston people are eager as usual after this and that, music and Fourier conventions,—lectures excite less interest now; there are such hordes of dullards in that field; it is almost as bad as the church. (21 Jan. 1844, LMF 3:170)

Even so, as Hudspeth notes, Fuller was curious enough to read Fourier for herself. She almost certainly met Brisbane, who had remained in Boston after the convention, for on January 28, she would write to Brownson to ask for Brisbane's copy of an unspecified volume of Fourier.206

The earliest evidence for Fuller's reading in and reevaluation of Fourier appeared soon afterwards. The venue for her appropriation of Fourier's metaphysics of the "aromal" was most unlikely—the "Wisconsin" chapter of Summer on the Lakes, in 1843, published in May 1844. As Zwarg argues in "Footnoting the Sublime," Fuller's Western trip had heightened her consciousness of the American Indian's plight, and Fourier provided a convenient theoretical framework. Fuller may have

206 Guarneri 232; LMF 3:174; Brisbane to Brownson, [1844?], Brownson Papers.
lifted Fourier's argument from the *Théorie de l'unité universelle* that the savage has a more restricted life than the civilizee, yet in many respects a more enjoyable one.\textsuperscript{207} Her thinking through of Fourier's historicization of racial subordination, Zwarg suggests, may have led her to his similar critique of gender subordination.

Whatever her train of thought, her linkage of Association with woman's freedom led to "a productive disagreement with Emerson on the question of agency and social change." But, given the relevance and moral urgency of the concerns she raised elsewhere in *Summer on the Lakes*, a debate over the merits of Justinus Kerner's *Die Seherin von Prevorst*, the biography of a young clairvoyant, does not seem like the most likely forum for a discussion of Fourier. But Andrew Jackson Davis would later make the same connection, praising the young seeress as the most important teacher in German history—greater than Luther and Calvin—just as Fourier was far and away the greatest teacher produced by the French (Davis 584, 585).

As we have already seen in Chapter 5, Fuller argued for the willingness to risk belief in clairvoyance through the allegorical character "Free Hope," who in turns cites a wise man's advice: "I have lived too long, and seen too much to be

\textsuperscript{207}Zwarg, "Footnoting"; see OC 3:163-177, the second volume of *TUU*, misidentified in "Footnoting" as the third volume.
incrédulosity.\textsuperscript{208} In fact, "Free Hope" invokes Fourier to explain clairvoyance's scientific basis, explaining that the mind of the poetic dreamer "stretches of itself into what the French sage calls the 'aromal state'" (SL 146). Compare the following passage from Fourier's disquisition, immediately after his outline of "sensual relations between the planets" on "the many other pleasures [jouissances] of the dead, whom we must call ultra-mondain beings, people more alive than we are," and their occasional relations with mere terrestrials (OC 3:333):

\begin{quote}
Vision. One finds an ultra-human faculty among some of the magnetized and somnambulists, who see without the aid of their eyes . . . . It is . . . . a faculty borrowed from those in the other life, where the exercise of the five senses is different than it is here; they are still the same five senses, but with a perfection immensely superior to those of human faculties. One could prove, while on the subject of the aromal movement, that the food of the ultra-mondains and that of the great planetary bodies is at least twenty times more varied and more refined than that of our gastronomes. (OC 3:337, my trans.)
\end{quote}

And so on—bizarre as Fourier's elaboration is, versions of its underlying cosmogony were circulating in Napoleonic France, available through Mesmer, Restif de la Bretonne, or Swedenborg.\textsuperscript{209} In any case, the only other passage on magnetism indexed in Silberling's \textit{Dictionnaire de sociologie}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{208}SL 147; rather than cannibalize Zwarg's essay, I would refer the reader to "Footnoting" 629-634.
\item \textsuperscript{209}On Mesmer's possible influence on Fourier, see Zwarg, "Footnoting" 632; on the Restif-Fourier connection, see Poster 132-138; Viatte 263-268.
\end{itemize}
phalanstérienne is found in the *Nouveau Monde industriel*, which Fuller did not read until several months later. Thus, as Zwarg conjectures, she almost certainly read *OC* 3, possibly the very volume of Fourier that Fuller had borrowed from Brisbane via Brownson. Consider how striking Fuller’s response was: after rejecting Brisbane’s "ambitious plans" for communitarian socialism, she tentatively endorsed Fourier’s infinitely more ambitious plan for interstellar communitarianism.

This Fourierist arcana interested Fuller enough that she referred to it again, albeit more obliquely, in the opening paragraphs of *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, in her call for man "to be a student of, and servant to, the universe-spirit; and king of his planet, that as an angelic minister, he may bring it into conscious harmony with the law of that spirit." This flighty rhetoric is also Fourierist doctrine, possibly gleaned from conversations with Brisbane (cf. *SDM* 239, 244), from the *Théorie de l'unité universelle*, or even from her reading of the *Nouveau Monde industriel*, which argued that "planetary worlds" were "the most immense creatures" (*OC* 6:372). But there is a crucial distinction to be made between Fuller’s appropriation of Fourierist

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210 *W19C* 247. Jeffrey Steele correctly identifies the reference; his gloss, however, is skewed by a typical materialist misreading: "Fuller adds a psychological concept to [Harmony] by using the term to refer to an ideal state in which the different facets of a person’s being are in balance" (*EssMF* 452n5).
metaphysical jargon and the interest evinced by others in the Transcendentalist circle towards that metaphysics. For her, such arcana were neither a subject for derision (as they were for Hawthorne, Brownson, and the Emerson of the 1844 Essays) nor obsession (for Emerson in his Swedenborgian moods and James). She was simply interested in visionary Fourierism. Her only criticisms of Fourier in Woman in the Nineteenth Century were holistic: the Frenchman was "a stranger to the highest experiences" and had put too much faith in institutional reform (a judgment she would later revise). But she found Fourier a useful corrective to Goethe's overemphasis on self-culture, and she saluted both men as romantic synthesizers, kindred spirits (W19C 314-315).

Of course, Fuller also had more down-to-earth reasons for appreciating Fourier, in particular, his critique of civilization from a feminist perspective. Since Fourier's amorous corporations often remind one not so much of sexual freedom, but of an adolescent boy's fantasy of sexual freedom, "feminist" may not be the first word that springs to one's mind. Faiza Blashak, for example, has called Le Nouveau Monde amoreux a "phallocentric utopi[a]" which "aim[s] at the

211 Granted, in light of Emerson's 11 April 1844 letter to Fuller—see Chapter 5—the provisional advocacy of "Free Hope" may well have been based on an earlier letter from Fuller, but the creation of the allegorical character insulated her from direct public endorsement of the aromal.
subjugation of the feminine."²¹² A just observation, and yet a problematic one, for it had been Fourier himself who had coined the word "féminisme"!²¹³

True, the word did not migrate to English for another half-century, and it is unlikely that Fuller encountered it in Paris. But Fourier’s signal contribution to feminist theory is generally acknowledged. As early as Quatre mouvements, he had argued that the rights each society accorded to women were the most reliable barometer of that society’s level of

²¹² In the abstract of Blashak’s dissertation (unfortunately unavailable via interlibrary loan).

²¹³ Goldstein 92n10, Altman 291n1. Today’s numerous anti-feminists might be tempted to emulate Dühring and Daniel Bell. Just as these two exploited Fourier’s status as ur-socialist in an attempt to portray socialism as irrational, others might similarly dismiss feminism as having been "invented" by a crackpot, passing silently over earlier feet-on-the-ground feminists (e.g., Wollstonecraft). And since Fourier was also the first to use "science sociale" in its modern sense (see Shapiro), should the social sciences also be abolished?

Also, Blashak’s characterization calls to mind an interesting parallel. French feminists of the 1970s were made uncomfortable by their white fathers Derrida and Lacan, their theoretical presence a reminder that the patriarchy had not been escaped (Jardine). For similar reasons, some feminists might find the recognition of Fourier’s proto-feminism strategically undesirable. Blashak’s abstract valorizes "Cixous’ vision of a lesbian utopia" as "a strategic alternative to the phallocentric conditions that still operate today"; so far, no problem. But the valorization is at the expense of Fourier’s utopia, one in which the "unconscious lesbian" would become conscious of her desires (qtd., Beecher 238). To be fair, Fourier the self-described "Sapphianist or a protector of lesbians" (qtd., Manuel and Manuel 675) can also be seen a vicarious (albeit presumably passive) exploiter of lesbians.
advancement. Furthermore, he had insisted that the extension of these rights was the most effective agent of social progress. Just as Marx believed that the liberation of the proletariat would bring about a transitional phase that would lead to the communist utopia, Fourier argued that women's liberation would signal the dawn of Guarantism, the transitional state between Civilization and Harmony:

As a general thesis: Social progress and transformations of Period occur as a result of the progress of women towards liberty, and declines in the social Order occur as a result of a decrease in the liberty of women. Other events influence these political vicissitudes, but no other cause produces social progress or decline so rapidly. As I have already said, the adoption of closed seraglios would quickly transform us into Barbarians, and the opening of the seraglios would suffice to bring the Barbarians into Civilization. To summarize: the extension of women's privileges is the general principle of all social progress. (OC 1:132-133)

Indeed, this principle is restated in the preface to Woman in the Nineteenth Century: "I believe that the development of [man] cannot be effected without that of [woman]" (W19C 245). This sentiment had been anticipated by the Brook Farmer Marianne Dwight, who after some comments on Fourier, advised her friend Anna Parsons to "[t]ake a spiritual view of the matter":

Raise woman to be the equal of man, and what intellectual developments may we not expect? How

214 Fourier detested the fourth historical era, the "patriarchal," even more than the cruel "Civilization" of his day. He was grateful that its remnants were found in only a few isolated corners of the globe and among the "Jewish sect" (OC 3:52).
the whole aspect of society will be changed! And this is the great work, is it not, that Association in its present early stage has to do? (Dwight to Anna Parsons, qtd., Sams 122)

In order to bring this equality about, Fuller borrowed Fourier's formula for the workplace: one-third of all positions in "masculine pursuits" should be allocated to women who desire them, just as one-third of all "feminine" duties were reserved for men (W19C 346)

Woman’s equality would also require a retooling of the marital institution, Fourier argued. His "amorous corporations" called for two fundamental reforms: first, the recognition of women's "amorous majority" at age 18, "emancipating them . . . from the humiliation of being put up for sale, and being obliged to do without men until some unknown comes to buy them and marry them" (OC 1:133). He argued that the current marital system, in which the economic interest of other parties played a far greater role in picking a mate than the woman's own desires, forced young girls to disguise their conduct with a "varnish of chastity," inevitably resulting in "universal Cuckoldry" (OC 1:137, 135).

Such passages may well have been Fuller's inspiration for a recurring argument in Woman: prostitutes are not depraved, but the products of a depraved society.

Fuller's evolution from the Fourier-influenced feminism of Woman to the socialism of the Tribune dispatches seems natural enough: a movement from one critique of domination to another.
But why was she first interested in Fourier's visionary doctrine of the aromal? One possible answer is suggested by Ednah Dow Littlehale Cheney's description of the effect that Fuller's Conversations had had on her:

I found myself in a new world of thought; a flood of light irradiated all that I had seen in nature, observed in life, or read in books. Whatever she spoke of revealed a hidden meaning, and everything seemed to be put into true relation. Perhaps I could best express it by saying that I was no longer the limitation of myself, but I felt that the whole wealth of the universe was opened to me. (qtd., Capper 305-306)

Within this typically Romantic rhetoric one detects the oceanic feeling once again, the description of the subject's loss of ego boundaries and expansion into the universe. If the irrationalism of the Conversations had opened new vistas for Cheney, then the irrationalism of Fourier's aromal may have offered similar experiences to Fuller.

This is not to say that Fuller was convinced that the "aromal state" explained the phenomena of clairvoyance and mesmerism. Her interest in mesmerism during this period is well-known: she even received regular mesmeric treatments in the spring of 1845 (Stoehr 216-217). Yet her interest in these pseudosciences might better be seen as mere flirtations with irrationality. As "Free Hope" responded to the Emersonian "Self-Poise,"

To me it seems that it is madder never to abandon oneself, than often to be infatuated; better to be wounded, a captive, and a slave, than always to walk in armor. As to magnetism, that is only a matter of fancy. You sometimes need just such a field in which to wander vagrant . . . . (SL 148)
Fuller was not espousing the Fourierist arcana or vouching for the authenticity of *Die Seherin von Prevorst*; rather, she simply found them interesting fields to wander in.

Fuller's male counterparts were more uptight in their responses to visionary Fourierism: Brownson had to damn it, Emerson had to dissect it relentlessly, and poor James adopted it as one of his creeds. The romantic synthesizer Fuller simply saw Fourier as a kindred spirit; she was not obsessed by the details. Hyper-intellectual that she was, Fuller nevertheless realized that an intellectual response to visionary Fourierism was inappropriate—a point that was largely lost on her male friends.

Furthermore, keeping in mind that Chasseguet-Smirgel (after Freud) diagnoses paranoia as a male disease, it is interesting to compare Fuller's attitude towards sexual liberation with that of her male counterparts. Her erotic life was largely compressed into the last five years of her life: her affair with James Nathan, her pursuit of the young Associationist Thomas Hicks\(^{215}\), and of course her relationship with Ossoli, only legally formalized after the birth of Angelo (Deiss 292-293). But Emerson struggled to repress the obvious truth about her life, as in this well-known journal entry made while he was co-editing Fuller's memoirs:

\(\text{\textsuperscript{215}}\)On Hicks, see Chevigny 423-424, LMF 4:307, and LMF 5:66—an ardent letter replete with Fourierist rhetoric.
Marriage
W.H.C[hanning] fancied that M had not married: that a legal tie was contrary to her view of a noble life. I, on the contrary, believed that she would speculate on this subject as all reformers do; but when it came to be a practical question to herself, she would feel that this was a tie which ought to have every solemnest sanction; that against the theorist was a vast public opinion, too vast to brave; an opinion of all nations & of all ages. (JMN 11:463)

Emerson's repression, similar to his repression of Caroline Sturgis's carnal desires, may have been motivated by a greater concern than propriety. As we saw, members of the Transcendentalist circle felt the attraction of free love, even Emerson. Yet the men had a vested interest in holding on to the patriarchal structure, unlike Fuller, who insisted upon the necessity of institutional change. Possibly these men worked out a psychic compromise. In their heads, they enjoyed the erotic fantasy of free love, as well as universal socialism, eros in the larger sense. For this purpose, the repressed Transcendentalists could have picked no better masters than Swedenborg and Fourier, the masters of intellectualizing sexual experience. (Depending on the nature of Fourier's "saphianism," it is even possible that both men died virgins.) But in the world outside the psyche, the men in the Transcendentalist circle struggled to hold on to their patriarchal privileges. For example, James's 1852 renunciation of free love was accompanied by a reactionary anti-feminism which held, in Habegger's characterization, that "woman is subservient, secondary, and inferior to man," and
marriage was based on a doctrine of force, "antediluvian brutality" (F 333, 334). From this reactionary point of view, then, Fuller's personal life had to be misrepresented. For her was substituted the lifeless Zenobia, the abstract theoretician, the crystal removed from life.
"Mysterious creature . . . I would know who and what you are!"

—Theodore to the Veiled Lady in Zenobia’s tale, "not exactly a ghost-story."

As theoreticians or witnesses, spectators, observers, and intellectuals, scholars believe that looking is sufficient. Therefore, they are not always in the most competent position to do what is necessary: speak to the specter. Herein lies perhaps, among so many others, an indelible lesson of Marxism.

—Derrida, Specters of Marx

I do I do I do I do believe in spooks!

—Bert Lahr as the Cowardly Lion

I.

By way of preface: several years ago, in the wake of the revelations concerning Paul de Man’s collaborationist past, we saw a spate of Op-Ed columns equating deconstruction with nihilism and attacking it as the ground (or rather un-ground) for many political positions of the contemporary Left. To my mind, most of these attacks can only be characterized as
shallow; nevertheless, I would not recommend Jacques Derrida as a suitable role model for the progressive. Not that deconstruction is politically irrelevant; neither, however, is it relevant in any simple way—other interventions may be far more effective. I also doubt deconstruction's political efficacy because of an "emperor's new clothes" conspiracy among some of its acolytes. Granted, Derrida's wildness may itself be relentlessly rigorous. But there are relatively few initiates who can follow its chief practictioner's logical and rhetorical threads; the rest of us must feign comprehension. This problem has been recognized and addressed at an institutional level, for an easily digestible alternative "Derrida" was concocted for American palates. As Nealon notes acerbically, "Derrida's writings were and still are, for the most part, scrupulously avoided in introductory courses because of their complexity and difficulty—or so the story goes" (27). Even as the wacky Frenchman's thought was gutted in America, no one complained very loudly (Nealon 45-49). Had Fourier still been alive in the 1840s, he would not have hesitated to correct his pragmatic American disciples. But in several other respects, the Fourier / Derrida parallels, or, more aptly, the parallels between their respective audiences, are amusingly close.

Having said that, and having registered my global doubts as to poststructuralism's political utility, I would like to place the preceding paragraph sous rature. For Derrida's
Specters of Marx (trans. 1994) drives its paradoxical point home relentlessly, and, at times, with uncharacteristic clarity: the death of Marxism, he argues, has made Marx more relevant than ever. Marx, who haunts our age like the ghost of Hamlet's father, demanding decisive action in a time out of joint. (We might add that our time, according to the Frankfurt School's pessimists, is one in which decisive action is no longer possible. Even more depressing: given Marxism's track record, this impotence is a blessing.)

In asking, "What is the effectivity or the presence of a specter, that is, of what seems to remain as ineffective, virtual, insubstantial as a simulacrum?" (10), Derrida conjures up several oppositions. Ghosts are present and yet absent: they return from the dead, perhaps retaining their appearance, but they do not return in the flesh. Present again (as the thing itself), but also present for the first time (as its simulacrum):

Repetition and first time, but also repetition and last time, since the singularity of any first time makes of it also a last time. Each time is the event itself, a first time is a last time. Each time it is the event itself, a first time is a last time. Altogether other. Staging for the end of history. Let us call it a hauntology. (10)

The pun is too good not to be taken seriously, which Derrida proceeds to do, tracing Marx's fascination with the trope of the specter. In The German Ideology, this fascination verges on obsession: throughout, he and Engels rail against the tendency to "make religious illusion the driving force of
history" (MECW 5:55). The centerpiece of the manuscript is Marx's "Saint Max," a 334-page tirade against the Young Hegelian Max Stirner, which begins with an exposé of Stirner's ideological "conjuring tricks" (5:119-129). Later, under the subheading "The Possessed (Impure History of Spirits)," Marx argued that Stirner had given his readers "instruction in the art of ghost-seeing" (5:152). Most spectacularly, under the sub-subheading "The Apparition," Marx seeks to demolish Stirner's narrative of human history as a watered-down Hegelian procession of "various kinds of spectres passing before us one after another": God, essence, the God-Man, man, the national spirit, and "everything" (5:157-159). After performing a historical materialist exorcism, Marx concludes:

[S]ince Saint Max shares the belief of all critical speculative philosophers of modern times that thoughts, which have become independent, objectified thoughts—ghosts—have ruled the world and continue to rule it, and that all history up to now was the history of theology, nothing more, nothing could be easier for him than to transform history into a history of ghosts. (5:160)

And so on, for almost three hundred pages more.

Derrida suggests that "[o]ne might read the whole German Ideology . . . as the inexhaustible gloss on this table of ghosts," comparing this "tableau of spirits" to a "[séance table that] begins to dance before our eyes, like a certain 'table' in Capital which we will later see move, when its becoming-commodity opens up the dimension of secrecy, mysticism, and fetishism" (142). To this extent, Marx’s motivation is not difficult to fathom: one can exorcize the
ghost by demonstrating that its appearance, its "prosthetic body" is itself nothing more than "a ghost of spirit, nothing more than a ghost of the ghost." By analogy, "[t]he theory of ideology depends . . . on this theory of the ghost" (126-127). Yet Derrida also notes that Marx's "rage" seems out of proportion to its object, so much so that he seems "captivate[d]" by his "prey":

My feeling . . . is that Marx scares himself [se fait peur], he himself pursues [s'acharne lui-même] relentlessly someone who almost resembles him to the point that we could mistake one for the other: a brother, a double, thus a diabolical image. A kind of ghost of himself. Whom he would like to distance, distinguish: to oppose. He has recognized someone who, like him, appears obsessed by ghosts and by the figure of the ghost and by its names with their troubling consonance and reference . . . . Now, Stirner talked about all this before [Marx] did, and at such great length, which is even more intolerable. In the sense given to this word in hunting, he poached the specters of Marx. (139-140)

There was yet another reason to be sensitive: the best-known of these specters was not on Stirner's list, not a revenant from the pre-Hegelian past, but a portent of things to come, one for whose incorporation Marx himself bears responsibility. The Manifesto opens, "A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of Communism." To be exact, the haunting specter was not actually-existing communism, but the communist potential feared by the crowned heads of Europe; nevertheless, the distinction can be fine, for a revolution can turn into "a parody of the specter itself"—after June 1848, as Derrida points out, a newspaper named The Red Specter surfaced, then
later a revolutionary group with the same name (116, 188n9).

One might add that as suggested in the preceding chapters, Fourier, the prophet of ultra-mondian life, had created ghosts of his own. Like Marx and like countless others in the nineteenth century, Nathaniel Hawthorne was acutely sensitive to socialism's supposed links to the spirit world. Is the Blithedale community a parody of the Veiled Lady, "endow[ed]," perhaps, "with many of the privileges of a disembodied spirit"? (N 636) Does it both "announc[e] and cal[l] for a presence to come"—that is, socialism? After the community's failure, how does Blithedale signify "the presence of a persistent past"? (Derrida 101) And, keeping in mind Zenobia's curse on Hollingsworth and its fulfillment—"Tell him that I'll haunt him!" (N 829, 844)—is it a friendly spirit?

Hawthorne's The Blithedale Romance (1852) is of course the best-known response to Fourierism in the American canon. When narrator Miles Coverdale reminisces about the community years after its demise, he still regrets Blithedale's dissolution, in spite of Zenobia's suicide and his own disillusionment. For the community had been based upon such a promising plan, the "beautiful scheme of a noble and unselfish life":

More and more, I feel that we had struck upon what ought to be a truth. Posterity may dig it up, and profit by it. The experiment, so far as its original projectors were concerned, proved long ago
a failure, first lapsing into Fourierism, and dying, as it well deserved, for this infidelity to its own higher spirit. Where once we toiled with our whole hopeful hearts, the town-paupers, aged, nerveless, and disconsolate, creep sluggishly afield. Alas, what faith is requisite to bear up against such results of generous effort! (N 846)

Several generations of critics have devalued Blithedale for its thesis-driven didacticism. Indeed, this passage supports the romance's central argument, that veils are ineffective in the long run. Just as a Veiled Lady's identity—her essential nature—cannot be concealed forever, none of the major characters is able to maintain his or her façade indefinitely. It is thematically fitting that this passage reveals the Blithedale community's true identity. Brook Farm's "infidelity to its own higher spirit" was the same as Blithedale's: Fourierism represented its descent from the transcendent (ghostly) realm to the material. Furthermore, Coverdale's revelation is accompanied by a devaluation. Some of his youthful idealism may remain, as indicated by his comment that Blithedale could have succeeded had it remained faithful to its "noble and unselfish" original principles, rather than base and selfish Fourierism. But Coverdale's condemnation of Fourierism is not accompanied by faith in other forms of socialism. Rather, he feels that the Blithedalers "had struck upon what ought to be a truth," implying that socialism is just a dream, and that Blithedale's lesson to posterity will be a negative one.
Intentional fallacy notwithstanding, Coverdale's opinion of socialism is close to Hawthorne's. In the Preface, the author specifically denied passing judgment on Brook Farm, insisting that the fictional community had only a tenuous relationship to West Roxbury and, further, that he did not "put forward the slightest intentions to illustrate a theory, or elicit a conclusion, favorable or otherwise, in respect to Socialism." But just as Margaret Fuller's appearance at Blithedale only heightens our suspicions about Zenobia's identity, we should be equally suspicious of the author's claim not to be passing judgment on Brook Farm. Indeed, Hawthorne immediately undercut this claim when he argued that a socialist community was the ideal setting for an American romance because it is the nation's closest approximation to a "Faery Land" with "a suitable remoteness" and "an atmosphere of strange enchantment" (N 633). It is precisely Hawthorne's loss of faith in utopian socialism—familiar enough not to need rehearsal here—that enabled him to transform Brook Farm into "the most romantic episode in [the Author's] own life—essentially a day-dream, and yet a fact—and thus offering an available foothold between fiction and reality" (N 634). Hawthorne's formulation insists upon socialism's halfimaginary status. Compare his famous recipe for romance in "The Custom-House" preface to The Scarlet Letter, the ode to moonlight and its power to transform a familiar room into a "neutral territory" outside of space and time (N 149). This
is also a recipe for utopia. The imagined community (utopia) can never be actualized; the ghosts of the romance will never be anything but ghosts.

Hollingsworth, after listening to Coverdale’s translation of a passage from Fourier, unequivocally condemned Fourierism for being based upon "the selfish principle—the principle of all human wrong, the very blackness of man’s heart, the portion of ourselves which we shudder at, and which it is the whole aim of spiritual discipline to eradicate."

Hollingsworth’s judgment seems to have been vindicated, for the fall into materialist Fourierism has indeed corrupted a potential "Paradise" and turned it into "Gehenna," making it Blithedale’s "Unpardonable Sin" (677-78), the sin against the Holy Spirit previously discussed in Chapter 4. In Hollingsworth’s version of Christian orthodoxy, humans err irrevocably when they attempt to realize their own ideals in the material world, rather than those of the Holy Spirit. In other words, those who attempt to realize utopia are building a new Tower of Babel; the prison-reform projector himself is tainted with this "sin."

Critics markedly less orthodox than Hollingsworth have echoed his sentiments. I have already alluded to D. H. Lawrence’s seminal reading of Blithedale in Studies in Classic American Literature, which proclaims that "the first part of reverence is the acceptance of the fact that the Holy Ghost will never materialize: will never be anything but a ghost,"
and that the irreverent Blithedalers "have sinned against the Holy Ghost" (117). In the first chapter of Studies, the similarities between his "Holy Ghost" and the id are apparent:

Men are not free when they are doing just what they like. The moment you can do just what you like, there is nothing you care about doing. Men are only free when they are doing what the deepest self likes.

... If one wants to be free, one has to give up the illusion of doing what one likes, and seek what IT wishes done. (13)

This sounds suspiciously like the doctrine of "passional attraction," the illusion of free will being equivalent to the "subversive" passions of "Civilization." But while Lawrence doesn't mention Fourier by name, his reading of Blithedale suggests that he would find the Fourierist project of social perfection just as "[t]heoretic and materialistic" as Franklin's project of self-perfection in the Autobiography (26). Just as the Holy Ghost within cannot be tamed by Franklin's "moral machine" (22), no communitarian system can force the gods within to "tingl[e] in tune with the Oversoul, like so many strings of a super-celestial harp" (112). Still, Lawrence's rejection of the Blithedale / Brook Farm experiment differs from Hollingsworth's. Lawrence also insists upon the irreconcilability of the ideal and material realms, but does not insist upon the transcendence of one of these realms:

You can't idealize hard work. . . . And that's why the idealists left off brookfarming, and took to bookfarming.

You can't idealize the essential brute-blood activity, the brute blood desires, the basic, sardonic, blood-knowledge. That you can't idealize it.
And you can’t eliminate it. 
So there’s the end of ideal man.

Man is made up of a dual consciousness, of
which the two halves are most of the time in
opposition to one another—and will be so long as
time lasts.

You’ve got to learn to change from one
consciousness to the other, turn and about. Never
try to make either absolute, or dominant. The Holy
Ghost tells you the how and when. (112)

Sometimes brute-blood is in the foreground (as in Section II
of this chapter), sometimes the spectral ideal (as in Section
III), but, as Lawrence insists, this dualism cannot be reduced
to a system.

II.

Even though John Hay’s novel The Bread-winners (1883)
was, I strongly suspect, modelled on Blithedale, its
similarities with its predecessor may not be obvious. For
example, Blithedale is pastoral, set in a fictionalized Brook
Farm, while The Bread-winners is urban, set in a amalgam of
Cleveland and Buffalo. Coverdale is the unreliable narrator
par excellence; Hay’s omniscient narrator speaks with
crystalline certainty. Yet there are some obvious ideological
sympathies. While Coverdale remains sympathetic to utopian
ideals, Blithedale warns its readers that socialist praxis is
unlikely to succeed; The Bread-winners unequivocally
demonstrates that socialist labor movements are frauds.
Without collapsing the differences between Hawthorne’s
cautionsary tale and the diplomat’s reactionary diatribe
(provoked by the Great Railroad Strike of 1877), I believe
that both novels ultimately underwrite (consciously or not) the capitalist project of transforming American society into a profit-generating machine. Surprisingly, the references to hothouses in the two texts can be used to support this assertion, as well as to illuminate the complex sexual dynamics of the two novels.

The construction of the first large-scale glass structures (such as the Winter Garden, completed in 1846) led, as Georg Kohlmaier and Barna von Sartory have argued, to the formation of a nineteenth-century hothouse "mythos" (7). Both as building and as metaphor, the hothouse becomes the site at which a bewildering variety of concerns intersect. First, the hothouse was seen as the resolution of the pastoral dilemma. Urban dwellers no longer needed to mourn the loss of rural pleasures, for they could now enjoy nature in the city, reaping the benefits of living in both worlds. Thus, the hothouse artificially re-created Eden; the Industrial Revolution had made a natural Utopia possible.

Yet this mythos also had a dystopian strain. Some ambitious graduate student might someday construct a Foucauldian history showing that even before the hothouse became a capitalist marketplace, it had been part of a violent discourse of power. For example, the eighteenth-century term for the hothouse is "forcing house" (Hix 9), that is, a place where plants are made to grow out of season in a foreign soil...
(compare the French "forçerie"). In *Capital*, Marx would later argue that the bourgeoisie "employ[s] the power of the state . . . to hasten, hothouse fashion, the process of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode. . . . Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one" (qtd., Schmitt 40). With the erection of the Crystal Palace in 1851—possibly on Hawthorne’s mind as he was writing *Blithedale*—the hothouse came to be used for commercial purposes. The artificial micro-ordering of its contents represented a very efficient form of discipline. Just as Linnaeus had forced a classification upon Nature by studying the plants in an Anglo-Dutch financier’s hothouses (Hix 11), the exhibitors at the Crystal Palace imposed an equally artificial order upon the display of commodities (Kohlmaier and von Sartory 1). Since the hothouse imposes an artificial order upon nature, it can readily figure the artificial ordering of mankind. With few exceptions, hothouses were constructed for the benefit of a noble and wealthy elite. Contemporary accounts portrayed the private winter garden as "an unreal world where amid rarities and rituals the nobility prepared to make its departure from the historical scene" (K. & v.S. 36). Furthermore, since today’s glass-and-iron architecture is a lineal descendant of the nineteenth-century greenhouse (K. & v.S. 5), this utopian critique can be extended to the power of modern skyscrapers and arcades to mark class boundaries.
In *The Blithedale Romance*, Coverdale never sees a hothouse in our presence, but two early scenes draw attention to Zenobia's hothouse flowers. When he recalls his arrival at Blithedale, he performs the courtesy of "summon[ing Zenobia up like a ghost, a little wanner than the life, but otherwise identical with it." He was and still is taken by the "single flower" in her hair: "an exotic of rare beauty, and as fresh as if the hot-house gardener had just clipt it from the stem." But his image of the phantasmagorical flower is faint: while he claims to "see it and smell it" in the present ("That flower has struck deep root in my memory"), these sensory perceptions are not passed along to the reader. The narrative is less concerned with the flower itself than with it as symbol: "So brilliant, so rare, so costly as it must have been, and yet enduring only for a day, it was more indicative of the pride and pomp, which had a luxuriant growth in Zenobia's character, than if a great diamond had sparkled among her hair" (N 644-645).

Coverdale suggests that the division of work has not changed at Blithedale, for women still have to perform the "artificial" domestic chores, rather than field work, labor befitting "the life of paradise" (16). Zenobia's reply suggests that the flower also signifies the intersection of the natural life and the artificial in the pastoral:

"I am afraid . . . we shall find some difficulty in adopting the Paradisiacal system, for at least a month to come. Look at that snow drift sweeping past the window! Are there any figs ripe, do you
think? Have the pine-apples been gathered, to-day. Would you like a bread-fruit, or a cocoa-nut? Shall I run out and pluck you some roses? No, no, Mr. Coverdale, the only flower hereabouts is the one in my hair, which I got out of a green-house, this morning. As for the garb of Eden," added she, shivering playfully, "I shall not assume it till after May-day!" (16-17)

In these two episodes, we see two distinct ways of thinking about greenhouses. Zenobia’s decadent daily plucking implies that the hothouse is somehow linked to an equally decadent attempt to control Nature technologically, especially if one is reading through the lens of "Rappaccini’s Daughter" (1844)—perhaps Zenobia plucks her flower from the "scientific" Rappaccini’s botanic garden (978). The second episode suggest that Nature, or at least Nature in New England, is not at all like Eden and needs to be controlled: if not by the agency of the Boreal Crown, then by more mundane means. As Leo Marx has shown, there is a similar tension built into the America-as-garden metaphor. Is the American garden is "a pre-lapsarian Eden" that needs no improvement? Then technological ‘improvements’ like the hothouse would merely commodify Nature, turn a flower into a throwaway product. Or is the American garden an untamed wilderness that needs to be cultivated? (L. Marx 87). Then the hothouse, as garden machine, is essential to growing coconuts and roses in an otherwise bleak environment.

Coverdale later recalls his confinement to a sickbed, and the flower Zenobia wore as she nursed him back to health. The
memory of his illness induces an floral preoccupation that repeats the invalid's obsession:

I noticed—and wondered how Zenobia contrived it—that she always had a new flower in her hair. And still it was a hot-house flower—an outlandish flower—a flower of the tropics, such as appeared to have sprung passionately out of a soil, the very weeds of which would be fervid and spicy. . . . It might be, that my feverish fantasies clustered themselves about this peculiarity, and caused it to look more gorgeous and wonderful than if beheld with temperate eyes. In the height of my illness, I went so far as to pronounce it preternatural. "Zenobia is an enchantress!" whispered I once to Hollingsworth. "She is a sister of the Veiled Lady! That flower in her hair is a talisman. If you were to snatch it away, she would vanish, or be transformed into something else!" (670)

Not only does Coverdale romanticize Zenobia's flower by fantasizing that it is essential to her identity, but also by willing forgetfulness. He struggles to suppress a acknowledged fact ("And still it was a hothouse flower . . . ."). He struggles so successfully that by the time he is finished, Coverdale—as narrator, not as febrile patient—concludes that Zenobia's flower must have grown in the wild, in a soil foreign enough to produce "fervent and spicy" weeds. As a result, he takes the cultivated Zenobia herself for an exotic, an "enchantress," or, as Hollingsworth less charitably puts it, a "witch" (670). Despite Zenobia's denials, the men may have been right; Zenobia has used the flowers to captivate Coverdale, then Hollingsworth soon after.

All these passages cited so far have all been sexually charged, for the hothouse—once synonymous with "brothel"—is a sexually-charged site. Not only do Zenobia's flowers invoke
the traditional vaginal symbolism, but they also suggest the Fourierist connection between non-monogamous sexuality in utopian communities and the idea of the hothouse as a dwelling place.

In March 1845, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody complained to her daughter that the French thinkers had "corrupt" ideas about woman, although she provisionally excepted one popular philosopher:

There is a sad tendency to the same evil among us. Why does not some undoubted man translate Fourier? Can the heavenly-minded W. H. Channing admire and follow an author whose books are undermining the very foundations of social order? Swedenborg, you know, has been misunderstood and his doctrine corrupted. It is possible it may be so with Fourier's. The subject is often discussed in the book-room, and it is strange to me that among learned men, who are interested about public morals and our civil institutions, no one should take the trouble to read what Charles Fourier wrote. Time will prove, I trust; but many a young mind may be ruined first. (Peabody to Sophia Hawthorne, 28 March 1845, qtd. in J. Hawthorne 267-268)

Reading between the lines, Peabody seems to be suggesting that Brisbane was a doubted man, and that Social Destiny of Man was an untrustworthy representation of Fourier. (Like Emerson, she compares the possibly unjust tarring of Fourier's reputation to that of Swedenborg, a further indication of the currency of this topic.) Sophia Hawthorne rapidly confirmed her mother's worst fears:

It was not a translation of Fourier that I read, but the original text,—the fourth volume; and though it was so abominable, immoral, irreligious, and void of all delicate sentiment, yet George
Bradford says it is not so bad as some other volumes. . . . It is very plain from all I read (a small part) that he has entirely lost his moral sense. . . .

This is the highest motive presented for not being inordinately profligate. My husband read the whole volume, and was thoroughly disgusted. (qtd. in J. Hawthorne 268-269)

In the fourth volume of Théorie de unité universelle, Fourier took nine pages to mark a "forced lacuna" in the exposition of his theory. He bitterly complained that the prejudices of "Civilization," which assumed that "a theory of free love is a theory of obscenity," obliged him to suppress "the quadrille of amorous equilibrium" (OC 5:461). Nathaniel could have filled in many of the blanks from his subsequent reading of Quatre mouvements, and the remainder with his imagination. As in Joseph Smith’s Nauvoo—alluded to more than once in Blithedale—sexuality in Fourier’s imaginary community was carefully controlled. However, infractions of Fourier’s rules could themselves be entertaining, as the following example from the suppressed Nouveau Monde amoreux illustrates:

It is customary for the Damsels [i.e., sexually active adolescents of both sexes] to remain faithful until they reach the age of twenty. But since everything is done by gradations in Harmony, and since it would be difficult, not to say impossible, for a couple to remain faithful for four or five years, the amorous code allows for exceptions to the rule of fidelity. Thus no one is expelled from the Damselate until he or she has committed three infidelities and one inconstancy, or else seven infidelities without an inconstancy. Only half an infidelity is counted if a Damsel has an affair with one of the priests or priestesses who, in view of their advanced age, are given special advantages. Thus a Damsel can commit fourteen acts of infidelity with priests . . . .
A homosexual affair is counted as half an infidelity. Likewise only half an infidelity is counted when two partners go to the amorous registry and announce their intention to engage in reciprocal infidelity for a period of three days or less. . . . These customs might seem to be libidinous in a corporation which is reputed to be faithful, but in fidelity as in all things exceptions are the rule. (OC 7:434-435, qtd. in Beecher and Bienvenu 367)

One gets the impression that Fourier himself would have been thrilled to keep the books on these infractions. Surveillance plays an enormous role in the community of pleasure; the "amorous registry" is a form of self-policing. A priestly caste receives special sexual privileges, and certain practices receive preferential treatment. Elsewhere, Fourier proposes to found separate Phalanxes for the satisfaction of the rarest sexual manias, such as "amorous heel-scratching" (qtd. in Beecher and Bienvenu 355). As with Linnaeus' ordering of the hothouse plants and the ordering of the exhibitions in the Crystal Palace, Fourier's control of sexual practices is exemplary of Foucault's "'new micro-physics' of power" (139).

It is easier to play the field, or keep score, when all the players are under one roof. Fourier's great architectural anticipation, the phalanstery, performs a crucial role in the ordering of the Phalanx. For example, one's dining hall was to be determined by one's social class, and one's dormitory by one's age and sexual practices. Fourier's innovation was to connect each building in the phalanstery to the others by
heated, ventilated, glass-covered passageways, allowing members of the community to enjoy Nature without being subjected to the rain or the cold (Beecher and Bienvenu 242-245). Kohlmaier and von Sartory consider this innovation representative of the utopian desire to find a harmonious balance between nature and culture; Fourier's passageway, first mentioned in *Quatre mouvements*, was one of the first major contributions to the greenhouse mythos (15).

We have seen that the hothouse mythos incorporates, and is incorporated in, the American pastoral, as well as capitalist discourses of power. Through association with Fourier, a more tenuous link exists between the hothouse and the regulation of sexual excess. We have seen much more of the hothouse mythos, however, than we have of the hothouse itself—for which we turn to *The Bread-winners*.

The protagonist of Hay's novel, Arthur Farnham, is a thirtyish widower, a former Army officer, and the sole heir to a multi-million dollar estate in Buffland, a metropolis on the shores of Lake Erie. When the beautiful carpenter's daughter Maud Matchin calls upon Farnham, she learns that he was unable to fulfill his promise of a job at the local library, as corrupt politicians have used the vacancy for patronage. Although Farnham is anxious to put an end to Maud's visits for propriety's sake, he impetuously promises to find her another position. As Maud leaves, Farnham takes Maud into the
garden’s rose house (built by Maud’s father, as was the nearby greenhouse), picks some flowers for her, and escorts her to the garden gate. He then tells her that she may use this rear entrance for her next visit, ostensibly because it is closer to her home, but actually to make her visits less conspicuous. Maud later discovers that her carpenter beau, Sam Sleeny, happened to be working on the Farnham greenhouse that day and had jealously spied on the couple.

Sam need not have worried, as Farnham is more interested in Alice Belding, the carefully-cultivated daughter of his next-door neighbor. When Farnham’s gardener Ferguson informs him that the rare cereus grandiflorus in the conservatory is about to blossom, Farnham runs next door to invite Alice and her mother to enjoy the spectacle. Mrs. Belding contrives to leave Alice and Farnham alone. While Alice sketches the flower, Farnham flirts with her gallantly, and by the end of the evening, they are quite taken with each other.

In the meantime, Maud goes to a séance, at which she asks Bott, the medium, how she can find out whether Farnham loves her. The pathetic Bott believes that Maud wants to know whether he loves her, and offers her the counsel of the spiritual world: "Tell your love!" (112). After several days of hesitation, Maud finally gathers the courage to tell Farnham, breaking the news to him with a torrid profession in the rose house that ends with her proposal of marriage, after which she is on the verge of fainting. Farnham gallantly
catches her in his arms and kisses her, but then confesses that her love is unrequited. Alice's mother happens to walk into the rose-house in time to witness this scene. Although she is amused, her daughter is not, and the romance is temporarily derailed.

Mrs. Belding is not the only spectator, however. Sam Sleeny, who has been unsuccessfully courting Maud, is infuriated by Farnham's kiss and vows revenge, thus setting the political intrigue in motion. Earlier, the honest but naive Sam had made the acquaintance of the ne'er-do-well Andrew Jackson Offitt. The narrator helpfully explains the significance of this name for his apolitical readers:

[I]n the West, [it] is an unconscious brand. It generally shows that the person bearing it is the son of illiterate parents, with no family pride or affections, but filled with a bitter and savage partisanship which found its expression in a servile worship of the most injurious person in American history. (89-90)

Offitt invited Sam to join his secret "labor reform" society, the Brotherhood of Bread-winners. The Bread-winners are a group of drunks and incompetents who spend much time theorizing about labor reform, but little time laboring. In fact, Offitt had formed the organization in order to live off the union dues.

Soon after Maud has been rejected by Farnham, the unions of Buffland plan a general strike. At the same time, both Bott and Offitt begin to court Maud. Bott is summarily dismissed, but the smooth-talking Offitt has more success.
Moved by his flattery, she tells Offitt how Farnham has spurned her, and how she would "owe a great deal to the man who would give her a beating" (211). The next day, Offitt and the other Bread-winners incite the striking workers to violence, in scenes based on the urban riots during the Great Railroad Strike. They mount an attack the Farnham and Belding estates. A factory owner, however, had tipped Farnham off to the danger, and Farnham's rapidly organized private police force easily repulses the rabblerousers. The only rioter who holds his ground is Sam Sleeny, who unsuccessfully rushes at Farnham with a hammer. He is arrested and vows revenge.

When Sam is freed a week later, Offitt decides to frame him. He steals Sam's hammer, slips into Farnham's study, brains the capitalist with the hammer, and steals his cash. Offitt then visits Maud at midnight and tries to persuade her to elope. Sam is arrested for attempted murder, but then escapes, exposes Offitt's treachery, and kills him. The court conveniently exonerates Sam, and Maud reconciles herself to marrying him. Farnham is nursed back to health by Alice, and they live happily ever after.

What functions do the hothouse episodes serve in The Bread-winners? First, the hothouses themselves reinforce the class barriers between Farnham, the owner, and Saul Matchin (Maud's father), Sam Sleeny, and the gardener Ferguson, all hothouse laborers. Hay, however, does not portray the class relationship as capitalist exploitation. When Sam complains
that Ferguson is ordering him around and slowing down his work, Saul replies,

"that ain't none o' your lookout. Do what Scotchee tells you, and I'll keep the time on 'em. We kin stand it, ef they kin," and the old carpenter laughed with the foolish pleasure of a small mind aware of an advantage. "Ef Art. Farnham wants to keep a high-steppin' Scotchman to run his flowers, may be he kin afford it. I ain't his gardeen."

(72)

Here, as elsewhere in the novel, Hay is standing the labor theory of value on its head: Farnham is being forced to pay an inflated value for Sam's labor. (It should be noted that the craftsman Saul is portrayed more sympathetically than any other worker.) If labor is being paid a more-than-fair price, then labor has no complaint, which in turn serves to reify class barriers.

Class distinction is also illustrated by comparing the cultivation of Maud and Alice to the cultivation of the flowers with which they are associated. Alice's flower is the cereus grandiflorus, a "regal flower" in the "inner room" of the conservatory that receives Ferguson's constant attention and has "a wall to itself" (115). Alice herself has just returned from two years of cultivation at Madame de Veaudry's exclusive New York finishing school. The unexotic Maud, on the other hand, is given roses; she was cultivated in a public high-school. Even this minimal eduction, the narrator notes, was a waste of time; her "education" has done nothing but make her unfit for domestic work. Hothouse cultivation is not appropriate for weeds.
If the Blithedale community is another species of hothouse, then how well do Priscilla and Zenobia flourish there? Upon her arrival at Blithedale, Coverdale observes that Priscilla's face was of a wan, almost sickly hue, betokening habitual seclusion from the sun and free atmosphere, like a flower-shrub that had done its best to blossom in too scanty light. (27)

City dwellers, especially Veiled Ladies, don’t get much sun. A few months at Blithedale improve her appearance, however. When Coverdale calls on the ladies in the boarding-house, he tells Zenobia that Priscilla has become "as lovely as a flower" (169). Zenobia’s arch reply draws attention to Priscilla’s working-class status:

"Well, say so if you like. . . . I wonder, in such Arcadian freedom of falling in love as we have enjoyed lately, it never occurred to you to fall in love with Priscilla! In society, indeed, a genuine American never dreams of stepping across the inappreciable air-line which separates one class from another. But what was rank to the colonists of Blithedale?" (170)

Zenobia realizes that the relatively firm class barriers of New England (barriers that will be even more impenetrable in Hay’s Buffland) are being threatened by the Blithedale experiment. Indeed, the two sisters are competing for the same man (unlike The Bread-winners, in which Maud only imagines that she is competing with Alice for Farnham), and it is Priscilla, the "poor, pallid flower" "flung wilfully away" by Zenobia (193), who eventually gets Hollingsworth.
The complex and indeterminate sexual relationship between Zenobia, Hollingsworth, Priscilla, Westervelt, and the amorous spectator Coverdale cannot be reduced to a relationship between classes, but this pentagram does suggest something about the sociosexual dynamic of Blithedale as a community. The life of Priscilla, like that of the "wild grapevine" which "had caught hold of three or four of the neighboring trees, and married the whole clump with a perfectly inextricable knot of polygamy," is a "fragile thread" that "has inextricably knotted itself with other and tougher threads, and most likely it will be broken" (N 718, 720, emphasis added). These passages, often quoted in conjunction, suggest sexual misconduct among the protagonists, and the inevitable consequence of such acts. But in her tale, Zenobia links the disappearance of the Veiled Lady to the appearance of Priscilla among the "knot of visionary transcendentalists" of Blithedale (N 733, emphasis added). It would appear that polygamy ensnares not just the main characters, but the entire "Knot of Dreamers" (N 644). In other words, everyone at

216 Coverdale's choice of books during his convalescence also suggests the community's violation of sexual norms—he reads Zenobia's copies of George Sand's romances as well as Fourier (52). In The Bread-winners, Maud reads La petite fadette because she has seen newspaper articles referring to Sand as a "corrupter of youth." The upwardly-mobile teen is disappointed to learn that Sand writes about peasants "poor as crows," loses interest, and thus remains uncorrupted (29).
Blithedale is potentially a participant in Fourierist sexual misconduct.\textsuperscript{217}

The sexual relationships in \textit{The Bread-winners}, on the other hand, are much easier to untangle: Offitt, Bott, and Sam all desire Maud; Maud desires Farnham, who resists her for reasons of class; and Farnham and Alice desire each other. Unlike Hawthorne's novel, everything goes according to form in Hay's-like marries like.

Besides keeping classes in their respective places, Farnham's hothouses also control sexual conduct. Alice's visit to the hothouse gives the narrator opportunities for sexual innuendo of the pistil-and-stamen variety that effectively objectifies Alice:

\begin{quote}
The bud was so far opened that the creamy white of the petals could be seen within the riven sheath, whose strong dark color exquisitely relieved the pallid beauty it had guarded so long. The silky stamens were still curled about the central style, but the splendor of color which was coming was already suggested, and a breath of intoxicating fragrance stole from the heart of the immaculate flower.

They spoke to each other in low tones, as if impressed with a sort of awe at the beautiful and mysterious development of fragrant and lovely life going forward under their sight. The dark eyes of Alice Belding were full of that vivid happiness which strange and charming things bring to intelligent girlhood. She was looking with all her soul, and her breath was quick and high, and her soft red lips were parted and tremulous. Farnham looked from her to the flower, and back again,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{217}Another "polygamy" innuendo in Blithedale refers to Mormonism: "Hollingsworth, like many other illustrious prophets, reformers, and philanthropists, was likely to make at least two proselytes, among the women, to one among the men" (N 691).
gazing on both with equal safety, for the one was as unconscious of his gazes as the other. (118)

Farnham has a proprietary feeling towards everything that comes into the hothouse—once in the conservatory, the "unconscious" Alice becomes his, possessed, admired, kept under glass. In this respect, he is Rappaccini rewritten as a sympathetic character: the woman/flower sisterhood is healthy rather than evil. Maud also places herself at Farnham's disposal, but Farnham's flirtations with the two women take place in two separate hothouses: the private conservatory for Alice, the more public rose house for Maud. A Blithedale-like mixing of classes is hindered by the architecture of the rose house. Both the bourgeois Mrs. Belding and the working-class Sam literally watch over the flirtation between Farnham and Maud, and are in position to nip it in the bud.

Besides serving as a site for sexual passion and a marker for class boundaries, the hothouse is a place where the country and the city can be reconciled in the pastoral. For Farnham, who had been stationed on the frontier during his Army career, the hothouse enables him to be reconciled to life in Buffland. Although the Blithedale community is intended to be a similar escape from the evils of the city, a hothouse-like phalanstery in which its members can flourish, Coverdale ironically finds his escape from the city only when he returns to the city and looks out the window of his hotel room:
There were apple-trees, and pear and peach-trees, too, the fruit on which looked singularly large, luxuriant, and abundant; as well it might, in a situation so warm and sheltered, and where the soil had doubtless been enriched to a more than natural fertility. (148)

This garden's artificial enclosure and fertilized soil makes it a roofless hothouse. It cannot be confused with Eden—Death is present in the form of a murderous cat stalking her prey. But it is not like Rappaccini's garden, either. Despite its artificiality, Coverdale finds the city hothouse a more congenial environment than Blithedale. The rural community fails to reconcile country and city, but the urban garden may succeed.

In Hay, the positive virtues of the hothouse are emphasized: it succeeds in making the pastoral reconciliation, it exemplifies the justice of capitalism, and it promotes a healthy, class-conscious sexuality. In Hawthorne, the negative features of the hothouse eventually surface: the pastoral reconciliation fails, and the blossoming Priscilla becomes the object of desires that transgress class boundaries. While Priscilla flourishes at Blithedale, the environment is wrong for Zenobia: the replacement of her hothouse flowers with inanimate jewels signals the failure of the project. Compare the moment in "Rappaccini's Daughter" when a "drop or two of moisture" falls from the flower and kills the lizard:

Beatrice . . . [did not] hesitate to arrange the fatal flower in her bosom. There it blushed, and
almost glimmered with the dazzling effect of a precious stone. ("Rappaccini's" 955)

There is a "great diamond" in Zenobia's hair now but the diamond is a lifeless beauty that symbolizes the death of Nature, Blithedale, and Zenobia, who have all given up the ghost. For her and for Beatrice, the hothouse is a death machine.

What I would like to stress here is the difference in the narrator's attitude towards hothouses in these texts. There is a historical progression from Aubépine's rejection of the hothouse project in "Rappaccini's Daughter," to Coverdale's more ambivalent attitude in The Blithedale Romance. Three decades later, Hay's narrator affirms the hothouse project. The interpretation of the hothouse mythos has also shifted: in Hay, the project no longer has anything to do with the creation of a Paradise on Earth. Hawthorne tells us how the utopian dream of the hothouse/phalanstery failed, while Hay tells us how Offitt's dystopian communist scheme was averted by a hothouse owner.

III.

One of Maud's failed suitors, Bott, has the same profession as Westervelt; he is also identified with the 'shirking class' through his membership in the Brotherhood of Bread-winners. Hay uses this ideological shorthand to equate spiritualism, a "grotesque superstition" that "rush[es] in at the first opportunity to fill the vacuum of faith" (35) with
the false ideology offered by the quasi-communist Offitt, Maud's other failed suitor. For Offitt's name conjures up not only the memory of the Democratic hero, but that of Andrew Jackson Davis. If we read *Blithedale* through Hay's lens, we need not fear the spells cast by Zenobia's hothouse flowers or Westervelt's power over Priscilla, for these illusions are readily exorcised. Equally illusory for Hay, then, is the ideology that underlies the Blithedale community, whether it be materialistic Fourierism or idealistic Transcendentalism.

While Orestes Brownson had drawn a similar political conclusion from *Blithedale*, he had insisted upon the reality of the very ghosts that Hay later dismissed, even claiming firsthand acquaintance with these specters. Brownson's novel *The Spirit-Rapper: An Autobiography* (1854), was in a sense autobiographical, for it drew upon his earlier interest in the experiments of the mesmerist and Saint-Simonian Charles Poyen (see Stoehr 37-40). Further, the author claimed that the novel contained "no fiction" other than the plot machinery:

> The connection of spirit-rapping, or the spirit-manifestations, with modern philanthropy, visionary reforms, socialism, and revolutionism, is not an imagination of my own. It is historical, and asserted by the Spiritists, or Spiritualists themselves . . . . (SR vi)

The tale is told by an unnamed narrator who, on his deathbed, reflects on the grave errors of his life. His troubles had begun in 1836, when he fell in with the French mesmerist Dr P——. Under the doctor's guidance, his friends begin experiments in animal magnetism. One young man mesmerizes his
fiancée too many times, inadvertently causing her death. But the undeterred narrator, waxing Faustian, is tempted to exploit the power of this new science. As he studies mesmerism, he falls in with a brazen young woman who is given the pseudonym "Priscilla" and who is modelled on Brownson’s former friend Fanny Wright. After Priscilla instructs the narrator in the evil doctrines of abolitionism and feminism, the two travel to a World Reform convention. Among the speakers are a "Mr. Edgerton" who waxes Emersonian and a "M. Beaubien" who offers a straightforward summary of Fourier. Afterwards, the narrator resolves to "devote myself body and soul to the cause of World-Reform" (SR 112).

The overjoyed Priscilla casts her lot as well. An "honest Christian" urges her to turn away from reform and especially from modern spiritualism, a form of "demonic worship." But she declares, "Satan is my hero" (116). A lineal descendant of Cotton Mather warns the narrator that he too is "forming a league with the devil" (124), but to no avail; emboldened, the narrator mesmerizes and enslaves Priscilla à la Westervelt. All these events unfold between the late 1830s and the mid-1840s. Looking back on these sinful days, the dying narrator concludes that the revolutions of 1848, like that of 1789, were inexplicable without postulating the agency of some invisible force: "France, Europe was mesmerized" (SR 163).
In fact, the repentant narrator reveals that it was **he**, assisted by his mesmerized slave Priscilla, who had been the agent of the plot to overthrow all the governments of the world:

Great movements are never carried on by simple human means alone, and never get beyond brilliant theories unless inspired and sustained by a superhuman power, either from heaven or from hell. . . . Men might form the most brilliant ideals, bring out the soundest, most attractive and perfect theories of reform, but it would avail nothing, unless endowed with a power not their own, to realize them in practice. Here was the defect in the plan of Signor Urbini [a Mazziniesque reformer in the novel] and Young Italy. . . . It is necessary to have a support outside of man; a source of power which is not human, and as the world would say, either divine or satanic, to be able to accomplish any thing.

But had I not this very power in the agent I had been experimenting with? What else was this mesmeric agent, whether a primitive, an elemental force of nature, or indeed a superhuman spirit endowed with intelligence and will? . . . Mesmeric clubs or circles must be formed on all points on which it is necessary to operate, and batteries to be erected everywhere, so that anywhere, and at any moment, a mesmeric current may be sent instantaneously through the masses, infusing into them a superhuman resolution and energy, and making them stand up and march as one man. This, then, was the first thing to be done. I would erect my mesmeric batteries in every country in Europe, all connected by an invisible, but unbroken, magnetic chain. (SR 170-172)

Despite Brownson's earlier predictions in such articles as "No Church, No Reform," the Continent had been swept by a reform movement, one that had largely left the Catholic Church on the sidelines. Since Brownson was convinced that mere human agency could not have fashioned a simulacrum of the Body of Christ that "stood up and marched as one man," it followed
that the power had to be satanic. This suggests a somewhat different interpretation of "A specter is haunting Europe." Acting on the Devil's behalf, the narrator and Priscilla had gone on a whirlwind tour, magnetizing reformer after reformer and turning them into revolutionaries (173-217). Had it not been for Pius the Ninth's "passive courage"—a phrase that would have made Fuller howl—Europe might have been lost (212).

As with the Salem witch trials, another social crisis blamed on Satan, the American failure to redeem the world calls the nation's claim to theological exceptionalism into question. (Note that Brownson consciously alluded to the witch trials in the novel through the pious descendant of Cotton Mather.) Brownson's idiosyncratic reading of 1848 suggests one possible cause of the earlier psychic crisis in the Bay Colony. If the Puritan city on a hill had in the end failed to redeem the world, then the fault must lie with an unseen evil Other. All these witch hunts—the search for the betrayer of China, France, the Bay Colony—are symptomatic of a loss of faith in America's Christic mission. Spiritualism intersects not only with socialism, but with the failure of American utopianism. At the close of The Spirit-Rapper, the remorseful sinner evaluates his life according to a formula we have seen before: "Had I not blasphemed the Holy Ghost, committed the Unpardonable Sin?" (SR 399)
IV.

Even today, there are ghosts to be exorcized on the Left and Right. Chasseguet-Smirgel and Grünberger insist upon drawing connections between the theory of the ego ideal and the theorists of May 1968; the leap may not be wholly unjustified. The opening sentence of *Freud or Reich?* attacks Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (1972); note that the latter book's favorable summary of Reich's organic theory in the "Introduction to Schizoanalysis" chapter is immediately followed by two reverent citations of Fourier (Deleuze and Guattari 291-294). The Freudo-Marxists were particularly interested in Fourier—in *Eros and Civilization* (1955), Herbert Marcuse claimed that the Freudian reality principle would have a historical end due to technological advances. The dawning of the Age of Aquarius prophesied by Marcuse has a Harmonian influence—Marcuse praised Fourier's "central idea," "the transformation of labor into pleasure." Now it is one thing to historicize the reality principle: inventions from the steam engine to the personal computer, for example, have eliminated much tedious labor, thus potentially freeing workers for more attractive labor. But it is quite another matter to foresee a historical end to unattractive labor.

But Chasseguet-Smirgel does not devote as much time to exorcisms on the Right. For example, one of the most recent manifestations of the myth of American theological exceptionalism is Francis Fukuyama's claim that the United
States, having fulfilled its historical tasks, has now brought humanity to the end of history. I think Fukuyama's numerous critics have not sufficiently appreciated the narcissism implicit in his proclamation. As its philosophical authority, "The End of History?" invokes Alexandre Kojève's Introduction to the Reading of Hegel (1947). But Fukuyama's rendering of Kojève is incomplete, as he strategically elides the relationship between the end of history and the Wise Man of the Phenomenology. Kojève offers a tripartite definition of the Wise Man: he is not only the "Man of absolute Knowledge, the perfectly self-conscious—i.e., omniscient, at least potentially," but also the "man who is perfectly satisfied with what he is," and even "the morally perfect man" (78, 80). A fourth definition, the Citizen of the perfect State, can be derived from the following:

The real aspect of the "circularity" of Wisdom is the "circular" existence of the Wise Man. . . . In his existence, the Wise Man remains in identity with himself, he is closed up in himself; but he remains in identity with himself because he passes through the totality of others, and he is closed up in himself because he closes up the totality of others in himself. Which . . . means, quite simply, that the only man who can be Wise is a Citizen of the universal and homogenous State . . . in which each exists only through and for the whole, and the whole exists through and for each man.

The absolute Knowledge of the Wise Man who realizes perfect self-consciousness is an answer to the question, "What am I?" The Wise Man's real existence must therefore be "circular" (that is to say, for Hegel, he must be a Citizen of the universal and homogenous State) in order that the knowledge that reveals this existence may itself be circular—i.e., an absolute truth. Therefore: only the Citizen of the perfect State can realize
absolute Knowledge. Inversely, since Hegel supposes that every man is a Philosopher—that is, made so as to become conscious of what he is (at least, it is only in these men that Hegel is interested, and only of them he speaks)—a citizen of the perfect State always eventually understands himself in and by a circular—i.e., absolute—knowledge.

This conception entails a very important consequence: Wisdom can be realized, according to Hegel, only at the end of History. (94-95)

From the above, it follows that in recognizing the end of History and realizing absolute Knowledge,218 Fukuyama is necessarily proclaiming himself a citizen of the perfect State, necessarily proclaiming himself the completely self-conscious, self-satisfied, morally perfect, post-philosophical Hegelian Wise Man. It is this smugness that allows the Wise Man to describe the United States as much more than a relatively just society. For Fukuyama, America is the "essential achievement of the classless society envisioned by Marx"—classless, that is, in the realm of ghosts, for the Untermenschen must not be conscious of what they are, therefore must not be the Citizens of whom Hegel speaks, therefore must not be closed up in the totality of the Wise Man, therefore must not be one of those in whom "Hegel is interested," therefore must not matter.

Let us look at one more passage: "Now, we are faced with a fact. A man who is clearly not mad, named Hegel, claims to

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218 Although there is a question mark in his title, Fukuyama accepts the Hegelian claim that the history of the ideal realm ended 183 years earlier at the Battle of Jena (Fukuyama 4-8).
have realized Wisdom" (Kojève 97, my emphasis). In reply, one can only quote the American pragmatist philosopher Ann Landers: "Wake up and smell the coffee, dearie!" Engels was right: not only does the closure of the Hegelian dialectic have "no lemonade at all,"219 but in his own way, Hegel is as mad as Fourier. For the idea of the dialectic's historical end, with its concomitant collapsing of the identity between Wise Man and perfect State ("each exists only through and for the whole, and the whole exists through and for each man"), appeals to the same narcissistic, regressive, and potentially fascistic "colossal body" fantasy of omnipresence that Chasseguet-Smirgel attacks in Fourier. Furthermore, the "moral perfection" of the American end of history is an illusion that can only achieved by denying the existence of those for whom Fourier spoke.

I am not claiming that Fourier's utopian dialectic is "true" (or perhaps "sane"), but rather that the critical examination of this dialectic also exposes that which is "false" (or "insane") in the ideological vision of America as agent of the historical dialectic's closure. One should not castigate Fourierists or U.S. citizens or Blithedalers for

219To his credit, Fukuyama acknowledges this as well: In the post-historical period there will neither be art or philosophy, just the perpetual caretaking of the museum of human history. I can feel in myself, and see in others around me, a powerful nostalgia for the time when history existed. (18) Perhaps he is not the self-satisfied Wise Man, after all. If so, however, he would then be incapable of recognizing the end of history.
holding worthy ideals, but for believing that these ideals can be achieved magically.
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