

PRESIDING DIVINITIES: IDEAL SCULPTURE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY
AMERICAN DOMESTIC INTERIORS

Lauren Keach Lessing

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy
In the Department of the History of Art
Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts
Indiana University

July 2006

Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Chairperson, Sarah L. Burns, Ph.D.

Doctoral Committee

Janet Kennedy, Ph. D.

Eugene Kleinbauer, Ph. D.

Julie Van Voorhis, Ph. D.

July 24, 2006

© 2006

Lauren Keach Lessing

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

For my father, George Keach,
a twentieth-century American sculptor
who hated the artworks I discuss here,
but who loved me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am fortunate to have had brilliant and encouraging guides in the field of Art History. Most especially, I am grateful to Sarah Burns, who never lost faith in me throughout this long process, and who continues to provide me with a model of fine teaching and scholarship. Thanks also to Jack Brown, Margi Conrads, Kathy Foster, BJ Irvine, Laura Jones, Susan Nelson, Michael Thiedeman, and Andrew Walker, and to my committee, Janet Kennedy, Gene Kleinbauer, and Julie Van Voorhis.

I owe more thanks than I can express to the members of my family, who have never wavered in their love and patience. Thanks especially to my husband Uri and my son Gabriel, and to Margaret Keach, Martin Keach, Eugene and Florence Klein, Abba and Bonnie Lessing, Avi Lessing and Bindi Desai, Glynnis Lessing and Juan, Ariety, and Leander Fried, Ian Lessing and Amanda Stansell.

I couldn't have finished this dissertation without the support of my friends, in particular Terri Sabatos who read it chapter by chapter and offered advice and encouragement. Thanks also to Hannah Bennett, Sigrid Danielson, John and Janet Fiskio-Lasseter, Randall Griffey, Stepahanie Knappe, Suzanne Moss, Martha Neth and Mark Patterson, Lisa and John Noyes, Susan Perry, Elizabeth and Eddie Roche, Liz Sweeney and Mark Logan, and Nancy Thompson.

Many people have aided me in my research. Thanks are due to Cathryn Anders at Lyndhurst in Tarrytown, New York, Anne Bolin at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut, Jack Brown and the entire wonderful staff at the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries of the Art Institute of Chicago, Mark Brown at the Belmont Mansion Museum in Nashville, Tennessee, Lynn Calvin at the Saratoga County Historical Society in New York, Ben Charland at the Peabody Essex Museum, David Dearing at the Boston Athenaeum, Aviva Dove-Viebahn at the University of Rochester, Lydia Dufour at the Frick Art Reference Library, Andrea Fahnestock at the Museum of the City of New York, Juan Fried of Ross Barney + Jankowski in Chicago, Lou di Gennaro at the Avery Library of Columbia University, William H. Gerds, Richard Hawkins at the Suffolk County Public Libraries in New York, Christopher Johns at the University of Virginia, John Lancaster at the Tennessee Association of Museums, Sherry Lindquist at Northwestern University, Charles Lockwood, David Lubin at Wake Forest University, Stephanie Mayer at Boston University, Elizabeth Montgomery at the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum, Amelia Peck and Thayer Tolles at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Susan Perry at the Chicago Landmarks Commission, Anne B. Shepherd at the Cincinnati Historical Society Library, Edward H.L. Smith, III at the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, Judy Throm at the Archives of American Art, Betsy Towl at the Horace Greeley House and New Castle Historical Society, Amy Trendler at the Art and Architecture Library, Ball State University, Roberta Wagner and Jeffrey Wiedman at the Spencer Art Reference Library of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

I received graduate assistantships from the History of Art Department at Indiana University and the Indiana University Art Museum, and research grants from the College of Arts and Sciences of Indiana University and from the Henry Luce Foundation, for which I am most grateful.

Finally, many people at Indiana University helped me through this process. In particular, thanks are due to Kim Brooks and Fenella Flinn, who fielded my telephone calls from various far-flung regions of the country and kept the gears of my graduate career well oiled and running.

Lauren Keach Lessing

PRESIDING DIVINITIES: IDEAL SCULPTURE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY
AMERICAN DOMESTIC INTERIORS

This dissertation deals with sentimental, marble, ideal figures by Antonio Canova, Hiram Powers, Randolph Rogers, Chauncey Ives, Joseph Mozier, William Rinehart, and others. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, such statues were displayed, often to large audiences, at exhibitions and in sculptors' studios, and published sources generally describe them in these settings. Nevertheless, the vast majority of ideal sculptures produced at this time were destined for the domestic sphere—a fact that has been overlooked by scholars. Similarly, whereas earlier studies of American ideal sculpture have focused on the wealthy, educated patrons who supported sculptors' careers, this dissertation explores the role of buyers—men and women who purchased one or more ideal sculptures for their houses, usually during a single trip to Italy, and who were motivated more by private concerns than by a desire to advance the cause of art in the United States. In many ways, these buyers resembled middle-class consumers of sculptural reproductions in mediums such as plaster or parian, making it possible for me to draw connections between ideal sculpture and a broad nineteenth-century culture of

sentimental domesticity.

Using seven in-depth case studies of American domestic interiors ranging from the 1840s to the 1880s, I argue that ideal sculptures in private homes were more than just decorative props. They were active players in domestic rituals and “presiding divinities” over domestic life. Installed in private homes, these artworks idealized western concepts of gender and domesticity, modeled genteel behavior, evoked reverence, allayed anxiety and, at the same time, confirmed their owners’ taste and wealth. Drawing on the methodologies of cultural studies—in particular studies of consumption, cultural biography, and material culture—I explore the role ideal sculpture played in sacralizing and sentimentalizing the nineteenth-century American home, and in constructing concepts of family, nationality, gender, race and class that were fundamental to individuals’ understandings, and public presentations, of themselves.

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1 - Hiram Powers

The Greek Slave, 1846

Marble, 65 in. high

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Gift of William Wilson Corcoran, 73.4

Fig. 2 - Attributed to Nicolino Calyo

Richard K. Haight Family, c.1842-1843

Gouache on paper, 20 x 15 in.

The Museum of the City of New York; bequest of Elizabeth Cushing Iselin, 74.97.2

Fig. 3 - Unknown artisan, likely Italian

Gilt plaster and wood frame, c.1840

Museum of the City of New York

Fig. 4 - Bierstadt Brothers (Charles and Edward Bierstadt)

View in a Conservatory, Fifth Avenue, N.Y., c.1860

Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views

New York Public Library

Fig. 5 - Unknown photographer

Mary Hampton in her Drawing Room,

Columbia, South Carolina, c.1860

Reproduced in William Seale, *The Tasteful Interlude: American Interiors Through the Camera's Eye* (London: Alta Mira Press, 1995), 31.

Fig. 6 - Unknown photographer

Sallie Baxter Hampton and Infant,

Drawing Room of Mary Baxter Hampton

Columbia, South Carolina, c.1860

Reproduced in William Seale, *The Tasteful Interlude: American Interiors Through the Camera's Eye* (London: Alta Mira Press, 1995), 32.

Fig. 7 - Antonio Canova

The Three Graces, 1813-1816

Marble, 182 cm high

Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg

Acquired from the Duke of Leuchtenberg, 1901

Fig. 8 - Antonio Canova

The Three Graces, 1814-1817

Marble, 180 cm high

Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, A.4-1994

Fig. 9 - Bierstadt Brothers (Charles and Edward Bierstadt)
Conservatory View, Fifth Avenue, N.Y., c.1860
Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views
New York Public Library

Fig. 10 - Bierstadt Brothers (Charles and Edward Bierstadt)
Conservatory View, Fifth Avenue, N.Y., c.1860
Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views
New York Public Library

Fig. 11 - Sir Joshua Reynolds
Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces, 1763-65
Oil on Canvas, 242 x 151.5 cm
The Art Institute of Chicago, 1922.4468

Fig. 12 - Unknown artist
The Graces (After Canova—A Very Long Way), 1851
Wood engraving, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Mid-Manhattan Picture Collection
New York Public Library

Fig. 13 - Peter Paul Rubens
The Education of Marie de Medici, 1622-1625.
Oil on canvas, 12' 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 9' 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
Musée du Louvre, Paris

Fig. 14 - Charles Willson Peale
The Peale Family, c.1771-1773 and 1808
Oil on canvas, 56 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 89 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Bryan Collection
The New York Historical Society, New York

Fig. 15 - Unknown illustrator
"The Happy Family"
steel engraving
Published in *Miss Leslie's Magazine*, 1 (January 1843), frontispiece.

Fig. 16 - Thomas Crawford
Flora, modeled 1847
Marble, 86 in. high
Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey

Fig. 17 - Bierstadt Brothers (Charles and Edward Bierstadt)
Conservatory View, New York, c.1860
Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views
New York Public Library

Fig. 18 - Hiram Powers
Proserpine, 1849
marble, 25 in. high
Private Collection

Fig. 19 - Erastus Dow Palmer
The White Captive, modeled 1857-58
Marble, 65 in. high
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Fig. 20 - Drawing Room of Hamilton Fish, published in
*Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number
of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States with a Description of
the Art Treasures Contained Therein*, vol.2 (New York: D. Appleton, 1883), 94.

Fig. 21 - Roman copy after Doidalsas of Bithynia
“Crouching Venus,” 3rd Century BCE
The Pius-Clementine Museum of Sculpture
The Vatican, Rome, Italy

Fig. 22 - E. P. Stephanoff, engraved by J. N. Gimbrede
“Home”
Steele engraving,
Published in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 22 (December 1841), frontispiece

Fig. 23 - Hiram Powers
A Country Woman, 1839
Marble, 23 in. high
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 24 - Hiram Powers
Anna Hazard Barker Ward, modeled 1837-38
plaster, 24 5/8 in. high
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.

Fig. 25 - Hiram Powers
Ginevra (first version), 1841
Marble, 24 in. high
Cincinnati Art Museum

Fig. 26 - Hiram Powers
Proserpine (first version), 1843
Marble, 24 in. high
Philadelphia Museum of Art

Fig. 27 - After Thomas Sully
“Fanny”

Steel engraving

published in *The Gift* (Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, 1839), frontispiece

Fig. 28 - Unknown illustrator

Hand-colored steel engraving

Published in *Godey's Lady's Book* (August, 1854), frontispiece

Fig. 29 - Hiram Powers

Proserpine, c.1850

Marble, 21 1/4 in. high

Greenwich Gallery, Greenwich Connecticut

Fig.30 - W.J.C., published by H. R. Robinson

Misery Acquaints a Man with Strange Bedfellows, 1848

Lithograph on wove paper, 26.6 x38 cm

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Fig. 31 - Edward Lamson Henry

Parlor on Brooklyn Heights of Mr. and Mrs. John Bullard, 1872

Oil on panel, 15 3/8 x 17 5/8. in.

Manoogian Collection

Fig. 32 - Unknown illustrator

“What Dandies Do,”

wood engraving

published in *Graham's American Monthly Magazine of Literature, Art, and Fashion*,
40 (May 1852), 471

Fig. 33 - Hiram Powers

Martha Endicott Peabody Rogers, 1845

marble, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass.

Fig. 34 - John Dodge

Adelicia Acklen, 1852

Watercolor on ivory, 3 x 2 1/2 in.

Belmont Mansion Museum, Nashville, Tennessee

Fig. 35 - John Dodge
Joseph Acklen, 1851
Watercolor on ivory, 3 x 2 ½ in.
Belmont Mansion Museum, Nashville, Tennessee

Fig. 36 - Unknown illustrator
“A Female Rebel in Baltimore—An Everyday Scene,”
Published in *Harper’s Weekly*, 5 (7 September 1861), cover

Fig. 37 - Unknown illustrator
“Sowing and Reaping,”
Published in *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* 23 (May 1863), 141.

Fig. 38 - Unknown photographer
Belmont Mansion from its Water Tower, c.1860
Photograph, Belmont Mansion Collection

Fig. 39 - Adolphus Heiman
Belmont Mansion, built 1853
Nashville, Tennessee

Fig. 40 - “An Anglo-Grecian Villa,” published in
Godey’s Lady’s Book 37 (November 1848), 308

Fig. 41 - C.C. Giers
Entrance Hall, Belmont Mansion, c.1867
Stereograph, Belmont Mansion Collection

Fig. 42 - C.C. Giers
Entrance Hall, Belmont Mansion, c.1867
Stereograph, Belmont Mansion Collection

Fig. 43 - Chauncey Bradley Ives
Rebecca at the Well, 1854 (this version 1866)
Marble, 50 in. high
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Gift of Mrs. Anna C. McCreery, 1899 (99.8)

Fig. 44 - Chauncey Bradley Ives
Sans Souci, 1864
Location unknown
(Photograph, Frick Art Reference Library Image Files)

Fig. 45 - Randolph Rogers
Ruth Gleaning, 1850 (this version, 1855 or 1856)
Marble, 45 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Gift of James Douglas, 1899 (99.7.1)

Fig. 46 - Randolph Rogers
Nydia, The Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii, c. 1853–54 (this version, 1859)
Marble, 54 in. high
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Gift of James Douglas, 1899 (99.7.2)

Fig. 47 - Randolph Rogers
The Lost Pleiade (Merope)
Marble, 129.5 cm high
The Art Institute of Chicago
Gift of Mrs. E. S. Stickney,
1889.8

Fig. 48 - William Henry Rinehart
Sleeping Children, 1859 (this version, 1874)
Marble, 15 x 18 x 37 in.
Mead Art Museum, Amherst College
Gift of Mr. And Mrs. William H. Gerdtz (Class of 1949)
1996.162

Fig. 49 - Joseph Mozier
The Peri, c.1865
Marble
Acklen Mausoleum, Mount Olivet Cemetery, Nashville, Tennessee

Fig. 50 - C.C. Giers
Grand Salon, Belmont Mansion, c.1867
Stereograph, Belmont Mansion Collection

Fig. 51 - Unknown photographer
Grand Salon, Belmont Mansion, c.1867
Photograph, Belmont Mansion Collection

Fig. 52 - Hiram Powers
California, 1850–55 (this carving, 1858)
Marble, 71 in. high
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Gift of William Backhouse Astor, 1872 (72.3)

Fig. 53 – “Adelicia Acklen Cheatham,”
Published in Mrs. Ellet, *The Queens of American Society*
(Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1867), 416.

Fig. 54 - Thomas Sully
Queen Victoria, 1838
oil on canvas, 94 x 58 inches
Collection of Mrs. Arthur A. Houghton Jr.,
on loan to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Fig. 55 - Muldoon and Co.
Acklen Mausoleum, 1884
Mount Olivet Cemetery, Nashville, Tennessee

Fig. 56 - Detlef Lienau
Elmwood, 1865-1869
Norwalk, Connecticut

Fig. 57 - Paul Schulze
Design for a country residence, published in
Henry Hudson Holly, *Holly's Country Seats: Containing Lithographic Designs for
Cottages, Villas, Mansions, etc. with Their Accompanying Outbuildings, also, Country
Churches, City Buildings, Railway Stations, etc., etc.*
(New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1863), 146.

Fig. 58 - Elmwood ground floor plan

Fig. 59 - Albert Bierstadt
The Domes of the Yosemite, 1867
Oil on canvas, 116 x 180 in.
St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, St. Johnsbury, Vermont

Fig. 60 - William Bradford
Sealers Crushed by Icebergs, 1866
Oil on canvas, 6 x 10 ft.
New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Mass.

Fig. 61 - Unknown photographer
Elmwood entrance hall, looking north
Stereograph, c.1869
Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum

Fig. 62 - Unknown photographer
Elmwood entrance hall, looking south
Stereograph, c.1869
Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum

Fig. 63 - Joseph Mozier
Pocahontas, 1850 (this version 1868)
Marble, 48 in. high
The Art Institute of Chicago
Roger McCormick and J. Peter McCormick funds, 1997.366

Fig. 64 - Joseph Mozier
The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish (first version), c.1853 (this version 1859)
Marble, 48 in. high
Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum, Norwalk, Connecticut

Fig. 65 - Erastus Dow Palmer
Indian Girl, or, The Dawn of Christianity, 1853-56
Marble, 60 in. high
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Bequest of Hamilton Fish, 1894 (94.9.2)

Fig. 66 - Unknown photographer
Elmwood rotunda, looking north-east
Stereograph, c.1869
Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum

Fig. 67 - Herter Brothers
Sofa, made for the rotunda of Elmwood
Walnut, marquetry of various woods, 53 in. high x 79 3/8 in. long
The Lockwood-Matthews Museum

Fig. 68 - Unknown photographer
Elmwood rotunda, looking north-east
Stereograph, c.1869
Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum

Fig. 69 - Larkin Goldsmith Mead
Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella, 1868 to 1871
Cararra marble, larger than life-size
California State Capitol Museum, Sacramento

Fig. 70 - Randolph Rogers
Isaac (second version), c.1864-65
Marble, 42 1/4 in. high
Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia
James H. Ricau Collection, 86.517

Fig. 71 - F.O.C. Darley. Eng. by Rolph & Jewett
“Domestic Life among the Indians”
steel engraving
Published in *Godey's Magazine*, 30 (June 1845), frontispiece

Fig. 72 - Mrs. Bloomfield Moore's Hall, published in
*Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number
of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States with a Description of
the Art Treasures Contained Therein*, vol.2 (New York: D. Appleton, 1883), 153.

Fig. 73 - George Fuller (1822–1884)
Nydia, 1882
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Gift of George I. Seney, 1887 (87.8.10)

Fig. 74 - Louis Lang
Blind Nydia Emerging from the Gardens of Glaucus Bearing Flowers, 1868
Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in.
Private Collection

Fig. 75 - Holme Cardwell
A Marble Group of Iona and Nydia, 1868
Marble, 50 ½ in.
Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, England

Fig. 76 - Eugène Delacroix
Liberty Leading the People (28 July 1830), 1830
Oil on canvas, 259 x 325 cm,
Louvre Museum, Paris

Fig. 77 - G. Galli
Engraving of Pietro Guarnerio's Sculpture, “Pompeii,” 1876
published in Edward Strahan, *The Masterpieces of the Centennial International Exhibition
Illustrated*, vol.1 (Philadelphia: Gebbie & Barrie, 1876), 311.

Fig. 78 - Olin Levi Warner (1844-1896)
Twilight, 1877-78
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Rogers Fund, 1915 (15.48)

Fig. 79 - Unknown photographer
Portrait of Elsie De Wolfe, 1898
Museum of the City of New York

Fig. 80 - Joseph Dunlap Eagles
Interior of the McGraw-Fiske mansion, Ithaca, N.Y.
“Merope” the Lost Pleiade in Art Gallery, 1883
Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views
New York Public Library

Fig. 81 - Joseph Dunlap Eagles
Interior of the McGraw-Fiske mansion, Ithaca, N.Y.
View of the art gallery, from the grand entrance, 1883
Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views
New York Public Library

Fig. 82 - William Adolphe Bouguereau
L'Etoile Perdue, 1884
Oil on canvas, 77 x 37 ½ in.
Private collection

Fig. 83 - Elihu Vedder
The Pleiades, 1885
Oil on canvas; 24 1/8 x 37 5/8 in. (61.3 x 95.6 cm)
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Gift of George A. Hearn, 1910 (10.64.13)

Fig. 84 - Unknown illustrator
“The Pleiades”
steel engraving
Published in *Godey's Lady's Book* 68 (January 1854), 21

Fig. 85 - Joseph Michel-Ange Pollet (1814-1870)
Une Heure De La Nuit, c.1848 (this version 1862)
Marble, 18 1/2 x 47 1/8 inches (47.25 x 120 cm)
Private collection

Fig. 86 - Joseph Dunlap Eagles
McGraw-Fiske mansion, Ithaca, N.Y., 1883
Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views
New York Public Library

Fig. 87 - Harriet Goodhue Hosmer
Zenobia in Chains, 1859
Marble, 49 in. high
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut

Fig. 88 - Unknown photographer
Entrance hall of "Palmer Castle," c.1885
Mounted photograph collection,
Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago

Fig. 89 - Randolph Rogers
Michigan Soldier's and Sailor's Monument, 1867-81
Bronze and granite, 56 feet high
Detroit, Michigan

Fig. 90 - Randolph Rogers
Heroic Figure of Michigan, c.1866
Plaster, 8 feet high
Formerly Bentley Historical Library,
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Fig. 91 - Antoine-Louis Barye
Tiger Surprising an Antelope, c. 1831, cast after 1855
bronze, 13 3/4 x 21 15/16 x 9 in.
National gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
Gift of Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer
1967.13.2

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

On an April evening in 1859, Louise Corcoran, the only child of the fabulously wealthy banker, philanthropist and art collector William W. Corcoran, married George Eustis, a United States Congressman from Louisiana, in her father's Washington, D.C. mansion. A "select circle" of several hundred guests witnessed the ceremony, which took place in Corcoran's private art gallery.¹ Writing of the wedding for *Harper's Weekly*, George Washington Jenkins noted that one of the original versions of Hiram Powers' celebrated marble statue the *Greek Slave* stood at one end of the gallery, "in a bay window which forms a fitting shrine." He went on to describe the "impressive and beautiful tableau" that greeted the wedding guests as they entered the gallery.

At the far end of the gallery, as a presiding divinity, was the exquisite chef d'oeuvre of Powers, surrounded by the rarest exotics, pure and white as the eloquent marble itself. Before the pedestal, however, were dense clusters of scarlet azelias [sic], which formed an effective background for the bride, who was, of course, the "observed of all observers." Never was there a more lovely victim at the altar of Hymen and never did she appear more beautiful.

Jenkins wrote of the bride's white silk and point lace gown, the handsome groom, and the artfully grouped wedding attendants before briefly describing the ceremony.

[The Rev.] Dr. Pyne stopped a few paces in front of the couple about to be wedded, Mr. Corcoran standing at his right hand, just in his rear, the attendants being on either side... Never was the ritual of the church more impressively read. Mr. Corcoran gave the bride away; the wedded couple knelt upon two prayer

¹ More than one thousand guests attended the reception, which Mrs. Jefferson Davis referred to as "a small Rothschild's affair." Letter from Varina Anne Banks Howell Davis to Jefferson Finis Davis, 3 April 1859, in Hudson Strode, ed., *Jefferson Davis, Private Letters 1823-1889* (New York: Harcourt Brace World, 1966), 580. Corcoran's art gallery remained part of his private home until Louise Corcoran's marriage, after which he set plans in motion to open his collection to the public in a separate building.

cushions placed before them; and no sooner had the clergyman said “Amen!” then they sealed the right with a kiss.²

The costumes of Louise Corcoran and her bridesmaids, the flowers, and the arrangement of the wedding party followed, almost to the letter, the recommendations for a tasteful wedding set forward in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* the previous November.³

However, the Corcoran family substituted their private art gallery for a church and reversed the usual order of the wedding procession. It was the guests and the minister who entered with the father of the bride. The bride, the groom, and their attendants stood posed and motionless—like works of art themselves—before an ideal marble statue, *The Greek Slave* (fig. 1), which took the place of a Christian altar.⁴

By 1859, Powers’ statue had achieved iconic status. Everyone at the Corcoran wedding would have been familiar with its subject.⁵ It depicts a young, Christian woman captured by Turks during the recent Greek War of Independence. Stripped and chained at

² George Washington Jenkins, “The Corcoran Wedding,” *Harper’s Weekly* 3 (April 16, 1859): 241-242.

³ “Centre-Table Gossip, Bridal Etiquette,” *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 57 (November 1858): 475.

⁴ In his description of the scene as a “tableau” Jenkins alluded to *tableaux vivants*—popular parlor theatricals which were formally and thematically related to ideal sculpture.

⁵ In 1847-1849, Corcoran’s version of the sculpture was publicly exhibited, with much fanfare, in New York, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Orleans and Cincinnati, where more than one hundred thousand Americans saw it. Richard P. Wunder, *Hiram Powers: Vermont Sculptor. 1805-1873* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989-1991), vol.2, 158-167. For a discussion of the *Greek Slave*’s tour of the United States, see Wunder, vol.1, 217-221; Joy Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives: Women in Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 46-72; Nancie Clow Farrell, “The Slave that Captivated America,” *Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin*, 22, no.4 (1969): 221-239; and Samuel A. Robertson and William H. Gerds, “Greek Slave,” *The Newark Museum Quarterly* 17 (Winter-Spring 1965): 1-30. This last article, though insightful and ground breaking, contains a number of inaccuracies.

the wrists, she stands on the auction block stoically awaiting her imminent sale into sexual slavery. In light of its subject matter, the *Greek Slave* might seem a bizarre choice for a wedding altar. Nevertheless, it created a vision of domesticity that mid-nineteenth-century viewers found immensely appealing.

At a time when a growing number of Americans were protesting the legal, political and economic disenfranchisement of married women in the United States, Powers' sculpture idealized the western model of marriage and family by contrasting it with a fantasy of the dissolute East. His chaste subject stands in marked contrast to a woman of the harem. As Powers' friend and promoter Minor Kellogg noted, "The cross and the locket, visible amid the drapery, indicate that she is Christian and beloved."⁶ Viewers often focused as much attention on the slave's past as they did on her future fate, contrasting "her distant, happy cottage home in Greece," where she had been cherished and adored, with the polygamous, lustful and pecuniary union about to be imposed on her.⁷ From this comparison emerged an idealized vision of Christian domestic life characterized by "love, trust, hope and joy"—an ideal that obscured the actual second-class status of married women throughout the western world at this time.⁸ The *Greek Slave* also embodied the mid-nineteenth-century ideal of "true womanhood"—an ideal

⁶ Quoted in the promotional pamphlet *Powers' Statue of the Greek Slave* (Boston: Eastburn's Press, 1848).

⁷ W. H. Coyle, "Powers' Greek Slave," undated excerpt from *The Detroit Advertiser*, quoted in *ibid.*

⁸ James Freeman Clarke, "The Greek Slave," quoted in *ibid.* The rhetorical use of the Orient as a foil against which Westerners define themselves and their culture has been discussed at length by Edward Said in his seminal book *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

that Barbara Welter has described as passive, pious, pure and domestic.⁹ As one American observer noted, the *Greek Slave* combined “all that is beautiful in the ideal—that glows in the fancy—and all that is cheerful and home-like in the fair beings who cluster around our own firesides and live in our hearts... An impure thought cannot rise in the bosom of the gazer, unless he be one who is unfit for the society of a pure woman.”¹⁰

As the passage above suggests, the *Greek Slave* not only idealized western concepts of gender and domestic life, it also encouraged proper domestic behavior among its viewers. A reporter for the *New York Courier and Enquirer* noted,

It is extremely interesting to watch the effect which the statue has upon all who come before it. Its presence is a magic circle within whose precincts all are held spell-bound and almost speechless. The grey-headed man, the youth, the matron, and the maid alike, yield themselves to the magic of its power, and gaze upon it in reverential admiration, and so pure an atmosphere breathes round it, that the eye of man beams only with reverent delight, and the cheek of woman glows with the fullness of emotion.¹¹

According to this and other accounts, the *Slave* created a quasi-religious space around itself, subduing its audience and evoking gendered, highly emotional responses which

⁹ Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860,” *American Quarterly* 18, no.1 (1966): 151-174. In the last thirty years, a number of scholars have questioned the degree to which women actually conformed to the ideal Welter described; however, it is precisely because there was no consensus about women’s nature and proper role that the ideal of “true womanhood” was a powerful cultural tool—it presented the viewpoint of the white bourgeois elite as natural and universal.

¹⁰ “The Genius and Sculptures of Powers,” *The American Whig Review* 2 (August 1845): 202.

¹¹ “Powers’ Greek Slave,” *The Courier and Enquirer* (New York), 31 August 1847, quoted in *Powers’ Statue of the Greek Slave*. Powers and his promoters used such descriptions of viewer behavior to fend off any possible accusation of lewdness; however, such reports were too widespread to have been fabricated.

were more closely associated with the sacred precincts of church and home than with the impersonal, public arena of the exhibition hall.

The assembled wedding guests in Corcoran's gallery might well have found the sculpture's spectacle of exposed (and commercially available) female flesh erotic—an eroticism that was surely heightened by its proximity to the blushing young bride; however, unless women responded with sympathetic modesty and men with flawless gallantry they risked identifying themselves with the barbarous Turks in the slave's fictional audience.¹² Nor was their attitude toward the sculpture merely affected. The *Greek Slave*'s embedded, sentimental narrative of ruptured domestic bonds addressed the separation from natal home and family that was a pressing anxiety for young women and their parents at this time—an anxiety that would have been particularly acute during a wedding. Furthermore, the statue's vulnerable female subject evoked sympathetic and protective responses. Even in the more neutral setting of a public exhibition hall, viewers sometimes imagined themselves as the slave's lost lover or mother, or as the slave herself

¹² At least one author explicitly attributed a (fictional) young woman's failure to show reverence for the *Greek Slave* to a lack of proper religious and domestic education. See Mrs. H. C. Gardner, "The Ill-Bred Girl," *The Ladies' Repository* 15 (April, 1855): 205-206. Significantly, the figure itself modeled the bodily and emotional self-control that was an essential component of genteel behavior. Writing for *Godey's* in 1853, Mrs. Merrifield recommended that every young lady desirous of making a good impression in society have a small copy of the *Greek Slave* on her dressing table. "Dress as a Fine Art," *Godey's Lady's Book* 47 (1853): 20. The relationship between the *Greek Slave*'s pose and the genteel deportment recommended by nineteenth-century writers on etiquette has been noted by Wendy Jean Katz, *Regionalism and Reform: Art and Class Formation in Antebellum Cincinnati* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2004), 164-65.

longing for her lost family.¹³ Regardless of the viewpoint they chose, the anguish of broken familial bonds was a persistent strain in viewers' thoughts.

Joy Kasson has rightly noted that the *Greek Slave* tapped into a profound cultural anxiety about the safety and integrity of the domestic sphere.¹⁴ In fact, viewers conflated the slave's body with the fraught barrier between the private and public realms, contrasting the corruption, exposure, and ruin that oppressed her from without with the comfort, faith and love sheltered within her heart.¹⁵ The drama of Powers' narrative came from the threat that her body—her last domestic barrier—might be violated; however, the sculpture allayed these fears even as it raised them. The contrast between its seeming softness and pliancy and its actual material—hard, cold marble—reassured viewers that the chaste female body was, like the Christian home, a fortress besieged but unyielding. One contemporary viewer wrote, “In the Bazaar, as on the pedestal, she stands a statue,” implying that the subject herself has chosen to be like stone.¹⁶

As the Corcoran wedding attests, ideal sculptures in private homes were more than just decorative props. They were active players in domestic rituals and “presiding

¹³ One viewer imagined herself as the slave's mother, confronting a vision of her child, “naked, forlorn, gazed at by pitiless eyes—a thing of scorn!” “Powers' Greek Slave,” *Putnam's Monthly*, 4 (December 1854): 666. Of course, the sculpture also invited another imaginative viewpoint—that of a Turk, but this was never publicly acknowledged.

¹⁴ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 65.

¹⁵ In her celebrated poem about Powers' sculpture, Elizabeth Barrett Browning located the figure in the liminal space between the interior and the exterior of a metaphorical house. “They say that ideal beauty cannot enter/ The house of anguish. On the threshold stands/ an alien image, with ensnaked hands, called the Greek Slave!” Browning, “Hiram Powers' ‘Greek Slave,’” *The International Magazine of Literature, Science, and Art* 2 (1 December 1850): 88. This poem was first printed in the 26 October 1850 issue of Charles Dickens' journal *Household Words*.

¹⁶ “Sketches of Italy,” *Arthur's Ladies' Magazine* 1 (January 1845): 64.

divinities” over domestic life. Idealizing western concepts of gender and domesticity, modeling genteel behavior, evoking reverence, allaying anxiety and, at the same time, confirming Mr. Corcoran’s taste and wealth, *The Greek Slave* was a perfect ornament for a domestic wedding altar. In this dissertation, I will explore the role ideal sculpture played in sacralizing and sentimentalizing the nineteenth-century American home, and in constructing concepts of family, nationality, gender, race and class that were fundamental to individuals’ understandings, and public presentations, of themselves.

I have taken my definition of “ideal sculpture” from Joy Kasson, who described these works as “three-dimensional, figurative works, usually marble, life-sized or slightly smaller, portraying (usually female) subjects drawn from literature, history, the Bible or mythology.”¹⁷ Such statues truly led a double life. They were displayed, often to large audiences, at exhibitions and in sculptors’ studios, and published sources generally describe them in these settings; however, the vast majority of ideal sculptures produced during the nineteenth century were destined for the domestic sphere, leading the American art critic James Jackson Jarves to refer to them derisively in his 1869 book *Art Thoughts* as, “ordinary parlor statues, Eves, Greek Slaves, Judiths and the like.”¹⁸

Ideal sculptures were also sentimental objects. By this I mean that they communicated through a system of signs designed to convey strong emotions and evoke

¹⁷Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 24-25.

¹⁸ James Jackson Jarves, *Art Thoughts, the Experience and Observation of an American Amateur in Europe* (New York: Hurd & Houghton; Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1869), 305.

a sympathetic response in the viewer.¹⁹ Although sentimentalism was by no means confined to the domestic sphere, it played a crucial role in the construction of nineteenth-century domesticity. It was largely through sentimental rhetoric that the home was defined as a “separate sphere,” characterized by sympathetic emotional bonds and opposed to the heartless, outside world of impersonal market relations.²⁰ Through both their melodramatic narratives of love and loss and the sympathetic responses they evoked, ideal sculptures contributed to this sentimental construction of the home.

The decades of the 1840s through the 1880s form the parameters of my study. Although the American sculptor Horatio Greenough (1805-1852) was modeling ideal figures in Florence as early as the late 1820s, it was during the 1840s, when wealthy Americans began routinely traveling to Europe, that the market for ideal sculpture in the United States first flourished. Despite a widespread misconception that the style waned rapidly after the Civil War, sculptors’ records show that ideal works continued to sell briskly during the two decades that followed.²¹ In fact, ideal sculpture continued to be

¹⁹ See June Howard, “What is Sentimentality?” *American Literary History* 11 (1999): 63-81. Kirsten Pai Buick explored the relationship between ideal sculpture and sentimental culture in “The Sentimental Education of Mary Edmonia Lewis: Identity, Culture and Ideal Works,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1999.

²⁰ Recently, many scholars have questioned the utility of the model of “separate spheres” as an analytical tool for studying nineteenth-century culture. Rather than presenting the separate, domestic sphere as a social reality, I intend to show that it was a rhetorical construct that masked the interrelated nature of public and private life. See Cathy N. Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher, eds., *No More Separate Spheres!* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

²¹ See for instance Randolph Rogers’ record book, summarized in Millard F. Rogers, *Randolph Rogers: American Sculptor in Rome* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1971); Typescript of Chauncey Bradley Ives’ commissions in the curatorial files of the Department of American Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Wunder, *Hiram Powers: Vermont Sculptor, 1805-1873*, vol.2. The reasons for ideal sculpture’s enduring

bought for domestic interiors until nearly the turn of the century; however, it was in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, when these statues combined the “aura” of rare and precious art objects with the still vital ideology of sentimental domesticity, that they wielded their greatest cultural power.²²

By the end of the nineteenth century, most critics dismissed ideal sculpture as formulaic, derivative, and feminine. Early twentieth-century critics and historians of sculpture in the United States continued to use these works as foils against which new styles could be constructed as serious, original, and masculine.²³ The resulting stigma had real and devastating effects. Many ideal sculptures were neglected, abandoned and lost. Works that had found their way into museum collections were de-accessioned or relegated to dusty (or wet) storage spaces. Statues in private hands were often used as garden ornaments.

In the late 1960s, the resurgence of interest in nineteenth-century American art sparked a reappraisal of ideal sculpture. For the last thirty-five years, scholars have

popularity aren’t hard to discern. After the Civil War, there were many newly rich Americans eager to establish their cultural credentials in the proven ways established by their predecessors. Furthermore, by the late 1860s, innovations in steam travel had made the journey to and from Italy easier, safer, and less expensive.

²² Walter Benjamin coined the term “aura” to describe the power of the unique or rare object. Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in Hannah Arendt, ed. *Illuminations* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1973): 217-251. As ideal sculpture became less rare in American homes, its status and power declined.

²³ See for instance Cyrus Edwin Dallin, “American Sculpture—Its Present Aspects and Tendencies,” *Brush and Pencil* 11, no.6 (1903): 416-429; Charles Henry Caffin, *American Masters of Sculpture* (Garden City; New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1913), v; J. Walker McSpadden, *Famous Sculptors of America* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1924), ii-vii; Loreda Taft, *The History of American Sculpture* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903). Although Taft devoted two thirds of this book to sculptors who worked before 1876, he nevertheless described this period as “a season of mediocrity.”

worked to recover the history of the genre. Painstakingly, they have pieced together the careers of individual sculptors and identified their works, producing a steady stream of monographs, collection catalogs and essays. Sale prices have risen steadily in response to this renewed interest, and ideal statues have emerged from decades of obscurity to be conserved, identified, described, and installed in museums and public galleries.

By 1990, a sufficient body of knowledge about American ideal sculpture existed for Joy Kasson to describe some of the most popular themes of these works and link them to broader cultural trends. In particular, she explored the ways in which ideal sculptures embodied anxieties about women's shifting roles. Yet, because she was still working to redeem these works of art from past criticisms, Kasson consistently privileged their public display and reception. While she acknowledged that private homes were the ultimate destination of most ideal statues, she argued that their role within these settings was essentially decorative and that their important cultural work was done elsewhere.²⁴ By dismissing the crucial relationship between ideal sculptures and the domestic context for which they were created, she failed to recognize some of their richest meanings and most important functions.

Kasson made a similar oversight in her discussion of patronage by distinguishing between public-minded "benefactors," who supported their protégés' careers, and mere "buyers," who purchased one or two ideal sculptures for their homes.²⁵ Despite Kasson's contention that benefactors were more important than buyers, the latter group far outnumbered the former. Benefactors were crucial in establishing sculptors in their trade

²⁴ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 23-25.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-18.

but buyers kept them in business. Furthermore, unlike benefactors, who were almost invariably men, many buyers were women. By underestimating the importance of buyers, Kasson overlooked the significant impact women had on the styles and subjects sculptors chose for their work. My dissertation is, in part, a corrective to Kasson's brilliant but too-narrow vision of the cultural work ideal sculpture performed. It is also a response to more recent studies, in particular those by David Dearing, Anne McNair Bolin and Wendy Jean Katz.

In addition to compiling an invaluable list of nineteenth-century owners of ideal sculpture, Dearing illuminated, more subtly and thoroughly than had Kasson, the symbiotic relationship between American sculptors and their patrons.²⁶ Yet, like Kasson, he made a distinction between "patrons" (whom he defined as active, public-minded supporters of sculptors' careers) and mere buyers. His study is of the former group. My dissertation, on the other hand, is concerned primarily with buyers—men and women who purchased one or more ideal sculptures for their houses, usually during a single trip to Italy, and who were motivated more by private concerns than by a desire to advance the cause of art in the United States. In many ways, these buyers resembled middle-class consumers of sculptural reproductions in mediums such as plaster or parian, making it possible for me to draw connections between ideal sculpture and a broad nineteenth-century culture of sentimental domesticity.²⁷

²⁶ David Dearing, "American Neoclassic Sculptors and their Private Patrons in Boston," Ph.D. dissertation, City University of New York, 1993.

²⁷ See Michelle Bogart, "Attitudes Toward Sculptural Reproduction in America, 1850-1880," Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1979.

In her dissertation, Bolin acknowledged the similarity between middle- and upper-class consumers of household art.²⁸ In both middle and upper-class homes, she argued, artworks were parts of a larger whole—the domestic interior—which functioned as a text. Citing a wealth of nineteenth-century prescriptive literature as evidence, she interpreted this text as primarily moralizing and didactic. The home, she argued, was conceived as a school where proper feelings and moral ideas were learned, and its embellishments served to further this end. I agree with Bolin that the domestic interior can be usefully viewed as a text and that one of its functions was educational; however, I contend that domestic interiors functioned in far more complex ways than either Bolin or nineteenth-century men and women themselves acknowledged. In particular, the domestic interior and the artworks it contained were tightly bound to the creation of identity.²⁹ By the nineteenth century, individual identity had become both fluid and elusive. This created a general longing to be known, loved and appreciated—a longing that gave rise to the cult of domesticity. The unfixed nature of identity also created an unprecedented opportunity for self-fashioning. By elaborating their domestic interiors, middle and upper-class men and women created a context in which their identities could be read and understood in a stable, positive way.

In her recent chapter on Hiram Powers' ideal sculpture in Cincinnati, Wendy Katz touched on the question of how these artworks functioned for their owners. Katz noted

²⁸ Anne McNair Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture: the Residential Art Gallery in New York City, 1850-1870," Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 2000.

²⁹ The relationship between nineteenth-century domestic ideology, personal possessions and individualism has been explored by Gillian Brown in *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).

that Powers' ideal busts, including *Proserpine*, *Ginevra* and the bust version of the *Greek Slave* (all of which link the themes of marriage and captivity) were frequently given as gifts to young married women. She argued that, as part of a system of domestic exchange, they served to strengthen social and familial bonds. She further contended that, by virtue of their display in private homes, they acted as stand-ins for the women who "arranged the moral order of the home," modeling the restraint and polite submission to others required of genteel women.³⁰ My research has confirmed that ideal sculptures (full-scale statues as well as busts) were indeed exchanged as gifts, sometimes just before or after a wedding.³¹ Not only did these gifts cement social ties and model correct feminine behavior, they reinforced a sentimental construction of the home by poignantly evoking the loving bonds between family members. Thus, when Martha Peabody's parents gave her a portrait bust of herself in the guise of Proserpine on the eve of her wedding, they expressed their feelings of loss as she left their home for her husband's.³² By displaying this bust in their home, both Martha and her husband expressed their reverence for the

³⁰ Katz, *Regionalism and Reform*, 169-171.

³¹ Married sons and daughters, particularly those who visited Italy on their wedding trip, also purchased ideal sculpture for their parents. For example, Potter and Bertha Palmer purchased a copy of Randolph Rogers' sculpture *Nydia, the Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii* for Bertha's mother on their wedding trip to Rome in 1871. The sculpture was prominently displayed at the wedding of Bertha's younger sister three years later. See Mary Simmerson Cunningham Logan, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife: An Autobiography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 375.

³² Proserpine, the daughter of the Roman earth goddess Ceres, was abducted and seduced by Pluto. As will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 2, nineteenth-century interpretations of the myth of Proserpine stressed both her anguished separation from her mother, and her growing love for her husband, Pluto.

emotional ties between parents and children, husbands and wives that formed the core of domestic ideology.³³

I hope to show that only when ideal sculpture is considered in its original domestic context can its eloquence and complexity, and its popularity in its own day, be fully understood.³⁴ My work has been informed by studies of consumption and material culture, sentimental fiction and cultural biography. From studies of consumption and material culture, I have taken the task of exploring the “various, complex, and occasionally contradictory” cultural work that ideal sculpture performed within the domestic sphere, in particular its role in creating identity.³⁵ From studies of sentimental

³³ The literature scholar Joanne Dobson has written that, “The principal theme of the sentimental text is the desire for bonding, and it is affiliation on the plane of emotion, sympathy, nurturance or similar moral or spiritual inclination for which sentimental writers and readers yearn. Violation, actual or threatened, of the affectional bond generates the primary tension in the sentimental text and leads to bleak, dispirited, anguished, sometimes outraged, representations of human loss, as well as idealized portrayals of human connection or divine consolation.” Dobson, “Reclaiming Sentimental Literature,” *American Literature* 69 (June 1997): 266-67.

³⁴ In 1973, William H. Gerds argued that ideal sculptures should be judged on how successfully they met the criteria of their own time. See Gerds, *American Neo-Classical Sculpture: The Marble Resurrection* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 51.

³⁵ Kenneth L. Ames, *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 1-2. See also, Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Lori Merish, *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000); Simon J. Bronner, ed., *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920* (Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis Du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1989); Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Colin Campbell *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987); Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987); Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (New York: Basic Books, 1979).

fiction, I have taken my view of ideal sculptures as sentimental objects that conveyed strong emotions, evoked sympathetic responses, and contributed to an idealized vision of American home life—one that had repercussions far beyond the supposed limits of the domestic sphere.³⁶ Drawing on the methodology of cultural biography, I have isolated moments in the “lives” of these sculptures, and suggested how their placement and framing within domestic interiors encouraged particular interpretations among specific communities of viewers.³⁷

Rather than attempting to write a comprehensive study of how ideal sculpture was displayed in American interiors during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, I have chosen to present six in-depth and broadly representative case studies that will suggest some of the cultural work these artworks performed in their domestic settings. I

³⁶ Howard, “What is Sentimentality?” 63. For the pervasiveness of sentimental, domestic culture in the nineteenth century, see Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); and Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). Beginning with Anne Douglas, literary critics have debated the meaning and function of “sentiment” in nineteenth-century culture. These debates have centered around what Laura Wexler has termed the “Douglas-Tompkins Debate.” Whereas Anne Douglas saw sentimentalism as a degradation of American literature, Jane Tompkins argued that it provided women with a political voice opposed to the market-oriented culture of the public sphere and allowed them to sympathize with other women across racial and class divides. More recently, scholars like Shirley Samuels and June Howard have moved beyond this debate and have instead defined sentimentalism as a rhetorical form which evokes emotions, particularly sympathy, and which can be used to support a range of political ends. See Jane Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of America Fiction, 1790-1860* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Laura Wexler, “Literary Eavesdropping, Domestic Fiction and Educational Reform,” in Shirley Samuels, ed. *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 9-38; Shirley Samuels, “Introduction,” *The Culture of Sentiment*, 3-8.

³⁷ Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997).

have made no attempt to discuss every American sculptor of ideal work or every region where it was displayed. To convey a sense of how ideal sculpture gained and eventually lost popularity in the United States, and to demonstrate how sculptors and owners adapted these works to support evolving ideas about the self in relation to the domestic sphere, I have divided my chapters into three thematic sections arranged in rough chronological order.

In my first section, “Domesticating the Ideal, Idealizing the Domestic,” I will discuss the impact European neo-classical sculpture had on American taste, suggest how its placement in domestic interiors inflected its meaning, and explore how later American ideal sculpture, which was created specifically for domestic display, functioned for its audience. My first chapter deals with Richard Kip and Sarah Rogers Haight’s copy of Antonio Canova’s *Three Graces*, as it appears in a portrait of the early 1840s portraying the Haight family in the library of their gothic revival summer cottage. Rather than displaying their sculpture in a pastoral or classicizing setting (such as the two original versions in Europe occupied), the Haights installed it in an intimate, domestic space. The anonymous painter of their family portrait played on the sculpture’s effect in this setting, making it the centerpiece of his painting and using it to emphasize the loving, familial bonds between his subjects.

Next, I will discuss Hiram Powers’ ideal bust *Proserpine* in the parlor of Horace Greeley’s New York brownstone. A biographer who described the parlor in 1854 singled the bust out from the mass of other artworks on display, using it to support his complimentary picture of Greeley as a thoroughly domestic man. With this example in mind, I will explore the ways in which ideal sculptures constructed male as well as

female, public as well as private identity in sentimental and domestic terms. I will also illuminate the qualities that made *Proserpine* the most widely reproduced of all nineteenth-century American ideal sculptures, contrasting it with the similarly themed, similarly lauded, but much less commercially successful sculpture *White Captive* by Erastus Dow Palmer.

In my second section, “Creating an Ideal Self,” I will examine two collections of ideal sculpture installed in opulent domestic interiors just after the Civil War, the first purchased by the Tennessee widow and plantation owner Adelia Acklen and the second by the Connecticut railroad magnate and financier LeGrand Lockwood. Although the two collections were acquired at roughly the same time and contained works by many of the same sculptors, they were used to create very different, highly gendered expressions of identity. When her husband died during the war, Acklen left her home in the hands of occupying Union troops. Risking her reputation as a genteel, Southern lady, she traveled to Louisiana where she struck bargains with both Union and Confederate officers and took charge of her family’s extensive cotton plantations. Seeking to re-domesticate her home and herself in the wake of the war, Acklen redecorated her Tennessee house with ideal sculptures that emphasized her identity as a dutiful wife, mother and Christian.

Lockwood, on the other hand, used his sculpture collection to express his power as an imperialist in benign, domestic terms. Having made a fortune during the Civil War trading U.S. bonds, Lockwood turned his attention in 1865 to investments in railroads and steamships. In the brief period between the end of the war and the sudden loss of his fortune in 1869, Lockwood’s wealth and power expanded with the rapidly expanding nation. He filled his vast, second empire mansion with a collection of paintings, statues

and even furniture that celebrated the principle of manifest destiny. In his entrance hall, flanking the entrance to his art gallery, were two ideal figures modeled by Joseph Mozier—*Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*. These sculptures, which depict an Indian maiden discovering Christianity and a captive white woman remembering her long-lost mother, framed the nation's westward expansion as a project of benign domestication and constructed Lockwood himself as a patriarch and missionary rather than a conqueror.

In my third section, "Looking and Longing," I will examine two ideal sculptures by Randolph Rogers in two aesthetic interiors of the 1870s—Clara and Bloomfield Moore's *Nydia, the Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii* as it appeared in the entrance hall of their Philadelphia townhouse, and Jennie McGraw Fiske's *Merope, the Lost Pleiad* in the art gallery of her palatial villa outside Ithaca, New York. Although the rage for aesthetic interior décor has been viewed as the death knell of ideal sculpture, a rich body of photographic and written evidence suggests otherwise. Ideal sculptures continued to be displayed in even the most "artistic" interiors of the 1870s and '80s; however, the more dramatic, baroque compositions that had become popular during the Civil War struck dissonant notes within the harmoniously arranged, aesthetic interiors that housed them. These sculptures by Rogers, both of which depict anxious women straining to see, gave physical expression to some of the anxieties and longings that permeated the domestic sphere during the transitional decade of the 1870s.

SECTION I DOMESTICATING THE IDEAL/ IDEALIZING THE DOMESTIC

In 1990, Joy Kasson defined nineteenth-century, “three-dimensional, figurative works, usually marble, life-sized or slightly smaller, portraying (usually female) subjects drawn from literature, history, the Bible or mythology” as “ideal” sculptures.¹ In doing so, she abandoned the anachronistic, overly narrow term “neoclassical,” coined by earlier art historians, and returned to the word that nineteenth-century men and women themselves had used to describe such works.

The common, nineteenth-century understanding of what constituted the Ideal in art stemmed from eighteenth-century theories, in particular those put forward by the German classicist and art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Winckelmann certainly did not invent the concept of ideal art; however, he popularized a particular definition of it that resonated with his mid-eighteenth-century audience, and continued to influence popular opinions about the proper appearance and function of sculpture for more than one hundred years. In two publications, his *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Art in Painting and Sculpture* of 1756 and his *History of Ancient Art* of 1764, Winckelmann described ideal art as general and imaginative rather than specific and real, based on Greek models, and filled with “noble simplicity” and “calm grandeur.” He also described the elevating and ennobling effects such works produced on the viewer.²

¹ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 24-25.

² J. J. Winckelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malery und Bilderhauerkunst* (Dresden and Leipzig: Waltherische Handlung, 1756); J. J. Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (Dresden, 1764; ed. W. Senff, Weimar, 1964); L. D. Ettlinger, “Winckelmann,” in *The Age of Neo-Classicism*, exh. cat. (London, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1972), xxx-xxxiv.

Winckelmann's ideas were echoed by British academicians, including Sir Joshua Reynolds and John Flaxman, and other European artists and intellectuals including the German painter Anton Raphael Mengs (1728-1779). The affluent, intellectual Americans that David Dearing described in his dissertation, "American Neoclassic Sculptors and their Private patrons in Boston," knew of Winckelmann, Reynolds, Flaxman and Mengs.³ Their understanding of ideal sculpture, and their philanthropic support of Americans who made it, was based on their belief that ideal art would ennoble American audiences and enhance civic virtue in the public sphere.⁴ They commissioned ideal sculptures with exhibitions in mind, and often had them permanently installed in public settings such as the Boston Public Library and the Boston Athenaeum. The Harvard-educated theologian and politician Edward Everett, a tireless supporter of ideal sculpture in the public sphere, was instrumental in gaining for Horatio Greenough the federal commission to produce a monumental ideal sculpture of George Washington for the United States Capitol building.

Despite such efforts, however, public commissions for ideal sculpture in the United States remained few and far between. The majority of Americans in the middle decades of the nineteenth century had no direct knowledge of Winckelmann's theories, and could make little sense of Greenough's portrayal of Washington in the guise of a

³ Dearing, "American Neoclassic Sculptors and their Private Patrons in Boston." In 1820, Edward Everett could write that, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, "The chefs-d'oeuvres of antiquity, restored to their proper estimation by Mengs and Winckelmann began to purify the public taste..." Everett, "Canova and his Works," *The North American Review* 10 (April 1820): 372.

⁴ See Neil Harris, *The Artist in American Society: The Formative Years 1790-1860* (New York: Clarion, 1966), 170-216.

heroic, nude Zeus.⁵ Most people who had the opportunity to purchase an ideal marble bust or statue wanted an object suitable for their homes—spaces that, by the middle of the century, had been sentimentalized and coded as feminine. For Wincklemann, whose concept of the ideal was primarily masculine and heroic, the Apollo Belvedere was the epitome of an ideal sculpture. By contrast, most Americans shopping for home décor in the 1830s and '40s preferred the graceful female figures of Canova. They were less interested in the struggles of masculine deities and heroic men than in the quiet joys and stoic sufferings of sweet-tempered women; and after all, when displayed in libraries, parlors and front halls, these figures resembled the “true women” from whom—according to the pervasive rhetoric of “separate spheres”—both public and private virtue flowed.

Writing of ideal sculpture in Victorian Britain, Martin Greenwood has observed that, as patronage shifted from the aristocratic elite into the hands of the affluent bourgeoisie, the themes and styles chosen by sculptors changed. They supplemented subjects drawn from Greek and Roman mythology with subjects based on popular literature and the bible—texts that were accessible to a broader audience. They also concentrated on smaller works and single figures, which could be displayed in relatively modest domestic settings. The term “ideal sculpture,” Greenwood argued, came to signify any sculpture that was neither a portrait nor an ecclesiastical work.⁶ In the United States,

⁵ Vivien Green Fryd, *Art and Empire: The Politics of Ethnicity in the United States Capitol, 1815-1860* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 62-87. For instance, Philip Hone, the Mayor of New York, reacted to the sculpture with bewilderment. “Washington was too prudent and careful of his health to expose himself thus in a climate so uncertain as ours,” he declared, “to say nothing of the indecency of such an exposure.” Quoted in *ibid.*, 76.

⁶ Martin Greenwood, “Victorian Ideal Sculpture, 1830-1880,” Ph.D. dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1998, 21-22.

a parallel shift occurred. By the middle of the nineteenth century, American artists were producing ideal sculptures almost exclusively for domestic display. As a result, the “ideals” these sculptures communicated were, almost always, domestic ideals—that is, they reiterated and actively contributed to the pervasive, sentimental image of the Nineteenth-century American home.

No single American sculptor was more influential in effecting this change than Hiram Powers. Donald Reynolds has argued that Powers combined the “ideal” with the “real” in his sculptures to please his American audience.⁷ More accurately, he domesticated the ideal—redefining the concept to make it suit the needs of his audience. He never modeled a heroic male nude. He never bothered with a recumbent figure or a sculptural group. He knew where his sculptures were going—into the parlors of affluent American homes—and he made sure that they would fit those spaces, both physically and thematically. His marble women celebrated the “family values” of the mid-nineteenth century: self-restraint, modesty, deference, compassion, filial love, and Christian faith.

⁷ Donald Reynolds, “The ‘Unveiled Soul’: Hiram Powers’s Embodiment of the Ideal,” *Art Bulletin* 59 (September 1977): 394-414.

CHAPTER 2
RICHARD KIP AND SARAH ROGERS HAIGHT'S
COPY OF ANTONIO CANOVA'S *THREE GRACES*

Around 1842, Richard Kip Haight, a prosperous New York merchant, and his wife, Sarah Rogers Haight, commissioned a small portrait of themselves and their four children in a tastefully furnished room, probably the library of their country house (fig.2). There, they are surrounded by their treasured possessions: Richard Haight's books and his collection of modern Wedgewood and ancient Greek vases, the Gobelin tapestry-covered chairs Sarah Haight purchased in France, and a large, marble copy of Antonio Canova's celebrated sculpture *The Three Graces*.¹ The globe in the lower left corner of the painting and the map of Asia spread out on the table allude to Richard Haight's profession as an importer, and also to the family's extensive travels. The Haight's beautiful possessions are trophies of the lengthy voyage through Turkey, Egypt, the Middle East and Europe

¹ Although no catalogue of the Haight's estate sale (conducted by Edward Schenck in New York City, 19-21 October 1860) is currently known to exist, information about the family's household possessions can be gleaned from a range of sources, including: Richard Randolph, "Sundry Memos of R. Randolph, Esq.," 1835-37, ms., Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Library, Winterthur, Delaware (Randolph accompanied the Haight's on their 1835-38 trip); Benjamin Blake Minor, "A Sketch of the Progress of Archaeological Science in America," *Southern Literary Messenger* 11 (July 1845): 426; Last Will and Testament of Richard K. Haight, 9 October 1858, ms, Office of Probate Records, Surrogate Court of New York County, New York, New York; "New York Historical Society," *New York Times*, 8 February 1860: 1; "Mr. Haight's Donation to the Historical Society," *New York Times*, 9 February 1860: 2; "The Historical Society," *New York Times*, 7 March 1860: 8; "Domestic Art Gossip," *The Crayon*, 7 (August 1860): 231-33; "Auction Sales" *New York Times*, 10 October 1860: 7; "Sale of Fashionable Furniture," *New York Tribune*, 19 October 1860: 8; "General City News," *New York Times*, 20 October 1860: 8; "The Fifth Avenue Auction Sale," *New York Times*, 20 October 1860: 8; "General City News," *New York Times*, 22 October 1860: 8; "New York Historical Society—Nov. 6, 1860," *The Historical Magazine*, 5 (January 1861): 12; Curtis Runnels, "Eureka in a Box," *Bostonia*, 6 (Winter 2003): 1.

that they had taken in the late 1830s.² They are also educational tools. So pervasive is the didactic theme of the Hights' portrait that every member of the family, from the patriarch to the baby, interacts with an object of instruction. *The Three Graces*, which occupies a central position in the room and in the portrait, also serves a didactic function. Nineteenth-century men and women believed that sculpture in the home exerted a powerful moral and intellectual influence. Beautiful statues elevated the mind by teaching aesthetic appreciation and personal grace. Beyond this, however, they also encouraged sensibility—the exquisite, empathetic responses to others' feelings that make deep emotional ties between human beings possible.³ As the presiding divinities of the Hight

² The Hights' first Grand Tour is partially documented in Randolph, "Sundry Memos of R. Randolph, Esq.," and in a series of letters, which Sarah Hight wrote and later published. Her letters from her first year in Europe (1835-1836) were published serially in *The New-York American* and later gathered together by a descendent as "The Travels of Sarah R. Hight Through Switzerland, Austrio-Hungary, Bohemia, Bavaria, Prussia, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Russia," ts., Research Division, New York Public Library. Her letters from Egypt, Turkey and the Middle East were published as *Letters from the Old World by a Lady of New York*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1840). Unfortunately, she did not publish any letters from the last leg of her journey through Italy, France and England in 1839. Because Sarah Hight used the nondescript pseudonym "A Lady of New York," a slightly later account of European travel by another author, *Over the Ocean, by a Lady of New York* (New York: Paine & Burgess, 1846), might be incorrectly attributed to her; however, the timing of the journey described in this volume, the events recounted, and the style in which it is written all make it clear that Mrs. Hight was not the author.

³ Michelle Helene Bogart briefly discussed these functions of sculpture in the home in "Attitude Towards Sculpture Reproductions in America 1850-1880," 68-70. Bogart cites a wealth of primary sources in support of her claims, including "Art and Its Future Prospects in the United States," *Godey's Lady's Book* 46 (March 1853): 217-221; *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* (25 October 1856): 308; Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1853), 332; Benjamin Silliman and C. R. Goodrich, *The World of Science, Art and Industry Illustrated from Examples in the New York Crystal Palace* (New York: Putnam and Co., 1854), 29; Christopher Crowfield [Harriet Beecher Stowe], *House and Home Papers* (Boston: Tichnor and Fields, 1867), 56.

family altar, the *Graces* demonstrate the virtues of sensibility by tenderly embracing one another. At the same time, their filial embrace symbolizes the loving bonds between the Hights themselves, and the domestic atmosphere of their home.

The Hight family portrait is intimate in scale as well as in content. Executed in gouache on paper, it measures only 20 x 15 inches but was probably slightly larger at one time. Abrupt cropping of objects by the picture edge was not a pictorial device commonly employed by European or American artists before the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The globe and the arched doorway to the conservatory on the left and the chair and second framed portrait on the wall at right were probably wholly visible in the original composition. The top and bottom margins also appear to have been cropped, trimming off the top of the niche in which *The Three Graces* stands, and grazing the chair legs and Sarah Hight's skirt in the foreground. The portrait was probably cut down fairly early in its existence to fit the ornate, gilded, mid-nineteenth-century, Italian frame in which it is currently displayed (fig.3).⁴ Both it and the frame passed down through the oldest Hight daughter's family until 1974, when the painting was given to the Museum of the City of New York.⁵

Shortly after the Museum acquired the unsigned painting, it was attributed to the Italian-American painter Nicolino Calyo (1799-1884). This attribution is convincing. Calyo, who received his artistic training at the Royal Academy of Naples, is well-known

⁴ For information about the frame, I am grateful to Scott Heffley, Paintings and Frames Conservator at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. The frame may have been acquired by the Hights in 1847, when the family lived in Rome.

⁵ See information about the painting in the curatorial object files, Museum of the City of New York.

for his delicate, expertly handled gouache landscapes and portraits.⁶ He lived in New York throughout the 1840s, and was somewhat of a celebrity there. A political exile who had traveled around Europe for eight years before settling in the United States, he attracted a circle of intellectuals who met regularly at his Manhattan home to discuss European politics and culture. The Hights, who prided themselves on the breadth of their cultural knowledge, may have known him socially. Calyo is also listed in New York directories of this period as a private art instructor. Lydia, the Hights' oldest child, painted seriously enough to eventually pursue her art studies in Rome. It's possible that Calyo was her teacher. In any case, gouache was not a popular medium in the United States before the Civil War, and was used almost exclusively by European-trained artists. The only master of this medium known to be working in New York in the 1840s was Nicolino Calyo.

The painting was given a date of circa 1848 when it was acquired by the Museum. This date, however, is slightly too late. In the 1850 Federal Census Record, there are six Hight children, not just four, and Lydia (though still living with her parents) is twenty years old, married, and has an infant of her own.⁷ In the portrait, her physical appearance and her costume indicate that she is between twelve and fourteen years of age.⁸ In fact,

⁶ Information about Calyo is sparse. See Kathleen Foster, *In Philadelphia: Three Centuries of American Art* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1976), 300; Stephen Rubin and John K. Howat, *American Watercolors from The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Abrams, 1991), 14, 66-67.

⁷ New York, New York County, 1850 U.S. Census, population schedule, 143, accessed through Ancestry.com, 16 July 2004.

⁸ I am grateful to Amelia Peck, Associate Curator of Decorative Arts, Metropolitan Museum of Art, for her help in determining Lydia Hight's probable age based on her clothing. Peck, e-mail to the author, 3 May 2004.

only very conservative American parents kept their fourteen-year-old daughters in short skirts with pantalettes showing beneath their hems, and the worldly Hights were not particularly conservative, making an age of twelve or thirteen far more likely.⁹ The clothing and apparent ages of the other Hight children support a date of 1842 or 1843 for the portrait. The 1850 Census gives the age of Richard R. Hight as fifteen, David Hight as eleven, and Frances Hight as nine. In the portrait, they appear to be between seven and eight, three and four, and one and two, respectively.¹⁰

Based on the incorrect date of c. 1848, Wendy Cooper has argued that the Hight family portrait depicts the library in their palatial Italianate mansion on the corner of Fifteenth Street and Fifth Avenue; however, that house was not completed until 1849, making it impossible as a setting for the portrait.¹¹ Furthermore, stereographs of the

⁹ A fashion writer for *Godey's Lady's Book* noted in 1850 that, "young ladies of twelve and thirteen do not disdain to wear beneath their demi-long skirts, white muslin pantalettes." "Children's Dress," *Godey's Lady's Book* 41 (September 1850), 189. Lynne Zacek Bassett has noted that "As a girl [of the second quarter of the nineteenth century] got older, her skirts became gradually longer. By the age of thirteen or so, she left off wearing pantalettes altogether." Bassett, "'The Great Leap,' Youth's Clothing in the Early Nineteenth Century," in Peter Benes, ed., *Textiles in Early New England: Design, Production and Consumption* (Boston: Boston University, 1999), 188. See also Joan L. Severa, *Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900* (Kent, Oh.: Kent State University Press, 1995), 17, 24.

¹⁰ Summer gowns very similar to those of Sarah and Lydia Hight appear in the color fashion plate of the August, 1845 issue of *Godey's Lady's Book*; however, the Hights were frequent European travelers who would have been conversant with the latest Parisian fashions. It wouldn't be surprising, therefore, to find their wardrobes one or more years in advance of their American contemporaries.

¹¹ Wendy A. Cooper, *Classical Taste in America, 1800-1840*, exh. cat. (Baltimore: The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1993), 100-01. A letter from George Robbins Gliddon to Henry Fox Talbot dated 19 March 1849 relates, "Mr. Hight is completing his 'Palazzo' in New York, with his dear family around him." Richard Hight was a mutual acquaintance of the two men. Larry J. Schaaf, ed., *The Correspondence of William Henry*

Haight's Fifth Avenue mansion dating from the 1850s show the *Three Graces* displayed in the family's elaborate conservatory (fig.4). Amelia Peck has suggested that the Haight's portrait was executed in Europe, based on the artist's evident expertise and the sophisticated architecture and trappings of the room depicted.¹² The Haight family did leave New York in the fall of 1843 for an extended stay in Europe; however, it is unlikely that they remained in one place long enough to establish a settled, domestic existence there. Rather, they seem to have led a peripatetic life, with the elder Richard Haight dividing each year between New York and various cities on the continent.¹³ Although the family's whereabouts during 1844 are unknown, they spent the early months of 1845 in Geneva, Switzerland, where Sarah gave birth to a daughter. They then traveled to Paris, returning to Geneva the following summer. They moved into a rented house in Rome in the spring of 1847, but Richard K. Haight and his daughter Lydia were back in Paris by November of that year. The political upheavals in Europe induced them to return to New

Fox Talbot, University of Glasgow, www.foxtalbot.arts.gla.ac.uk (accessed 2 August 2004).

¹² Peck e-mail to the author, 3 May 2004.

¹³ The Haight family's imminent departure for Europe is mentioned by Philip Hone in his diary entry for 21 July 1843. Philip Hone and Bayard Tuckerman, *The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828-1851*, vol.2 (New York: Dodd and Mead, 1889), 189. Their movements around Europe are documented through letters written by Richard K. Haight and his friends to William Henry Fox Talbot, in particular: George Wilson Bridges to Talbot, 2 February 1846; Richard K. Haight to Talbot, 14 March 1846, 2 November 1846 and 9 December 1846; George Robbins Gliddon to Talbot, 14 October 1846 and 19 March 1849; Edward Anthony to Talbot, 25 February 1847, 1 March 1847, 10 May 1847 and 30 August 1847, *The Correspondence of William Henry Fox Talbot*. The birth of Nina Cristina Haight in Switzerland early in 1845 is also recorded in the 1850 U.S. Census. Richard K. and Lydia Haight's presence in Paris in the winter of 1847, which was mentioned by Edward Anthony in his letter to Talbot of 25 February 1847, was confirmed by their fellow American traveler Henry Colman in *European Life and Manners; In Familiar Letters to Friends*, vol.2 (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, and London: John Petherham, 1849), 303.

York in 1848, before their new mansion was complete. It seems unlikely that even the Hights (who made their earlier Grand Tour with a “traveling library” of several hundred books and a French chef) would have wandered around Europe accompanied by a suite of household furniture and a large marble sculpture. Given this fact, and the likely date of 1842 or 1843 for the portrait, it was probably painted before the family left the United States and either depicts an imaginary interior, the Hights’ first Manhattan townhouse, or an unidentified country residence.

It is possible, of course, that the interior in the Hight portrait was simply invented by the artist; however, the painting’s detailed description of objects known to have been owned by the family suggests that it depicts an actual room in their home. Stylistically and thematically, the Hight portrait resembles contemporary Biedermeier family portraits in Europe, for instance, Johann Michael Neder’s (1807-1882) portrait of the Viennese banker Franz Jäger and his family (1836, Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf). The subjects of both portraits are rising members of the bourgeois elite, and the painters in both cases stressed their ongoing self-education and refinement. Typically in Biedermeier portraiture, the actual domestic interiors of individual families were meticulously recorded in order to convey their affluence and taste, and also to express an ideal of self-contained family life.¹⁴ It is precisely for these reasons, I contend, that the painter of the Hight portrait depicted the family comfortably ensconced in the tasteful interior of their own home.

¹⁴ Georg Himmelheber, *Biedermeier, 1815-1855: Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Decorative Arts Furniture*, exh. cat. (Munich: Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, 1988), 56-59, 184, 186; Geraldine Norman, *Biedermeier Painting 1815-1848: Reality Observed in Genre, Portrait and Landscape* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 30, 44, 72-73, 84-85, 100-101.

Until the Haight family left for Europe in 1843, their Manhattan address was 4 Lafayette Place.¹⁵ A north-south residential street that connected Astor Place with Great Jones Street, Lafayette Place was laid out and developed by John Jacob Astor in 1826.¹⁶ It quickly became the most fashionable neighborhood in the city. Its row houses and churches were all built in the late '20s and early '30s, and reflected the prevailing taste for neo-classical architecture. The famous "Colonnade Row" houses (officially known as LaGrange Terrace), which were designed by Seth Geer (d.1866) and Alexander Jackson Davis (1803-1892) to resemble a Corinthian temple, were just one block north of the Hights' house. St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church, one door down, was an Ionic temple with a steeple. Even the extant home of Seabury and Eliza Tredwell (the so-called "Old Merchant's House") just around the corner on Fourth Street, though Federal-style on the outside, has a thoroughly neo-classical interior, replete with egg and dart moldings and ionic columns and pilasters. Though no image of the Hights' Lafayette Place house survives, it is unlikely to have included an archivolted, gothic revival doorway, such as the one leading into the conservatory on the far left of the Hights' portrait, or the bookcases on the back wall, with their gothic revival trefoil lattices. Even the room's fawn-colored walls are consistent with the principles of gothic revival, rather than neo-classical, décor. Gothic revival row houses were built in Manhattan, but not before the

¹⁵ *Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory* (New York: Thomas Longworth, 1839), 301.

¹⁶ Charles Lockwood, *Bricks and Brownstone: The New York Row House, 1873-1929* (New York: Rizzoli, 2003), 778-82.

mid-1840s and not in Lafayette Place.¹⁷ The Hights' portrait, therefore, probably does not depict their Lafayette Place townhouse, which was most likely a neo-classical building inside and out.

It is very probable that the Hights owned or rented a country house, and that their family portrait shows them in that setting. By 1841, the American architect and landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852) could assert that, "to most [wealthy Americans], a country house is necessary, because it is commonly regarded as an appendage to a man of fortune..."¹⁸ The popularity of Downing's own books, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* of 1841, and *Cottage Residences* of 1842, attests to the truth of his assertion.¹⁹ Architects and domestic advice writers described the gothic revival style as particularly suitable for rural residences because it harmonized well with natural surroundings and expressed an idealized vision of Christian home-life that was opposed to the worldliness of modern cities.²⁰ As a result, Gothic

¹⁷ Ibid. I am grateful to Mr. Lockwood for the information, as well as insight, he provided to me personally regarding the Hight family and their portrait.

¹⁸ "Downing on Landscape Gardening," *The North American Review*, 53 (July 1841): 260.

¹⁹ A. J. Downing, *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1841); Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage Residences; or, A Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas* (New York: Putnam and Sons, 1842). These books by Downing followed on the heels of Andrew Jackson Davis's popular plan book, *Rural Residences* (New York: New York University, 1837).

²⁰ See, for example, A. J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 21, 26. Downing cites a writer for *The Literary World* who noted, "In the forms of the Gothic cathedral are embodied the worship principle, the loving reverence for that which is highest, and the sentiment of Christian brotherhood." Downing himself concluded that an English Gothic cottage is best suited to convey, "the domestic virtues, the love of home, rural beauty, and seclusion." See also Colleen McDannell, *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 28-39.

revival villas and summer cottages enjoyed a considerable vogue in the United States from the late 1830s through the 1850s. New Yorkers built them wherever rail lines and steam ships could easily carry them: in the then-rural northern part of Manhattan, along the banks of the Hudson River, in neighboring New Jersey and Connecticut, and in the countryside surrounding Brooklyn.²¹ Unfortunately, before the Civil War no New York law required that property deeds be filed in County Clerks' offices—a fact that makes tracing antebellum, rural, New York real estate almost impossible.²² However, in May of 1843, uncollected letters for Lydia Haight were piling up in the Brooklyn post office, suggesting that the family's summer address was near that city.²³ This theory is corroborated by an 1835 article in *The Farmer & Gardener*, which stated that "Mr.

²¹ For examples of Gothic revival residences around New York, see the Alexander Jackson Davis Papers, 1791-1937, The New York Public Library, Manuscripts and Archives Division; Everard M. Upjohn, *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939); Katherine S. Howe and David B. Warren, *The Gothic Revival Style in America, 1830-1870*, exh. cat. (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1976); Patrick Alexander Snadon, "A. J. Davis and the Gothic Revival Castle in America, 1832-1865," Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1988; Adam W. Sweeting, *Reading Houses and Building Books: Andrew Jackson Downing and the Architecture of Popular Antebellum Literature, 1835-1855* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1996), 122-155.

²² Neither A. J. Davis nor Richard Upjohn, the two most prolific architects working in the Gothic Revival style during the 1830s and early 1840s, built a house for the Haight family. See the Alexander Jackson Davis Papers and Upjohn, *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman*. Many Americans who built country houses at this time simply hired local builders who improvised their own version of a particular architectural style or worked from a plan book.

²³ "List of Letters Remaining in the Post Office," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 1 May 1843, 3. Richard K. Haight's close friend and business partner, and the namesake of the Haight's youngest son, John Halsey, built a country house outside Brooklyn in the 1838. See *America's Successful Men of Affairs: An Encyclopedia of Contemporaneous Biography*, vol. 1 (New York: The New York Tribune, 1895-96), 290.

Richard K. Haight, an intelligent merchant of the city of New York, has one hundred [mulberry trees], which were imported from France this present season, which I saw at his nursery in Brooklyn in a flourishing condition.”²⁴ Both the gothic revival interior in the Haight’s portrait and the family’s summer clothes support the theory that the painting depicts a country residence.

During the 1840s, the Haight family appeared to lead a charmed existence.

Richard Kip Haight had been born in New York City in 1797, the son of a prosperous and socially ambitious milliner.²⁵ Richard and his brother David went into business as merchants of “hat trimmings” (presumably feathers), setting up an office down the street from their father’s shop in the 1820s. The feather trade proved lucrative. By the late 1850s, the brothers had been joined by another partner, John Halsey, and were listed in a New York business directory as “Haight, Halsey & Co., Importers.”²⁶ Although business

²⁴ “Culture of the Mulberry Tree,” *The Farmer & Gardener* 1 (24 March 1835), 372. This article makes it clear that Haight was growing mulberry trees in the hope of cultivating worms for the manufacture of silk thread—an ambition which was rendered moot by the opening of China to Western trade in the 1840s.

²⁵ Biographical information about the Haight family is scant. I have gathered facts from a range of sources, including: the curatorial object files of the Museum of the City of New York; Sarah Rogers Haight’s published letters, op. cit.; a transcription of a 1916 letter by the Haight’s son, David Lane Haight, in the introduction to “The Travels of Sarah R. Haight”; Frederick Kinsman Smith, *The Family of Richard Smith of Smithtown, Long Island: Ten Generations* (Smithtown, New York: Smithtown Historical Society, 1967), 195; Wendy A. Cooper, *Classical Taste in America*, 66-67, 100-01. I am grateful to Edward H. L. Smith, III of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, and Richard Hawkins of the Long Island Collection, Smithtown Public Library for providing me with additional information from their files.

²⁶ Richard and Henry Haight are listed as merchants of “hatters trimmings” in *The New York Business Directory for 1841 and 1842* (New York: J. Doggett, Jr., 1841), 69. The business is listed as “Haight, Halsey & Co., Importers” in *The New York City Copartnership Directory for 1859-60* (New York: John F. Trow, 1859), 35.

cares must have taken at least some of his time, Richard Haight was able to indulge a range of varied interests. He was an avid reader and traveler, and an amateur horticulturalist, archeologist and photographer. Haight married Sarah Rogers, the daughter of a Long Island whaling captain, in 1828. Noted for her beauty and intellectual brilliance, Sarah Haight became a popular travel writer and also translated a volume of French children's stories into English.²⁷ Writing of her in 1843, the New York diarist and former mayor Philip Hone commented, "I have taken a liking to this lady. She is conceited but, in truth, she has much cause to be."²⁸ Lydia Haight, the family's oldest child, was a belle before her marriage to William Jones (the son of the owner of the Chemical Bank) in the late 1840s. Henry Colman wrote of her in 1847, "The manners of Miss H-- have an elegant and unaffected simplicity quite charming, and there is a sort of vestal fire burning in her mind, and sparking in her conversation..."²⁹

The Hights were seasoned world travelers and, not surprisingly, also collectors. In addition to various works of art, they owned an extensive library with many rare books and a collection of scientific instruments and specimens. Their possessions reflect the breadth of their tastes and accomplishments, of which they were undoubtedly proud. Their copy of Canova's *Three Graces* fit neatly into the erudite atmosphere of their home. By purchasing and displaying it, the Hights demonstrated their familiarity with

²⁷ Sarah Rogers Haight, *Jane Brush and Her Cow: A Story for Children Illustrative of Natural History, Altered from the French of Mmle. Trémadeure* (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1841).

²⁸ Hone and Tuckerman, *The Diary of Philip Hone*, vol.2, 189.

²⁹ Colman, *European Life and Manners*, vol.2, 303.

European high art and culture and aligned themselves with such aristocratic luminaries as Josephine Bonaparte, the Duke of Bedford, and the Duke of Leuchtenberg.

Antonio Canova in America

In Europe, during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Antonio Canova was the most popular sculptor alive.³⁰ His work, which was widely known through published descriptions, engravings and copies in a range of media, embodies the poise, idealism and simplicity lionized by the influential Neoclassical art theorist Johann Joachim Winckelmann. At the same time, his statues' amazingly flesh-like surfaces, sinuous lines, and frequent evocation of touch endow them with an insistent strain of eroticism. Far from being shocked, Canova's aristocratic European audience appreciated this quality in his art. For instance, the artist's friend and biographer Count Leopoldo Cicognara wrote rapturously of Canova's nude, male figure, *Paris* (1807-12, The Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg), "if one could make statues by caressing marble, I would say this statue was formed by wearing out the marble that surrounded it with caresses and kisses."³¹

Perhaps because his sensuous style seems so at odds with the well-documented prudery of antebellum American culture, many scholars have overlooked Canova's

³⁰ Recent monographs about Canova include Christopher M. S. Johns, *Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998) and *Canova*, exh. cat. (Venice: Correr Museum and Possagno: Gipsoteca Museo Canoviano, 1992).

³¹ Count Leopoldo Cicognara, *Lettere ad Antonio Canova* (Urbino: Argalia, 1973), 54, translated in the entry for Canova in *The Grove Dictionary of Art* (London: Grove, 1996), online database, <http://www.groveart.com> (accessed 3/15/05).

popularity in the United States.³² Michelle Bogart, for instance, asserted that Americans were generally unfamiliar with European sculpture before the Civil War, and William Gerdts singled Canova out as too sexually provocative for most American tastes.³³ As both David Dearing and Wendy Cooper have recently shown, however, statues by Canova were popular in the United States throughout the early nineteenth century.³⁴ Americans (like their European contemporaries) read about Canova's work in hundreds of publications over the course of the nineteenth century.³⁵ Public exhibitions of

³² For nineteenth-century American prudery see Carol Eaton Soltis, " 'In Sympathy with the Heart;' Rembrandt Peale, an American Artist, and the Traditions of European Art," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2000, 290-349; E. McSherry Fowble, "Without a Blush: The Movement toward Acceptance of the Nude As an Art Form in America, 1800-1825," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 9 (1974): 103-121; Robert O. Mellow, "Nineteenth-Century American Attitudes Toward the Nude Figure in Art," Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1975.

³³ Bogart, "Attitudes Toward Sculptural Reproduction in America," 15-22; William H. Gerdts, "Celebrities of the Grand Tour: The American Sculptors in Florence and Rome," in Theodore E. Stebbins, *The Lure of Italy: American Artists and the Italian Experience 1760-1914*, exh. cat. (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1992), 66-67. Significantly, Gerdts cites as evidence statements made by Hiram Powers, William Ware and Nathaniel Hawthorne during the second half of the nineteenth century, when Canova's popularity was on the wane.

³⁴ Cooper, *Classical Taste in America*, 70-72, 84; David Dearing compiled an invaluable list of nineteenth-century owners of ideal sculpture in his "American Neoclassic Sculptors and their Private Patrons in Boston," 670-750.

³⁵ Despite Edward Everett's assertion, in 1820, that "an equal fame with [Canova's] is already claimed by Thorwaldsen," a search of Cornell University's *Making of America* full-text database of twenty-two American nineteenth-century periodicals revealed that Canova's name appeared in 101 articles from 1815 to 1850, making him the most written-about sculptor (and possibly the most written-about artist) included in the database for those years. During the same period, the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorwaldsen's (1770-1844) name appears in 31 articles. Edward Everett, "Canova and his Work," *North American Review*, 10 (April 1820): 374; Cornell University, *The Making of America*, <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa> (accessed 31 July 2005).

Canova's work, if not common, were not unusual.³⁶ Copies of four statues by Canova (*The Three Graces*, *Venus Italica*, *Hebe* and *Perseus with the Head of Medusa*) were displayed at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts until 1845, when they burned along with the original building in a disastrous fire.³⁷ In 1824, copies of Canova's *Three Graces*, *Hebe* and *Boxers* were on display at the New York Academy of Fine Arts.³⁸ A copy of Canova's *Dancer with Hands on Hips* was on permanent display in the Boston Athenaeum's statuary room by 1855.³⁹ An "enterprising merchant" displayed marble copies of twenty-two of Canova's best-known statues, carved by his students, at Corinthian Hall in Boston in 1833.⁴⁰ There, they attracted a large audience before going up for sale in August of that year. The following winter, the unsold sculptures from the Corinthian Hall exhibition, with four additions, were displayed again at Harding's Gallery in Boston.⁴¹ One reviewer of this exhibition praised the *Three Graces* in particular:

³⁶ One hundred and eight sculptures by or after Canova appear in James L. Yarnall and William H. Gerds, *The National Museum of American Art's Index to American Art Exhibition Catalogues before the 1876 Centennial Year*, 6 vols. (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1986), now available as a database through the Smithsonian Institution, <http://siriris-artexhibition.si.edu> (accessed 31 July 2005).

³⁷ "Destruction of the Academy of Fine Arts, in Philadelphia," *The Anglo American*, 5 (21 June 1845): 208.

³⁸ "Fine Arts," *Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot*, 19 May 1824: 2.

³⁹ "Statuary Room of the Boston Athenaeum," *Ballou's Pictorial* 8 (31 March 1855): 201.

⁴⁰ *Catalogue of the Statuary and Sculpture to be Sold at Corinthian Hall on Saturday, Aug. 31, 10, A.M.*, cited in Dearing, 61.

⁴¹ [*Catalogue of Statuary after Antonio Canova*], (Boston: Harding's Gallery, 1834). Margaret Fuller recalled, years later, her excited reaction upon hearing of this exhibition. "Canova! The name was famous. He was the pride of modern Italy, the prince of modern

The Graces are a most exquisite group. It is impossible to look on them and not be filled with a sense of their surpassing loveliness. Their forms are developed with a perfect mastery over the technical learning of the art, and a most finished conception of beauty. Taken singly, they are perfect; taken together, they are a combination of perfections. Their attitudes are most excellent to show the graceful outline, and the swelling fullness, which charm the eye, and captivate the imagination.⁴²

Not only were copies of Canova's works exhibited publicly in museums, galleries, libraries and athenaeums, they were also proudly displayed in many private homes. Nineteenth-century photographs of American domestic interiors confirm this fact.⁴³ For instance, around 1860, three generations of the Hampton family were photographed in the drawing room of Mary Hampton's Columbia, South Carolina home, sitting in front of her marble copy of a dancing girl by Canova (figs.5-6). Canova's sculptures of chastely clothed dancers appear to have been his most popular works in the United States; however, copies of nudes by the Italian sculptor were also on view. The respected Boston merchant Nathan Appleton acquired a copy of Canova's *Venus Italica* (c.1821, Boston Public Library) in the 1820s, which he daringly displayed in his entrance hall.⁴⁴ Copies of *Venus* after Canova appeared in at least four other private collections

art, and now we were to see enough of the expressions of his thought to know how God, nature, and man stood related in the mind of this man." Fuller, "Canova," *The Dial* 3 (April, 1843): 455.

⁴² "Sculpture," *The New-England Magazine*, 5 (December 1833): 482.

⁴³ See William Seale, *The Tasteful Interlude: American Interiors Through the Camera's Eye* (London: AltaMira Press, 1995), 31-3248, 104-05, 153.

⁴⁴ Cooper, *Classical Taste in America*, 84.

during the nineteenth century.⁴⁵ At least three other American families besides the Hights had marble copies of the *Three Graces* in their homes.⁴⁶

Although marble sculptures were luxury items, available to only the wealthiest Americans, a broad middle-class audience also acquired Canova's works for their homes in the form of prints, or statuettes in plaster, alabaster or—in particular—parian.⁴⁷ Parian, a slightly translucent, white, biscuit porcelain, was invented by the British pottery firm W. T. Copeland & Sons in 1842. It was named by another pottery, Minton & Co., for the white marble that it emulates, and it quickly became an affordable and hugely popular substitute for marble. Parian became so ubiquitous in middle-class homes that, in 1840, a British writer observed, "Copies from the more popular works of Canova, such as the Venus, the Graces, the Dancing Nymphs, Cupid & Psyche, &c., may be found in almost every house."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Dearing, "American Neoclassic Sculptors and their Private Patrons in Boston," 676, 678, 680, 695.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 682, 709, 718.

⁴⁷ Canova was, in many ways, a pioneering modern artist. He closely supervised the publication and distribution of thousands of engravings of his sculptures which contributed greatly to his fame and the popularity of his work. See Hugh Honour, "Canova and his Printmakers," *Print Quarterly*, 12 (September 1995): 253-75. Alabaster "mantle ornament" versions of Canova's *Three Graces* and *Dancing Girls* were advertised in American newspapers throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. See for example: "Splendid Marble and Alabaster Mantle Ornaments," *Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot*, 24 December 1825: 3; "Free Sale of Elegant Alabaster Ornaments," *Baltimore Patriot*, 26 May 1824: 3. For the prevalence of parian statuettes in the nineteenth century, and the common reproduction of works by Canova in this medium, see *The Parian Phenomenon: A Survey of Victorian Parian Porcelain, Statuary and Busts* (Somerset, Eng.: Richard Dennis, 1989), 59, 134, 151, 201.

⁴⁸ "Antonio Canova," *The Penny Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* 9 (1840): 365. Although most parian figurines were made in Great Britain,

Despite its widespread reproduction, Canova's sculpture was associated, in the minds of many Americans before the Civil War, with aristocratic European elegance.

Thus, a short story writer for *Godey's Lady's Book* described "the elegant boudoir of a titled lady in London" as follows:

The room was richly yet tastefully furnished. The delicate tints of the carpet and the satin covered furniture harmonized well with the silvery hue of the paper that covered the walls. A few beautiful paintings, one an exquisite Madonna, the rest glowing Italian landscapes, were hung with an artist's care in the best lights, and in a recess stood one perfect statue, a graceful Hebe, from the magical chisel of Canova.⁴⁹

As is so often the case in *Godey's*, it is difficult to tell, in this passage, where the interior decorating advice ends and the fiction begins. *Godey's*, which disseminated dress fashions, decorating tips and an ethos of sentimental domesticity to a broad, popular audience, championed Canova tirelessly.

As domestic decorations, Canova's sculptures (whether full-size marble copies or smaller reproductions) expressed their owners' reverence for art and culture, and thus their sensitivity and refinement. In the early 1850s, the poet and art critic E. Anna Lewis wrote short poems about each of the two parian statuettes after Canova that adorned the mantel in her study. No illustrations accompanied these poems when they were published in *Godey's Lady's Book*.⁵⁰ Rather, the editor assumed that her readers would already be familiar with the works in question: *The Genius of Art* (it is impossible to determine what

they were marketed (and found an enthusiastic audience) in the United States. See Bogart, "Attitudes Toward Sculptural Reproduction in America," 46-48.

⁴⁹ Helen Hamilton, "The Italian Sisters," *Godey's Lady's Book*, 65(August 1852): 179.

⁵⁰ E. Anna Lewis, "To Hebe (A Little Statue on the Mantle in my Study)," *Godey's Lady's Book*, 40 (January 1850): 66; E. Anna Lewis, "To The Genius of Art (A Little Statue on the Mantle in my Study)," *Godey's Lady's Book*, 42 (March 1851): 187.

sculpture she is describing here) and *Hebe* (1796; Hermitage Museum).⁵¹ Lewis wrote of her statuettes in the same reverent tone that she would later use when writing about Hiram Powers' full-size, marble *Greek Slave*.⁵² "And here, with pulses hushed, I gaze on thee,/ Till nascent haloes circle round thy brow,/ And from the portals of eternity,/ The laurelled dead, returning, round thee bow."⁵³

As Canova's work was woven into the fabric of mid-nineteenth-century, American domestic culture, it (and Canova himself) became sentimentalized in the minds of many Americans. *Godey's Lady's Book* published a short story in 1845 in which Canova appears as a romantic hero, in love with a Tuscan princess who models for him anonymously.⁵⁴ Illustrations of Canova's sculptures appeared in annual holiday gift books (prettily bound and copiously illustrated volumes, intended to be exchanged as Christmas gifts).⁵⁵ Even the sensuousness of Canova's style was reinterpreted sentimentally as sweetness. A writer for the *North-American Review* wrote in 1829:

Grace and Tenderness, as they correspond with the prominent features in [Canova's] own moral character, breathe of course through the marble upon

⁵¹ Lewis's poems show how little distinction most Americans made between even very small copies and original marble sculptures. As Michelle Bogart has argued, small-scale copies of ideal sculptures served as acceptable stand-ins for the originals in the minds of their owners. See Bogart, "Attitudes Toward Sculptural Reproduction in America," 33-35.

⁵² E. Anna Lewis, "Art and Artists of America: Hiram Powers," *Grahams Magazine*, 48 (November 1855): 397-401.

⁵³ Lewis, "To The Genius of Art."

⁵⁴ Miss H. B. MacDonald, "The Orpheus and Eurydice of Canova," *Godey's Lady's Book*, 31 (September, 1845): 103.

⁵⁵ For instance, *Friendship's Offering for 1848* (Boston: Philips & Sampson, 1847), described in "Editor's Book Table," *Godey's Lady's Book*, 36 (January 1848): 68.

which he had impressed it... while Canova has, in all his statues, employed as little drapery as possible, and although his style be soft and graceful, in some cases almost to voluptuousness, he has never overstepped the limits prescribed by the strictest delicacy, but on the contrary has sedulously studied, more than any other sculptor, all the reserve which real modesty requires.⁵⁶

Small wonder, then, that in a sentimental poem about a sleeping infant, published in 1846, an anonymous poet evoked the image of Canova's *Three Graces* to describe the child's guardian angels:

Through the still, transparent air,
Angel-forms I see,
Round the little cradle stand,
Like sweet Charity;
Like the graces touched with life,
That Canova made;
Seraph sisters, pure as light,
Sunbeams without shade.⁵⁷

Canova's *The Three Graces*

Josephine Bonaparte, a faithful friend and patron of Canova's, commissioned the first version of *The Three Graces* in 1812 (fig.7). The former Empress of France wanted the sculpture for her gallery at Malmaison—her country house outside of Paris, to which she had retired following her divorce from Napoleon.⁵⁸ In particular, Josephine wanted to complete a mythological narrative begun with several other figures by Canova—his *Paris* and his *Dancer with Hand on her Hip* (c.1805-12; The Hermitage Museum, Saint

⁵⁶ "Life and Works of Canova," *The North-American Review* 29 (October 1829): 469.

⁵⁷ "Little Ellie," *The American Whig Review*, 3 (June 1846): 610.

⁵⁸ Christopher M. S. Johns, "Empress Josephine's Collection of Sculpture by Canova at Malmaison," *Journal of the History of Collections*, 16, no.1 (2004):28. For a broader study of Canova's patronage, including an in-depth discussion of his relationship with Josephine, see Johns, *Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe*.

Petersburg). In Greek mythology, the Graces (Euphrosyne, Aglaia, and Thalia) are the daughters of Zeus and the nymph Euryonome, and in Greek and Roman art they are usually shown embracing (though not as enthusiastically as in Canova's sculpture) and symbolize generosity. By the fifteenth century, they appeared most frequently in art and literature as the attendants of Venus—the goddess of love and beauty, whom Paris selected as the most desirable of the Olympian pantheon.⁵⁹ Josephine wrote to Canova in 1813 as work was proceeding on her sculpture, saying that she intended to place *The Three Graces* between her *Paris* and her *Dancer*. There, the sculpture would have completed the entourage of Venus, whose role would have been filled implicitly by the mistress of Malmaison herself.⁶⁰

In Canova's group of the *Graces*, three life-size, nude, young women stand locked in an embrace, their arms twined around each other's shoulders and waists, and their hands gently caressing one another. Each girl rests her weight on one leg and leans slightly inward toward the center of the circle. The two flanking figures turn to face the taller girl in the center, who rests her forehead gently against one sister's upturned face as the other looks on adoringly. A swag of drapery over the left-most sister's arm covers all three figures minimally but modestly. A rose garlanded plinth supports the group from behind on the left side. Although the composition favors a direct, frontal view, Canova equipped the sculpture with a rotating pedestal and it could be turned 360 degrees.

Canova, who was fascinated with dance, often used postures and gestures drawn from

⁵⁹ For the artistic precedents and iconography of Canova's *Graces*, see Hugh Honour, "Canova's Three Graces," in Honour and Aidan Weston-Lewis, eds., *The Three Graces*, exh. cat. (Edinburgh: The National Gallery of Scotland, 1995), 19-45.

⁶⁰ Johns, "Empress Josephine's Collection of Sculpture by Canova at Malmaison," 30.

ballet in his sculptures. He used rotating pedestals to make motion an integral part of many of his compositions. The gracefully disposed and rhythmically repeated legs, feet, arms, hands and heads of *The Three Graces* endow the sculpture with a balletic quality that must have been enhanced when the group was turned.

Unfortunately, Josephine died before Canova completed *The Three Graces*. When the sculpture was finished in 1816, it passed into the hands of her son, Eugène Beauharnais (later known as The Duke of Leuchtenberg) who took it with him into exile in Munich. There, it became part of Beauharnais' collection of art and memorabilia, which he installed in the semi-public gallery of his palace. Meanwhile, even before 1816, Canova had begun a second copy of *The Three Graces* for another friend and patron, John Russell, the sixth Duke of Bedford.⁶¹ This version is nearly identical to its predecessor with the exception that Canova reduced its size slightly, and reduced the supporting rectangular plinth to a more slender column (fig.8). Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, American tourists visited both the Duke of Leuchtenberg's palace in Munich and the Duke of Bedford's country estate, Woburn Abbey, sixty miles outside of London, to view the two original versions of Canova's *Three Graces*.⁶² The well-traveled Haight family may have seen both sculptures.

⁶¹ For information about this second version, see Alison Yarrington, "The Three Graces and the Temple of Feminine Virtue," *Sculpture Journal*, 7 (2002): 30-43; Malcolm Baker, *Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000), 159-68; John Kenworthy-Browne, "The Sculpture Gallery at Woburn Abbey and the Architecture of the Temple of the Graces," in *The Three Graces*, 61-71.

⁶² After 1837, the plaster model of the sculpture that had once resided in Canova's studio in Rome was also on view, in the Gipsoteca Museo Canoviano in the sculptor's home town of Possagno.

The version of *The Three Graces* belonging to the Duke of Leuchtenberg was displayed, along with half of Josephine Bonaparte's art collection, in one of two large gallery rooms in the Leuchtenberg Palace (now the Ministry of Finance) in Munich.⁶³ These galleries, which contained more than two hundred objects, were open to the public each Thursday, and generally attracted a small crowd of art students and tourists. After entering the vast, neoclassical building, visitors climbed a grand staircase to the first floor. This was the most public area of the Duke's residence, where his ball room and theater were also located. The gallery rooms themselves were aligned so that visitors first entered a small, square room, where modern German and French paintings were displayed. They then passed into the long, principle gallery. Anna Mary Howitt, an English art student in Munich, described this gallery as follows:

Along the centre of the room are arranged several groups of sculpture, among which are Canova's Three Graces and Magdalene. The other groups are, I think, French; with classic vases and several antique remains; together with a beautiful carved ivory goblet or two, and some reliques [sic] of Napoleon and Eugène Beauharnais, which are placed on marble slabs around the room. The walls are covered with pictures of the masters of the Italian, Spanish and Flemish schools, arranged in separate compartments... there are several world-famous pictures here—Murillos, Titians, Leonardo Da Vincis, etc.”⁶⁴

Bayard Taylor noted that, upon entering the gallery, “Canova's world-renowned group of the Graces at once attracts the eye.”⁶⁵ The sculpture's position in the center of the room

⁶³ The palace was designed for the Duke of Leuchtenberg (Eugène Beauharnais) by the court architect of Ludwig I, Leo von Klenze (1784-1864). For detailed information about the building, see Iris Linnenkamp, *Leo von Klenze: das Leuchtenberg-Palais in München* (München: Kommissionsverlag UNI-Druck, 1992).

⁶⁴ Anna Mary Howitt, *An Art Student in Munich* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1853), 212-213.

⁶⁵ Bayard Taylor, *Views A-Foot, or, Europe Seen with a Knapsack and Staff* (New York: Hurst & Co, 1850), 196.

made it possible for viewers to walk around it and examine it from all sides, leading another visitor to comment, disparagingly, “Canova’s Graces modern, very modern. Arms like snakes entwined... The posterior of the one most to the right when standing before I do not understand.”⁶⁶

The second version of *The Three Graces* was installed by John Russell, the Sixth Duke of Bedford, in a special, purpose-built room of his sculpture gallery.⁶⁷ The sculpture gallery itself is a long, free-standing building that was originally built as a conservatory by the architect Henry Holland (1745-1806) around 1787. Its original, central section measures 138 x 25 feet, and its south façade is punctuated by nine bays, each nearly 20 feet high. The central, Palladian bay is topped by a pediment, behind which a shallow masonry dome rises from the center of the roof. When the Fifth Duke of Bedford transformed the building into a sculpture gallery in 1800, he called upon Holland again to design a “Temple of Liberty” for the east end of the building. Here, he intended to display sculptures that would express his liberal support for the principles of the French revolution. Holland designed a 12 foot square room with an Ionic portico for this purpose.

The Sixth Duke of Bedford collected statuary extensively after his inheritance in 1802, and he filled the gallery at Woburn Abbey with a combination of antique and modern works. After Canova agreed to make him a copy of *The Three Graces* in 1815,

⁶⁶ Charles R. Mack and Ilona S. Mack, eds., *Like a Sponge Thrown into Water: Francis Lieber’s European Travel Journal of 1844-1845* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001), 73.

⁶⁷ John Kenworthy-Browne, “The Sculpture Gallery at Woburn Abbey and the Architecture of the Temple of the Graces,” 60-71.

the Duke hired the architect Jeffery Wyatt (1766-1840) to design a “Temple of the Graces” for the west end of the building. Wyatt built a rotunda, fifteen feet in diameter, which is separated from the main hall of the gallery by a set of heavy, bronze-studded, mahogany doors. The temple’s domed, diamond-coffered ceiling is elaborated with gilt decorations and punctured by a round, glazed oculus. The walls are of yellow faux-marble. The floral pattern of the inlaid marble floor was designed to fit around *The Three Graces*’ forty-five inch high, carved limestone pedestal, which stood near the wall opposite the door. Like the earlier version of Canova’s sculpture, the Duke of Bedford’s *Three Graces* was fitted to its pedestal in such a way that it could be rotated easily.⁶⁸

As Alison Yarrington has recently argued, *The Three Graces* in its temple at Woburn Abbey was the centerpiece of an elaborate iconographic program whose theme was feminine virtue.⁶⁹ By the eighteenth century, the Graces were commonly deployed in art and literature as symbols of beauty, joy and splendor—all attributes of a virtuous woman. The inscription over the doors to the Temple of the Graces, which asserts that, “From [the Graces] flow all the decencies of Life,” framed Canova’s sculpture as an allegory of feminine civility, and marble sculptures of the Duke’s two young daughters, which flanked the Temple’s threshold, presented these young, female members of the Duke’s family as votaries of the Graces.

It is difficult to judge how many of the American tourists who visited the Temple of the Graces at Woburn Abbey would have recognized the symbolism expressed in John

⁶⁸ *The Three Graces* was removed from the Temple of the Graces in the 1970s, and was purchased jointly by The National Gallery of Scotland and The Victoria and Albert Museum in 1984. See Baker, *Figured in Marble*, 159-68, 181.

⁶⁹ Yarrington, “The Three Graces and the Temple of Feminine Virtue,” 30-43.

Russell's installation. The visitors who came, once a week, to see the gallery were not allowed to enter the Temple. Instead, they viewed Canova's sculpture from a distance, through square grills in the closed temple doors. When the American traveler Henry Colman visited Woburn Abbey as the Duke's guest in 1845, he was too stunned by the grandeur of life in a great English country house to take more than passing notice of the sculpture gallery; however, he did observe that, "The original group of 'The Three Graces,' in marble, by Canova himself, is here, and is surpassingly beautiful."⁷⁰ Probably, what most American visitors to Woburn Abbey took away with them was a deep admiration for what Alexander Jackson Downing described as the "accumulated luxuries, treasures of art, refinements and comforts" of the estate. Downing, who visited Woburn Abbey in 1850, also singled out *The Three Graces* as the crowning glory of the Duke's art collection.⁷¹

Sculpture galleries had been popular accoutrements of British country houses since the seventeenth century.⁷² As these homes became more accessible to American tourists in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, they provided examples of the aristocratic splendor to which more and more Americans aspired. As I will discuss at greater length in Chapter 4, Americans like the wealthy Tennessee plantation owner

⁷⁰ Colman, *European Life and Manners*, 313. *The Three Graces* was the only work of art at Woburn Abbey that Colman mentioned specifically. When he saw and admired Hiram Powers' original version of *The Greek Slave* in London five months later, he felt compelled to note that, "[Powers'] model was not so good as that of either of the Three Graces selected by Canova." Ibid., 331.

⁷¹ A. J. Downing, *Rural Essays* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1853), 533-34.

⁷² See Ruth Guilding, *Marble Mania: Sculpture Galleries in England 1640-1840*, exh. cat. (London: Sir John Soane's Museum, 2001).

Adelicia Acklen self-consciously modeled their own homes after British Country houses. After Acklen completed her Grand Tour in 1866, and assembled her recently-purchased sculpture collection in her villa outside Nashville, she began referring to her house as “the Chatsworth of the South.”

The Hights’ *Three Graces*

The dating of the Hights’ portrait suggests that the family acquired their copy of Canova’s *Three Graces* before 1843. It is possible that they purchased the sculpture in the United States. As the 1833 and 1834 sales of copies after Canova in Boston demonstrate, full-size marble copies of Canova’s works (including copies of *The Three Graces*) were occasionally available for purchase in this country, although they were made in Italy.⁷³ It’s even possible that the Hights purchased their copy of the statue at Harding’s Gallery in Boston in 1834. The most likely scenario, however, is that the Hights acquired their sculpture during the family’s first Grand Tour of Europe, in 1835-39.

Traveling to Europe, at least once during a lifetime, was a tradition among the wealthiest Americans even in the eighteenth century; however, before the advent of steam travel a transatlantic passage was dangerous, uncomfortable, lengthy and expensive. The first successful steam-powered ocean crossings occurred in 1838, and the establishment of the Cunard line of steam ships, which sailed between Liverpool and New York, followed in 1840. Steam ships cut the journey, which had taken six to eight

⁷³ The Boston merchant Thomas Appleton, who served as the American Consul in Livorno, also purchased and shipped marbles on commission to American buyers during the 1830s. See Cooper, *Classical Taste in America*, 97.

weeks under sail, down to three weeks, and made it much more affordable—within the reach of most upper-middle-class Americans. As a result, floods of American tourists flocked to Europe from all parts of the United States after 1840. The success of the nineteenth-century American sculptors who worked in Florence or Rome is a direct result of this flood tide of American tourism, brought on by the advent of steam travel.⁷⁴

European tourism had increased to a steady stream even before the advent of transatlantic steam ships. As early as 1828, Philip Hone observed with surprise that every guest at a New York dinner party had been to Europe, and by the time the American painter Thomas Cole (1801-1848) traveled to Italy in 1831, he was able to support himself there with commissions from traveling Americans.⁷⁵ Because of the difficulty of transatlantic travel before 1840, Americans often extended the length of their Grand Tour to two years or more.⁷⁶ The Hights, whose first trip extended over more than four years, were unusually adventurous tourists. Not only did Sarah Hight cross the ocean pregnant, with a five-year-old daughter in tow, but, after giving birth in Geneva, she left both her children with hired nannies in Paris and set out on a three-year journey with her husband through Europe, Turkey and the Middle East.⁷⁷ Such behavior was almost unheard of for

⁷⁴ Gerds, “Celebrities of the Grand Tour.”

⁷⁵ See Neil Harris, *The Artist in American Society* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969), 124.

⁷⁶ Mary Ellen Martin, “Nineteenth-Century Salem on the Grand Tour,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 116, no.1 (1980): 1-20.

⁷⁷ See “The Travels of Sarah Rogers Hight.” The first letter by Sarah Hight in this collection is a long lament about her immanent separation from her children, and the “rude breezes every instant widening the gulf that separates her from her soul’s strongest ties on earth, until the very heartstrings are ready to burst with the intensity of anguish.”

an American woman at the time, and Sarah Haight expressed worry in her letters that her conduct would be thought “unnatural.”⁷⁸

Like other Americans, the Hights accumulated furniture, paintings, antiques and objects d’art as they traveled. Although their much-anticipated trip through Italy in 1839 is undocumented, it would have been extremely easy for the couple to have acquired a marble copy of Canova’s *Three Graces* there. As Flemming Friborg has observed, such copies (made with varying degrees of accuracy) were common in both Florence and Rome.⁷⁹ They could even be purchased for convenience’s sake in Livorno—the Italian port from which freight was shipped to England and, ultimately, to the United States.⁸⁰ The best copies of Canova’s sculptures were made by his students and workshop assistants. Shortly after Canova’s death, a writer for the British *New Monthly Magazine* visited the sculptor’s studio and found, to his surprise, that “It was open and the chisels of the various workmen as busy as ever.”⁸¹ The studio apparently functioned for three years after Canova’s death before it was finally closed in 1826, when Canova’s brother brought his plaster models and tools home to Possagno to be placed on display there. By that

In her letter of the following day, however, she relates that “the regrets, the sighs, the tears of yesterday have all now vanished,” and she is anxious to get to Vienna. *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Flemming Friborg, “The Living Flesh. Canova’s *Three Graces* and Carl Jacobsen,” *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 26 (1999): 119-37.

⁸⁰ See Cooper, *Classical Taste in America*, 65.

⁸¹ “Modern Pilgrimages. No.VIII. The Studio of Canova,” *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* 7 (1823): 28.

time, however, casts had been made of Canova's most popular works, and sculptors who had been affiliated with his studio continued to make copies from these for decades.

Because the present location of the Hights' *Three Graces* is unknown, it's not possible to determine with certainty whether it was a high-end copy, made from a cast of Canova's original plaster model and finished by a skilled sculptor, or a cheaper knock-off. Judging from Sarah Hight's erudite and thoroughly informed letters, however, it seems unlikely that the couple would have purchased an inferior copy. Not only were the Hights unusually well-educated, they also made connections with artists and intellectuals in each place they traveled. In Paris, for instance, they became friendly with the young American painter George P. A. Healy (1813-1894), who "...had just returned from Italy, where he had been some time improving himself in his profession."⁸² In short, the Hights had access to well-informed individuals who could have advised them about their purchases of works of art

The Hights' *Three Graces* in their Library

However Sarah and Richard Hight acquired their copy of Canova's *Three Graces*, their decision to display the sculpture in their library, rather than in a more public space in their home, is in keeping with antebellum American cultural constraints on the display of nudity in art. As E. McSherry Fowble has shown, the display of nudes was a contentious issue in American culture throughout the first four decades of the nineteenth

⁸² "The Travels of Sarah Rogers Hight," 27. The Hights commissioned Healy to paint a portrait, now lost, of Richard K. Hight.

century.⁸³ The bone of contention was not the nudes themselves, so much as the appropriate spaces in which they could properly be displayed. Public spaces, where people of different ages, sexes and classes could mingle, were suspect. Even within a private home, the more discreetly a nude painting or statue could be displayed the better. When Rosalie Stier Calvert ordered two plaster casts of the Apollo Belvedere and the Venus de Medici for the drawing room of her Maryland plantation house in 1807, her father objected. In a letter to her sister, Calvert mused that "...if I cannot put them in the drawing room, I shall put them in my husband's study."⁸⁴ Libraries and studies were ideal for the display of nudes because these spaces were set apart from the social traffic of the household and reserved for serious, masculine concerns, or for the family to use in isolation.⁸⁵ The Hights' library was also a suitable setting for *The Three Graces* because it was an educational space, and thus framed the sculpture, not as a hedonistic display of female flesh, but as an instructional tool and a sign of the family's erudition.

In order to understand how the Hights intended *The Three Graces* to function in their library, one need only look at how the sculpture appears in Calyo's gouache, which after all, is as much an idealized portrait of a room as it is a portrait of a family. In the portrait, *The Three Graces* appears as the centerpiece of the Hights' library. It sits slightly back in a frescoed niche, bathed in raking light from the conservatory on the left. It dominates the space of the portrait, and its influence over the family is conveyed by the formal parallels between the sculpture and the Hights themselves. The three figures in

⁸³ Fowble, "Without a Blush."

⁸⁴ Quoted in Cooper, *Classical taste in America*, 65-66.

⁸⁵ Clifford Edward Clark, Jr., *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 40.

Canova's sculpture echo the three-part division of the family, with Lydia on the left, the four male Hights clustered in the center, and Sarah on the right. Lydia's raised arm mirror's Euphrosyne's raised arm. Sarah Hight's proper left arm and sleeve mirror the curved line of Thalia's back. The upturned tilt of the younger Richard Hight's head, as he looks toward his father, mirrors the tilt of Thalia's head as she looks toward her sisters. The gilt, tapestry covered chair, which waits to receive Lydia when she sits, echoes the arched niche that the *Graces* occupy. Like the carved figures themselves, the Hights exist in perfect harmony. In this way, the painter conveyed what Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe would later describe as the profound influence of "the aesthetic element" over "the education of the entire household in refinement, intellectual development and moral sensibility."⁸⁶

Although the Hights' library would have been accessible to only a small circle of family and friends, the Hights' family portrait—whose elaborate frame suggests that it was prominently displayed—may have made the room accessible to a broader audience. Stereographs of the Hights' Fifth Avenue mansion, taken during the 1850s, show similar small, elaborately framed paintings hanging on the walls of a parlor that opened into their conservatory (figs. 9-10) The portrait functions on several levels. As I have previously argued, it resembles contemporary Biedermeier portraiture in its attention to the physical details of an actual domestic setting. In their family portrait as in their library, the Hights' tasteful and costly possessions, including *The Three Graces*, express their wealth and discerning connoisseurship, and bear witness to their extensive travels. *The*

⁸⁶ Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home, or Principles of Domestic Economy* (1869; repr., Project Gutenberg, 2004), chap. 6, <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/mrwmh10.txt> (accessed 3 June 2005).

Three Graces also carried with it, into the Hights' more modest country residence, associations with the royal villa of Malmaison and the great country estate of Woburn Abbey, as well as the Leuchtenburg Palace in Munich.

The Hight family portrait is also what Roger Stein has referred to as an “emblematic portrait,” that is, it asks viewers to:

...know the value of its subjects through [the images] that surround them, and stand for attributes, ideas and values of the sitters. The emblematic portrait requires the viewer's knowledge of a system of meanings and his or her active engagement to create intellectual coherence and meaning out of images so arranged—rather, that is, than merely perceiving persons in their living space at a particular moment in historical time.⁸⁷

A number of objects in the painting have clear symbolic significance. For example, the North American goldfinch held by Lydia, like the conservatory behind her and the bouquet on the table in front of her, associate the young girl with the natural world. The little bird perched on her finger as she points to her father probably also refers to his early profession as a feather merchant. The distance Richard Hight has traveled from such modest beginnings is indicated by the map, labeled “ASIA,” spread out on the table before him. Clearly visible along the margin of the map closest to the viewer are the islands of Japan and the Philippines. With a small smile playing around his lips, the elder Richard Hight points to a particular spot along the east coast of China, just south of the inward-curving Yellow Sea. He is, in fact, pointing to the port city of Shanghai, which was opened to western trade by the treaty of Nanking on August 29, 1842.⁸⁸ Together, the

⁸⁷ Roger B. Stein, “Charles Wilson Peale's Expressive Design: *The Artist in His Museum*,” *Prospects* 6 (1981): 144-45.

⁸⁸ The British-Chinese Treaty of Nanking, which ended the first Opium War, secured trading rights in Shanghai for the British only; however, the United States immediately

bird and the map trace Haight's professional trajectory from local businessman to global imperialist. His oldest son, who points to the jutting Korean peninsula with a stylus as he looks attentively toward his father, is being groomed to follow in his footsteps.

The Three Graces serves a similarly emblematic function in the Haight family portrait. Since before the eighteenth century, real or invented statues were routinely included in portraits as attributes, to convey important information about the sitters with whom they were paired. For instance, John Singleton Copley (1738-1815) included an ancient sculpture, believed at the time to depict the Roman youth Papirius and his mother, in his Grand Tour portrait of Mr. And Mrs. Ralph Izard (1775; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). As Maurie D. McInnus has shown, while this sculpture reinforced an image of the Izards as connoisseurs, its theme (that of a youth divided by conflicting loyalties to his home and his country) also reflected perfectly the position of Ralph Izard, who was torn between loyalty to England and his love for his native South Carolina.⁸⁹ Statues of the Graces, specifically, also appear in eighteenth-century portraiture as emblems of feminine virtue and accomplishment. In *Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces*, for instance, Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) evoked the Graces' already discussed associations with beauty, joy and splendor (gifts the sisters bestow on their votary in the

dispatched a trade commission, headed by Caleb Cushing, to negotiate similar rights for the United States. These rights were secured on July 3, 1844. By 1845, a writer for *The Living Age* could effuse, "By our admission into the Port of Shang-hai, we can approach by sea within seventy miles of [the most important Chinese] market for our goods." "Intercourse with China," *The Living Age* 4 (15 March 1845): 638. See also "American Diplomacy in China," *The North American Review* 89 (October 1859): 479.

⁸⁹ Maurie D. McInnus, "Cultural Politics, Colonial Crisis, and Ancient metaphor in John Singleton Copley's Mr. And Mrs. Ralph Izard," *Winterthur Portfolio* 34 (Summer/Autumn 1999): 85-108.

form of a proffered laurel crown) to convey a flattering image of Lady Bunbury as a graceful and virtuous woman (fig. 11).

Seen in light of Reynolds' portrait, *The Three Graces* in the Haight family portrait might be understood as signifying Lydia and Sarah Haight's personal grace and feminine virtue. That the Graces retained these symbolic associations well into the nineteenth century can be seen from a satirical print of around 1850, now in the Prints and Photographs Division of the New York Public Library (fig. 12). The wood engraving, titled *The Graces (After Canova—A Very Long Way)*, depicts three homely women in Bloomer costumes, standing on a pedestal in an awkward and slightly licentious parody of the pose held by Canova's *Graces*. The humor of the image arises from the women's gracelessness and their implied lack of virtue—qualities that Canova's statue, the print suggests, embodies.

More specifically, *The Graces* in the Haight family portrait draws attention to the entire family's ongoing process of self-education. Like the Graces who stand encouragingly behind Marie de Medici in Peter Paul Rubens' (1577-1640) painting *The Education of Marie de Medici* (fig. 13), they preside over the Haight's acquisition of knowledge, and also of taste—the elusive quality which the sentimental novelist Lydia H. Sigourney described as follows:

When manifested in graceful movement and manner, elegance of language, or correct appreciation of the fine arts, [taste] serves as a sort of historical trait, proving either the influence of refined society, an accomplished education, or such means of improvement as are seldom accessible in solitude and obscurity.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Lydia H. Sigourney, "Taste," *Godey's Lady's Book* 20 (February 1840): 88.

Another role of *The Three Graces* in the Haight family portrait (and by extension, in their library) is suggested by the American painter Charles Wilson Peale's (1741-1827) portrait of his own family, *The Peale Family* (fig. 14). This large (5 x 7 feet) portrait hung for years in Peale's studio, where it served as an example of his prowess as a portrait artist and conveyed his ideal of harmonious familial relations.⁹¹ Like the Haight, the Peale family gathers around a cloth covered table. At the center of the painting, posed like a Madonna with her infant son, is Charles Wilson Peale's first wife, Rachel Brewer. Around the table are another child, Peale's brothers and sisters, a servant, and the family dog. Peale depicted himself pausing in the act of painting to lean over the table and watch his brother James sketch a picture. The family members smile and touch one another affectionately. As John Adams wrote of the painting in 1776, "There was a pleasant, a happy cheerfulness in their countenances, and a familiarity in their air toward each other."⁹² In order to reinforce this air of domestic felicity, Peale included, on the easel to the left of his own image in the portrait, an unfinished painting of three embracing sisters wearing Greek costume—clearly meant to be the three Graces. Over them is the Latin inscription "Concordia Animae" (Harmonious Spirits). Thus, as early as 1775, the Graces were being used emblematically in American art to symbolize loving, familial bonds and domestic harmony.

Like *The Peale Family*, the Haight family portrait is a conversation piece—that is, an informal painting depicting figures engaged in ordinary activities in a domestic

⁹¹ Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr., ed. *Raphaelle Peale Still Lifes*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1988), 37.

⁹² Quoted in David C. Ward, *Charles Wilson Peale: Art and Selfhood in the Early Republic* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2004), 138.

setting. As Deborah Ann Schafer has argued, conversation piece portraits became popular in Europe in the eighteenth century in response to a new ideal of family life—one that was characterized by intimacy, harmony and tenderness.⁹³ In the Haight family portrait, *The Three Graces* reinforces this domestic ideal and, at the same time, the intimate, domestic setting in which the sculpture appears inflects its meaning. By the mid-nineteenth century, images of families gathered in well-appointed interiors around cloth-draped tables were common visual tropes, used to suggest domestic bliss.⁹⁴ This is the case, for example, in John Sartain's (1808-1897) print *The Happy Family*, which appeared as the frontispiece for the first volume of *Miss Leslie's Magazine* in January 1843 (fig. 15). Seen in just such a context, the *Graces* are stripped of their erotic connotations and reframed sentimentally. As symbols of filial affection, they express the Haight's own loving ties to one another. In the Haight's library, as in their portrait, *The Three Graces* signified personal grace, refinement, feminine virtue and filial love, as well as wealth and taste, and it exerted an elevating influence over the family.

Flora

Canova, more than any other European sculptor, popularized ideal sculpture in America and set the stage for the pattern of collecting marble statues that would prevail in the United States throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The Hights probably purchased their copy of Canova's *Three Graces* during their first Grand Tour in

⁹³ Deborah Anne Schafer, "Fashioning an Ideal of Intimacy: British Family Portraits, 1730-1790," Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 2004.

⁹⁴ For a thorough discussion of this imagery in American art and visual culture, see Cristina Bishop Klee, "The Happy Family and the Politics of Domesticity, 1840-1870," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 2004.

the late 1830s. During their second Grand Tour ten years later, they commissioned an ideal sculpture by the American artist Thomas Crawford (1814-1857). *Flora* (fig. 16), which Grace Greenwood described as “an exceedingly graceful and beautiful figure,” shares unmistakable qualities with Canova’s sculptures, particularly his *Dancing Girls*.⁹⁵ Although her face lacks the sweet, emotive expression characteristic of Canova’s female figures, *Flora*’s clinging, swirling drapery, her garland of flowers and her pose (which Crawford clearly adapted from ballet) all attest to Canova’s vital influence over the first generation of American sculptors in Italy, and over American taste into the 1840s and beyond.⁹⁶

Crawford designed *Flora* specifically for the conservatory of the Hights’ new, Italianate mansion in Manhattan, where it remained until 1860. Stereographs of the mansion’s interior, now in the New York Public Library, show *Flora* in an ivy-filled

⁹⁵ Grace Greenwood, “Leaves from Over the Sea,” *The National Era*, 10 March 1853: 37. For more information about Crawford’s *Flora*, see: Laretta Dimmick, “A Catalogue of the Portrait Busts and Ideal Figures of Thomas Crawford, 1813-1857,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1986, 448-62; John K. Howat, “Private Collectors and Public Spirit: A Selective View,” in *Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), 102-103; and Thayer Tolles, “Modeling a Reputation: The American Sculptor and New York City,” in *ibid.*, 152-53.

⁹⁶ The South Carolina planter, William Aiken and his wife Harriett Lowndes Aiken made a Grand Tour in 1858, traveling with a floor plan of their new art gallery. In Italy, they bought several marble statues by American artists, including a bust of *Proserpine* by Hiram Powers and a *Campagna Shepherd Boy* by Edward Sheffield Bartholomew (1822-1858). They also bought a reduced-scale copy of Canova’s *Venus Italica*. As Maurice D. McInness has argued, Canova remained popular with American tourists even after mid-century, when he fell from favor with connoisseurs. Maurice D. McInness, “‘Picture Mania’: Collectors and Collecting in Charleston,” in McInness ed. *In Pursuit of Refinement: Charlestonians Abroad, 1740-1860* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 39-54.

niche, presiding over the elaborate, two-story Moorish garden room (fig. 17).

Interspersed amidst fountains, mosses, ferns and flowers is an array of other marble sculpture, including two crouching sphinxes, a copy of the Roman bathing Venus in the Vatican Museum in Rome, a nymph lifting a shallow bowl of water, and *The Three Graces*, now positioned at one end of the long, rectangular room, in front of an enormous window patterned with panes of stained and clear glass in a pseudo-oriental design (fig. 4). It is *Flora*, however, that enjoys the most prominent position in the room. Framed by the main entrance to the conservatory, the sculpture appears to be just alighting atop a moss-covered “hill,” her drapery still swirling in the wind generated by her swift descent and her arms filled with flowers. The figure is, both formally and thematically, perfectly suited to the space it occupies.

Following the death of their oldest son in a shipwreck in 1858, the Hights sold their house and most of their possessions, intending to return permanently to Europe. In 1860, the family donated *Flora* to the art museum in the recently opened Central Park. A writer for *The Crayon* demonstrated his or her firm belief in the elevating role of ideal sculpture by expressing the hope that, in her new park setting, *Flora* would exert a civilizing influence over the public.

...a marble female form, pure in fancy and material, may greatly assist in preserving order. A fine ideal statue like the “Flora” would, wherever it could be seen, be more effective in any given area than twenty policemen. We would have one visible in the Park at every turn, and placed in the Park solely on account of order. The noblest ideas of the past, the ideas which have ever exercised positive control over the masses, have ever been associated with female forms, as is easily recognized by studying the worship of Minerva by the noblest people of antiquity, and of the Madonna by the millions of the middle ages.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ “Sketchings. Domestic Art Gossip,” *The Crayon* 7 (August 1860): 231.

Fresh from a genteel, domestic interior, *Flora* bore with her trailing clouds of feminine domestic influence (described in the passage above almost as a form of mind control), and thus fit perfectly into the civilizing program of the park as a whole.

William Niblo, who purchased *The Three Graces* at the Haight's estate sale, probably intended Canova's sculpture for his fashionable theater and private park, Niblo's Garden, on Broadway.⁹⁸ In the 1840s, when the propriety of displaying nudes was still open to question in the United States, the proximity of such a work to a public theater would have made both the sculpture and the setting seem positively obscene. By 1860, ideal sculptures had become so closely associated with refined domesticity that their presence conferred an air of respectability on public spaces, even commercial ones.

⁹⁸ "Sale of Fashionable Furniture," *New York Tribune*, 19 October 1860: 8. The present location of the Haight's *Three Graces* is unknown. When Niblo (a widower with no surviving children) died in 1878, he bequeathed his furniture to his housekeeper, Mary Sylvester, and his artworks to the YMCA of New York. Because of the ambivalent position held by ideal statuary in the late 1870s, the sculpture may have been considered to be either "furniture" or "art." See "An Old New-Yorker Dead," *New York Times*, 22 August 1878: 5.

CHAPTER 3

HIRAM POWERS' BUST *PROSERPINE* IN HORACE GREELEY'S PARLOR

By the 1850s, Hiram Powers was widely recognized as the foremost American sculptor of ideal subjects. Because he understood early on how such works would be displayed and viewed in the United States, he was able to develop a formula that met, nearly perfectly, the needs of his audience. Nowhere is that formula better expressed than in his ideal bust, *Proserpine* (fig. 18). Although Powers' *Greek Slave* remains his best-known work, *Proserpine* was his best seller. With one hundred and fifty-six known copies produced in Powers' studio, it was probably the most popular ideal sculpture in the United States, and possible anywhere, during the entire nineteenth century.¹ In order to understand why Powers' *Proserpine* was so tremendously popular as a domestic ornament, it's instructive to compare it with another ideal sculpture, similarly praised in its day and similarly themed, but not nearly as commercially successful: Erastus Dow Palmer's (1817-1904) *White Captive* (fig. 19).

Palmer's White Captive

Palmer was born in Pompey, New York, a small town near Syracuse.² He began his adult life as a carpenter, but trained himself as a carver of cameos when he was twenty-nine.

¹ Wunder, *Hiram Powers, Vermont Sculptor, 1805-1873*, vol.2, 187-202.

² For biographical information about Palmer, see Thayer Tolles, ed., *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Volume I* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999), 60-62; H. Nichols B. Clark, *A Marble Quarry: The James H. Ricau Collection of Sculpture at the Chrysler Museum of Art* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1997), 164-66; J. Carson Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983).

He quickly became very successful in this profession. Within a few years, however, his eyes weakened and he was forced to give up close work. He turned to marble sculpture, opening a studio in Albany and, within a year, producing an accomplished marble bust, *The Infant Ceres* (1850; Metropolitan Museum of Art). This work, and the two busts that followed, *Resignation* (1854; Albany Institute of History) and *Spring* (1855; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts) were much admired, as was his first full-length ideal figure, *Indian Girl* (1853-56; Metropolitan Museum of Art)—a figure which I will discuss at greater length in Chapter 5. Unlike most other American sculptors of ideal busts and figures, Palmer never left the United States to set up a studio in Italy, and so he was unable to capitalize on the lucrative tourist trade there; however, his striking work, which tended toward naturalism rather than classicism, caught the eyes of influential critics who published enthusiastic reviews in newspapers and journals. As a result of this exposure, he was able to sell multiple copies of all the above-mentioned sculptures.³

In 1857, Palmer began what he referred to in a letter to his friend John Durand as, “My finest work.”⁴ The statue, which would depict a white, adolescent girl kidnapped and stripped by American Indians, was intended as a pendant to his *Indian Girl*, then owned by the New York politician Hamilton Fish.⁵ Palmer related to Durand that he

³ Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 149-51; 168-69; 176-77. Palmer apparently made only one full-length version of *Indian Girl*, but he sold several busts of the figure’s head and shoulders.

⁴ Erastus Dow Palmer to John Durand, 11 January 1858, Dreer Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, quoted in Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 183.

⁵ Fish purchased *Indian Girl* first, and commissioned *The White Captive* shortly after installing the earlier sculpture in his home. See Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 149-50, 180-184 and Thayer Tolles, “Modeling a Reputation: The American Sculptor and New York City,” in *Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861*, 164-67. A photograph of Fish’s

intended the first sculpture, which depicts an Indian maiden discovering a crucifix, “to show the influence of Christianity upon the savage,” and the second to show “the influence of the savage upon Christianity.”⁶ The result was *The White Captive*, a tour de force that showcased Palmer’s originality and skill. The nude, pubescent female figure stands in a strained and awkward contrapposto pose. Her left arm is pulled behind her back by a bark thong, which binds both of her wrists to the tree stump at her right side. Her right hand, which is the most visible, clutches fearfully at the stump. While Palmer’s theme of a young, captive woman facing imminent sexual violation was clearly a response to Powers’ celebrated *Greek Slave*, he sought to improve upon that work by making his sculpture both more American and more lifelike. Although the *White Captive*’s smooth, marble body follows accepted neo-classical conventions (it is flawlessly white and lacks both body hair and genitalia), her face is realistic in both its proportions and its expression of shock and dread.

The White Captive was destined to join *The Indian Girl* in the music room of Hamilton Fish’s house (fig. 20); however, with Fish’s permission, Palmer first placed the sculpture on display at Schaus’s Art Gallery on Broadway in Manhattan, and later in Boston. In both cities, it attracted crowds of viewers who each paid twenty-five cents to see it. From the beginning, the sculpture was controversial. Several months after Palmer’s exhibition ended, a writer for the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* could refer glibly to “that

drawing room, taken in the early 1880s, shows *Indian Girl* standing in his music room, just outside the entrance to the drawing room. *The White Captive* probably stood opposite it, on the other side of the music room, but is obscured by a hanging curtain. See *Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States with a Description of the Art Treasures Contained Therein* (New York: D. Appleton, 1883), 94-95.

⁶ Erastus Dow Palmer to John Durand, 11 January 1858.

large class of people who were somewhat shocked at the unnecessary nudity of his figure.”⁷ Even Palmer’s good friend John Durand published a scathing critique in *The Crayon*, which lambasted Palmer for abandoning classical ideals and exposing female flesh for no higher reason than money. “He who is void of moral delicacy and sensibility,” chided this anonymous critic, “can never rise to the true conception of artistic effort or of artistic spiritualization.”⁸ In a letter that appeared in the *New York Times*, a writer called the sculpture “an attack on the decorum of American manners,” and asked, “In gazing upon it, are we not taking the first, returning step toward the barbarism of the savages, whose act of obscene cruelty it is intended to depict?” He or she then went on to decry “the unblushing effrontery with which the exhibition room of the ‘White Captive’ is sometimes made a convenient lounging and flirtation place.”⁹ Whereas *The Greek Slave* created around itself a sanctified, domestic space, the *White Captive* created, in this writer’s estimation, a prurient and lustful atmosphere.

It is true that the *White Captive*, whose arms are pulled behind her, is marginally more exposed than the *Greek Slave*; however, another reason for the outcry against Palmer’s figure is suggested by the response of the American art critic James Jackson

⁷ “Art Gossip,” *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 4 (December 1860): 182.

⁸ “Naked Art,” *The Crayon* 6 (December 1859): 877. Palmer was so hurt by this betrayal, that he wrote to Durand, canceling his subscription to *The Crayon* and noting, “I enjoy the pleasure, however, of thinking that you are not the author of this ignorant, filthy, obscene expression of fanaticism.” Letter from E. D. Palmer to John Durand, 3 December 1859, John Durand Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Reel N21.

⁹ “Palmer’s White Captive,” *New York Times*, 30 December 1859: 2. This letter prompted an outraged response from gallery owner William Schaus, who called the writer, “the hero of a blunder as indelicate as it is stupid.” “Palmer’s White Captive,” *New York Times*, 2 January 1860: 4.

Jarves. While Jarves believed that many American ideal sculptures suffered from overgeneralization and a lack of expression, he believed Palmer erred in the opposite direction. The *White Captive*'s ordinary face and terrified expression rendered her, in his opinion, "ignoble and common."¹⁰ Finally, several observers recorded how painful they found the experience of looking at the sculpture. A critic writing for the *Musical World* echoed the letter writer in the *New York Times* when she stated that, "We feel we are almost as ruthless as her savage captors in continuing to look at her while she suffers so much."¹¹

As J. Carson Webster has shown, the majority of published reviews praised the *White Captive*; however, even the most favorable responses betray a certain anxiety about the girl it depicts, who has neither the idealized physiognomy nor the perfect poise of a "true woman." According to the reviewer for the *Atlantic Monthly*: "...her chin trembles, and one of her hands is convulsively clenched—but it is with the anguish of her sore besetting, not the spasm of mortal fear...we know that the soul of the maiden will help itself,—that her hope clings fast and her courage is undaunted, and her faith complete."¹² This reviewer's attempt to reassure his readers (and possibly himself) that the figure is neither vulnerable nor afraid reveals his awareness that she might easily be perceived as being both. A writer for the *Troy Arena* newspaper noted that a typical viewer, in looking at the *White Captive*, is so pained that he or she "personates and reflects the expression of

¹⁰ Jarves, *Art Thoughts*, 309.

¹¹ *Musical World*, 19 November 1859: 4, quoted in Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 66.

¹² "Palmer's White Captive," *The Atlantic Monthly* 5 (January 1860): 109.

the statue.”¹³ Sentimental viewers looking for a vicarious emotional experience found it in the *White Captive*; however, it was an experience in which reassurance and spiritual uplift could be easily overshadowed by pity, frustration, and outrage.

As Joy Kasson has noted, one reason that the *White Captive* provoked so much anxiety is that it raised an unspoken question: what would happen if the girl did not die, but instead lost her identity as a white, Christian woman and willingly bore the children of her captors?¹⁴ Fear of miscegenation certainly lurks beneath the surface of viewers’ responses to the sculpture, but it is joined there by other, more pressing fears—in particular, fears about the integrity of the sentimental domestic ideal. What would happen if a true woman could not exert restraining influence over masculine passions? What would happen if a child ceased to be innocent and spiritually faithful? What would happen if a chivalrous man could not succor or protect his dependants? This last question was particularly fraught. If Palmer’s *White Captive* speaks of the supposed savagery of undomesticated American Indian men, it also speaks of the impotence of their white American counterparts. Underlying the sculpture’s harrowing narrative of sexual violation is the specter of male failure.

Palmer realized a handsome profit from his *White Captive*. He was able to add the revenues from both the New York and the Boston exhibitions to the \$3000 that Fish had paid him for it; however, he never sold a full-length replica of the sculpture and, despite having modeled a less expensive bust version, he appears to have sold only one marble

¹³ *Troy Arena* (New York), 19 November 1859: 2, quoted in Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 65.

¹⁴ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 73-100.

copy of the bust.¹⁵ One need only think of the one hundred and fifty-six known copies of Powers' bust of *Proserpine* to determine which sculpture most Americans deemed preferable as a domestic ornament. Unlike the *White Captive*, *Proserpine* reassured its audience by expressing and reaffirming mainstream cultural values. Powers' bust—so seemingly bland and unexpressive by today's standards—was such a powerful image in the middle decades of the nineteenth century that the writer James Parton evoked it in 1854 in order to normalize and sentimentalize the eccentric *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley, who owned a copy of the bust.

Writing Sentimental Interiors

In 1854, Sara Payson Willis (writing under the pen name Fanny Fern) published her first novel, *Ruth Hall*. Willis wrote humorous weekly columns in several newspapers and, by 1856, was the highest paid columnist in the United States. Her blend of wry satire and sentimentalism struck just the right note with her middle-class American audience. In *Ruth Hall*, which sold more than one hundred thousand copies in its first of many editions, Willis struck out against various forces oppressing women in the nineteenth century. In particular, she drew a comparison between her sentimental heroine, Ruth, and Ruth's dour, puritanical mother-in-law. Nowhere is the generational difference between these two women clearer than in a scene near the beginning of the novel, in which the nosy, judgmental Mrs. Hall surreptitiously investigates her son and daughter-in-law's

¹⁵ The information in Palmer's account books related to the *White Captive* has been analyzed and published in Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 181-87. Palmer also sold a marble replica of the *Captive's* foot, which one critic particularly praised as being "calm" and thus demonstrating self-control. Wendell L'Amoreux, *Springfield Republican*, 19 February 1858: 2, quoted in *ibid.*, 184.

new home. A lengthy description of the house unfolds which confirms Ruth's identity as a sentimental "true woman."

"This is the parlor, hey?" soliloquized old Mrs. Hall, as she seated herself on the sofa. "A few dollars laid out here I guess." Not so fast, my dear madam. Examine closely. Those long, white curtains looped up so prettily from the open windows are plain, cheap muslin; but no artist could have disposed their folds so gracefully. The chairs and sofas, also, Ruth covered with her own nimble fingers. The room has the fragrance of a green-house, to be sure; but if you examine the flowers, which are scattered so profusely round, you will find they are *wild* flowers, which Ruth, basket in hand, climbs many a stone fence every morning to gather; and not a country boy in the village knows their hiding places as well as she. See how skillfully they are arranged! With what an eye to the blending of colors! How dainty is that little tulip-shaped vase, with those half-opened wild rose-buds!¹⁶

As Ruth's mother-in-law penetrates deeper into the house, searching for signs of waste and untidiness, she becomes increasingly frustrated. Finally, she reaches the inner-most heart of the house—the nursery.

...the floor is strewn with play-things; thank God, there's a child in the house! There is a broken doll; a torn picture-book; a little wreath of oak leaves; a dandelion chain; some willow tassels; a few acorns; a little red shoe, full of parti-colored pebbles; the wing of a little blue bird; two little speckled eggs, on a tuft of moss; and a little orphan chicken, nestling in a basket of cotton wool... her eye falls on a crouching "Venus," in the corner. Saints and angels! why, she has never been to the dress-makers! There's a text now! What a pity there is no appreciative audience to see the glow of indignation with which those half averted eyes regard the undraped goddess! "Oh, Harry! Is this the end of all my teachings? Well, it is all *Ruth's* doings—all *Ruth's* doings. Harry is to be pitied, not blamed;" and the old lady takes up, at length, her *triumphant* march for home.¹⁷

Ruth's crouching Venus is undoubtedly supposed to be a copy of the ancient marble statue of a bather in the Vatican Museum in Rome (fig. 21). In the nineteenth century, this Roman copy of a Hellenistic bronze was greatly admired and widely reproduced for domestic decoration. But why, one might wonder along with Mrs. Hall, would a nude

¹⁶ Fanny Fern, *Ruth Hall* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1854), 59.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

sculpture of a pagan goddess be included as a decoration in Willis's ideal nursery?

Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe offered an explanation in their

American Woman's Home of 1869:

...there are few of the renowned statues, whether of antiquity or of modern times, that have not been accurately copied in plaster casts... The educating influence of these works of art can hardly be overestimated. Surrounded by such suggestions of the beautiful, and such reminders of history and art, children are constantly trained to correctness of taste and refinement of thought, and stimulated—sometimes to efforts of artistic imitation, always to the eager and intelligent inquiry about the scenes, the places, the incidents represented.¹⁸

As the scattered playthings in Ruth's nursery attest, little Daisy Hall has been well-trained to appreciate (and appropriate) beauty in the world around her. Furthermore, her adoption of an "orphan chick" confirms what many sentimental men and women believed—that judiciously selected pictures and statues encouraged emotional as well as aesthetic sensitivity, an idea that had its roots in the mid-eighteenth-century "cult of sensibility." As a writer for the *North American Review* argued in 1841,

Vis-à-vis the idea that painting and sculpture "are a source of corrupting luxury, and an unfavorable moral influence," it is wiser and better to deny at once the authority of the common prejudice, that pleasure and purity, leisure and morality are incompatible and to regard as nearer the truth the opinion, that love of innocent enjoyment, of beauty, the gratification of fancy, the indulgence of taste, are among the original, strong, and good principles of our nature, the development of which will ward off corruption, and complete and perfect the social man.¹⁹

Sculpture in the home served as an outward sign its owners' sensibility and, hence, his or her character. Mrs. Hall's failure to appreciate Ruth's sculpture, like her failure to understand the general sentimental ethos of her son and daughter-in-law's home, signals

¹⁸ Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home*, chap. 6, <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/mrwmh10.txt> (accessed 10 August 2003).

¹⁹ "Arts of Design in America," *The North American Review* 52 (April 1841): 312-13.

the marked contrast between her and Ruth, whose refined taste, affinity with nature, lack of pretense and open, loving nature are evident in every detail of her décor.

A year after the New York publishing firm of Mason Brothers published *Ruth Hall*, they published a book by Willis' husband, the biographer James Parton. Parton broke with tradition by writing a biography of a living subject—the social reformer and editor of the *New York Tribune*, Horace Greeley.²⁰ Like *Ruth Hall*, Parton's book was popular and went through many editions. He was criticized, however, for being too laudatory.²¹ His admiration for Greeley is particularly clear in a section near the end of his biography where he describes an anonymous gentleman's evening visit to Greeley's Manhattan townhouse.

Arriving before Greeley had returned from work, this visitor wandered through the public, first-floor rooms of his home, carefully observing and relating to Parton's readers what he saw there. He first establishes that Greeley's fashionable, Gramercy Park house is "in point of pretension, about midway between the palaces of the Fifth Avenue and the hovels of the Five Points." Greeley is thus presented, geographically, as neither decadent nor depraved but as a member of the respectable middle class. His "exceedingly narrow" entrance hall and stairs, his coarse, durable hall carpet, and Mrs. Greeley, "the very picture of a prosperous farm wife," who is summoned away from her visitor by a crying child, all confirm the Greeley family's congenial ordinariness. After noting the extreme simplicity of the Greeleys' parlor furniture, the narrator continues:

²⁰ James Parton, *The Life of Horace Greeley, Editor of the New York Tribune* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1855).

²¹ See, in particular, "Life of Horace Greeley, J. Parton," *Putnam's Monthly* 5 (February 1855): 215.

...the walls were almost covered with paintings; the mantel-pieces were densely peopled with statuettes, busts, and medallions; in a corner on a pedestal stood a beautiful copy of (I believe) Powers' Proserpine in marble; and various other works of art were disposed about the floor or leaned against the walls... The subjects of more than half of them were religious.²²

He goes on to relate that, after waiting for an hour and perusing "...volumes of Burns, Byron and Hawthorne, Downing's Rural Essays, West's complete Analysis of the Holy Bible, and Ballou's Voice of Universalism," Greeley arrived home:

...the face of the master of the house beamed into the room... He flung off his overcoat, hung it up in the hall, and looking into the parlor, said: "Just let me run up and see my babies *one* minute; I haven't seen 'em all day, you know;" and he sprang up the stairs two steps at a time. I heard him talk in high glee to the children in the room above, for "just one minute," and then he rejoined me.²³

The scene, as the narrator paints it, resembles an engraving published in *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1841 (fig. 22). Titled simply "Home," the engraving depicts a father returning from his day's labors to his happy, waiting family. Upon crossing his threshold, he sweeps his youngest child up in his arms for a kiss. Greeley's sensibility, already conveyed by the objects in his parlor, is confirmed by his domestic behavior. This narrator presents his home as a "separate sphere," where Greeley tosses aside his business cares along with his overcoat and lovingly devotes himself to his family. His behavior in his own home is, furthermore, presented as completely unaffected and sincere. He emerges from Parton's narrative as a thoroughly sentimental man.²⁴

²² Parton, *The Life of Horace Greeley*, 428.

²³ *Ibid.*, 429.

²⁴ For a discussion of "model husbands" within mid-nineteenth-century sentimental visual culture, see Klee, "The Happy Family and the Politics of Domesticity," 131-34.

Significantly, it was this account of “Horace Greeley at Home” that Parton distributed to newspapers and magazines at Christmastime of 1854, in advance of the publication of his biography.²⁵ Although he asserted vigorously that “Horace Greeley is wholly innocent of this book,” Parton was frank about the fact that he “liked the man,” and “gloried in his career.”²⁶ Greeley (whose eye turned periodically to politics) could hardly have wished for a more flattering portrayal of himself in the cultural climate of the 1850s.

In a sense, through their detailed elaborations of domestic interiors, Willis and Parton created their sentimental protagonists. Both the Hall house and the Greeley house function as texts within their texts, to be read by those who would (unlike old Mrs. Hall) immediately recognize and appreciate the outward signs of sentimental domesticity. Sculpture plays a key role in both interiors. Whereas Willis used a copy of an ancient, European statue to signal her heroine’s sensibility, Parton included in his biography a reference to Powers’ *Proserpine*.²⁷ By 1854, the bust would have been well-known to most of Parton’s readers. Like Greeley’s religious paintings and his volumes of Burns, Byron and Hawthorne, it helped to sentimentalize and also normalize the outspoken editor and reformer, who was widely known as an eccentric. Indeed, Greeley’s artistic

²⁵ See for instance, “Horace Greeley at Home,” *Farmer’s Cabinet* (Amherst, Mass.), 28 December 1854: 1.

²⁶ Parton, *The Life of Horace Greeley*, vii.

²⁷ The present location of Greeley’s version of this bust is unknown; however, Powers’ correspondence with Greeley indicates that it had a simple, beaded border rather than the original basket of cut flowers or the most usual border, which was made of acanthus leaves. Powers to Horace Greeley, 28 July 1852, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers, Vermont Sculptor, 1805-1873*, vol.2, 194.

tastes were one of the few points on which he agreed with the majority of middle and upper-class Americans, most of whom believed, during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, that Hiram Powers was the greatest living sculptor.

Hiram Powers

Hiram Powers was born in rural Vermont but he grew up in the thriving, western city of Cincinnati.²⁸ There, he studied with the German-American sculptor Frederick Eckstein (c.1775-1852) before launching a career as a sculptor of portrait busts and wax figures. The English traveler and writer Frances Trollope, who visited Cincinnati in the early 1830s, was impressed by Powers' busts and his animated wax tableau of Dante's "Inferno" on display at Dorfeuille's Western Museum. She became a faithful promoter of Powers' career. Powers also found local support from the wealthy Cincinnati lawyer Nicholas Longworth, who sent the young artist to New York, Washington D.C. and Boston. Longworth eventually funded Powers' journey to Florence, Italy, where the sculptor settled with his family in 1837.

Powers continued making portrait busts in Italy. His bust of the Harvard mathematician John Farrar (1837; Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University), which he modeled shortly after opening his studio in Florence, is typical. The bust is strikingly unidealized. Farrar's scrawny neck, grim, square-jawed visage, and thinning, nineteenth-

²⁸ For biographical information about Hiram Powers, see Sylvia Crane, *White Silence: Greenough, Powers and Crawford, American Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1972); Wunder, *Hiram Powers, Vermont Sculptor*, vol. 1; Janet A. Headley, "English Literary and Aesthetic Influences on American Sculptors in Italy, 1825-1875," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1988, and Donald M. Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture* (New York: Garland, 1977).

century coiffeur emerge from a loosely draped swath of fabric, intended to confer a classical air on the otherwise thoroughly modern personage. Powers' early portrait busts of women, for instance *Ann-Sarah Maxcy Hughs* (1837; private collection) are equally frank, often to the point of being homely. Still, Powers was able to make a living modeling busts of American tourists, many of whom were homesick and eager to patronize a countryman. As Sylvia Crane has observed, they seemed not to mind, but rather to admire, the unvarnished verisimilitude of Powers' portrayals.²⁹

In Italy, Powers also began to work on ideal subjects. In this, he was following the example of Horatio Greenough (1805-52), an American sculptor who had been working in Florence for ten years when Powers arrived, and who took the less experienced sculptor under his wing.³⁰ Although Greenough, like Powers, supported himself with portrait commissions, he also produced a steady stream of ideal works. His group *Chanting Cherubs* (1829-30; unlocated) created a sensation in the United States during an exhibition tour in the early 1830s. It was followed by the full-length, supine *Medora* (1831-1833; private collection), the group *Angel and Child* (1832-33; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) and the monumental *George Washington* (1833-31; Smithsonian American

²⁹ Crane, *White Silence*, 191.

³⁰ For information about Horatio Greenough, see Thomas Brendle Brumbaugh, "Horatio and Richard Greenough: a Critical Study with a Catalogue of their Sculpture," Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1955; Nathalia Wright, *Horatio Greenough, the First American Sculptor* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963); Crane, *White Silence*, 20-134; Nathalia Wright, ed., *The Letters of Horatio Greenough, American Sculptor* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972); Headley, "English Literary and Aesthetic Influences on American Sculptors in Italy," 44-82; John R. Aylesworth, "Specimens of Taste for our Maturer Age: Neoclassicism as Realized in America in Selected Works of Horatio Greenough and Washington Irving," Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio University, 1985.

Art Museum), which the federal government commissioned for the United States Capitol rotunda.

Powers not only looked to Greenough as an example of how to conduct his career, he also sought to improve on Greenough's success. In particular, he strove to meet the demand of traveling British and American tourists for sentimental figures with which to decorate their homes.³¹ Like Greenough, Powers became friendly with the Boston-born American Consul in Livorno, Thomas Appleton, who was also in business as an art exporter. Appleton was able to tell both sculptors which copies of modern and ancient statues Americans were buying for their homes, and the qualities they looked for when making their purchases.³² Despite this knowledge, Greenough frequently swam against the tide of public opinion in his efforts to improve American tastes.³³ He disdained, for instance, to make a sculpture as a domestic ornament for the drawing room of his most faithful patron, Robert Gilmor.³⁴ The sculpture he did eventually make for Gilmor, his large, recumbent *Medora*, took up far too much floor space for domestic display and had to be stored in the basement of the Gilmors' home.³⁵ Powers, on the other hand, sought to accommodate his audience's wishes. His statement to his friend John Smith Preston that

³¹ Janet Headley has explored the marketability of Powers' ideal sculpture in Britain at length in Headley, "English Literary and Aesthetic Influences on American Sculptors in Italy," 142-253.

³² Wunder, *Hiram Powers, Vermont Sculptor*, vol.1, 105.

³³ For Greenough's views on American taste, and its need for improvement, see Horatio Greenough, "Remarks on American Art," *The United States Magazine, and Democratic Review* 13 (July 1843): 45.

³⁴ Crane, *White Silence*, 54-55.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 58.

his first two ideal works, the busts *A Country Woman* (modeled 1838; Corcoran Gallery of Art) and *Ginevra* (modeled 1838; Cincinnati Museum of Art), would make “appropriate ornaments for opposite sides of a room,” reveals that he thought of them, from the first, as domestic decorations.³⁶

Powers was an inventor as well as a sculptor, and he intended many of his technical innovations to speed the process of carving statues in marble. One of these was a new pointing machine—a measuring device that cut the time involved in transferring a figure from the model to marble by one third. Another was his time-saving process of modeling figures directly in plaster rather than clay. These inventions, which Powers began working on soon after his arrival in Florence, indicate that he was planning from the first to sell multiple copies of his statues, and wanted to produce them quickly, efficiently and accurately. In keeping with this goal, Powers chose themes for his ideal works that would appeal to a broad audience. Writing to Longworth in 1839 of a full-length statue he had just begun, based on his young daughter, he noted that “Statues of little children are very popular & I have so fine an opportunity I avail myself of it with great hope of success.”³⁷ The “success” for which Powers strove was always commercial as well as artistic.

Powers modeled his first ideal work, a female bust titled *A Country Woman* (fig.23), as a gift for Mrs. John Smith Preston, in 1838. The title is a play on words. The

³⁶ Powers to John Smith Preston, 31 August 1839, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers, Vermont Sculptor*, vol.1, 120.

³⁷ Powers to Nicholas Longworth, 22 April 1839, Hiram Powers Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, roll 1132. Powers apparently never finished his ideal child, as no such work by him is known.

bust, which ostensibly represents a woman from the countryside around ancient Rome, closely resembles Powers' portrait bust of his friend and "countrywoman," the young American tourist Anna Ward (fig.24), which he modeled at the same time. The sculptor frankly admitted the resemblance in a letter to Ward, and the art critic Henry Tuckerman referred to the bust as "that of a beautiful countrywoman," suggesting that Powers was equally frank with others about the bust's true subject.³⁸ Although Powers raised the bridge of the ideal head's nose, lengthened her neck, and varied the hairstyle and drapery, it retains the firm jaw and high cheekbones also seen in his bust of Anna Ward.

By the time Powers began his second ideal work, less than a year later, he had learned the virtue of attaching a sentimental narrative to his sculptures. He titled this bust *Ginevra*, after a character in Samuel Rogers' popular 1822 poem *Italy* (fig.25).³⁹ In the poem, Ginevra is a young woman in Renaissance Italy who accidentally locks herself in an empty chest on her wedding night, only to be found there—a skeleton still wearing her wedding clothes—many years later. Although *Ginevra*'s head is tilted slightly down and her cheeks are more rounded, the bust closely resembles *A Country Woman*.⁴⁰

³⁸ Powers to Anna Barker, 29 September [1838], Samuel Gray Ward Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, cited in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.1, 112. Henry Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists: American Artist Life, Comprising Biographical and Critical Sketches of American Artists: Preceded by an Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of Art in America* (New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1867), 279.

³⁹ Samuel Rogers, *Italy, a Poem* (London: J. Murray, 1823). For the popularity of Rogers' work, see J. R. Hale, ed., *The Italian Journal of Samuel Rogers* (London: Farber & Farber, 1956), 107-15.

⁴⁰ Feeling that his wife's version of *A Country Woman* suffered from the lack of a narrative, and noting its resemblance to *Ginevra*, John Smith Preston simply began referring to the work as *Ginevra*. It apparently took several decades for anyone to notice that it was actually a different sculpture. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.2, 131.

Longworth, who received the first marble version in 1842, noted that Rogers' Ginevra was a laughing, merry girl, while Powers' bust was solemn to the point of appearing morose.⁴¹ Furthermore, *Ginevra*'s classical hairstyle and drapery seem ill-suited for Rogers' Quattrocento heroine. In fact, Powers only came up with a title for the bust as it was being carved in marble. By calling it *Ginevra*, he probably intended to stir the heart strings of tourists with a familiar, tragic story that had associations to Florence, and could therefore serve as a suitable memento of their trip. Unlike *A Country Woman*, which Powers was never called upon to reproduce, *Ginevra* was repeated at least six times before Powers reworked the sculpture in 1863.⁴²

Proserpine

For Powers, the years between 1839 and 1841 were taken up by portrait commissions, the modeling of his first full-length ideal figure, *Eve Tempted* (modeled 1839-42; Smithsonian American Art Museum), and the preliminary modeling of the *Fisher Boy* (modeled 1841-1843; Metropolitan Museum of Art) and the *Greek Slave* (modeled 1841-1843; Corcoran gallery of Art) Although he was thinking about a third ideal bust as early as 1840, he didn't begin modeling *Proserpine* in earnest until 1843. The first marble copy was destined for Edward Lea Carey, a Philadelphia publisher who had offered Powers \$500 for an original sculpture of the artist's own choosing. Typically, Powers had no particular subject in mind when he began modeling the bust, but chose the story of

⁴¹ Nicholas Longworth to Hiram Powers, 21 May 1842, Cincinnati Historical Society, cited in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.1, 132.

⁴² Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.2, 154-55.

Proserpine, drawn from the first-century BCE Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, before he transferred the work to marble.

In Ovid's well-known version of the myth, Proserpine, the daughter of the Roman harvest goddess Ceres, is a sweet, blooming girl. Left momentarily alone as she gathers flowers by a lakeshore, she is abducted by Pluto, the lustful god of the underworld. Stricken by the loss of her child, Ceres desperately searches for Proserpine, neglecting her agricultural duties and rendering the earth barren. When she learns of her daughter's fate, she demands her return from Jupiter, the ruler of the gods and Proserpine's father. Jupiter decrees that Pluto must return Proserpine to her mother unless the girl has eaten during her time in the underworld, in which case she must remain there as Pluto's wife. The homesick Proserpine had indeed eaten, but only six pomegranate seeds. As a compromise, she must remain Pluto's wife but, ever afterwards, may divide each year between her husband's realm and her mother's. Her annual return to the earth causes Spring, her departure Autumn.

The story of Proserpine was popular in the nineteenth century, no doubt because its bittersweet theme of maternal love and separation struck a chord with parents and children who were often separated by great distances or premature death.⁴³ The eminent Baptist minister and author John Aldis noted, in 1856, that "The fable concerning Proserpine is perhaps the most beautiful that the Greek imagination has furnished"

⁴³ For a few of the many iteration of this myth in nineteenth-century English literature, see Headley, "English Literary and Aesthetic Influences on American Sculptors in Italy," 190-97. As Jane Tompkins has pointed out, two central themes of nineteenth-century sentimental literature are the theme of separation and reunion, and the theme of salvation through motherly love. Tompkins, *Sensational Designs*, 125.

because of its tender depiction of maternal love and loss.⁴⁴ The English Romantic writer Mary Shelley wrote a short play based on the myth in 1820, in the wake of the recent death of both of her children.⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, the play, which appeared in the popular gift book *The Winter's Wreath* in 1822, stressed the theme of maternal grief.⁴⁶ Later authors continued to emphasize the painful nature of Ceres' and Proserpine's separation; however, they also made Pluto more sympathetic. In his *Tanglewood Tales*, Nathaniel Hawthorne presented a juvenile Proserpine who cries heartily for her mother, but also finds joy in becoming the lonely Pluto's "one little ray of natural sunshine."⁴⁷ Another version, penned by "Jove Omnip," tells the story from Pluto's point of view. Proserpine emerges from this narrative as a winsome coquette who, upon seeing her abductor, "fawn-like, startled, flies, but archly she looks back and peals in Pluto's ear a merry laugh."⁴⁸ Another author stressed that, "Proserpine later loved this disagreeable husband

⁴⁴ Rev. John Aldis, "Grecian Fables," *The Ladies' Repository* 16 (March 1856): 177. By this time, Thomas Bulfinch had made Ovid's version of the story widely accessible, in expurgated form, in his immensely popular book *The Age of Fable, or, Beauties of Mythology* (Boston: S.W. Tilton, 1855).

⁴⁵ Julie Carlson, "Coming After Shelley," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 41 (Winter 1999): 351-77.

⁴⁶ Mary Shelley, "Proserpine, a Mythological Drama in Two Acts," in *The Winter's Wreath, A Collection of Original Contributions in Prose and Verse* (London: Whittaker, Treacher & Arnot, 1822), 1-20.

⁴⁷ Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Pomegranate Seeds," *Tanglewood Tales, for Girls and Boys; Being A Second Wonder Book* (1853; repr., Eldritch Press, 2002), Chapter 6, <http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/nh/tt.html> (accessed 6 August 2005).

⁴⁸ Jove Omnip, "The Rapture of Proserpine: A Rhapsody, from Ovid," *The American Monthly Magazine* 4 (1 September 1834): 44-45.

so much, that jealous of Mentha, she changed her into a mint.”⁴⁹ In Harriett Beecher Stowe’s light-hearted parody of Roman mythology, Proserpine is a fond, over-solicitous wife, nursing her husband through a tooth-ache.⁵⁰ Finally, several authors interpreted the myth as a moral homily on the dangers awaiting young women in the public sphere. Fowler Bradnack cautioned, “Take warning by [Proserpine’s] fate, young ladies,/ Remember how she went to Hades,/ Where gloomy everlasting shade is--/ Had she stayed within, without a doubt/ Pluto would not have found her out.”⁵¹

Whereas earlier painters and sculptors had typically depicted the moment of Proserpine’s abduction, Powers’ rendering of the myth is more ambiguous. Only *Proserpine*’s crown of wheat sheaths and the floral base of his bust allude to her identity, and even these attributes were added late in the process. The American painter Daniel Huntington (1816-1906) made a quick sketch of the first marble version of *Proserpine* in 1845, and included it in a letter to Carey.⁵² In this sketch, Proserpine resembles *Ginevra*; however, Powers was not satisfied and was already reworking his model, a step that would require the bust to be re-carved.⁵³ The most notable change in Powers’ second

⁴⁹ “Mythology—Proserpine,” *Family Magazine or, Monthly Abstract of General Knowledge* 1 (February 1834): 186.

⁵⁰ Harriet Beecher Stowe, “Olympiana,” *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 18 (June 1839): 241.

⁵¹ Fowler Bradnack, “Pluto and Proserpine,” *The American Knickerbocker Magazine* 63 (March 1864): 233-4. See also Solon Robinson, *Hot Corn* (New York: DeWitt and Davenport, 1854), 34-35.

⁵² Daniel Huntington to Edward Lea Carey, January 1845, Edward Lea Carey Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁵³ “Where is Proserpine?” Carey wrote to Powers in May, 1844, “I begin to fear that she may have left the earth forever.” In July, Powers responded, “The first attempt at Proserpine in marble has been abandoned after the work was very far advanced, for I

version of *Proserpine* was his elimination of her classical drapery and the addition of her crown and a woven basket of narcissus flowers as a base, from which the nude girl's breasts and shoulders emerge; however, the bust is set apart from Powers' two earlier efforts not only by its nudity and elaborate base, but by an entirely different type of face (fig.26). Both *A Country Woman* and the first version of *Ginevra* have somewhat heavy, strong-featured faces, influenced by both the living example of Anna Ward and the abundance of ancient Roman statuary that Powers studied in Italy.⁵⁴ This fact led Lady Rosina Wheeler Bulwer-Lytton to comment bitinglly in 1841 that *Ginevra* was "...much older than the poet's youthful creation, [and] might have passed for Cornelia or any other Roman matron."⁵⁵

By the time Powers modeled *Proserpine*, his ideal of feminine beauty had changed. Although *Proserpine* retains the straight, high-bridged "Greek" nose that was nearly ubiquitous in nineteenth-century ideal statuary, Powers rendered it smaller and less pronounced. The contours of her heart-shaped face are also softer and rounder. Her

never liked the model..." Edward Lea Carey to Hiram Powers, 21 May 1844, and Hiram Powers to Edward Lea Carey, 1 July 1844, cited in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.1, 138.

⁵⁴ The Florentine sculptor Lorenzo Bartolini (1777-1850) visited Powers' studio in January, 1839. In a letter to John Smith Preston, Powers related that Bartolini, whom he greatly admired, advised him against using Greek and Roman statues as models for his own sculpture, stating emphatically that such works had features that were too "hard and sharp," and were "good for nothing but to lead artists out of the proper road." Bartolini endowed his own statues with sweet, soft, large-eyed faces that conformed to modern ideals of beauty. Hiram Powers to John Smith Preston, 13 February 1839, cited in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.1, 114. There is no doubt that Bartolini had a profound impact on Powers' evolving style. See Douglas Kirk Samuel Hyland, "Lorenzo Bartolini and Italian Influences on American Sculptors in Florence (1825-50)," Ph.D. dissertation University of Delaware, 1980.

⁵⁵ Giberna [Lady Rosina Wheeler Bulwer-Lytton], "The Arts—Modern Art and Artists in Italy," *Court Journal* (London), 8 May 1841: 1186-87.

broad, smooth forehead flows down into plump cheeks that taper to a dainty chin. Her hooded, downcast eyes are unusually large, her mouth delicate and small. To any mid-nineteenth-century viewer, she would have been immediately familiar. The same face peers demurely from countless pages of *Godey's Lady's Book* and *Grahams Magazine*, and from the popular chromolithographs of Currier & Ives. It is a type that Lois Banner has described as “the steel-engraving lady... Her face is oval or heart-shaped. Her eyes gaze into the distance or are downcast. Her chin is soft and retreating. Her mouth is tiny, resembling a ‘bee stung cupid bow’ or a ‘rosebud’... Her shoulders slope; her arms are rounded... her complexion is white...”⁵⁶ Once he had modeled *Proserpine*, Powers used this type of face for all his ideal female heads. In particular, his bust *Psyche* (1848; Cincinnati Art Museum) has a face nearly identical to *Proserpine*'s. He also re-modeled *Ginevra*, giving her a new, *Proserpine*-like face as well as a new costume, in 1863.

Powers' decision to abandon antique prototypes in favor of this modern style of beauty may well have been precipitated by Carey himself. Together with his partner, Abraham Hart, Carey was the foremost American publisher of illustrated gift books in the 1830s and early '40s.⁵⁷ These collections of sentimental prose and verse, accompanied by copious engravings, were—as their name implies—frequently exchanged as gifts. They were also shared among friends and read collectively by nineteenth-century book groups. As Stephanie Mayer has discovered, the antebellum gift book industry had a profound effect on the styles and subjects chosen by American artists—many of whom also

⁵⁶ Lois W. Banner, *American Beauty* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), 46.

⁵⁷ Carey & Hart's publications during these years include *The Gift*, *The Violet*, *The Diadem*, *The Ruby*, *The Literary Souvenir*, *The Evergreen* and *The Iris*, all serially issued gift books.

contributed illustrations to these publications.⁵⁸ Carey was an avid art collector who, not surprisingly, had a taste for sentimental genre paintings that closely resembled the illustrations in his gift books—engraved scenes that featured innumerable large-eyed, sweet faced maidens (fig.27). Powers must have felt certain that *Proserpine*’s “steel engraving lady” face would please Carey and, through him, a broad, gift-book-reading section of the American public. Although Carey died before seeing the completed bust, Powers’ instinct was correct.

By sculpting a modern, popular ideal of feminine beauty in flawless, white, Serevezza marble, the sculptor canonized that ideal—conferring a mantle of high-culture legitimacy upon it. His audience was appreciative to the point of being overwhelmed. The popular American author and social reformer Sarah Clarke (a.k.a. Grace Greenwood), who saw the bust at an 1849 exhibition of Powers’ sculpture in Boston, related:

The [Greek] Slave and the head of Proserpine, I had seen before. Though the former, from its touching associations, impresses and interests one most, the later is undoubtedly the most beautiful... Indeed, the sense of its surpassing loveliness weighs on the heart, and fills the eyes with tears. I do not know that Proserpine ‘tells its own story,’ as severe critics require that every work of art should do, but

⁵⁸ I am grateful to Stephanie Mayer of Boston University for sharing her research on this subject related to her forthcoming dissertation. Other sources of information about gift books include: Ralph Thompson, *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865* (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1936); David S. Lovejoy, “American Painting in Early Nineteenth-Century Gift Books,” *American Quarterly* 7 (Winter 1955): 345-61; Benjamin Rowland, Jr., “Popular Romanticism: Art and the Gift Books 1825-1865,” *Art Quarterly* 20 (Winter 1957): 365-81; and Ann Katherine Martinez, “Messengers of Love, Tokens of Friendship’: Gift-Book Illustrations by John Sartain,” in Gerald W. R. Ward, ed., *The American Illustrated Book in the Nineteenth Century* (Winterthur, Del.: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1987), 89-112.

it certainly tells a story of an exquisite head, and throat, and bosom—of an adorable face—of an absolutely perfect womanly beauty.⁵⁹

“What a lovely face!” exclaimed a writer for the *Southern Literary Messenger*, “If the daughter of Ceres was half as beautiful, I wonder not that Pluto bore her away...”⁶⁰

Writing of a visit to Powers’ studio, Bayard Taylor observed:

Now I come to the last and fairest [sculpture] of all—the divine *Proserpine*. Not the form—for it is but a bust rising from a capital of acanthus-leaves which curve around the breast and arms and turn gracefully outward—but the face, whose modest maiden beauty can find no peer among goddesses or mortals. So she looked on the field of Ennæ—that “fairer flower” soon to be gathered by “gloomy Dis.” A slender crown of green wheat-blades, showing alike her descent from Ceres and her virgin years, circles her head. Truly, if Pygmalion stole his fire to warm such a form as this, Jove should have pardoned him.”⁶¹

Finally, a reviewer for *Godey’s Lady’s Book* gushed:

...the most beautiful thing this side of *heaven*, we were going to say, is the bust of “Proserpine,” by Hiram Powers. A head perfectly formed; every feature tremulous with emotion; a delicate play of the smaller muscles around the mouth, never before seen in marble; a neck and throat of surpassing grace, joined to a bosom and shoulders of the softest and most delicate curvature; all stamp it as a masterpiece. The basket of flowers is a pretty device to avoid the fragmentary appearance usual in busts, and is exquisitely chiseled. This bust of “Proserpine,” to our taste, is worth as many such whole length figures of the “Greek Slave,” as could stand between here and the Vatican.”⁶²

The tremulous emotion that the reviewer for *Godey’s* perceived in *Proserpine* was not apparent to everyone. A writer for *The Illustrated Magazine of Art* found the bust

⁵⁹ Grace Greenwood, *Greenwood Leaves: A Collection of Sketches and Letters by Grace Greenwood* (Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1850), 263.

⁶⁰ Cecilia, “Memories of Home Travels,” *Southern Literary Messenger* 20 (January 1854): 30.

⁶¹ Taylor, *Views A-foot*, 298.

⁶² “Notices of the Fine Arts,” *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 39 (September 1849): 219.

“too cold for flesh and blood, and too still for mortal life.”⁶³ In fact, the face that Powers modeled is technically expressionless. With her head angled slightly down and to the side, the trajectory of her gaze misses the viewer and her features are perfectly at rest; however, two factors created the illusion of animation and expression for many of *Proserpine*’s nineteenth-century viewers. The first of these is lighting. Powers was aware that the crystalline structure of white marble softened hard contours, absorbed light, and created translucent shadows. He invented special tools for abrading the surface of his sculptures in order to create a texture like real skin, making his sculptures seem soft, pliant and erotically touchable. A light source, placed in proper relation to the translucent surface of the bust could create the shadows that gave *Proserpine*’s face expression.⁶⁴ If this light source were fire or candlelight, or—a more common lighting source at this time—an oil or paraffin lamp, the shifting motion of the flames might even create the “delicate play of the smaller muscles around the mouth” that the reviewer for *Godey’s* noticed.⁶⁵

⁶³ “Hiram Powers,” *The Illustrated Magazine of Art*, 3, no.15 (1854): 220.

⁶⁴ In a letter to Miles Greenwood, who had purchased a re-worked version of *Ginevra* in 1868, Powers admonished him for placing the bust in a first-floor window of his house. In addition to creating a gaudy “shop window” effect, Powers warned that “unless it is placed properly—that is to say—in a single light at an elevation sufficient to bring the shadow of the nose down to the verge of the upper lip—the expression intended will not be seen, nor will all the pains I have taken be justified.” Hiram Powers to Miles Greenwood, 28 January 1869, Hiram Powers Collection, Cincinnati Historical Society Library.

⁶⁵ See Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 155-189. Gaslight was harsh and glaring and produced a bad smell. It was therefore not popular for domestic lighting.

The second factor that created the illusion of expression in *Proserpine*'s face was simply viewers' will to relate to the bust empathetically. As one admirer recounted in a poem:

That half-averted face—how passing fair!
The smile that lingers round the curving mouth
With mournful meaning filled; the pensive brow
So beautifully calm and passionless;
The rounded cheek that seems as it would yield
Beneath a finger's weight; the wavy hair
About the imperial head; and more than all,
The chaste'n'd woman's look of tenderness,
That pleads in every line, and longs to break
The trembling silence of those breathing lips!⁶⁶

This viewer saw *Proserpine* not only as a “true woman”—as Barbara Welter has defined that mid-century feminine ideal—but as a woman who, though passionless, was deeply emotional, and who longed to speak to her observer.⁶⁷ As this viewer's reaction suggests, most nineteenth-century men and women did not assess ideal sculpture in cool, formal terms, nor did they dismiss these works as merely decorative. Rather, they viewed ideal sculpture sentimentally—that is, they expected to find a touching human drama in each statue and they hoped to be moved, preferably to tears. Recognizing emotion in the marble figure before them, and experiencing that emotion vicariously, was a vital part of this process. Aware that his ideal busts and statues would be viewed in this way, Powers wisely made their “expressions” so subtle as to be almost completely subjective. In this way, he opened them to a range of interpretations over time. *Proserpine* could be a fond

⁶⁶ M.J. [Margaret Junkin Preston], “Thoughts, Suggested by Powers' *Proserpine*,” *Southern Literary Messenger* 15 (February 1849): 100.

⁶⁷ Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860.”

wife one day and a kidnapped girl the next, depending on the light and the viewer's mood.

Although her “expression” was changeable, nineteenth-century viewers associated the physical type embodied by *Proserpine* with a particular, fixed personality: feminine, sweet, gracious, retiring, refined, and domestic.⁶⁸ For instance, in the August, 1845 issue of *Godey's Lady's Book*, a colored engraving titled “A Domestic Scene” depicts a woman with features and posture nearly identical to *Proserpine's* (fig.28). As she gracefully holds a cup of tea, she watches over her sleeping baby with her pretty, well-behaved daughter standing attentively near-by. Her tastefully arranged parlor blooms with potted flowers. She embodies the mid-nineteenth century ideal of “true womanhood.” As Charles Colbert has demonstrated, such correlations between physical appearance and character were reinforced and granted legitimacy by the pseudo-scientific theories of phrenology and physiognomy—theories that enjoyed wide popular acceptance in the United States and England during the 1840s, and to which Powers himself subscribed.⁶⁹ Physiognomy and phrenology transformed each human head into a text, in which the character of its owner could be read. According to these theories, *Proserpine's* wide brow denoted spirituality, her large eyes expressed her loving, empathetic nature, the rounded back of her head showed her to possess abundant filial affection, her long neck

⁶⁸ See Caroline Ticknor's satirical article, “The Steel-Engraving Lady and the Gibson Girl,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 88 (July 1901): 105-10.

⁶⁹ Charles Colbert, *A Measure of Perfection: Phrenology and the Fine Arts in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Colbert reveals that Powers was so anxious about the bumps behind his baby daughter's ears (bumps that, phrenologists believed, corresponded to destructiveness and sexual passion) that he regularly applied leeches to those spots. *Ibid.*, 193.

communicated gentleness and her delicate chin showed her to be discreet and somewhat timid. Finally, the downward tilt of her head revealed modesty and a tendency to melancholy.⁷⁰ In short, *Proserpine*'s physiognomy reinforced the bust's sentimental, mythological narrative.

Powers' deft combination of a modern feminine ideal with a well-known sentimental narrative proved potent. Even before he had completed the first version of *Proserpine* for Carey, he was commissioned to make a second. In the end, Powers' studio produced at least 156 copies of *Proserpine*, more copies than were produced of the bust and full-length versions of his more celebrated *Greek Slave* combined.⁷¹ Powers created abbreviated versions and a two-thirds reduction of the bust and, as time passed, he progressively simplified its base. In this way, he could offer buyers a range of styles and prices, and he could also speed up production.

Powers carved his first, elaborate flower basket base for *Proserpine* only once, for Carey's version. The process of carving it was so time-consuming that, by the time it finally arrived in Philadelphia, Carey had died. For his second version of the bust, Powers designed a new base of acanthus leaves. Though faster and easier to carve than the basket and flowers that had preceded them, these leaves similarly softened the lower portion of the bust and gave *Proserpine* the charming appearance of resting, half-hidden, in vegetation (fig.29). Acanthus leaves also symbolize immortality, thus drawing attention to the parallel between the story of Ceres and Proserpine, with its theme of loss and

⁷⁰ In addition to Colbert, see also the extremely popular treatise on physiognomy, *The Physiognomist's Own Book: An Introduction to Physiognomy Drawn from the Writings of Lavater* (Philadelphia: James Kay Jun., & Brother; Pittsburgh: C. H. Kay & Co., 1841), 9-18, 25, 35, 77.

⁷¹ Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.2, 188-202; 169-176.

reunion, and Christian beliefs about rebirth and reunion in heaven. By 1849, Powers had also created a model of *Proserpine* with a plain base and a simple, beaded border that revealed a few additional inches of the figure's torso (fig.18). The first buyer of this version was Horace Greeley.

Horace Greeley

Greeley was born in Amherst, New Hampshire in 1811.⁷² His parents were poor New England farmers who had lost their land and moved about New England as sharecroppers and day laborers. After leaving school at fourteen, the precocious Greeley became an apprentice typesetter for a local Vermont newspaper. By 1841, he had worked his way up to being the editor and half-owner of the *New York Tribune*. Greeley was aided in his rapid professional rise by powerful friends within the Whig party; however, it soon became clear that his populist and reformist beliefs extended far beyond the Whig platform. During the 1840s, Greeley used his position as editor to champion a range of social causes including the abolition of slavery and capital punishment, women's rights, universal suffrage, labor unions, a minimum wage, and the communitarian beliefs of the French socialist Charles Fourier. Seemingly unafraid of unpopular stances, he opposed alcohol, tobacco and the Mexican War. The columnists he hired included Margaret

⁷² Biographies of Greeley are numerous, and include Robert C. Williams, *Horace Greeley: Champion of American Freedom* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); Eric S. Lunde, "Horace Greeley," in *American National Biography*, vol.9 (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1999), 467-70; Suzanne Schulz, *Horace Greeley: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992); Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *Horace Greeley: Nineteenth-Century Crusader* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953); Horace Greeley, *Recollections of a Busy Life* (New York: J.B. Ford & Co., 1868).

Fuller, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Karl Marx.⁷³ During a single term as a United States Representative in 1848-49, he alienated political foes and allies alike with his vitriolic attacks on government corruption. He became a founding member of the Republican Party in 1854, but remained on the radical fringe of that party as well.

Greeley was also considered to be personally odd. He wore a distinctive white hat and coat all year round. He disdained etiquette. Although he lived in a fashionable New York neighborhood, he kept goats in his backyard (they got loose periodically and wreaked havoc). For several years, the unmarried Margaret Fuller lived with him and his family. He did not, like Fourier, decry the institution of marriage. In fact, his views on the subject were uncharacteristically conservative; however, his ongoing battle with social conventions left him open to charges of eccentricity and immorality.⁷⁴ Long before the cartoonist Thomas Nast (1840-1902) annihilated Greeley in the pages of *Harpers Weekly* during his ill-fated presidential run in 1871-72, Greeley was the subject of numerous satirical attacks. In an 1848 lithograph published by Henry R. Robinson, titled “Misery Acquaints a Man with Strange Bed-Fellows,” Greeley and his rival editor James Watson

⁷³ For Greeley’s transmission of radical European ideas to the United States, see Adam-Max Tuchinsky, “Horace Greeley’s Lost Book: ‘The New York Tribune’ and the Origins of Social Democratic Liberalism in America,” Ph.D. dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2001.

⁷⁴ Greeley put forward his views on marriage in 1853, during a debate between himself, Henry James, Sr. and Stephen Pearle Andrews. Greeley stated, “Polygamy is not an experiment to be first tried in our day; it is some thousands of years old; its condemnation is inscribed on the tablets of Oriental history; it is manifest in the comparative debasement of Asia and Africa. The liberty of Divorce has been recognized by great historians as one main cause of the corruption and downfall of the Roman Empire. The sentiment of chastity becomes ridiculous where a woman is transferred from husband to husband, as caprice or satiety may dictate.” Stephen Pearle Andrews, ed., *Love, Marriage and Divorce* (1853, repr., Molinari Institute, 2005), Section 3, <http://praxeology.net/HJ-HG-SPA-LMD-3.htm> (accessed 20 October 2005).

Webb (who both supported Zachary Taylor for president) appear cuddling together in a large four-poster bed with their respective newspapers stacked on top of one another on the bedside table and their clothes draped over two chairs in the foreground (fig.30).

As unconventional as Greeley was, his admiration for Hiram Powers was perfectly in keeping with the mainstream of mid-nineteenth-century American upper and middle-class culture. Greeley's interest in Powers seems to have begun in 1847 during the national tour of the *Greek Slave*. He wrote a glowing review of Powers' celebrated statue in the *Tribune* that echoed, point-for-point, the press testimonials re-published in Minor Kellogg's promotional pamphlet. Claiming that his praise was but "...a feeble expression of the delight, the joy, as if at a new revelation of the divine treasures of Beauty, the religious elevation of feeling which seems to flow from the marble like inspiration," Greeley continued:

...in that nakedness she is unapproachable to any mean thought. The very atmosphere she breathes is to her drapery and protection. In her pure unconscious naturalness, her inward chastity of soul and sweet, womanly dignity, she is more truly clad than a figure of lower character could be thought ten times robed. Indeed, no one can feel that anything is wanting, and the longer you gaze the deeper is your sense that so noble an ideal of beauty and of Woman could only thus be seen.⁷⁵

In 1851, Greeley served on the jury for the American exhibition in the Crystal Palace in London, where the *Greek Slave* was again prominently displayed. From London, he embarked with his family on a Grand Tour, recording his experiences in a book, *Glances*

⁷⁵ Horace Greeley, "The Greek Slave," *New York Daily Tribune*, 31 August 1847, cited in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.1, 220. As I discussed in Chapter 1, the *Greek Slave* celebrated the Western model of marriage, reinforcing it against attacks from contemporary dissenters including Charles Fourier, Robert Dale Owen and the Mormon Church, among many others. Although Greeley considered himself a defender of women's rights, his views on marriage, cited above, were very similar to Powers'.

at *Europe*, which was published the same year. In it, Greeley described a visit to Powers' studio:

I saw nothing in Rome with greater pleasure or profit than I derived from the hour I spent in the studio of our countryman Powers... The abundance of orders constantly pouring in upon him at his own prices does not induce him to abandon nor postpone his efforts in the ideal and more exalted sphere of his art, but rather to redouble those efforts; and it will yet be felt that his "Greek Slave" and "Fisher Boy," so widely admired, are not his loftiest achievements. I defy antiquity to surpass—I doubt its ability to rival—his "Proserpine" and his "Psyche" with any models of the female head that have come down to us... I do not see how they could be excelled in their own sphere...⁷⁶

Despite his effusive praise, four years earlier, of the *Greek Slave*, and his recent oversight of that sculpture's installation in a prominent place at the Crystal Palace, Greeley now believed that Powers' ideal busts *Proserpine* and *Psyche* were even "loftier" conceptions.⁷⁷

Greeley's experience of visiting Powers' studio probably accounts, at least in part, for his new partiality. By 1851, Powers had become adept at sizing up potential

⁷⁶ Horace Greeley, *Glances at Europe in a Series of Letters from Great Britain, France, Italy, Switzerland, &c., During the Summer of 1851* (New York: Dewitt & Davenport, 1851), 216-17.

⁷⁷ In his opinion of these busts, Greeley differed sharply with the young art critic he had recently hired at the *Tribune*, George William Curtis. Curtis, who saw the bust of *Proserpine* along with Powers' *Greek Slave*, *Fisher Boy* and *Eve Tempted* in the more neutral (and evenly lit) setting of the exhibition hall at the New York Crystal Palace Exhibition in 1853, brought a professional eye to bear on these works. He concluded, "Here are four heads, and every one of them is flat, barren, soulless, senseless. The statues, if the heads were knocked off, would command universal applause; but the eyes which can see meaning in either of these four faces, must be greatly aided by the fancy of their possessor." Curtis's review is re-printed in Horace Greeley, ed., *Art and Industry as Expressed in the Exhibition at the Crystal Palace New York, 1853-4* (New York: Redfield, 1853), 54. Although this review was published anonymously, and has frequently been misattributed to Greeley himself, David Dearing has identified Curtis as the *Tribune*'s sole art critic in the early 1850s. See David Dearing, ed., *Rave Reviews: American Art and its Critics, 1826-1925*, exh. cat. (New York: National Academy of Design, 2000), 71-72.

customers and making just the right sales pitch to them. He typically ushered American tourists into his parlor where his wife served them gingerbread and coffee, and his daughters sang and played popular American songs on the piano. Then, leaving their children behind with his own, he ushered them into his studio. By the time the Greeleys moved from the sociable atmosphere of Powers' parlor to his studio, the sculptor was probably well aware that they were not in the market for a full-size *Greek Slave*, which in 1851 was selling for \$4000 (the equivalent, according to the Consumer Price Index, of \$95,000 in today's currency). Not only were busts considerably cheaper, they also fit more easily into the narrow parlors of New York row houses such as the Greeleys'. Nathaniel Hawthorne and his wife also visited Powers' studio in the 1850s, and Hawthorne recounted, with a combination of wry humor and genuine admiration, how Powers presented his ideal busts to them:

...Powers showed us his two busts of Proserpine and Psyche, and continued his lecture by showing the truth to nature with which these are modelled [sic]. I freely acknowledged the fact; there is no sort of comparison to be made between the beauty, intelligence, feeling, and accuracy of representation in these two faces and in that of the Venus de' Medici. A light—the light of a soul proper to each individual character—seems to shine from the interior of the marble, and beam forth from the features, chiefly from the eyes. Still insisting upon the eye and hitting the poor Venus another and another blow on that unhappy feature, Mr. Powers... made us see and confess that there was nothing right in the Venus and everything right in Psyche and Proserpine. To say the truth, their marble eyes have life, and, placing yourself in the proper position toward them, you can meet their glances and feel them mingle with your own.⁷⁸

It is clear from this passage that Powers not only delineated the virtues of his sculptures vis-à-vis respected, well-known works of ancient art, he also showed potential buyers

⁷⁸ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, vol.2 (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1876), 24.

how to look at them and appreciate them sentimentally. Assuming that the Greeleys received a similar lecture, it is no wonder that they bought a bust of *Proserpine*.⁷⁹

The Greeleys didn't purchase their bust immediately. Instead, they ordered it after they had returned home through Horace Greeley's friend Thurlow Weed, who was then living in Italy. Upon receiving the order, Powers wrote to Horace Greeley asking what kind of border he would prefer and—perhaps with the knowledge that the Greeleys' budget was limited—suggesting a plain border. Powers stressed that “the majority of persons of taste in the arts” preferred the plain border and noted that it “has the advantage of showing more of the figure, that is, the bust.” He added, “I should certainly prefer it for myself.”⁸⁰ The Greeleys chose a version of *Proserpine* with a plain border and paid Powers seventy-five British pounds—the equivalent, according to the British Retail Price Index, of about \$10,000 in today's U.S. currency. This was roughly half the annual rent that the Greeleys paid for their Gramercy Park townhouse.⁸¹

⁷⁹ In his 1863 novel, *Americans in Rome*, Henry P. Leland included a thinly veiled parody of Powers in his character of the American expatriate sculptor Chapin. When asked his opinion of the Acropolis by a group of tourists, to whom he is attempting to sell a copy of his statue “The Orphan,” Chapin replies, “There was some sentiment in those days, but it was all of the religious stripe; they didn't come down to domestic life and feelin'; they hadn't made the strides we have towards layin' open art to the million—toward developin' *hum* feelings.” Henry P. Leland, *Americans in Rome* (New York: Charles T. Evans, 1863), 36-37.

⁸⁰ Hiram Powers to Horace Greeley, 28 July 1852, Hiram Powers papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, cited in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.2, 194. Wunder suggests that Powers' decision to push the plain border with Greeley was motivated by his desire to give this more profitable version of his bust the greatest possible exposure. *Ibid.*, vol.1, 276

⁸¹ Parton, *Life of Horace Greeley*, 427

The Greeleys' Townhouse

Horace and Mary Greeley lived from 1850 until 1863 in a three-story, Italianate row house at 35 East 19th Street, in the Gramercy Park neighborhood. After 1853, they divided their time between this house and their rural home (with a working farm) in Chappaqua, New York.⁸² East 19th Street was a prosperous, upper-middle-class neighborhood in the 1850s.⁸³ The Greeleys' house was two blocks from Fifth Avenue—within comfortable strolling distance of the Hights' palatial Italianate mansion. Yet, though they lived in close proximity to the wealthiest neighborhood in Manhattan, their house was far from remarkable.⁸⁴ Located on the north side of the street, it was made of brick painted to resemble the more fashionable brownstone. It was an attached row house that shared its east and west walls with its neighbors, and was twenty feet wide and fifty feet deep. Its stoop led up to a door on one side of the façade, next to which a window looked into the front parlor. On the façade above were four more windows that opened into the upper floors.

According to the description of the Greeleys' house related by Parton, the front door opened into a narrow entrance hall "...and the stairs, narrower still, begin at a few feet

⁸² I am grateful to Betsy Towl, Executive Director of the Horace Greeley House and New Castle Historical Society in Chappaqua, New York, for providing this information and assisting me with my research generally.

⁸³ According to the 1850 federal census, Greeley's neighbors were physicians, lawyers and merchants. New York, New York County, 1850 U.S. Census, population schedule, 143, accessed through Ancestry.com, 16 July 2004.

⁸⁴ The size, shape and exact location of the Greeleys' house can be seen in William Perris, *Maps of the City of New York*, vol.5 (New York: Perris & Browne, 1857), 48. A good idea of the appearance of its façade can be gleaned from photographs of other row houses along this block of East 19th Street, in the collection: Photographic Views of New York City, Prints and Photographs Division, New York Public Library.

from the door, affording room only for the hat stand and a chair.”⁸⁵ The plan of the Greeleys’ home was typical for a New York row house built before the 1850s.⁸⁶ The first floor contained the entrance hall, stairs, and three connected rooms: a front parlor, a back parlor of the same size, and a smaller “tea room” at the very back of the house. One of these rooms was usually used as a formal dining room; however, the Greeleys used all three as parlors, a fact that suggests their frequent use of these rooms for large social gatherings.⁸⁷ Given the Greeleys’ reformist sympathies, it’s almost certain that they hosted political meetings in their home.

Of all the rooms in a typical nineteenth-century middle or upper-class house, the parlor was the one that best articulated the idea of “home.”⁸⁸ It was both a private space used by members of a family and a semi-public space in which guests were entertained. Because of its dual role, visitors understood that a parlor revealed much about the private, domestic life of its owners. Furthermore, a parlor’s arrangement and décor always resulted from a combination of convention and personal taste. For this reason, as Katherine Grier has argued, it expressed a family’s relationship to the values of the larger culture.⁸⁹ Through their parlors, nineteenth-century men and women strove to present

⁸⁵ Parton, *Life of Horace Greeley*, 428,

⁸⁶ See Lockwood, *Bricks and Brownstone*, 164-67.

⁸⁷ Parton, *Life of Horace Greeley*, 428-29. The Greeleys probably ate their meals in the basement, in a room adjacent to the kitchen. On the upper floors would have been bedrooms, informal sitting rooms and servant’s quarters.

⁸⁸ Logan, *The Victorian Parlor*, 105.

⁸⁹ Katherine C. Grier, *Culture and Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988), 89.

themselves in a favorable light—as refined, well-traveled, interesting and domestic. As Thad Logan has pointed out, parlors also existed to provide physical and emotional comfort to their owners.⁹⁰ This comfort could be provided by soft upholstery, good light, beautiful objects and a warm fire. It could also be provided by décor that reaffirmed a family’s world view, and expressed a favorable image of them.

According to the description in Parton’s biography, the Powers’ parlors were:

...curiously furnished...the inventory of the furniture would read thus:--One small mahogany table at the head of the front parlor, one lounge in ditto; eleven light cane chairs in front and back parlors; one bookcase of carved black-walnut in the small apartment behind the back parlor; and, except the carpets, not another article of furniture in either room. But the walls were almost covered with paintings; the mantle-pieces were densely peopled with statuettes, busts, and medallions; in a corner on a pedestal stood a beautiful copy of (I believe) Powers’ Proserpine in marble; and various other works of art were disposed about the floor or leaned against the walls. Of the quality of the pictures I could not, in that light, form an opinion. The subjects of more than half of them were religious.⁹¹

In a later nineteenth-century biography of Horace Greeley, Lurton Dunham Ingersoll affirmed that Greeley’s “...furniture was not of the finest. But in his European travels, he had met with paintings and sculptures which he liked, and... his home became somewhat crowded with paintings and statuary.” Despite his assertion that his subject “cared little, perhaps nothing, for display,” Ingersoll acknowledged that Greeley’s décor produced an air of “unostentatious refinement” and “beautiful simplicity” that made a deep impression on visitors.⁹²

⁹⁰ Ibid., 76.

⁹¹ Parton, *Life of Horace Greeley*, 428.

⁹² Lurton Dunham Ingersoll, *The Life of Horace Greeley* (Philadelphia: Potter & Co., 1873), 370.

Some intrepid Americans displayed their marble busts in the centers of their parlors. For instance, in Edward Lamson Henry's (1841-1919) portrait of Mr. and Mrs. John Ballard in the front parlor of their Brooklyn row house, Harriet Hosmer's (1830-1908) bust *Medusa* (1854; The Detroit Institute of Arts) sits on its pedestal just behind the center table, where the figure appears almost to be a third member of the family (fig.31). More commonly though, busts were placed against walls or (as in the case of the Greeleys' bust) in corners, where they would be out of the way of foot traffic.⁹³ Hamilton Fish placed his version of *Proserpine* just to one side of his fireplace, where the play of firelight must have enhanced its effect (fig.20). The Greeleys, on the other hand, relied on gas light, which (as Parton's observer notes) made their artwork difficult to appreciate.⁹⁴ Because it was harsh, and could produce an unpleasant smell, gaslight was condemned by writers on domestic decoration as a "common" form of lighting; however, it was so inexpensive compared to oil or paraffin lamps that, by the middle of the nineteenth century, it was nearly ubiquitous in middle-class homes.⁹⁵ While the very wealthy could afford to eschew gaslight, the Greeleys (who were continually overextended financially) likely could not, except for on the most formal occasions. Still, despite the harsh lighting,

⁹³ See, for example, the photograph of Gardner Brewer's parlor, with Powers' bust *Clytie* in the corner, in Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 86.

⁹⁴ The anonymous visitor in Parton's biography relates that Mary Greeley proceeded him into the parlors to light the gas before returning to her children upstairs. Parton, *Life of Horace Greeley*, 428.

⁹⁵ See Sara Milan, "Refracting the Gasolier: Understanding Victorian Responses to Domestic Gas Lighting," in Inga Bryden and Janet Floyd, eds., *Domestic Space: Reading the Nineteenth-Century Interior* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), 84-102.

the relative sparseness of the Greeleys' parlors served to focus attention on their artworks, and on Powers' life-size, white marble bust in particular.

As Logan has shown, parlors were repositories of a wide range of objects that symbolically expressed (and, I would argue, constructed) ideas about gender, race, social class, and the relationship of public and private life.⁹⁶ In the Greeleys' parlor, their bust of *Proserpine* functioned in just this way. It also framed the Greeleys as well-traveled, refined connoisseurs and fond parents, modeled genteel behavior, and contributed to the sentimental, domestic atmosphere of their home. Finally, the Greeleys undoubtedly experienced pleasure and emotional satisfaction in contemplating an object they found both beautiful and moving.

Although European travel became easier, faster, cheaper and far more common after the advent of commercial steam ships, it was still a rare privilege for Americans in the 1850s. Those who made a Grand Tour generally returned home with as many trophies as their budgets and their living spaces could accommodate.⁹⁷ The Greeleys were no exception. A partial list of their purchases, related by Horace Greeley's niece Cecelia Cleveland in 1874, includes both copies of well-known, old master paintings and "original" oil paintings by Lucas Cranach and Guercino, among others. In addition to *Proserpine*, the Greeleys purchased several supposedly antique marble busts and figurines, and an array of bibelots, including a mosaic card table, several antique

⁹⁶ Logan, *The Victorian Parlor*, xiii, 31-37.

⁹⁷ See for instance, Alice P. Kenney, "Kate Gansevoort's Grand Tour," *New York History* 67 (October 1966): 343-61; Mary Ellen Martin, "Nineteenth-Century Salem on the Grand Tour"; Annette Woolard, "Nineteenth-Century Delawareans and the Grand Tour," *Delaware History* 22 (Spring/Summer 1987): 125-157; Jeff Mansell, "Souvenirs from the Grand Tour," *Alabama Heritage* 29 (Summer 1993): 21-25.

medallions and a model of the tomb of Scipio.⁹⁸ These items served as personal mementos and also spoke to the Greeleys' visitors of their European travels. Their décor clearly communicated the idea that art and travel should come before upholstery—a sentiment that anticipated the advice of Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, who warned in 1869 that expensive furniture contributed nothing to the moral sensibility of a household, while judiciously chosen artworks were educational tools that rendered the entire family more sensitive and refined.⁹⁹ The Greeleys' parlor décor, though unusual, aptly expressed their identity as well-traveled, intellectual social reformers.

Although Horace Greeley was socially progressive to an unusual degree, his bust of *Proserpine* aligned him and his family with more widely-shared cultural values. As Wendy Katz has argued, “The taste for ideal sculptures... expressed adherence to values of self-control, surfaces designed to please others, and the willingness to interpret those constrained surfaces for evidence of inner and honorable character.”¹⁰⁰ *Proserpine*, which Powers imbued with the restraint and repose typical of his ideal figures, modeled the “genteel performance” through which middle and upper-class Americans constructed their identity, and with which they justified and naturalized their social power.¹⁰¹ As

⁹⁸ Cecilia Cleveland, *The Story of a Summer; or, Journal Leaves from Chappaqua* (New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., 1874), 114-24.

⁹⁹ Beecher and Stowe, *The American Woman's Home*, chap. 6, <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/mrwmh10.txt>.

¹⁰⁰ Katz, *Regionalism and Reform*, 171.

¹⁰¹ In his study of nineteenth-century etiquette books, John Kasson argued that middle and upper class Americans constructed their identity, in part, through this “genteel performance” John F. Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1990).

Karen Halttunen has demonstrated, the mid-nineteenth-century parlor was, daily, the site of such performances.¹⁰²

As Halttunen has argued, the parlor was also a site where men and women had to negotiate the contradictory demands of gentility and sentimental culture. On one hand, the code of genteel behavior required them to restrain their bodies and limit their expression of feeling. On the other, the prevailing sentimental culture encouraged the intense experience of emotions as a sign of natural refinement. Nineteenth-century viewers' sympathetic responses to *Proserpine*, like their responses to *The Greek Slave*, were rendered more acute by the fact that both figures seem to conceal intense emotions behind an impassive mask, erected both as a mark of their gentility and as a barrier to the threatening, invasive gazes of the outside world. An 1852 wood engraving, published in *Graham's Magazine*, shows a sensitive young woman's humorously unsuccessful attempt to maintain a genteel calm while on display in an opera box (fig.32).¹⁰³ Her body language, while exaggerated, is similar to *Proserpine's*.¹⁰⁴

In addition to being the site of daily, polite performances, the parlor was also occasionally a stage on which its owners performed actual amateur theatricals before

¹⁰² Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 153-190.

¹⁰³ The article which this engraving illustrates is Thompson Westcott, "The Physiology of Dandyism: What Dandies Do," *Graham's Magazine* 40 (May 1852): 471.

¹⁰⁴ Significantly, this illustration appears only a few pages away from Horace Greeley's review of *The Greek Slave* at the Crystal Palace, in which he describes the figure standing, "constantly surrounded by a swarm of admirers." Greeley, "The Crystal Palace and Its Lessons," *Graham's Magazine* 40 (May 1852): 476. The idea that the body could be transformed into a barrier between a threatening, judgmental, outside world and an inner world of intense emotion mirrors, in microcosm, the rhetoric of separate spheres, wherein the walls of the home serve the same purpose.

family members and friends. Among the most popular of these were *tableaux vivants*. *Tableaux* performances featured varying numbers of (predominantly female) players who posed in dramatic attitudes before an audience, usually accompanied by music, stage lighting and interpretive readings. They enjoyed a great vogue with middle and upper-class Americans during the second half of the nineteenth century. Performers of the popular "statuary tableaux" coated themselves with cocoa butter and powdered chalk, wrapped themselves in white muslin, mounted pedestals and assumed the poses of real or imagined ideal statues. The extent to which nineteenth-century viewers identified with *Proserpine*, and wished to emulate Powers' bust, can be seen from the following "living representation of the bust of Proserpine by Powers," published in an 1860 manual of *tableaux vivants*:

The lady must take her position inside the pedestal... hook it firmly together and pack cloth between the lady and the inside of the pedestal, for the purpose of keeping the body from moving... See that the arms are folded out of sight and the hair arranged properly. The eyes should be cast upwards slightly and, when once fixed, they should not be moved. The face and neck should be made as white as possible; the expression of the countenance calm and serene.¹⁰⁵

Mary Chapman has written that *tableaux vivants*, "...contributed to nineteenth century constructions of women as silent and immobile," constructions which women resisted to varying degrees.¹⁰⁶ As I will discuss in later chapters, *tableaux* performances also allowed women to place themselves in active, even heroic roles; however, the *tableau* of *Proserpine* mirrored the genteel performance that both women and men (but particularly

¹⁰⁵ J.H. Head, *Home Pastimes; or Tableaux Vivants* (Boston, J. E. Tilton & Co., 1860), 55.

¹⁰⁶ Mary Chapman, " 'Living Pictures': Women and Tableaux Vivants in 19th-Century American Fiction and Culture," *Wide Angle*, 18, no.3 (1996): 27.

women) were expected to maintain in the ritualized arena of the nineteenth-century parlor—a performance that constrained both their bodies and their voices.

The bust of *Proserpine* also expressed refined gentility through its whiteness.¹⁰⁷ Like the writer of the *tableau vivant*, who stressed that the performer’s “face and neck should be made as white as possible,” Hiram Powers was deeply concerned with the color of his sculptures. He abandoned the use Carrara marble early in his career in favor of Seravezza marble. Though the latter type was less readily available and considerably more expensive, it is whiter and contains fewer colored veins. This made it a safer bet for Powers, whose policy it was to abandon partially carved blocks of marble if they contained “flaws” (i.e., color of any kind). As Hawthorne famously related, Powers believed that whiteness rendered his sculptures more spiritual, a point on which Hawthorne concurred.¹⁰⁸ This belief stemmed in part from the translucent quality of white marble; however, it also derived from a nineteenth-century racial hierarchy so widely accepted that it was almost unspoken. This hierarchy defined groups and individuals with paler skin as naturally more refined, and attributed to them a greater capacity for self-control.¹⁰⁹ Although Horace Greeley held relatively enlightened views

¹⁰⁷ For a cultural history of how material goods constructed an ideal of “whiteness” in the nineteenth century, see Bridget T. Heneghan, *Whitewashing America: Material Culture and Race in the Antebellum Imagination* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2003).

¹⁰⁸ Hawthorne, *French and Italian Notebooks*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980), 293.

¹⁰⁹ Greeley’s niece, Cecilia Cleveland, related that when she traveled to Italy in the early 1870s, a number of American sculptors advised her against visiting the studio of Edmonia Lewis (1845-1911), an American sculptor of both African and American Indian descent. “She was, they declared, ‘queer,’ ‘unsociable,’ and often positively rude to her visitors...” Cleveland was surprised, when she finally met Lewis, to find her perfectly

on the subject of race, he believed that Powers' perfectly white ideal heads and figures represented the highest type of human beauty. As Kirk Savage has argued, "Sculpture... mapped the racial terrain of the human body, where the hierarchy of difference clung most tenaciously."¹¹⁰

Throughout the 1840s and '50s, Greeley was a staunch supporter of women's rights to vote and to work for competitive pay in such "feminine" jobs as teaching and tailoring; however, in an 1850 column he expressed his opinion that work outside the home should be the province of young, unmarried women. A married woman, he felt certain, would continue to devote herself to home duties, "because she delights in so doing and not because man requires it." Of women gaining the franchise, he observed:

...as to the exposure of Women to insult and outrage in the Town or Ward meeting, or at the Election, we trust the effect would be just the opposite to that anticipated—namely, that men would be constrained by the presence of ladies to keep sober and behave themselves. The presence of Woman has this effect ever on those assemblages honored by her presence; and we trust its virtue is far from having been exhausted.¹¹¹

polite and dignified. The rivalry among American sculptors in Italy was intense, and it was not at all unusual for these artists to disparage competitors to potential buyers. What is noteworthy in this case is that they accused Lewis, not of being a bad sculptor, but of being uncouth. As a non-white woman, she was particularly vulnerable to such charges, which reinforced the widely held notion that people with darker skin lacked self-control. Cleveland, *The Story of a Summer*, 109-110.

¹¹⁰ Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 90. See also Savage, 8-10. On nineteenth-century racial hierarchy and marble sculpture, see also Jennifer DeVere Brody, "Shading Meaning," in Andrew Stephenson and Amelia Jones, eds. *Performing the Body/Performing the Text* (London: Routledge, 1999), 89-106.

¹¹¹ Horace Greeley, "Remarks," *New York Daily Tribune*, 2 November 1850: 6.

In short, “true women” would continue to be inherently domestic and to exert their magical, moralizing influence over men whether they were inside their homes or out of them. This theme threads its way through nineteenth-century interpretations of the myth of Proserpine as well. Although Proserpine’s adventure in the public sphere led to her abduction, it also resulted in the containment of Pluto’s dangerous masculine passions within the bounds of marriage, where he is forced to “keep sober and behave.” Perhaps for this reason, one nineteenth-century art critic advised, “For a *boudoir*, there is nothing so beautiful as [Powers’ bust of] Proserpine.”¹¹²

The sentimental, nineteenth-century rhetoric of gender contended that, just as women’s civilizing influence could benefit the public sphere, men’s support and protection were needed within the home. In an 1857 column celebrating the values of “fireside and table,” the editor of *Harper’s* admonished his male readers:

It is easy to purchase success in business at too dear a price... some Eastern nations buy their wives; but we often sell ours, and pocket the profits. And when the successful man has amassed a fortune, what sort of home has he for its enjoyment? The statuary that he puts there rebukes the mock-life around it... Wives and children need something besides good sentiments and full purses. They want attention, counsel, sympathy, heart-succor and heart support. Denied these gracious offices on the part of a husband and father, what else can be expected but disorder and distress at home?¹¹³

In this editorial, ideal statuary in the domestic sphere silently rebukes the un-domestic man by presenting him with an image of true womanhood that his own wife, destitute of his support, cannot hope to attain. Just as true women transform men into gentlemen, they themselves rely on the benevolence of sentimental men who act towards them with

¹¹² C. E. Lester, “The Genius and Sculpture of Powers,” *The American Whig Review* 2 (Aug. 1854): 203.

¹¹³ “Editor’s Table,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, 14 (March 1857): 557.

chivalry and honor. Recently, Cassandra Cleghorn has demonstrated how this very rhetoric of sentimental manhood underpinned nineteenth-century reform efforts—efforts in which Greeley was deeply involved.¹¹⁴

In the semi-public space of their parlor, the Greeleys' bust of *Proserpine* connected the family to a broad, middle-class culture of sentimental domesticity by modeling the physiognomy and modest behavior of a true woman. In this way, the sculpture also elicited a sympathetic, protective response from male viewers, calling forth their domestic natures and constraining them to “keep sober and behave themselves.” Furthermore, the bust defined Horace Greeley as a sentimental man—one who revered true womanhood and sought, chivalrously, to protect those weaker than himself through his involvement with various reform efforts. By describing the interior of Greeley's home—a description which included Powers' well-known bust—and offering his readers a flattering glimpse of the man as a father and husband, James Parton was probably seeking to counter the damaging caricatures of Greeley as an uncouth, non-normative man. By displaying the bust in their parlor, a space they almost certainly used for political meetings as well as social interactions, the Greeleys linked the various reform efforts they championed to mainstream cultural ideals.

One more function that the bust of *Proserpine* performed within private homes is suggested by the Greeleys' tragic history of personal loss. By 1851, six of their ten children had died. Childhood mortality rates in the United States at this time hovered at

¹¹⁴ Cassandra Cleghorn, “Chivalric Sentimentalism: The Case of Dr. Howe and Laura Bridgeman,” in Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler, eds., *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 163-80.

around thirty-three percent—higher in urban areas—making the loss of a child a nearly universal experience for married people.¹¹⁵ The psychological and cultural effects of such repeated, devastating tragedy can not be overestimated. Child death profoundly colored the ways in which nineteenth-century men and women viewed themselves and the world. Most Americans comforted themselves through these recurring traumas with a softened and sentimentalized version of Christian theology. Children, they believed, were innocent and faithful by nature, and were thus assured of salvation. The separation of death, though painful, would be blessedly temporary.¹¹⁶ Though the story of Proserpine derives from pagan mythology, it echoes the themes of death and rebirth, loss and reunion that lie at the heart of sentimental Christian theology. One nineteenth-century viewer described the bust as “Proserpine, who, by her being and nature was to the ancient world a symbol of that great truth connected with death, which is that the seed when planted in the earth dies only to spring forth in beauty again...”¹¹⁷ In their home, surrounded by paintings

¹¹⁵ For the period 1850-1880, the mortality rate for white children in the United States hovered between 32% and 35%. This percentage was slightly higher in urban areas and in the South. Mortality rates for black children are difficult to estimate but were almost certainly much higher. Michael R. Haines, “Estimated Life Tables for the United States, 1850-1910,” *Historical Methods* 31 (Fall 1998): 149-69.

¹¹⁶ Terri Sabatos, “Images of Death and Domesticity in Victorian Britain,” Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 2002, 237-39. Though Sabatos concentrates on how British families used artworks to assuage their grief, her argument is equally relevant to the United States during this same period. See also Nancy Schrom Dye and Daniel Blake Smith, “Mother Love and Infant Death, 1750-1920,” *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 329-53.

¹¹⁷ [May Griffith], “Powers’ Proserpine,” unpublished, undated typescript, Edward Carey Garner Collection, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Reel P24, frame 2. Griffith was a member of a prominent, nineteenth-century, Philadelphia family, who saw E. L. Carey’s version of the bust installed in his home. I am grateful to Stephanie Mayer for providing me with this information.

with religious themes, Mary and Horace Greeley's bust of *Proserpine* must have daily reassured them that, like Ceres, they would one day be reunited with their lost children.

Although Proserpine, like Palmer's *White Captive*, depicted a kidnapped girl, the story of Proserpine and Ceres had a known, satisfying conclusion. Furthermore, unlike the *White Captive*'s distraught visage, *Proserpine*'s calm, unworried face communicated patience and faith.¹¹⁸ *Proserpine* reassured its audience, and it reinforced rather than destabilized the nineteenth-century domestic ideal. It is therefore not surprising that a number of women chose to have their portraits made by Hiram Powers in the guise of *Proserpine* either just before or after their marriages (fig.33).¹¹⁹ As Wendy Katz has argued, versions of *Proserpine* itself were also frequently given as gifts to young married women. These busts, and the portrait busts based on them, served as object lessons, modeling the restraint and polite submission to others that would be required of women

¹¹⁸ In the 1850s and '60s, ideal marble busts and figures with faces that expressed distress became acceptable, even popular. Examples include Harriet Hosmer's (1830-1908) bust *Medusa*, and Randolph Rogers sculptures *Nydia* and *Merope* (which I will discuss at length in chapters 6 and 7). However, the anxiety and sadness communicated by these sculptures is extremely stylized. *Medusa*, for instance, retains a smooth brow as she gaze heavenward with wide, mournful eyes and slightly parted lips. Her expression resembles that worn by benighted heroines in paintings by the Italian Baroque artist Guido Reni (1575-1642), whose works were tremendously admired in the 1850s. In his *White Captive*, on the other hand, Palmer presented a startlingly realistic depiction of a badly frightened girl.

¹¹⁹ Among these bust portraits is one of Anstiss Wetmore, modeled by Powers in 1846. Whereas most sitters preferred some minimal drapery, Mrs. Wetmore, true to the model, had Powers include her exposed bosom. When this bust arrived in the Wetmores' New York home, the resulting scandal effectively ended their marriage. Shortly afterwards, Anstiss Wetmore left for Europe with her husband's coachman. In a Brontëesque gesture, Mr. Wetmore carried the bust up to the attic where it remained locked up until his death. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.2, 106-7.

after their marriages.¹²⁰ They also expressed, in poignant yet reassuring sentimental terms, the emotional ties between parents and children, husbands and wives that formed the core of domestic ideology. At a time when marriage often meant separation—sometimes by long distances and for periods of years—between parents and their daughters, Powers’ sweet interpretation of the myth of Proserpine and Ceres must have been particularly meaningful.

The Greeleys’ bust of *Proserpine* reveals that, however socially radical and personally odd they may have been, they embraced wholeheartedly the sentimental culture of their day—a culture that united middle and upper-class Americans from disparate backgrounds and regions. As I argued in my introduction, nineteenth-century sentimentalism endorsed no single political position. It was, rather, an outlook—one that emphasized empathy and religious faith, valued private experience, lionized the emotional bonds between family members, and stressed the importance of self-refinement as an ongoing process.

¹²⁰ Katz, *Regionalism and Reform*, 169-171.

SECTION II CREATING AN IDEAL SELF

In June of 1865, Adelia Acklen, a forty-six year old widow from Tennessee, traveled to Europe for the first time in her life. After stopping briefly in London to collect a fee for cotton she had sold the previous year, she embarked on a grand tour of the continent.

From Rome that winter she wrote to her mother, “For the last day or two, I have visited a number of artists’ studios. At each place I have had to climb three or four flights of stairs!”¹ The New York railroad magnate and financier LeGrand Lockwood traveled to Europe with his wife that same year, and he too visited artists’ studios in Rome.

Specifically, Acklen and Lockwood visited the studios of American sculptors. These had become standard stops for Americans on the Grand Tour in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Although the former Confederate plantation owner and the Yankee financier would probably have had little to say to one another socially, their shared affinity for Randolph Rogers, Joseph Mozier, and Chauncey Ives suggests that they had similar tastes. Both Acklen and Lockwood had come to Italy with more than just a passing curiosity about American sculpture. They had come to buy. Acklen was planning to re-decorate her palatial villa just outside of Nashville, which had been occupied by Union troops during the war. Lockwood was building a massive, Second Empire mansion in Norwalk, Connecticut with the fortune he had made investing in railroads and trading

¹ Letter from Adelia Acklen to her mother, from Rome, 25 February 1866, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files, Nashville, Tenn. I am grateful to Mark Brown and John Lancaster, the Curator and Registrar of Belmont Mansion, for their extensive and excellent assistance, and for the trove of historical information they have gathered, organized and analyzed.

government bonds. By carefully selecting artworks for their respective houses, each was seeking to construct an idealized, highly gendered version of him or herself.

In the decades between 1850 and 1870, the population of the United States nearly doubled to forty million people. By 1870, twenty percent of Americans were living in cities. During this same period, the frontier moved rapidly west and six new states were added to the Union. Railroads and steamship lines multiplied, and travel became faster, cheaper and more convenient, speeding westward expansion and urbanization. The country emerged from the crisis of the Civil War into a period of unprecedented economic growth, but the largely unregulated economy made personal fortunes unstable. In the fluid social climate that resulted from rapid growth and constant change, Americans struggled to define themselves in relation to their country and one another.

As I have already discussed, domestic interiors were (and are) crucial sites of identity formation. In the second half of the nineteenth century, homes became larger, grander and more theatrical. Not only did many Americans have more money to spend, they also traveled widely and saw more of the world. Flocks of American tourists returned from Europe with aristocratic chateaux and villas fresh in their minds. Through bricks and mortar, they sought to render their wealth visible, confirm their cultural credentials, and lend an air of stability to their (often all-too-tenuous) prosperity. As Lori Merish has argued, the mid-nineteenth century also saw the rise of our modern consumer psychology, in which individuals express themselves through consumption and identify with the objects they display on their persons and in their homes.² Through the tasteful

² Lori Merish, *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 2-3.

elaboration of their interiors, middle and upper-class Americans hoped to solidify elusive social categories, and define themselves favorably.

As domestic interiors grew larger and more complex, and as rich Americans grew richer, the market for American ideal sculpture boomed. Tourists often bought more than just a single sculpture for their homes. Some, like Acklen and Lockwood, even purchased a group of thematically related marble statues. Once installed in domestic interiors, these sculptures became part of a complex spatial text that governed and defined social relations.³ Acklen and Lockwood selected particular ideal sculptures for their homes because of their aesthetic appeal, but they also used these artworks, in conjunction with an array of other objects, to solidify fraught categories of class, gender, race and nationality.

Like most ideal sculptures, the statues Acklen and Lockwood purchased in Italy constructed an ideal of refined domesticity through both their forms and their associated narratives. It is important to note that, as they idealized themselves through their sculpture collections, both Acklen and Lockwood looked back to the cultural norms of the 1840s and 1850s, the heyday of sentimental domestic culture in the United States. In particular, the formulations of genteel femininity and masculinity expressed by their sculptures reflect mid-century gender ideals. The female figures in both collections are pious, loving and domestic. Lockwood's male figures, while strong and adventurous, act in the service of God, home and family. Together, these figures defined the domestic

³ Thomas J. Schlereth and J. H. Foy, eds. *American Home Life, 1880-1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992). Although this study deals primarily with late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century homes, its careful attention to the relationship between habitat and domestic life has informed my work.

interiors that housed them as civilized spaces where women and children would be sheltered and nurtured, and they encouraged male viewers to see themselves as protectors and patriarchs.

It is significant, and not surprising, that white marble was the preferred medium for such sculptures. Although a few American sculptors did cast ideal figures in bronze (Lockwood owned one such sculpture), these works were not, until the 1880s, as commercially successful as figures carved from marble, nor did they enjoy the same elevated status.⁴ Similarly, sculptors who tinted their marble figures were roundly criticized. Even the natural, colored veining that sometimes appeared during the carving process could force a sculptor to abandon a half-carved block of marble, because it lowered the value of the finished work below the cost of labor. Middle-class consumers shared this affinity for white sculpture. The figurines and sculptural reproductions most prized in the nineteenth century were those made of parian, a biscuit porcelain named for the pure, cream-colored, Greek marble it emulates. White was associated erroneously with antique Greek and Roman sculpture, and it was also perceived as a more spiritual, less earth-bound color. Its popularity also rested, however, on the fact that it associated

⁴ The American sculptor Henry Kirke Brown (1814-1886) set up a foundry for the casting of bronze sculpture in Brooklyn in the 1840s. He sold more than thirty copies of his small, bronze, ideal figure *Filatrice* (after 1850; Metropolitan Museum of Art); however, its size (just twenty inches high), lower cost and lack of a specific sentimental narrative all marked it as a primarily decorative object. *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Volume I*, 41, 44-45. Randolph Rogers (1825-1892) also worked in bronze although he usually reserved this medium for his public commissions. As I will discuss in Chapter 5, LeGrand Lockwood owned a rare, bronze version of Rogers' sculpture *Isaac* (1865; private collection).

the genteel, spiritual and domestic qualities that ideal sculptures embodied with white skin and, more broadly, white culture.⁵

Both Acklen and Lockwood also expressed nationalist ideals through their sculpture collections. Acklen's collection of marble "True Women" demonstrated her loyalty to antebellum, Southern gender codes and, by extension, the rhetoric of the "Lost Cause." Lockwood, on the other hand, used his ideal sculpture in conjunction with the rest of his art collection to present American expansionist policies (in which he was deeply invested) as a benign and divinely ordained project of domestication.

Stereographs provide important records of the interiors of both Acklen's villa, Belmont, and Lockwood's summer estate, Elmwood. Stereographs, which juxtapose two photographic images of an identical scene shot from slightly different angles, create an illusion of three-dimensional space. They were also cheap and easy to reproduce.⁶ These photographs were thus ideally suited to convey a highly experiential impression of an interior to a potentially wide audience. The fact that both Acklen and Lockwood commissioned stereographs of their homes says something about their ambitions—both collectors wanted to publicize their interiors. This idea is born out by the fact that both Acklen and Lockwood allowed (and possibly invited) newspaper reporters to publish

⁵ For a cultural history of how whiteness was constructed through material goods in the nineteenth century, see Bridget T. Heneghan, *Whitewashing America: Material Culture and Race in the Antebellum Imagination* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2003). On nineteenth-century racial hierarchy and marble sculpture, see also Jennifer DeVere Brody, "Shading Meaning."

⁶ See Jim Fowles, "Stereography and the Standardization of Vision," *Journal of American Culture* 17, no.2 (1994): 89-93 and Robert J. Silverman, "The Stereograph and Photographic Depiction in the 19th Century," *Technology and Culture* 34 (October 1993): 729-56.

long, detailed descriptions of their homes.⁷ Like these newspaper articles, the stereographs of Belmont and Elmwood represent attempts to project, in a fixed and favorable form, the identities of their owners. Not surprisingly, ideal sculptures often appear as focal points of these images.

⁷ See “LeGrand Lockwood’s Residence,” *New York Sun*, 2 October 1869: 2 and O.O.S., “A Lovely Spot,” *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Ky.): 18 May 1881.

CHAPTER 4

ADELICIA ACKLEN'S COLLECTION OF IDEAL SCULPTURE AT BELMONT

Probably around the time of her third marriage in 1867, the wealthy Tennessee plantation owner Adelia Acklen hired a local Nashville photographer, C.C. Giers, to make a series of stereographs of the interior of her palatial Italianate villa, Belmont, located two miles outside of town.¹ Several stereographs survive, depicting Belmont's entrance hall and expansive "grand salon." These stereographs, a description of Belmont that appeared in Elisabeth Ellet's social register *The Queens of American Society*, and several other published descriptions of the house document the location of Acklen's five American ideal sculptures and describe their surroundings.² Four of Acklen's sculptures remain at the Belmont Mansion Museum (now part of Belmont University), in or near their original locations. Based on the image of Belmont that emerges from these sources, I will argue that Acklen, seeking to re-domesticate both her house and herself in the wake of the Civil

¹ Carl Giers, whose middle name is variously described as Cooper or Casper, had a Union Street studio in Nashville in 1867. Giers' stereographs of Belmont differ from stereographs he produced for commercial distribution in that they are stamped only with the name "C.C. Giers" and the location "Nashville, Tennessee" instead of with the full studio address, date and copyright information. This suggests that they were privately commissioned, most likely by Acklen. See James A. Hoobler, *Nashville, From the Collection of Carl and Otto Giers* (Charleston, S.C.: Acadia, 1999).

² Descriptions of Belmont after the war can be found in Mrs. Ellet, *The Queens of American Society* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1867), 417-420. Therese Yelverton, *Teresina in America*, v.1 (London: Bentley & Son, 1875), 250-7; John W. Kiser, "Scion of Belmont, Part I," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 38 (Spring 1979): 37-9; O.O.S., "A Lovely Spot," *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Ky.) 18 May 1881, re-printed in Albert W. Wardin, Jr. *Belmont Mansion, the Home of Joseph and Adelia Acklen* (Nashville: Belmont Mansion Association, 2002), 28-9. In addition, extant reinforcements under the floor mark the precise original location of Acklen's version of *Ruth Gleaning* by Randolph Rogers.

War, redecorated her villa with ideal sculptures that emphasized her identity as a dutiful wife, mother and Christian.

Adelicia Hayes Franklin Acklen

By 1852, when Adelicia Acklen was thirty-five years old, she had been widowed, had broken her late husband's will in court and gained control of his vast estates (including plantations in three states and seven hundred and fifty slaves), and had given birth to seven children, four of whom had died. An extremely intelligent and strong-willed woman, she had demonstrated a talent for the supposedly masculine endeavors of business and law. Yet a miniature portrait painted that year by John Dodge (fig.34) depicts Acklen as soft and sweet. The corresponding portrait of her second husband, Joseph Acklen, (fig.35) shows him with his chin slightly lifted, his mouth firm, his gaze steady and direct, and his right hand resolutely clasping his lapel. Adelicia, on the other hand, appears tentative, almost shy. Her cheeks are slightly flushed, her eyes wide and gentle. With her right hand, she delicately fingers the edge of her velvet wrap. These intimate little portraits, made for the family, are conventional and also telling. They present idealized images of a husband and wife as those social categories were defined at mid-century. Joseph is strong and capable, Adelicia beautiful and loving. There was no way for Dodge, using the current imagery of femininity, to show Adelicia's iron will or keen, pragmatic mind.³ Nor, probably, would Acklen have wanted these qualities to become part of her persona.

³ Anne Verplanck has discussed how portrait miniatures functioned as "devices of internal communication among distinct sectors of the elite population" which "helped mediate or reinforce self, family and group identity." Verplanck, "The Social Meaning of

As a range of scholars have argued, the ideal of the Southern lady as fair-skinned, sweet, domestic, pure, pious and dependent was central to Southern planters' justification of their position at the top of a rigid social hierarchy.⁴ It allowed elite women to define themselves as naturally genteel, and elite men to define themselves as chivalrous protectors of the weak—definitions crucial to their sense of personal honor and entitlement. Particularly in the tense decade leading up to the Civil War, ideal Southern womanhood became an emblem of Southern culture. Authors brandished it like a flag, comparing the instinctively delicate “true women” of the South to shrewish, masculine, fame-seeking female reformers in the North. One author noted, in reference to such reformers, “Our ladies blush that their sisters *anywhere* descend to such things. Our ordinary women much prefer to follow the example of genuinely womanly feeling, set them by the ladies around them, then that set by Northern ladies, and so they are above [them].”⁵ As Donald Matthews has pointed out, Southern Protestant ministers preached

Portrait Miniatures in Philadelphia, 1760-1820,” in Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison, eds. *American Material Culture: The Shape of the Field* (Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997), 196.

⁴ See for instance Virginia Kent Anderson Leslie, “The Myth of the Southern Lady: Antebellum Proslavery Rhetoric and the Proper Place of Women,” *Sociological Spectrum* 6 (1986): 31-49; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women in the Old South* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Elizabeth Moss, *Domestic Novelists in the Old South: Defenders of Southern Culture* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1992); Susan J. Tracy, *In the Master's Eye: Representations of Women, Blacks and Poor Whites in Antebellum Southern Literature* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995); and Joan Cashin, *Our Common Affairs: Texts from Women in the Old South* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

⁵ B, “The New Social Propositions,” *Southern Literary Messenger*, 20 (May 1854): 300. For other examples see Moss, *Domestic Novelists in the Old South* and Tracy, *In the Master's Eye*.

that God himself endowed women with graceful submissiveness, passive fortitude and tender, loving natures. This argument made any deviation from female gender norms seem not only subversive but sacrilegious.⁶

The biographies of individual Southern women alive during the middle decades of the nineteenth century show the extent to which they accepted, rejected or modified the ideal of the Southern lady—an ideal which shaped cultural expectations of them and, to some degree, their own expectations of themselves.⁷ A number of scholars have argued that the Civil War created a “crisis in gender” for such women, forcing them into more assertive, public roles; however, this view is oversimplified.⁸ Decades before the war, many women, including Adelia Acklen, were already asserting themselves in ways that deviated from the passive, selfless feminine ideal. As Alexis Giradon Brown has noted,

Throughout their religious and scholarly education, [elite Southern] women were taught to be feminine and dainty before guests, but tough and commanding when dealing with plantation life. Not only was this character split unreasonable, it was impossible to fulfill. For the purpose of survival... women began to explore their own ways of avoiding the prescriptions of society while remaining within the pleasing set of feminine ideals.⁹

⁶ Donald G. Matthews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 169-70.

⁷ Betty L. Mitchell, ‘Biography,’ in Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, eds. *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), reprinted in *Documenting the American South*, <http://www/docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/biography.html> (accessed 20 January 2005).

⁸ See for instance Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Women’s World in the Old South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982); Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and Jacqueline Glass Campbell, *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

⁹ Alexis Giradon Brown, “The Women Left Behind: Transformation of the Southern Belle, 1840-1880,” *Historian* 62 (Summer 2000): 765.

Throughout her young adult life, Acklen aggressively pursued her own interests. At twenty-two she took the lead in courting her first husband, Isaac Franklin—a man more than twice her age. In 1849, three years after he died, she married again, but required her second husband to sign a firm pre-nuptial agreement. She then took advantage of a loophole in Franklin’s will and broke it in court, making herself one of the few married women in Tennessee at that time with full control of her own property and income. As Acklen must have been aware, Southern ladies who strayed too far from the feminine ideal risked being identified as traitors to their class and their society, and they risked their own and their families’ honor.¹⁰ For this reason, she carefully observed all the social niceties expected of a genteel Southern lady, and she relied on her considerable personal charm to shield her from criticism. Her younger sister later recalled that Acklen “could talk a bird out of a tree.”¹¹

At the end of the Civil War, Acklen’s identity as a “true woman” was threatened on two fronts. Throughout the war years, the Northern press presented Southern women as strident, spoiled and shrewish (much the same way the Southern press presented

¹⁰ For the centrality of honor in antebellum Southern society, see Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (London: Oxford University Press, 1982). While Wyatt-Brown discussed Southern honor as a primarily male attribute, Giselle Brown has recently argued that women laid claim to their own brand of honor by embodying, as nearly as possible, the Southern feminine ideal. See Brown, *The Confederate Belle* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 4.

¹¹ Quoted in Wardin, *Belmont Mansion*, 2002, 1. This book, an earlier edition of the same title published in 1981, and a day-by-day account of Acklen’s life compiled by Mark Brown and John Lancaster, have served as my main sources of biographical information about Acklen. See Brown and Lancaster, “Chronology of Adelia Hayes Franklin Acklen’s Life,” MS, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files, Nashville, Tenn.

Northern women). The cover illustration of an 1861 issue of *Harper's Weekly* captioned "A Female Rebel in Baltimore—An Everyday Scene," depicts a pretty young woman wearing an elaborate gown sewed together from pieces of an American flag (fig.36). The coquettish attitude she displays before a group of frankly interested young soldiers shows that she has stepped well outside the bounds of proper feminine behavior. An engraving published in the May, 1863 issue of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* depicts Confederate ladies hounding their men to war in order to satisfy their own fury and pride. In the companion engraving, the trappings of class and gender have been completely stripped away from them, revealing a mob of savage harridans, rioting for bread (fig.37). Many of the Union soldiers who would occupy Nashville for the next ten years, and the Northern businessmen and their families who poured into town after the war, must have regarded Acklen's position as a plantation owner and recent Confederate slave holder as incompatible with the sweetness and moral rectitude of a genteel Christian lady.¹² A Union officer stationed in Nashville in 1862 noted, "[Mr, Acklen's] wife well fills his place... so far as rebellion sympathies and hate can extend."¹³ For this native of Illinois, Acklen was de-sexed by her identity as a wealthy, slave owning Confederate.

¹² Slavery's capacity to de-sex female slave owners was an effective rhetorical tool used by abolitionists. In his autobiography, Frederick Douglass described a young mistress who "had never had a slave under her control previous to myself," as "a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings... Her face was made of heavenly smiles and her voice of tranquil music. But, alas! This kind heart had but a short time to remain such... That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon." Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003), 51 (first published 1845).

¹³ John Fitch, *Annals of the Army of the Cumberland*, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1864), 635.

Graver still for Acklen was the reaction of her Southern neighbors to her and her husband's actions during the war, which preserved much of their wealth. When Tennessee seceded from the Union in June, 1861 the Acklens took a firm Confederate stand. They donated \$30,000 to the Confederacy and Adelia joined the Ladies' Soldiers Friend Society. On the eve of Nashville's occupation by Union forces in February, 1862, Joseph fled (at Adelia's urging) to the Acklens' cotton plantations in Louisiana. Several months later, after Union troops captured New Orleans and Baton Rouge and began moving up the Mississippi River, he found himself pinned between opposing Union and Confederate lines. Fearful that Confederate soldiers would burn his cotton to prevent its falling into enemy hands, he appealed to Union officers. Although Acklen refused overt Federal protection (no doubt fearing reprisal), Lieutenant R. B. Lowry of the U. S. Navy reported that he renounced his oath of allegiance to the Confederacy and provided useful information on Confederate naval operations near his land.¹⁴ Acklen, who had but recently been an outspoken and published advocate of slavery, wrote to his wife, "I am done with nigger labour. I never had much fancy for it as you know but now I am fully satisfied. I have suffered all kinds of deprivations and been subjected to all kinds of lies and slanders that malice could invent."¹⁵ Joseph may have intended this letter to be

¹⁴ Ibid., 15.

¹⁵ Letter from Joseph Acklen, Angola Plantation, Louisiana to Adelia Acklen, 20 August 1863, copy in Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files of original in Manuscripts Section, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University. According to the Acklens' son, William Hayes Ackland, Joseph "was desirous of showing the world the better side of slavery in an ideal plantation life." See Kiser, "Scion of Belmont, Part I," 43. Joseph Acklen published a two-part article in which he attempted to do just that. See Joseph Acklen, "Rules and Management of a Southern Estate," *Debow's Review*, 21 (December 1856): 617-620 and 22 (April 1857): 376-381. This article was later cited by various

intercepted and read by Union soldiers. His sprawling, unsteady signature suggests he was already ill with the disease (probably of malaria) that would kill him a month later.

With characteristic resolve, Adelia took charge of the situation. Accompanied by a hired guard, a cousin who was a Confederate war widow, and possibly her brother, she traveled to Louisiana and took up residence at her Angola plantation.¹⁶ There, she began playing what one Union officer referred to as a “very deep game.”¹⁷ While her cousin traveled back and forth, bargaining with Confederate officers to save the cotton, Acklen entertained Union officers in the plantation house. After two months, the Confederate General Leonidas Polk signed an order allowing Acklen to move her cotton to New Orleans. Acklen also obtained permission from Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter, Commander of the Union’s Mississippi fleet, to ship her cotton down river and, ultimately, past the Federal blockade to Liverpool, England. Somehow, Acklen even arranged to haul her cotton to the river on Union army wagons with Confederate soldiers standing by as guards. In England, she sold it at exorbitant war-time rates, netting roughly three quarters of a million dollars in gold.

Just how Acklen managed to accomplish this feat remains shrouded in mystery. It’s likely that she, like her husband, offered military information to Union officers while her cousin, Sarah Grant, offered similar information to the Confederates. Leonidas Polk,

proponents of slavery. See for instance, William Gannaway Brownlow, *Ought American Slavery to be Perpetuated?* (Philadelphia: privately printed, 1858), 95-96.

¹⁶ The most accurate account of Acklen’s actions to save her cotton can be found in Brown and Lancaster, “Chronology of Adelia Hayes Franklin Acklen’s Life.”

¹⁷ Lieutenant-Commander Kidder Randolph Breese, journal entry dated 22 April 1864, quoted in Wardin, 2002, 17.

the Confederate general in command of the Army of Mississippi, was a family friend of Acklen's and some of his relatives in Nashville may have been in debt to her.¹⁸ In addition, Adelia had a crucial advantage over her husband when it came to negotiations. Both she and her cousin were able to play on their position as ladies and recent widows to gain sympathy and respect. According to Kirsten Wood, elite Southern widows—who were easily distinguishable by their mourning costumes—were able to walk on both sides of the gender line, exercising male authority while portraying themselves as dutiful, selfless guardians of their late husbands' wishes and their children's needs. As a result, widows could operate beyond the pale of ladylike behavior and still expect to be treated with deference.¹⁹ Even after a Confederate colonel discerned what Acklen was doing, he delayed taking action to prevent her from moving her cotton to the river “for fear an injustice should be done to Mrs. A.”²⁰ In the end, he was able to seize only two wagon loads of Acklen's cotton plus the Union mules and wagons she had used.²¹ Acklen was held for only two days by the Confederate army for shipping cotton illegally, then she was released unscathed along with her confiscated mules, wagons and cotton. Leaving her brother in charge of her Louisiana plantations, she took a steam ship from New Orleans and returned to Nashville by way of New York in August, 1864.

¹⁸ I am grateful to Mark Brown for this insight.

¹⁹ Kirsten E. Wood, “Broken Reeds and Competent Farmers: Slaveholding Widows in the Southeastern United States, 1783-1861,” *Journal of Women's History* 13 (Summer 2001): 34-57.

²⁰ Letter from Colonel Frank Powers to Lieut. Colonel Jones S. Hamilton, 11 May 1864, quoted in Wardin, 2002, 16-17.

²¹ *Ibid.*

Despite her status as a widow, Acklen's exploit damaged her reputation at home. In saving her cotton, she had decisively stepped outside the proper sphere of a genteel Southern lady and had clearly done so for materialistic, rather than patriotic or filial reasons. In the process, she had made fools of Confederate officers, at least one of whom was a well-respected member of a prominent Nashville family. Furthermore, Acklen (who was acutely aware of the war's inevitable outcome) renewed ties to Northern relatives in 1864. She even sent her oldest son to boarding school in New Jersey, keeping him out of harm's way. While many of her neighbors' houses were damaged or completely destroyed during the Battle of Nashville, Acklen's house and grounds, which served as a Union army headquarters, survived largely unscathed. Finally, her niece and ward Sally Acklen became engaged to one of the occupying Union officers and the couple were married in New York in 1866. All of these factors combined to make Acklen's social position in post-war Nashville tenuous. She lamented in a letter to her brother that she was condemned by Northerners and Southerners alike.²²

Acklen briefly considered leaving Nashville permanently, but instead decided to renovate her house and, with it, her image. Her trip to New York and Europe, which she began in June of 1865, was a crucial part of this plan. It allowed her to collect the money for her cotton and to buy carpets, wallpaper, drapery, furniture and art for her house. By doing so, and by marrying as well and as quickly as possible, Acklen hoped to publicly re-domesticate both her home and herself.

²² Letter from Adelia Acklen to Addison Hayes, 27 August 1864, quoted in Brown and Lancaster, "Chronology of Adelia Hayes Franklin Acklen's Life."

Belmont

In 1853, Adelia and her second husband Joseph Acklen built Belmont and laid out its elaborate grounds with money her late husband had designated to build and fund a school for poor children. The estate, which was located two miles south of Nashville, had several formal gardens, numerous fountains, a water tower, conservatory, deer park, art gallery, and zoological garden (fig.38). The house itself is Italianate in style, finished with warm, reddish-brown stucco and white trim (fig.39). Lace-like, cast iron balconies originally extended above the recessed entrance and along the second story of each wing. Italianate houses were built by the thousands by middle and upper-class Americans throughout the 1850s. The most popular type featured irregular “picturesque” massing, an asymmetrical façade, L-shaped plan and a square tower. Belmont is atypical in that it has a symmetrical façade and plan, Corinthian columns and pilasters, and a cupola that rises from the center of the house. It resembles the model “Anglo-Grecian Villa” in an 1848 article in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* (fig.40). Adelia’s son later recalled that his mother was a devotee of the *Lady’s Book*.²³ It’s possible that she showed this elevation and the accompanying description and plan to the German-born architect Adolphus Heiman, who probably designed Belmont in 1850.²⁴

²³ Kiser, “Scion of Belmont, Part I,” 41.

²⁴ In their choice of a design for their villa, the Acklens may also have been influenced by the mid-century Italianate architecture of New Orleans, which (unlike its Northern manifestation) was characterized by verticality, regularity and symmetry. See Joan Garcia Cardwell, “Italianate Domestic Architecture in New Orleans, 1850-1880,” Ph.D. diss., Tulane University, 1975. Although it is not certain that Heiman designed Belmont, he did design later remodeling and additions. As the most prominent architect working in Nashville at the time the house was built, he would have been a likely choice.

Belmont was surrounded by plantations belonging to Adelia's family but it was not itself a plantation house. Rather, it was country villa of the type described and popularized by the American architect Andrew Jackson Downing in his 1850 book *The Architecture of Country Houses*.²⁵ According to Downing,

The villa, or country house proper... is the most refined home of America—the home of its most leisurely and educated class of citizens. Nature and art both lend it their happiest influence. Amid the serenity and peace of sylvan scenes, surrounded by the perennial freshness of nature, enriched without and within by objects of universal beauty and interest—objects that touch the heart and awaken the understanding—it is in such a house that we should look for the happiest social and moral development of our people.²⁶

Like the picturesque mansions built by New York merchants and industrialists along the Hudson River, Belmont seemed to offer a haven from the world of labor. Unlike Fairview, the working Tennessee plantation house where Adelia had lived with her first husband, Belmont was a whimsical retreat, situated far from the Acklens' slave-worked Louisiana and Texas cotton fields. Although the Acklens initially intended Belmont to be a summer home, by the late 1850s the family was spending nine months of every year there.²⁷

As Downing and other nineteenth-century writers on domestic architecture argued, the successful country house functioned as a simulacrum for its owners, expressing their "habits, education, tastes and manners," as well as their moral

²⁵ Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1859). Downing recommended the Italianate style as most suitable for villas in "the middle and southern states." See 264-5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 258.

²⁷ At this time, the Acklens were still not planning to make Belmont their primary residence. Rather, they were planning to build an even larger house in Louisiana. Mark Brown e-mail to the author, 1 April 2006.

character.²⁸ Thus, Belmont's symmetry was intended to suggest rectitude and common sense while its proximity to nature revealed sentiment and deep feeling. Even the name Belmont, which the Acklens took from Shakespeare's play *A Merchant of Venice*, is self-referential. In the play, Belmont is the villa belonging to Portia, a wise and virtuous heiress. When Portia marries the noble but impoverished Leonides, she bestows her great wealth upon him and vows absolute submission to his will—a vow which doesn't prevent her from subsequently disguising herself as a lawyer and successfully defending her husband's friend in court. The name Belmont created a concrete link between the villa and Adelia herself, whose recent demonstration of legal prowess in the Franklin will case had made her and her second husband very wealthy.

As Belmont's similarity to the model home in *Godey's* and the idealized country houses described by Downing makes clear, the Acklens' villa was also conceived as an ideal domestic space. Whereas, in the North, the rhetoric of domesticity focused on the nuclear family, Southern domestic ideology placed a greater emphasis on extended family and social relations.²⁹ When Belmont became the Acklens' primary residence, they added two wings and a long "grand salon" along the back. These large interior spaces made it possible for the family to offer the expansive hospitality that was an integral part of the Southern domestic ideal. William Ackland later recalled both the extravagant parties his mother hosted at Belmont and the almost constant presence of house guests. "Relatives came with servants and children for indefinite stays—often

²⁸ Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 261-2.

²⁹ Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress*, 36-39.

weeks at a time... There was always a welcome so long as there was a vacant bed or seat at the table and it was never known before hand how many would be seated at meals.³⁰

Frances Walsh, the director of the convent school that Sally Acklen attended in the early 1860s, recalled that the mansion, “comprised the leading characteristics of the old southern home, spacious with appointments adapted to generous hospitality, but it surpassed them all in expensive ornamentation.”³¹ Although Walsh noted disapprovingly that Belmont’s extravagant décor lent it an air of “oriental luxury,” Adelicia and Joseph Acklen probably viewed their art, furniture and other domestic embellishments as perfectly in line with the stipulations of writers like Downing, who insisted the ideal house be “enriched without and within by objects of universal beauty and interest... that touch the heart and awaken the understanding.” Even Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, writing for a middle-class audience, stressed that, “the aesthetic element... contributes much to the education of the entire household in refinement, intellectual development and moral sensibility.”³² Because of the emphasis domestic writers placed on décor as a beneficial moral influence, homeowners like the Acklens could display their wealth and good taste while simultaneously demonstrating proper domestic behavior.³³

³⁰ Kiser, “Scion of Belmont, Part I,” 42.

³¹ Mother Frances Walsh, “The Annals of St. Cecilia Convent, 1860-1888,” MS, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files, Nashville, Tenn., 33.

³² Catharine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman’s Home*, chap. 6, <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/mrwmh10.txt> (accessed 10 August 2003).

³³ As Clifford Edward Clark, Jr. has written of mid-nineteenth-century domestic architecture in the United States, “The single-family home remained... an indicator of social class, but it now became an even more acceptable form of material indulgence.

Belmont's aura of lavish domesticity was shattered when the house and grounds were occupied by the 4th Union Army Corps in December, 1864. A soldier in the 64th Ohio Volunteer Infantry recalled,

Our line of works here at Nashville were run right through a princely mansion on our company front. The fine lace curtains on gilded windows, with costly upholstery, rich furniture and Brussels carpets, all spoke of great wealth. Our officers occupied the principle rooms for offices.³⁴

A Union officer noted,

We, on the outside [of the villa], were equally well off, for the spacious grounds were surrounded by nicely built stone walls that were worked into chimneys... The ornamental trees did not make first-rate fire wood on account of being green, but we had not time for them to dry, and had to get along with them as best we could.³⁵

Acklen, who had taken refuge with her family and many of her valuables at Mrs. James K. Polk's house in Nashville, returned after the Battle of Nashville to find her home standing but a shambles. She was still so discouraged by its state three months later that she wrote to her brother of her plans to rent it out or turn it into a hotel.³⁶ By June though,

Since the home was promoted by plan-book writers as a form of art and since the function of art was to uplift and inspire, the expenditure of large sums of money to document social status was now entirely legitimate." Clark, *The American Family Home*, 59. Nevertheless, the disapproval of Frances Walsh and a Union officer, John Fitch, who described Belmont as "rather a specialty in the way of extravagance... gothic-ified and starched and bedizened to perfection," show that there was no consensus about what constituted a legitimate display of wealth. Fitch, *Annals of the Army of the Cumberland*, 635.

³⁴ G. W. Lewis, *The Campaigns of the 124th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry, with Roster and Roll of Honor* (Akron, Oh.: Werner Company, 1894), Quoted in Wardin, 2002, 19.

³⁵ Quoted in *ibid.*

³⁶ Transcript of letter from Adelia Acklen to Addison Hayes, 14 March 1865, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files.

when she embarked on her European sojourn, she had decided to stay and renovate the house.

Belmont After the Civil War

Acklen returned to Tennessee determined to reestablish herself as the reigning queen of Nashville society. Within months of her homecoming, Belmont's gardens had been replanted and the house redecorated with new carpets, drapery, wallpaper and furniture. Belmont also contained many more works of art than it had previously. Acklen had the art gallery to the east of the main house torn down and she transferred her extensive collection of paintings to her home, making it resemble, in the words of one visitor, "a house insecurely built of pictures."³⁷ Anne Bolin has argued persuasively that mid-nineteenth-century American viewers understood art's role in domestic interiors to be primarily moralizing and didactic.³⁸ As I have noted, art's ostensible moral influence also allowed wealthy Americans to collect art, and display it prominently, without seeming merely ostentatious. By displaying her art collection in her home, Acklen could argue, she was furthering the moral education of her children. She probably hoped, through her collection of paintings, sculpture and *objets d'art*, to inflect Belmont's magnificence with an atmosphere of refined domesticity.

In December, 1866 Acklen held a reception at Belmont for the Alabama socialite and saloniste Octavia Le Vert which was attended by several hundred guests. A reporter

³⁷ Yelverton, vol.1, 251.

³⁸ Anne McNair Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 2000.

for the *Nashville Union* referred to it as “one of the most princely and brilliant occasions of the character ever enjoyed in this region.”³⁹ The Le Vert reception marked Belmont’s reopening and Acklen’s reentry onto the Nashville social scene; however, Acklen found that merely demonstrating her wealth, taste and sumptuous hospitality was not enough to restore her to the good graces of her neighbors. In fact, the reception may have worked against her purposes. When she began a courtship with a former Confederate general (another member of the extensive Polk family), his family quickly put an end to the match. One of his daughters wrote to her sister, “[Mrs. Acklen] may be a very fine woman for aught I know the contrary, but she is not the sort of woman that would make Father happy... She is a complete woman of the world and very fond of making a display of her wealth which is very parvenuish I think.”⁴⁰ As Dinah Maria Mulock Craik explained in 1859, “to be a ‘woman of the world,’ though not essentially a criminal accusation, implies a state of being not natural ... She is like certain stamped-out bronze ornaments, an admirable imitation of real womanhood—till you walk around her to the other side.”⁴¹ By calling Acklen a “woman of the world,” Sarah Polk Jones implied that she was not a “true woman,” but merely a cheap, hollow imitation.

³⁹ “The Reception at Bellevue [sic],” *Nashville Union*, 20 December 1866: 3.

⁴⁰ Letter from Sarah Rachel Polk Jones to Emily Donelson Polk Williams, 18 February 1867, cited in Wardin, 2002, 27.

⁴¹ Dinah Maria Mulock Craik, *A Woman’s Thoughts on Women* (New York: Rudd & Carleton, 1859), 199-201.

In the wake of the war, the ideal of “true womanhood” became more powerful than ever in the South.⁴² According to George Rable, elite Southern women worked to keep the ideal alive so that they could maintain their social standing in the unstable, post-war world.⁴³ LeeAnn Whites has argued that Southern women also wanted to soothe the wounded masculinity of defeated Confederate soldiers. By accepting (at least outwardly) an image of themselves as fragile and dependent, they allowed Southern men to once again define themselves as strong and capable.⁴⁴ Women’s loyalty to the antebellum feminine ideal became an outward sign of their enduring loyalty to the Southern cause. In order to mend her reputation in the fraught atmosphere of post-war Tennessee, Acklen would have to demonstrate her conformity to the ideal of true Southern womanhood. To this end, she carefully assembled a collection of ideal sculptures that celebrated feminine virtue, submissiveness, motherly affection, piety and repentance.

It is very unlikely that all five (if any) of the marble statues Acklen purchased during her trip to Europe and New York would have been installed in time for the Le Vert reception; however, several were likely in place by the time she celebrated her wedding to Dr. William Cheatham, a respected Nashville physician, six months later.⁴⁵

⁴² See especially Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention; Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). Faust argues that Southern women themselves were primarily responsible for the conservative construction of post-bellum femininity in the South.

⁴³ George Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

⁴⁴ LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995).

⁴⁵ Although Dr. Cheatham was not a veteran, he had served the Confederacy with distinction during the war. His first wife, who was accused of being a Confederate spy,

Once installed in her home, they marked her as a person of means and taste, and they also reinforced her identity as a “true woman” (an identity which was, of course, further reinforced by her marriage). A biographical sketch of Acklen that appeared in Elizabeth Ellet’s 1867 book *The Queens of American Society* reveals the sculptures’ importance to her new persona. More than half of the four page sketch is taken up with a description of Belmont, which the author describes as both a “princely abode,” and “a home full of the sanctities of love.” After noting that the new Mrs. Cheatham was “the light of this abode,” and “the pride and joy of her husband,” Ellet went on to describe all five of her ideal statues in their domestic settings.⁴⁶ This biography was, in essence, written by Acklen herself. In an 1866 letter to Acklen, Octavia LeVert wrote, “This morning’s post brought me your note of April 26 in the same envelope of the sketch. It contains all the items Mrs. Ellet requires to write a Biographical sketch of you... She drapes these in her own language, making [them] entirely her own.”⁴⁷ Through her description of her house and her sculpture collection, Acklen propagated an image of herself as both regal and domestic.

Visitors approached Belmont’s south-facing front entrance by climbing a flight of stairs up from a circular front drive. The drive is positioned between the house and its sloping lawn, which was laid out in three circular gardens terminating with the

had died in a Union prison, and his brother-in-law was the Confederate General John Hunt Morgan.

⁴⁶ Ellet, *The Queens of American Society*, 417-420.

⁴⁷ Transcript of letter from Octavia LeVert to Adelia Acklen, 4 May 1867, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files. Although it does not bear directly on this study, Acklen and LeVert’s friendship, which was warm and mutually beneficial, throws light on the ways elite women worked together to maintain their social standing in the post-bellum South.

conservatory and water tower several hundred yards to the south. The recessed entrance was flanked by marble urns, cast iron lions and a pair of white Corinthian columns.

The entrance hall of Belmont is a square room measuring 20 x 20'. Its walls were papered with a design of alternating flowers and vertical stripes, and the floor covered with a flowered Brussels carpet. Directly before visitors as they passed through the front door was a life-size version of Randolph Rogers' first ideal sculpture, *Ruth Gleaning* atop an octagonal green and white marble pedestal (fig.41). Just to the left was William Rinehart's similarly life-size *Sleeping Children* (fig.42). Other marble figures on display included a *Sleeping Cupid*, copied after a sculpture by the Flemish artist Laurent Delvaux (1695-1778), and statuettes of *Atalanta Adjusting her Robes*, *Venus Stepping into her Bath* and *St. John*. On the west wall, above the *Sleeping Children*, was a large portrait of Adelia Acklen with her daughter Emma Franklin by the Kentucky painter Joseph Henry Bush (1794-1865). Bush's companion portrait of Joseph Acklen hung on the east wall. Through the east doorway, which opened into the library, visitors could probably see a two-thirds scale reduction of Chauncey Bradley Ives' *Rebecca at the Well* (fig.43). Through the opposite doorway, it may have been possible to glimpse Ives' smaller sculpture of a little girl, *Sans Souci* in the central parlor (fig.44). The profusion of sculpture in and around Belmont's entrance hall led one visitor to comment caustically, "I made a most ungraceful entrée over a *Petit Samuel* at prayer on the floor. Fortunately, as we afterwards discovered, there was no one in the room. The negro servant having left us, we groped about for a seat, afraid of sitting on some one's lap or getting impaled on the antlers of a stag."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Yelverton, vol.1, 251-2.

At the back of the entrance hall, directly facing the heavy walnut door, is a white Carara marble fireplace over which hangs a large, three-part, gold-framed mirror, original to the house. On either side of the fireplace are doorways leading north into the central stair hall and, beyond a row of Corinthian columns, to the grand salon at the back of the house. Panels of etched, rose-colored Venetian glass fill the transepts above each of these doorways and frame the south-facing entrance. During daylight hours, a warm, rosy glow streams through the colored glass into the hall. A gasolier hangs from the ceiling in the center of the room and it too originally had shades of colored glass.⁴⁹ It's unlikely, however, that Acklen used it for formal occasions. Gaslight, which was relatively cheap, had become a nearly ubiquitous feature of middle-class homes by the 1860s; however, writers on domestic decoration complained that it was a "common" form of lighting that distorted the appearance of objects in a room and produced an unpleasant odor.⁵⁰ For evening entertainments, Acklen most likely lit Belmont with hundreds of wax candles. The entrance hall would also have been illuminated by the flickering light of a fire on the hearth. Firelight and candlelight in the evening, and rose-tinted sunlight during the day, imparted a life-like warmth and softness to Acklen's white marble sculptures and heightened their impact on visitors.

As Kenneth Ames has discussed, entrance halls had a complex and important function within nineteenth-century homes. They were transitional spaces, mediating between the public, outside world and private domestic interiors. In them, visitors were

⁴⁹ Mark Brown, e-mail to the author, 1 April 2006.

⁵⁰ See Sara Milan, "Refracting the Gasolier."

carefully screened and first impressions made.⁵¹ Although the social practice of paying calls was less rigidly observed in a rural setting, William Ackland recalled that his mother drove to Nashville every morning to pay calls.⁵² She was also “at home” herself to receive calls at one morning or afternoon a week.⁵³ Visitors came frequently to Belmont. Whether they were paying calls during the day or attending an evening dinner or party, the villa’s entry hall provided a space in which for them to wait until they were formally received into the house as guests.

Acklen’s desire to make a good first impression probably explains her placement of so many marble sculptures in and around her entrance hall. Of these, the largest and most significant was the centrally placed *Ruth Gleaning* by Rogers (fig.45). Rogers, a native of Ann Arbor, Michigan, modeled his *Ruth* in Florence in 1851, after completing an apprenticeship with the Italian sculptor Lorenzo Bartolini (1777-1850).⁵⁴ He oversaw the carving of the first marble version in his new studio in Rome in 1852-53. The popularity of *Ruth* as a subject for ideal sculpture in the United States at the time prompted an English critic to complain that American sculptors were afflicted with “*Ruth*

⁵¹ See Ames, *Death in the Dining Room*, 7-43.

⁵² John Kiser, “Scion of Belmont, Part II,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 38 (Spring, 1979): 190.

⁵³ Mark Brown, e-mail to the author, 1 April 2006.

⁵⁴ For three informative discussions of Rogers’ *Ruth*, see Millard F. Rogers Jr., *Randolph Rogers, American Sculptor in Rome*, 13-19; H. Nichols B. Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 206-9; Laurretta Dimmick, “*Ruth Gleaning*,” in Tolles, ed., *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Volume I*, 115-117.

fever.”⁵⁵ Although Rogers was a young, virtually unknown sculptor, his innovative version of the subject quickly became one of the most popular. He sold at least thirty copies of *Ruth Gleaning* in two sizes (life-size and a two-thirds scale reduction).⁵⁶

Formally, Rogers’ models are readily apparent. *Ruth*’s kneeling legs and feet are positioned like those of the much-copied, ancient Roman “Kneeling Venus” (Museo Pio-Clementio, Vatican), and her shoulders, long neck and gracefully upturned head recall several figures by Bartolini, particularly *Faith in God* (1834; Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan). As Nicholas B. Clark has argued, Rogers’ innovation lay in his characteristic ability to capture a fleeting, dramatic moment—in this case the moment when, gazing up from her gleaning, Ruth first beholds her future husband.⁵⁷ So rapt is Ruth’s attention on Boaz that she has unconsciously (or coyly) allowed her robe to slip down over one shoulder, exposing her shoulder and breast. “There is a peculiar expression imparted by her eager eyes and her half-open mouth,” the nineteenth-century critic William B. Clark noted, “as if she were hesitating between hope and fear with regard to the result of her scheme for securing the protection of her rich kinsman.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Florentia, “A Walk Through the Studios of Rome,” *Art Journal* (London), 1 (1 June 1854): 186. Other versions of the subject were modeled by Edward Sheffield Bartholomew, Henry Kirke Brown, Richard Greenough, and Chauncey Bradley Ives.

⁵⁶ The number of copies of *Ruth* Rogers produced is impossible to determine exactly. Accounts listed in Rogers’ journals include mention of thirty-one copies, but his journals do not cover the years before 1868. Dimmick suggests the number was close to fifty, but given *Ruth*’s popularity in the years before 1868, there may have been as many as one hundred copies made. Rogers, 198-9; Dimmick, “Ruth Gleaning,” 115.

⁵⁷ Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 208.

⁵⁸ William J. Clark, Jr. *Great American Sculptors* (Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1876), 75.

When Acklen visited Rogers' studio in 1866, she must have seen several of his later ideal figures, including *Nydia, the Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii*, which he first carved in 1856, and *Merope, the Lost Pleiad*, which he was in the process of modeling (figs.46-47). By the time of her visit, copies of the extremely popular *Nydia* were out-selling copies of *Ruth* by a ratio of two to one.⁵⁹ William B. Clark noted that, though the two sculptures were placed side-by-side in the 1876 centennial exhibition in Philadelphia, "The Ruth... did not attract a tithe of the attention that the Nydia did, and did not awaken a tithe of the admiration."⁶⁰ The fact that Acklen chose the earlier, more conservative sculpture for her home reveals much about her taste and motivations. Executed in a neo-baroque style, both *Nydia* and *Merope* depict active women struggling against their surroundings. Rogers' mature works were so dramatic that one critic complained that he had "sacrificed delicacy to force."⁶¹ The opposite could be said of *Ruth*. With her graceful, downward flowing lines and her face raised in adoring supplication, she appears as soft and pliant as the wheat she holds. Viewers were, like Boas himself, struck by her beauty and impressed by her kind and filial nature.⁶²

Nineteenth-century interpretations of the biblical story of Ruth focused on her submissiveness and virtuous devotion to family—in short, her identity as a "true woman." A poem of 1857 reads, in part,

⁵⁹ Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 202-3.

⁶⁰ Clark, *Great American Sculptors*, 75.

⁶¹ Dr. Samuel Osgood, "American Sculptors in Rome," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 41 (August 1870): 422.

⁶² See for example, S., "American Artists in Florence," *Bulletin of the American Art-Union*, 8 (1 April 1851): 13.

... sweet Ruth among the meadows!
Stay awhile, true heart, and teach us,
Pausing in thy matron beauty,
Care of elders, love of kindred,
All unselfish thought and duty.⁶³

Writing in 1858, the Reverend John Angell James, a popular Congregationalist minister and domestic advice writer, held Ruth up as an example to modern widows, urging them to follow in her footsteps by submitting to God's will and rejecting worldly pursuits in favor of domestic devotions.⁶⁴ Rogers' presentation of Ruth is very much in line with such interpretations. Noting that versions of Rogers' sculpture "adorn some of the most tasteful American homes," Earl Shinn emphasized *Ruth's* aura of sweet femininity and noted its capacity to elicit pious thoughts in the viewer.

The lovely Moabite, "heart-sick amid the alien corn," kneels to Boaz on the barley-field of that good Jew. Across her arm lies a handful of ripened ears, and she looks up half desolate and half hopeful, as his words of kindness fall upon her wistful ear... Let not the visitor, who pauses in admiration before this fair marble, forget that Ruth is especially interesting as the only heathen woman introduced into the ancestry of Christ!⁶⁵

It's hardly surprising that Acklen, who had herself been accused of sacrificing delicacy to force, should have chosen *Ruth* rather than *Nydia* or *Merope* to be the first impression visitors received upon crossing her threshold. Positioned symbolically before a hearth and bathed in warm, rosy light, *Ruth* invited sympathy and admiration. The rotating base on which the sculpture rests also invited viewers to interact with it. Using

⁶³ "Ruth," *The Living Age*, 53 (4 April 1857): 351.

⁶⁴ John Angell James, *The Widow Directed to the Widow's God* (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1858): 113-5.

⁶⁵ Edward Strahan [Earl Shinn], *The Masterpieces of the Centennial International Exhibition Illustrated*, vol.1 (Philadelphia: Gebbie & Barrie, 1876), 127-8.

the handle that projects from the base at *Ruth*'s feet, a viewer can easily turn the figure this way and that, admiring the play of light across its surface and adding a dynamic, temporal dimension to its composition. Such bases, which were common accoutrements for ideal sculpture by the 1860s, contradict Joy Kasson's contention that ideal statues faded passively into the background of the domestic interiors that housed them.⁶⁶

Ruth also invited male viewers to place themselves in the position of Boaz—*Ruth*'s patron and protector. Like *Ruth*, Boaz was idealized in nineteenth-century, sentimental literature. For instance, Gail Hamilton wrote a novelized *Book of Ruth* in which Boaz appears as a "gentleman... whose bearing toward the lovely Moabite widow was the true courtly politeness which would have dignified a prince." Not surprisingly, a reviewer in *Godey's Lady's Book* presented this novel as a potential "home lesson" to American laborers.⁶⁷

To the right of *Ruth*, through the doorway to the library, stood Chauncey Ives' *Rebecca at the Well*, modeled in 1854 (fig.43). Like Rogers, Ives first served an apprenticeship in Florence before setting up a studio in Rome in 1851.⁶⁸ By the time Acklen visited his studio early in 1866, he was one of the most popular American sculptors in Italy. Henry Tuckerman noted that, "Mr. Ives is well-known in New York through several fine works of classic statuary which adorn some of her most elegant

⁶⁶ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 23-25. I am grateful to Christopher Johns for alerting me to this common feature of nineteenth-century sculpture.

⁶⁷ "Summer Reading," *Godey's Lady's Book* (August 1865): 174.

⁶⁸ For biographical information about Ives, see Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 582-3; Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 98-121; *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 26-9.

private mansions.”⁶⁹ A partial list of Ives commissions, drawn from his studio book, reveals that his popularity extended to all parts of the country.⁷⁰ Both of the sculptures Acklen ordered from Ives were listed among his most important works in a guidebook published for American travelers in Europe in 1865.⁷¹

A correspondent for the *London Daily News*, who saw the sculpture in Ives’ studio, described *Rebecca at the Well* as “full of grace and beauty.”⁷² When a copy was exhibited in New York in 1860, a critic for the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* wrote that the sculpture was, “full of tenderness and grace, but earnest, calm and sustained as a queen.”⁷³ As previously noted in relation to Hiram Powers’ *Proserpine*, calm was a much prized quality in ideal female figures, particularly in the decades before the Civil War. To nineteenth-century viewers, calm communicated refinement, self-mastery and unshakeable religious faith. Ives expressed these qualities in his sculpture in several ways. Rebecca’s head is turned to her left, and her face is tilted in a listening attitude. Though attentive, her expression is relaxed, as is her posture. Leaning against the stack of stones which Ives used to signify a well, Rebecca stands at ease. Her right hand holds an empty water jug propped on the lip of the well, while her left hand pulls her skirt back

⁶⁹ Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 582.

⁷⁰ Transcript of Chauncey Bradley Ives’ Studio Book, MS, curatorial files, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

⁷¹ William Pembroke Fetridge, *The American Traveler’s Guide* (New York: Fetridge & Co., 1866), 569.

⁷² Quoted in “Rome,” *The Living Age* 53 (4 April 1857): 62.

⁷³ “Masters of Art and Literature: Chauncey B. Ives,” *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, 4, no.44 (1860): 164.

from her extended right leg in a gesture that suggests the beginning of a curtsy. Ives, who lacked Rogers' skill with the figure, struggled with Rebecca's contrapposto pose, and her chunky legs extend awkwardly from her short-skirted robe; nevertheless, *Rebecca* radiates a dignified calm that is remarkable considering the startling, life-altering news she is supposedly receiving.

Like *Ruth*, Ives' *Rebecca* looks up to face her future husband—not in person but in the guise of his emissary, sent to fetch her away from home and family. In *Rebecca*, as in Powers' *Proserpine*, a girl's loss of her natal home serves to underline the strength of her attachment to her family, and to her mother in particular. In his *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Women from the Bible* of 1851, the Congregationalist minister Phineas Camp Headley gave Rebecca's story a sentimental inflection by describing how the girl "hung upon her mother's neck in tears" upon receiving the news of her betrothal. Nevertheless, Headley related, "[Rebecca] was prepared by a higher communion than that with kindred, and the heroism of cheerful piety, to answer unhesitatingly, 'I will go.'" ⁷⁴ Like Headley, Ives made Rebecca's sacrifice more poignant by portraying her as an adolescent girl. By giving her a calm and dignified demeanor, he emphasized her piety and selfless heroism.

Popular, evangelical writers like James and Headley used sentimental retellings of old testament stories to demonstrate, "God's eternal purpose borne onwards by the unostentatious incidents of a touching domestic scene."⁷⁵ In this way, they sacralized the

⁷⁴ C. Headley, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Women in the Bible, from Eve of the Old to Mary of the New Testament* (Auburn, New York: Derby, Miller and Co., 1851), 52-4.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

domestic sphere and the activities that occurred within it. A writer for *Godey's Lady's Book* reminded readers in 1842 that, "Rebecca was performing a household service, filling her pitcher at the well, when she was met by the pious servant of Abraham; and in that simple act of kindness, 'Drink, I pray thee, and I will draw water that thy camels may drink also,' she was unconsciously fulfilling an appointment of the Lord."⁷⁶ As Colleen McDannell has argued, middle and upper-class American women embraced this vision of the home and their domestic duties because it conferred a ministerial authority upon them.⁷⁷ By following in the footsteps of evangelical authors, sculptors like Rogers and Ives catered to the tastes of American women, who comprised a significant share of their patron base. Their idealized depictions of biblical heroines were perfectly suited to ornament Christian homes. Not only did such sculptures purportedly exert a positive moral influence on the family, they also publicly affirmed their owners' piety and confirmed the sacred role of women within the household. Acklen made *Rebecca's* educational role explicit by displaying the sculpture near a painting, now lost, which depicted "a child dreaming; an angel with a hand in hers is beckoning her toward heaven with the other hand."⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Mrs. S. E. Farley, "Domestic and Social Claims on Women," *Godey's Lady's Book* 24 (March 1842): 148.

⁷⁷ Colleen McDannell, *The Christian Home in Victorian America*, xiv-x.

⁷⁸ Mark Brown and John Lancaster, "Catalog of Artwork at Belmont," MS, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files, Nashville, Tenn., no.9.

Ruth and *Rebecca*'s tranquil, submissive acceptance of their changed circumstances also echoed the behavior attributed to "true women" in the South in the wake of the Civil War. An 1866 editorial in the *Nashville Union* reads, in part,

As a general rule, Southern women have accepted the strange and onerous duties imposed upon them by a new condition of things with a quiet, uncomplaining dignity—there has been little outcry or complaint, no impotent railing against adverse destiny, no eating of dust and rending of garments under the feet of the conquerors, nor any act, hidden or overt, which could cast remotest reproach upon the memory of those whose dust they delight to honor.⁷⁹

By displaying biblical figures embodying contemporary feminine ideals, Acklen presented these ideals as divinely ordained and expressed her solidarity with them. Viewed together in their domestic setting, the sculptures *Ruth* and *Rebecca* framed Acklen as a virtuous Southern wife and widow.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ "What Shall We Do for Servants?" *Nashville Union*, 4 October 1866: 3.

⁸⁰ The smaller female figures Acklen exhibited in her entrance hall complemented the ideal presented by *Ruth* and *Rebecca*. Acklen's marble statuette of *Atalanta Adjusting her Robes*, copied after an ancient Roman original in the Louvre, embodies a narrative drawn from Greek mythology rather than the bible. In the myth, Atalanta is warned by the oracle at Delphi never to marry. In order to avoid her suitors, she becomes the fastest of runners and sets the following terms: any man who wishes to wed her must outrun her; any man whom she outruns will be put to death. Though no man can match Atalanta's speed, Hippomenes eventually outwits her. While he is racing, he distracts her by throwing three golden apples (gifts from Aphrodite) across her path. Drawn by their beauty, Atalanta stops to pick each one up, unwittingly allowing Hippomenes to win. In the statue, the yet unwed Atalanta loosens her clothing as she prepares to race. Unlike *Ruth* and *Rebecca*, she neither seeks marriage nor submits to it passively, yet she is unable to resist the power of romantic love or escape her conjugal fate. The exact original location of *Atalanta* within Belmont's entrance hall is unknown, but a stereograph by Giers shows a statuette of *Venus Stepping into her Bath*, copied after a late eighteenth-century sculpture by the Swiss artist John Niklas Bystrom, resting on a marble-topped umbrella stand, just beneath Bush's portrait of Adelia Acklen. There, it created an obvious visual parallel between Acklen and the Roman goddess of beauty and romantic love.

In Rome, Acklen also purchased two American marble sculptures of children which, if not ideal by Kasson's definition of the term, are certainly idealized. To the left of *Ruth*, against the west wall of the entrance hall, was William Rinehart's most popular work, *Sleeping Children* (fig.48). Also to the left, through the entrance to the central parlor, was Chauncey Ives' sculpture of a blithely reclining little girl, *Sans Souci*. These figures, and the many other images of children that adorned Belmont's interior, were part of a rich, mid-nineteenth-century visual culture that constructed childhood as a carefree period of angelic innocence—a construction which, like the ideal of the “true woman,” contributed to an idealized vision of domestic life.⁸¹

Rinehart, who began his career carving grave stones in Baltimore, modeled the first version of *Sleeping Children* in 1859 as a grave marker for the twin children of a patron. He subsequently sold at least nineteen copies of the sculpture to Americans who visited his studio in Rome. Some of these were probably also used as grave markers but many were, like Acklen's, displayed in domestic interiors.⁸² The sculpture depicts two sleeping, curly-headed infants nestled together on a little bed, half covered with a blanket. To enhance the illusion of a bed, Acklen covered the pedestal with drapery. One child has thrown an arm around the other, and rests its head on its companion's shoulder. The babies' plump faces are relaxed and peaceful. Rinehart told prospective patrons that the models were the children of a friend, who had been brought to his studio every afternoon

⁸¹ Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998).

⁸² See William Sener Rusk, *William Henry Rinehart, Sculptor* (Baltimore: Norman T. A. Munder, 1939), 68-9; Marvin Chauncey Ross and Anna Wells Rutledge, *A Catalogue of the Work of William Henry Rinehart Maryland Sculptor, 1825-1874* (Baltimore: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, 1948), 33-35.

for their nap so that he could model them. In Rinehart's story, the children contracted "Roman fever" but both got well.⁸³ Despite this reassuring narrative, it's clear that he made sleep a gentle metaphor for death in his sculpture. In her 1875 memoir about her travels through Italy ten years earlier, Sallie Brock referred to *Sleeping Children* as "a pair of reclining twin babes intended for a tomb."⁸⁴

Acklen made the connection between sleep and death overt in her own version of *Sleeping Children* by having the names of her deceased twin daughters, Laura and Corinne, carved onto the base along with the words "twin sisters." Six of her ten children had died in the space of ten years—an uncommon figure even at a time when roughly one out of three children did not survive to adulthood.⁸⁵ The emotional and psychological impact of such repeated losses must have been profound. In 1855, a month after her two-year-old twins died of scarlet fever two weeks apart, Acklen wrote to a friend:

I should have written you soon after our return to the Plantation but for my afflictions have been sore—even now at times, it seems a terrible dream to me—and when I ask, Can it be? Is it so? That those dear lovely little ones are to gladden my sight no more in this life? Their little arms no more to twine around my neck, nor their sweet prattle to delight my ears? Oh, too sad comes the conviction that it is so. How lone and desolate feels the mother's heart.⁸⁶

⁸³ Rusk, *William Henry Rinehart*, 68-9.

⁸⁴ Sallie A. Brock, "My Souvenirs—Buchanan, Read, Rinehart, Powers," *Appleton's Journal*, 14 (7 July 1875): 78.

⁸⁵ For the period 1850-1880, the mortality rate for white children in the United States hovered between 32% and 35%. This percentage was slightly higher in urban areas and in the South. Mortality rates for black children are difficult to estimate but were almost certainly much higher. Michael R. Haines, "Estimated Life Tables for the United States, 1850-1910," 149-69.

⁸⁶ Letter from Adelia Acklen to Mrs. John Heiss, February 1855, quoted in Elaeonor Graham, "Belmont: Nashville Home of Adelia Acklen," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 30 (1971): 358.

When Acklen's brother, Oliver Hayes, lost an infant son ten years later, Acklen wrote to him:

...only think how much better to loose a son in infancy than after grown and entering upon the threshold of life. Our Heavenly Father ordereth all things well and wisely. My dear Oliver, do bear with Christian resignation your affliction and cheer up Emily and inspire her with fortitude... I can sympathize with you as not many others can. But you will find, dear bother, that nothing can comfort us at such a time or sustain us but the arm of the Almighty and his precious promises.⁸⁷

As Terri Sabatos has pointed out, grieving nineteenth-century parents often displayed images of sleeping children in their homes to reassure themselves that their loss was, like sleep, only temporary.⁸⁸ Such images also reassured parents of their dead children's spiritual wellbeing. Acklen's assertion that it is better to loose a child in infancy relates to the common nineteenth-century belief that young children, being sinless, were assured of salvation. To make this point explicit, Acklen displayed a painting by Robert Gschwindt titled *The Twins: their Resurrection* in the adjoining central parlor. Although the painting is now lost, it was quite large (5 x 7') and depicted a pair of twins (possibly posthumous portraits of Laura and Corinne) ascending into heaven on judgment day. Rinehart's sculpture is more subtle but makes essentially the same point. *Sleeping Children* is a highly idealized image. The beautiful, healthy, happy children it depicts are not dead, nor do they suffer. They merely sleep until they can rejoin their family in heaven.

At a time when the loss of a child was a nearly universal experience, few visitors to Belmont would have missed the symbolism of Rinehart's sculpture. That sentimental

⁸⁷ Letter from Adelia Acklen to Oliver Hayes, ca.1865, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files.

⁸⁸ Terri Sabatos, "Images of Death and Domesticity in Victorian Britain," 237-39.

viewers recognized, and were deeply touched by such images is evident from the poem, “Lines Suggested by the Sight of a Beautiful Statue of a Dead Child,” published in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* in 1834. Coming upon a life-like statue of a sleeping child, the writer laments, “I see thee in thy beauty! As I saw thee on that day--/ But the mirth that gladdened then thy home, fled with thy life away./ I see thee lying motionless, upon th’ accustomed floor--/ My heart hath blinded both mine eyes—and I can see no more!”⁸⁹

The same stereograph that shows the statuette of *Venus Stepping into her Bath* in Acklen’s entrance hall also shows *Sleeping Children* on its cloth-draped pedestal beneath Bush’s portrait of Acklen. In the portrait, Acklen holds the hand of another deceased daughter, Emma Franklin, who appears to be about two years old. This depiction of Acklen in a tender, maternal role defined her relationship to the sleeping figures below. While the near-by statuette of *Venus* alluded to her charm and beauty, *Sleeping Children* showed her to be a fond and faithful Christian mother.

It’s worth noting that Acklen’s copy of Laurent Delvaux’s (1696-1778) eighteenth-century sculpture *Sleeping Cupid*, which shows the Greek god as a life-size, supine, chubby infant using a quiver of arrows as a pillow, was also displayed in Acklen’s front hall. While images of Cupid sleeping traditionally symbolize the triumph of spiritual over carnal love, Acklen’s placement of Delvaux’s sculpture so close to Rinehart’s *Sleeping Children* added another layer of meaning to the work. In this context,

⁸⁹ “Lines Suggested by the Sight of a Beautiful Statue of a Dead Child,” *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 8 (September 1834): 123.

the sculpture may have alluded to Acklen's first child who, like his sisters, had died in infancy.⁹⁰

Of Ives' sculpture *Sans Souci* (or "Carefree"), Henry Tuckerman wrote, "...it represents a little girl with open book clasped listlessly in one hand, while the other is thrown over her curly head, and she casts back her lithe frame in the very attitude of childish *abandon*, the smile and posture alike expressive of innocence and *naïve* enjoyment." He concluded that the figure was, "remarkably adapted to ornament a drawing room."⁹¹ Ives modeled the *Sans Souci* in 1863 and made at least twenty-two copies, of which Acklen's was the fifth.⁹² Although the sculpture is life-size, it apparently did not require reinforcements below the floor. Therefore, its precise original location is unknown; however, an 1881 article that appeared in the Louisville *Courier Journal* lists *Sans Souci* as one of the artworks in Belmont's central parlor. The author's description reads succinctly, "perfect abandon of a child."⁹³

Ives' sculpture is one of many images of happy, carefree, rural children produced by American artists during or just after the Civil War. As Sarah Burns has argued, such images constructed a nostalgic vision of childhood as a golden age, hermetically sealed off from the adult world of toil and worry.⁹⁴ The little girl Ives modeled is barefoot and

⁹⁰ I am grateful to John Lancaster for this insight.

⁹¹ Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 582-3.

⁹² Transcript of Chauncey Bradley Ives' Studio Book, MS, Metropolitan Museum of Art Curatorial Files.

⁹³ O.O.S., "A Lovely Spot," re-printed in Wardin, 1981, 28.

⁹⁴ Sarah Burns, *Pastoral Inventions: Rural Life in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 297-337.

minimally dressed. Though she doesn't throw one arm behind her head as Tuckerman remembered, she does stretch out to savor the feel of implied sunlight and a breeze, indicated by her windblown drapery and hair. Her posture and forgotten book suggest that she is shirking her studies and, by extension, the onset of adult responsibility. Like the children in Ives related sculptures *Boy Holding a Dove* (modeled 1847; Chrysler Museum of Art) and *The Truant* (1871; Henry Luce III Center for the Study of American Culture), she enjoys an affinity with nature that is pure, unmediated and sensual.

Sans Souci is so evocative of the sun-warmed countryside that Tuckerman's description of it as "remarkably adapted to ornament a drawing room" seems surprising, as does Acklen's choice to display the sculpture in the relative gloom of her central parlor. The sculpture's placement becomes more understandable, however, when one considers the function and symbolic significance of a nineteenth-century parlor. Within the home, the parlor was both a private space shared by members of a family and a semi-public space used to entertain guests. Because of its double role, visitors understood that a parlor's arrangement and décor revealed much about the private, domestic life of a family. Acklen's central parlor was one of five possible sitting rooms at Belmont by 1866, but its generous size (18 x 27 1/2') and position near the front of the house (between the entrance hall and the grand salon) made it accessible and frequently used. Despite Belmont's size and grandeur, the central parlor's décor mirrored that of many middle-class American parlors. The room's walls were hung with genre scenes and family portraits. Its Brussels carpet, woven into a profusion of roses, referred to the natural world. Its piano, rococo revival center table and marble mantle were adorned with

albums, wax flowers, figurines and souvenirs, all of which spoke of the family's tastes, history and travels. As Katherine Grier has argued, the parlor was the symbolic heart of the nineteenth-century home. More than any other room, it expressed its occupants' refinement and symbolized the domestic function of the house as a whole.⁹⁵

The care and protection of children was, arguably, a home's most important function in the minds of middle and upper-class Americans during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In an 1860 editorial simply titled "Children," the editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, Sarah Hale, described her niece's home as an ideal to be emulated by her readers:

What a delightful home theirs is! My niece and nephew have a theory that all this management so much talked of is not needed, so they manage the children as little as possible, leaving Nature to form their shades of character... The children are allowed great freedom, and romp through the house, upsetting a chair here and scattering a few toys there, and making the old walls ring again with their shouts of laughter and merry songs. Mother and father are their companions, as well as mentors, and are always welcome at their sports.⁹⁶

Acklen's son later recalled that his mother embraced this Romantic view of child rearing—a view also expressed in *Sans Souci*.⁹⁷ Home often appeared in late nineteenth-century art and domestic rhetoric as a protected haven where childish innocence and freedom could be preserved from the cares of the adult world, and where (as the passage quoted above suggests) even adults could loose themselves in carefree play. By placing *Sans Souci* in her parlor, Acklen (who had three young children living at home) presented

⁹⁵ Katherine C. Grier, *Culture and Comfort*, 89. See also Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlor*.

⁹⁶ Sarah Josepha Hale, "Children," *Godey's Lady's Book* 60 (Mach 1860): 272.

⁹⁷ Kiser, "Scion of Belmont, Part I," 40-2.

her home as just such a haven, and invested both it and herself with an aura of sentimental domesticity.

Acklen's largest and most elaborate ideal sculpture was a nude, standing, winged figure by Joseph Mozier, *The Peri*, which she displayed in Belmont's grand salon (figs.49-51). Near the center of the room, standing eight feet high on its pedestal, the sculpture presided over nearly all of Acklen's most important social functions. The subject is taken from the Irish poet Thomas Moore's 1817 poem "Lallah Rook." A story within the poem tells of a peri, or fallen angel, who longs to return to Heaven. After several failed attempts to re-enter paradise, she is at last admitted when she brings the correct gift to the guardian of the celestial gates—the tears of a repentant sinner. Mozier's sculpture depicts the peri standing in a graceful contrapposto pose, her slightly upturned face transfixed by an expression of joyful reverence. With her open right hand, she presents the sinner's tears, while her left hand holds a goblet—a reference to one of her earlier gifts, a cup containing the blood of a patriotic hero. Her wings, which extend down past her knees, are folded behind her like a mandorla. Although *The Peri* is both voluptuous and completely unclothed, Mozier followed nineteenth-century academic conventions for the depiction of the female nude by omitting genitalia and body hair. The smoothness and whiteness of the marble lent *The Peri* a chaste, spiritual air that, as Hiram Powers famously argued, made nudity permissible in ideal sculpture. Inscribed on the pedestal are the words from Moore's poem, "Joy! Joy forever. My task is done. The gate is crossed and heaven is won."

Acklen examined an array of American ideal sculpture before choosing *The Peri* for her grand salon. Her son William, who accompanied her on visits to sculptors'

studios, recalled that she visited Hiram Powers' studio in Florence and looked at his standing nudes the *Greek Slave* and *California*.⁹⁸ This suggests that Acklen may have wanted to purchase a nude female figure specifically. In recounting the visit to Powers' studio, William Ackland recalled at length his elders' reverence for the *Greek Slave* (fig.1). Though Powers' most celebrated sculpture was somewhat out of date by 1865 (it had been modeled more than twenty years earlier), it clearly still held power for Acklen, and she was keenly aware of its capacity to move and subdue an audience. Although she didn't purchase a copy of the *Greek Slave*, she probably wanted to achieve a similar effect.⁹⁹

In 1866, female nudes were still relatively rare subjects for American sculptors, who were cautious not to offend their patrons' sensibilities. Acklen would also have seen Powers' early work, *Eve Tempted* (modeled 1842; National Museum of American Art), and she may have seen his *Eve Disconsolate* (modeled 1859-61; Cincinnati Art Museum) in plaster, although no marble version of this work existed until 1871. When she visited Chauncey Ives' studio in Rome, she would have seen his second version of *Pandora* (modeled 1864; Detroit Institute of Art), which he had recently completed in marble. She would also have seen Rinehart's *Thetis* (modeled 1861; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston), and possibly the model for his *Hero* (modeled c.1865; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine

⁹⁸ Ibid., 54-5.

⁹⁹ Powers appears to have actually discouraged Acklen from purchasing a *Greek Slave*. According to William Ackland, the sculptor related that the slave's hair had been "much criticized," and steered Acklen instead toward his more recent work *California* of 1855. See *ibid.*, 55. This is not surprising in light of Powers' assessment of *California* "as a work of art... much superior to the Greek Slave." Letter from Powers to M. M. Holloway, 23 September 1862, quoted in *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 20.

Arts), which had not yet been executed in marble. In the end, Acklen's choice was probably determined by several factors, including the sculpture's cost, the expected time for its completion and delivery, its theme, and its aesthetic appeal.

Mozier's personality appears to have had little impact on Acklen's decision to purchase *The Peri*. After abandoning a successful career as a New York dry goods merchant, he had taken the usual path to Rome, joining the colony of American sculptors there in 1850 after having first studied in Florence (Mozier served a brief apprenticeship with Hiram Powers rather than with an Italian sculptor). William Ackland remembered him as a "shrewd loquacious Yankee" who "was generally thought rather tiresome."¹⁰⁰ Still, Mozier had several crucial advantages over his competitors. First, *The Peri* was probably less expensive than a comparable work by Powers, Ives or Rinehart, because Mozier was considered to be less accomplished. Although he was prolific, critics were usually reserved in their appraisals of his work, and he never achieved the first rank of American ideal sculptors. Second, *The Peri* had the rare allure of being a unique marble figure, at least for a short while. Acklen appears to have purchased the first of only two copies.¹⁰¹ Third, Mozier had a version of *The Peri* available for purchase. Although an

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 54. Ackland's assessment of Mozier jibes with that of Nathaniel Hawthorne, who compared him to "a country shopkeeper in the interior of New York or New England" who, though "keen and clever," "lacked refinement. See Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 1980, 153-4.

¹⁰¹ A second marble version of *The Peri* was sold at Mozier's posthumous studio auction in 1873. This version was purchased by William H. Webb, a New York ship builder. When Webb emigrated with his family to Australia three years later, a Mr. Carter purchased the sculpture from his estate sale. Its current location is unknown. See "Art: The Mozier Marbles," *New York Tribune*, 14 March 1873: 2; "The Webb Collection," *Brooklyn Eagle*, 27 March 1876: 2; "Sale of Celebrated Statuary," *New York Times*, 31 March 1876: 2.

1873 article claimed that *The Peri* had been executed to order for Acklen, this could not have been the case.¹⁰² Her version of the sculpture was exhibited at the Tenth Street Studio Building in New York in October and November of 1866, making it almost certain that the sculpture was completed, or well under way, by the time Acklen visited Mozier's studio in February, 1866.¹⁰³ Life-size ideal figures generally took at least eighteen months to carve in marble, and several additional months to deliver. Had Acklen contracted for the carving of such a sculpture, she could have waited two years or more for it to arrive in Tennessee.¹⁰⁴

Powers also had a finished sculpture available for purchase at the time Acklen visited him—his second marble copy of *California* (fig.52). Although he tried earnestly to sell Acklen this figure, probably at a reduced rate, she wasn't interested.¹⁰⁵ Most likely,

¹⁰² Rodman J. Sheirr, "Joseph Mozier and his Handiwork," *Potter's American Monthly*, 6 (January 1876): 28.

¹⁰³ For Mozier's 1866 New York exhibition, see "Mozier's Sculpture," *New York Post*, 16 October 1866: 3; "Art Matters," *American Art Journal* 5 (18 October 1866): 408; "Art," *The Round Table* 4 (3 November 1866): 227; "Mozier's Statuary," *New York Post*, 7 November 1866: 1.

¹⁰⁴ The version of Hiram Powers' *California* ordered by John Jacob Astor, Jr. in the Spring of 1855 is an interesting case study. The first four blocks of marble were found to have flaws, forcing Powers and his workmen to abandon them at various stages of completion. Carving of the fifth and final block began in April, 1857 and was completed in August of 1858, but the sculpture was not installed in Astor's home until December, 1858. See Wunder, II, 126. The unpredictable nature of marble carving gave sculptors with completed works available for purchase a distinct advantage; however, sculptors could rarely afford to render a figure in marble unless they were certain it would sell. Mozier's decision to begin a marble version of *The Peri* before he had a definite buyer is a testament to his faith in the sculpture.

¹⁰⁵ This version of *California*, which had been on Powers' hands for five years, was finally purchased in 1867 by Milton S. Latham of California for twelve hundred pounds, three hundred pounds less than Powers' original asking price. *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 20.

it was the sculpture's theme that left her cold. Despite her admiration for Powers, Acklen was simply not interested in owning a feminine allegory of westward expansion., particularly not one that had been described in 1855 as "cunning... sly and cat-like... tempting the colonist on [to disaster] by her own personal charms."¹⁰⁶ *The Peri*'s themes of repentance and longing for admittance into paradise, on the other hand, must have appealed to her immediately. Like Rinehart's *Sleeping Children* and a number of other artworks at Belmont, *The Peri* constructed heaven as a place of long anticipated reunion. Paradise, in Moore's poem, is the peri's true home and her heavenly family waits within. Mozier's sculpture thus contributed to the conflation of heaven and home that was central to nineteenth-century domestic ideology.¹⁰⁷ *The Peri* also mirrored Acklen's determination to be forgiven and readmitted into the good graces of her neighbors.

Several other marble depictions of Moore's fallen angel existed at the time Mozier modeled *The Peri*, sometime in the early 1860s. Erastus Dow Palmer modeled a half-length, sleeping, winged figure which he titled *Sleeping Peri* (1855; Troy Public Library), though no such scene occurs in "Lallah Rook." Thomas Crawford depicted a thoughtful, slender, half-draped angel in his *Peri at the Gates of Paradise* (1855;

¹⁰⁶ "Hiram Powers," *The Living Age* 44 (17 March 1855): 703.

¹⁰⁷ Countless nineteenth-century religious tracts presented heaven as a larger, more elaborate version of a nineteenth-century home, where family members would live together in perfect harmony. See for instance Rev. L. C. Lockwood's song, "Blest Ones at Home" (sung to the tune of Stephen Foster's "Old Folks at Home"), which declares: "O'er the banks of life's pure river,/Far, far away,/ There's where my heart is turning ever,/ There's where the blest ones stay;/ All through this vale of tribulation,/ Sadly I roam;/ Still longing for that habitation,/ And for the Blest ones at Home." Lockwood, "Blest Ones at Home," (New York: Andrew's Printer, c.1860). Home, on the other hand, was often described as heaven in microcosm. See McDannel, 80-83.

Corcoran Gallery of Art). Crawford's peri appealed to the earlier nineteenth-century taste for still, contemplative, emotionally controlled, ideal figures while Mozier's more dramatic, emotive peri conformed to the theatrical figural style that came into vogue during the Civil War. Whereas Crawford's peri meditates mournfully on her banishment, Mozier's peri conveys the ecstasy of salvation.

Reviews of *The Peri* were generally favorable, both during Mozier's 1866 Tenth Street Studio exhibition, and when his second marble version appeared in his posthumous studio auction in New York in 1873. " 'The Peri' is a finely modeled figure, full of expression and well conceived," wrote a critic for the *American Art Journal*, adding humorously, "The Peri, however, is encumbered with a superfluity of tears, Moore having allowed her but one of those 'starry bowls' instead of three."¹⁰⁸ A reviewer for *The Arcadian* noted, "much beauty" in *The Peri*'s "sweeping lines... combined with a certain grandeur that is apt to enchain the spectator."¹⁰⁹ An unidentified 1866 review, clipped from a newspaper and saved by the Acklen family, describes the figure as, "the embodiment of one of those beautiful creations of Tom Moore, with the attributes of the angel—yet human."¹¹⁰ Clarence Cook sounded the only dissenting note, caustically describing Mozier's zaftig angel as, "a robust and well-conditioned spirit, with hardly enough of the spiritual to balance her earthly substance."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ "Art Matters," *American Art Journal* 5 (18 October 1866): 408.

¹⁰⁹ "Fine Arts: The Mozier Statues," *The Arcadian* 1 (20 March 1873): 10.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Kiser, "Scion of Belmont, Part I," 38.

¹¹¹ "Art: The Mozier Marbles," *New York Tribune*, 14 March 1873: 5.

Mozier's large, dramatic *Peri* was well-suited to Acklen's grand salon—the largest and most impressive space in her home. The room, which measures 58 x 31 feet, is separated from the original portion of the house by a row of slender Corinthian columns, and from the courtyard outside by a series of triple-arched, floor to ceiling windows. Three of these windows extend out into a bay that once housed a fountain complete with a life-size, bronze water nymph. The ceiling, separated from the walls by a wide, ornate cornice, is vaulted. The result is a room that is imposing, yet bright and airy.

As Karen Halttunen has argued, by the 1850s domestic culture in the United States was becoming more theatrical. As the “sentimental posture of moral earnestness” that characterized polite, parlor behavior in the 1840s gave way to a culture of unabashed self-display, spaces within private homes became larger and more stage-like.¹¹² The relative simplicity of early nineteenth-century décor blossomed into the exuberant drapery and upholstery, reflective surfaces and rococo ornament that predominated in the fashionable, French Second Empire-inspired interiors of the 1850s and 60s. Ideal sculpture's evolution from thoughtful, self-contained figures to expressive, theatrical heroines followed this shift. Figures like Mozier's *Peri*, Rogers' *Nydia*, Ives' *Undine Receiving her Soul* (modeled c.1859; Yale University Art Gallery) and even Powers' late works *Eve Disconsolate* and *The Last of the Tribes* (modeled 1871; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston), with their dramatic postures and expressions, were able to assert their presence in even the most elaborate setting.

Although Acklen redecorated Belmont in the mid-1860s, her tastes remained true to the prevailing styles of the 1850s. Two extant photographs of Acklen's grand salon

¹¹² Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 153-90.

reveal light colored walls, tapestry rugs over a floor painted to resemble black and white tiles, ornately carved and upholstered armchairs placed here and there, a circular divan, a round parlor table covered with bibelots, and a pedal organ. Among the many framed paintings on the walls were five views of Venice by (or after) Canaletto (1697-1798) a large, sixteenth-century painting of the marriage of Jacob and Rachel, and a painting of Vulcan and Venus. Marble busts, which the Louisville *Courier Journal* described as portraits of Antoninus Pious, Emperor Hadrian, Cicero and Demosthenes, stood on pedestals between the windows. The photographs show Mozier's sculpture beneath an ornate, hanging gasolier. Rather than placing the figure by a wall, Acklen situated it in the center of the room facing the doors leading into the grand salon from the front hall, and the stairs leading up to the second story. Placed as it was, *The Peri* became the first and most striking impression visitors received upon entering the room.

Not only was Acklen's grand salon the site of all her large-scale entertainments, the room was also a kind of theater, stocked with boxes of costumes and props for amateur theatricals and *tableaux vivants*.¹¹³ Such games became wildly popular in the United States in the 1850s and '60s and, as Halttunen notes, were part of a new, broader social practice.¹¹⁴ Middle and upper-class Americans in the mid-nineteenth century began to view the Self as a role to be performed before an audience. Acklen, who had a keen theatrical sense, threw herself unreservedly into her own, post-war performance of identity. She returned from Europe with a diamond tiara, which she wears in her

¹¹³ Mrs. Spencer McHenry, "Belmont Acklen Estate," copy in Belmont curatorial files of MS, Neil Savage Mahoney Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 174-75.

engraved portrait in Ellett's *Queens of American Society* and wore at all large and significant social gatherings thereafter (fig.53). Newspaper accounts of the Le Vert reception and her wedding reception one year later show how Acklen's persona evolved in that brief time. While the first account makes note of the crown, the second describes it as "the gift of the Emperor and Empress of France."¹¹⁵ It's uncertain whether Acklen herself was the source of this undoubtedly spurious story; however, it is probably due to her skillful, theatrical self-fashioning that, by 1867, she was described as a crowned peer of European royalty.

Objects and settings played crucial roles in the mid-nineteenth century dramatic performance of identity. To enhance her monarchic image, Acklen hung a copy of Thomas Sully's 1838 *Portrait of Queen Victoria in Her Coronation Robes* over the landing of her staircase, facing the grand salon (fig.54). Sully's deft combination of sweet, lady-like mildness with regal dignity matched perfectly Acklen's aspirations for her own public persona following the war. *The Peri*, which faced Sully's portrait, performed an equally important role. Raised on its pedestal, the figure would have been visible from every part of the grand salon, even when the room was filled with people. It expressed repentance and the joy of reunion with the divine; however, unlike the related personages of Eve or Pandora, the peri's precise transgression is unclear. It is never mentioned by Moore, nor does Mozier allude to it. Instead, *The Peri* conveyed the *idea* of repentance by proffering a penitent sinner's tears to Acklen's guests, while the figure itself remains both feminine and pure. Mozier's sculpture reinforced the ideal of the "true

¹¹⁵ See "The Reception at Bellevue [sic]," *Nashville Union*, 20 December 1866: 3; and "Wedding Festivities—Dr. and Mrs. W. A. Cheatham's Reception Last Night," *Nashville Union*, 28 June 1867: 3.

woman” as an earth-bound angel—beautiful, emotional, fair skinned and morally pure—whose missionary role ensured her ultimate return to her heavenly home. Acklen, who had always been a devout Presbyterian, increased her support of the church after the war by donating bronze bells to two Nashville congregations. The first, for the First Presbyterian Church in downtown Nashville, she commissioned at a cost of \$3,000. The second, for Moore Memorial Chapel, she removed from one of her Louisiana plantations.¹¹⁶

The extent to which Acklen identified herself with *The Peri* is evident from her will, in which she stipulated that the figure would be removed with her body to Mount Olivet Cemetery. In accordance with her wishes, *The Peri* was placed in Acklen’s gothic revival mausoleum after her death in 1887 (fig.55). In her will, Acklen also specified her choice of “furniture for the hall of the mausoleum”—an iron chair and seat, a small marble table, and a gilt, marble-topped stand with a vase for flowers. She further stipulated that the two marble urns that once flanked Belmont’s front porch be moved to the “grounds” of the mausoleum.¹¹⁷ In essence, Acklen re-created a domestic space around her remains, the remains of two of her husbands and, ultimately, nine of her children. Here, *The Peri* continues to preside in perpetuity as a proverbial “angel in the home.”

¹¹⁶ Wardin, 1981, 31.

¹¹⁷ “Will of Adelia Cheatham,” Records of Davidson County, Wills and Inventories, Tennessee State Library and Archives, vol. 30, 155-64.

Years after Acklen's death, her son William recorded that, immediately after the war, his mother "resumed her place as a social leader which was never disputed."¹¹⁸ At least one fellow Nashvillian's description of Acklen throws doubt on his claim. In 1894, the outspoken anti-suffragist and Lost Cause devotee Josephine Pearson wrote the following, heavily mythologized account of Acklen's reception for Octavia LeVert, which Pearson remembered incorrectly as having occurred in 1864, just after the occupation of Nashville.

Adelicia had a dais erected in the great hall. Seated upon it, she waved a wand like an oriental queen. All was most ostentatious. During the intermission she arose and made the following announcement. "If anyone present desires to speak French, my guest Madame LeVert will be glad to accommodate. If anyone desires to speak Spanish, Madame LeVert's daughter will be glad to accommodate. And if anyone desires to speak Italian, I myself will be glad to accommodate." After a long silence, a Yankee officer tottered to the dais and offered to speak "henglish" if anyone present wanted to accommodate in that tongue.¹¹⁹

Pearson's overwrought account of Acklen as a pretentious scalawag, entertaining Yankees in the midst of the war, reveals the limits of Acklen's post-war self-fashioning. Pearson, who in her struggle against the nineteenth amendment stated that, "The fight to preserve our ideal of Southern womanhood is a Holy War, and a crucial test of Southern rights and honor," simply did not buy Acklen's bid to re-position herself on the pedestal of "true womanhood," regardless of how many be-pedestaled images of true women she displayed.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Kiser, "Scion of Belmont, Part I," 58.

¹¹⁹ Transcript of unidentified newspaper clipping, Belmont Mansion Curatorial Files, Nashville, Tenn.

¹²⁰ Quoted in Edward D. C. Campbell and Kym S. Rice, eds., *A Woman's War: Southern Women, Civil War, and the Confederate Legacy*, exh. cat. (Richmond, Va.: Museum of the Confederacy; Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), 189.

CHAPTER 5
LEGRAND LOCKWOOD'S COLLECTION
OF IDEAL SCULPTURE AT ELMWOOD

Sometime between 1868 and 1872, the New York railroad magnate and financier LeGrand Lockwood and his wife, Ann Louisa Benedict Lockwood, commissioned a series of stereographs of their palatial new country house in Norwalk, Connecticut. Like the stereographs of Adelia Acklen's villa, these cards lack the descriptive captions and copyright information that would have marked them as commercial publications. They were probably intended for the Lockwoods' circle of family and friends, announcing the completion of their house, Elmwood, of which they were understandably proud. Several of the stereographs depict the exterior and grounds of the massive, French Second Empire mansion; however, the majority show semi-public rooms on the first and second floors. These elaborately decorated spaces contained the bulk of the Lockwoods' extensive art collection, including ideal sculptures by Joseph Mozier, James Henry Haseltine and Randolph Rogers. The stereographs reveal the Lockwoods' careful arrangement of these sculptures in relation to one another, other works of art, and the surrounding architecture. Installed in their domestic setting, the Lockwoods' ideal sculptures became part of an artful and elaborate spatial text—one that linked together the seemingly disparate ideas of westward expansion and sentimental domesticity. These intertwined ideas were central to LeGrand Lockwood's understanding and public presentation of himself.

LeGrand Lockwood

LeGrand Lockwood was born in 1820 in Norwalk, Connecticut, but moved to New York with his family at the age of twelve.¹ He must have been ambitious. The son of a shoe salesman, he was a partner in a brokerage firm by the time he was twenty-three and senior partner of his own firm fourteen years later. Lockwood married another Norwalk native, Anne Louisa Benedict, in 1842 and the couple eventually had eight children, six of whom survived to adulthood. He made a fortune investing in railroads during the 1850s, and he increased his wealth through the sale of government bonds during the Civil War. In 1863 he was elected Treasurer of the New York Stock Exchange, and two years later he was reported to be the fourth wealthiest man in New York.²

Lockwood was a shrewd trader who profited enormously from the volatile markets of the 1850s and 60s; however, he was also deeply invested, financially and personally, in America's westward expansion. By the late 1850s, Lockwood was the Director of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, which connected the east and west coasts of the United States before the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, and which later connected the west coast to Hawaii and Asia. In the 1860s he became the

¹ Sources of biographical information about Lockwood include: "LeGrand Lockwood," *New York Times*, 25 February 1872: 3; "LeGrand Lockwood," *New York Tribune*, 26 February 1872: 5; "LeGrand Lockwood," *Norwalk Gazette* (Conn.), 27 February 1872: 1; Mary E. Adams, ed., *LeGrand Lockwood (1820-1872)* (Norwalk, Conn.: The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum, 1969); Linda R. Kraus, ed., "A Documentation of the History and Restoration of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion, Norwalk, Connecticut," 1974, typescript, Yale University Art Library, New Haven, Conn., vol.1, 9-13; Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 119-28.

² "Income Record," *Scientific American* 12 (22 April 1865): 265.

treasurer and chief stockholder of the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad, which became the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad in 1869 and which linked the east coast to a broad network of Midwestern cities.³ In general, Lockwood's wealth rested on the vast volume of railroad stocks that his brokerage firm traded. In Lockwood's obituary, a writer for the *Norwalk Gazette* attributed the success of Lockwood & Co. to "the general development of railroad interests in the West."⁴

Although Lockwood worked and lived in Manhattan, he maintained a patriarchal presence in his home town. In the early 1860s, he owned both the local, horse-drawn train that connected North and South Norwalk, and the Danbury-Norwalk Railroad, the major freight line between Norwalk and New York City. Due in part to this freight line, the population of the town tripled between 1850 and 1870, and it was transformed from a small farming village into a bustling, industrial hub. It is hardly surprising that Lockwood should have chosen a tract of rural land in the center of Norwalk as the site for his "country seat." From there, he could survey the changes he had helped bring about, and fully enjoy his baronial status.

When Lockwood's brokerage firm went down in the gold panic of October 24, 1869, Lockwood lost his fortune. In order to repay his debts, he was forced to sell his controlling shares in the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad to Cornelius Vanderbilt, who also gained control of the mortgage on the Lockwoods' Connecticut home. Lockwood died of pneumonia, still in debt, in 1872. Two years later, Vanderbilt

³ Closer to home, Lockwood was also Director of the New York Central Railroad, the Second Avenue Railroad, and the New York and Eastern Railway. See *LeGrand Lockwood (1820-1872)*, 10-17.

⁴ "LeGrand Lockwood," *Norwalk Gazette*, 1.

foreclosed and the house was sold. Anne Lockwood auctioned off most of her family's artworks and furniture in two large estate sales in 1872 and 1873.⁵

Elmwood

Lockwood began buying farmland for the site of his Elm Park estate in 1863, and by the following year he owned thirty-four acres situated midway between North and South Norwalk. He chose a low hill overlooking Main Street, the railroad tracks and both sides of the town as the site for his future house. Lockwood made several trips to France during the early 1860s, selling United States bonds. He must have been impressed by the renovations then in progress under the direction of Baron Georges Eugene Haussmann (1809-1892). Upon returning home, he chose Detlef Lienau (1818-1887) to build his Norwalk house in the latest French style. Lienau was a logical choice. He had been trained in Paris and had already designed one prominent New York building, the Hart M. Schiff residence, in the French Second Empire style. Construction of Lockwood's Connecticut house began shortly after the end of the Civil War and was complete by 1869.

The house itself, which the Lockwoods called Elmwood, was situated near the center of a landscaped park, possibly designed by Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903). Its curving drives and flower-bordered footpaths led past formal gardens, groves of trees, conservatories, marble garden sculptures of Greek and Roman deities, a stocked pond,

⁵ See *The Entire Collection of Important Modern Paintings, Statuary, Bronze, Articles of Vertu, Etc. Belonging to the Late Mr. LeGrand Lockwood*, sale cat. (New York: Leavitt Auctioneers, 1872); and *Unique and Artistic Furniture from the House at Norwalk, Conn., of the Late LeGrand Lockwood*, sale cat. (New York: Leavitt Auctioneers, 1873).

and a vineyard. An effusive article that appeared in the *New York Sun* in 1869 described the effect of the house as viewed from the grounds. “It is a wonder of architecture... Its bright walks sparkle in the sun, towers and spires blend gracefully with its slated roof, and fairy rays of gilt kindle its crest with glory.”⁶ The massive, four-story, sixty-room, grey granite house, topped with a series of mansard roofs and trimmed with lacy ironwork, is certainly impressive (fig.56). Adding to the mansion’s allure in 1869 was its novelty. The Second Empire style, which would become a popular choice for American domestic architecture in the gilded age, was still new and remarkable when Elmwood was built.

Over the course of the 1860s, as the status of French culture rose in the United States, the Second Empire style came to signify both affluence and genteel refinement. The exterior of Elmwood closely resembles an engraving of an ideal “country seat” which appeared in an 1863 plan book by the American architect Henry Hudson Holly (1834-1892) (fig.57).⁷ Of this residence, Holly notes:

It seems to us a marked indication of good taste, instead of spending a princely amount for some narrow plot of ground in some aristocratic quarter of the city, to establish an elegant and independent country seat... To be a “monarch of all he surveys” in the midst of the fine repose and healthy ease of a fine estate in the country, is the unfailing desire of every man who has resources within himself against *ennui*, and large capacities to develop in the paths of elegant culture.⁸

There’s little doubt that Lockwood saw himself as just such a man.

⁶ “LeGrand Lockwood’s Residence,” *New York Sun*, 2 October 1869: 2.

⁷ Henry Hudson Holly, *Holly’s Country Seats: Containing Lithographic Designs for Cottages, Villas, Mansions, etc. with Their Accompanying Outbuildings, also, Country Churches, City Buildings, Railway Stations, etc., etc.* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1863), 146.

⁸ Ibid. 152.

The plan of Elmwood is an irregular Greek cross, similar to that of St. Peter's Cathedral in the Vatican, but embroidered with turrets, bays, verandas and a large *porte cochère* (fig.58). At its center is an open, slightly elongated, octagonal room, lit by a skylight three stories above. This was the Lockwoods' art gallery, and it was also the nexus of their home. A series of doorways connected most of Elmwood's first floor rooms, making it possible for family members to pass directly from room to room without going through the art gallery; however, guests would almost certainly have been ushered through the gallery upon entering the house. Although Elmwood has four entrances, the principal, formal entrance is located at the west end of the building. Passing through massive, carved mahogany doors from the *porte cochère*, one first enters an oval vestibule, then a rectangular entrance hall, before passing into the octagonal art gallery. Although Lockwood had an extensive art collection distributed all around his house, I am primarily interested in these three, most public rooms. It was here, I contend, that LeGrand Lockwood formulated most clearly the idealized image of himself that he wished to communicate to his guests.

Lienau worked with a number of the most prestigious American decorators and cabinet makers, including the firms of Leon Marcotte, Herter Brothers, George Platt, and E. W. Hutchings & Son, who each designed one or more rooms within the mansion.⁹

⁹ Sources of information about Elmwood's interior include: "For Sale or to Let: Mr. LeGrand Lockwood's Mansion at Norwalk, Connecticut," unidentified newspaper clipping, dated March 1873, Detlef Lienau Collection, Department of Special Collections, Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University; "Lockwood-Mathews House, Veterans' Memorial Park, Southeast, Norwalk, Fairfield County, CT," Historic American Buildings Survey, CT-265; Ellen Kramer, "The Domestic Architecture of Detlef Lienau," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1958; Mary E. Adams, ed., *The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion*, (Norwalk, Conn.: The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum, 1969); "A Documentation of the History and Restoration of the Lockwood-

Like Lienau, these men worked with their patrons' tastes in mind. As the lady of the house, Anne Lockwood probably had the last word on its décor, and the prevailing French style of Elmwood's interior reflects her taste.¹⁰ A reporter for *The New York Sun* related on October 2, 1869 that "[Elmwood's] rooms have been draped and furnished in accordance with Mrs. Lockwood's taste and wishes."¹¹ Anne Lockwood accompanied her husband to Europe twice as the house was being built, in 1865 and again in 1867. During the second trip, she visited the Exposition Universelle in the company of Leon Marcotte, and made several significant purchases of decorative art there. The most extravagant item she bought was a grand prize-winning clock by Carriere Belleuse (1824-1887), which

Matthews Mansion, Norwalk, Connecticut"; Mary E. Findlay, "Interior Decoration of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion: Color and Design of the Painted Plaster Walls and Ceilings of the First Floor," MA Thesis, Columbia University, 1978; R. Bergmann and L. Hamilton, "Restoration of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion: Preserving Masterpieces of Craftsmanship," *Technology and Conservation*, 7 (Winter 1982): 14-25; Katherine S. Howe, "Elm Park: The LeGrand Lockwood Residence," in *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*, exh. cat. (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, 1994), 139-47; Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 172-77. Lienau's drawings for Elmwood, along with photographs and newspaper clippings related to the house, are in the Special Collections Department of the Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University. For an enlightening discussion of Leon Marcotte's interiors in the cultural context of the 1860s and '70s, see John Davis, "Children in the Parlor, Eastman Johnson's *Brown Family* and the Post-Civil War Luxury Interior," *American Art* 10 (Summer 1996): 50-77.

¹⁰ Anne Lockwood wrote to her daughter-in-law from Paris that she was in contact with all the various decorators working on Elmwood's interior. Letter from Anne Louisa Lockwood to Katherine Bissel Lockwood, 4 July 1867, Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum Archives, quoted in *Nineteenth-Century Architects: Building a Profession*, exh. cat. (Norwalk, Conn.: Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum, 1990), 12. The Lockwoods' son, who remained in New York, sent his parents sets of plans and descriptions of the work underway. Letter from LeGrand Lockwood Jr. to Anne Louisa Lockwood, 14 March 1865, Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum Archives, quoted in *ibid.* Despite several attempts, I was unable to gain access to these archives, which contain correspondence, photographs and scrapbooks related to the house.

¹¹ "LeGrand Lockwood's Residence," 2.

was eventually installed on the landing of Elmwood's grand staircase, overlooking the art gallery.¹²

Despite Mrs. Lockwood's well documented taste for French décor, LeGrand Lockwood, the active art collector in the family, bought not a single French painting or sculpture.¹³ For the most part, he purchased (and, in some cases, commissioned) works by contemporary American, German, Dutch and Belgian artists. Reviews of the exhibition that preceded the 1872 sale of the Lockwoods' art collection suggest that he was the sole buyer; however, the best indication that LeGrand Lockwood was the primary buyer of Elmwood's ideal sculpture, as well as its paintings, lies in the artworks themselves, many of which relate more or less directly to his passionate interest in Manifest Destiny.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, given the fact that much of his vast personal fortune flowed from the railroads that pushed the frontier west, Lockwood saw a religious and moral imperative in national expansion. In 1863, he gave the painter Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) \$25,000 to travel west and paint, from sketches made on the spot, a monumental picture titled *The Domes of Yosemite* (fig.59) for Elmwood's art gallery.

¹² Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 124.

¹³ *The Entire Collection of Important Modern Paintings, Statuary, Bronze, Articles of Vertu, Etc. Belonging to the Late Mr. LeGrand Lockwood*. Despite the assertion in this catalogue that the sale encompassed LeGrand Lockwood's entire collection, several ideal sculptures, including Randolph Rogers' *The Truant* (1854) and Chauncey Ives' *Rebecca at the Well* (1854) were not included in the sale, raising the question of whether Anne Lockwood considered these works (which were not displayed in Elmwood's art gallery) her own. *The Truant* is clearly visible in a stereograph of Elmwood's drawing room. For a record of LeGrand Lockwood's purchase of *Rebecca*, see the transcript of Chauncey Bradley Ives' studio book, MS, curatorial files, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

¹⁴ For reviews of the Lockwood collection, see "Fine Arts," *New York Times*, 14 April 1872: 2; "A Valuable Art Collection," *New York Commercial Advertiser*, 16 April 1872: 4; "Fine Arts," *New York World*, 18 April 1872: 2.

Around the same time, Lockwood also purchased two canvases by Bierstadt depicting the Rocky Mountains.¹⁵ Three years later, he funded the artist and explorer William Bradford's (1823-1892) journey to the Arctic, having already commissioned a 6 x 10 foot painting titled *Sealers Crushed by Icebergs* (fig.60), based on the artist's ill-fated voyage to Greenland. This painting may also have hung in the Lockwoods' gallery.

The awkward position of Lockwood's larger paintings, which were hung in Elmwood's art gallery unframed and overlapping the dado, suggests that Lienau's staff of decorators had little to do with their placement. It was most likely LeGrand Lockwood himself that chose their locations. Lockwood probably also chose the locations of his ideal sculptures, which complemented his landscapes and inflected their meaning. In particular, his paired depictions of an Indian maiden discovering Christianity and a captive white woman remembering her long-lost mother, by the American sculptor Joseph Mozier, framed the nation's westward expansion as a project of benign domestication and constructed Lockwood as a patriarch and missionary rather than a conqueror.

The vestibule

The vestibule of Elmwood is a square room, entered from the west and made into an oval by half-circular niches at both the north and south ends. Tall, narrow windows in these niches illuminate the room's star-patterned floor of inlaid, parti-colored marble, its faux rib-vaulted ceiling and its walls, which were once painted beige and covered with

¹⁵ "Fine Arts: Collection of the Late LeGrand Lockwood," *New York World*, 18 April 1872: 2.

decorative blue and red frescoes.¹⁶ Outfitted with an inner set of doors, the Lockwoods' vestibule kept drafts out of their house and provided a place for guests to shed their coats. Beyond this, however, it served as an ornate staging ground that framed the principal view into the house. When the inside double doors of oak and frosted glass are open, a visitor can see straight through the entrance hall to the sun-lit art gallery directly ahead, and beyond to the deep bay window set in the back wall of the dining room at the opposite end of the house.

The Entrance Hall

Having passed through the vestibule, a visitor enters a 20 x 32 foot, rectangular room with half-circular niches in each corner, oriented perpendicular to the main axis of the house. Save for the corner niches, the room resembles a tetrastyle atrium in an ancient Roman villa. Four Doric columns and four pilasters of mottled grey and white Florentine marble on high porphyry bases create a corridor through the center of the hall, and direct visitors attention into the art gallery. The diamond pattern of the inlaid Italian marble floor is broken with stripes of colored marble that follow and emphasize this trajectory. Stereographs of the room show four Renaissance revival chairs, designed by Leon Marcotte, positioned near the four corner niches (figs.61-62). Their presence suggests that Marcotte also designed other features of the room, including the color scheme, the coffered ceiling (originally painted deep blue) and the massive, walnut mantle ornamented with carved, Greek-garbed caryatids, that occupies the north end of the room.

¹⁶ See Findlay, "Interior Decoration of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion," 43-46.

Although the walls of the entrance hall were putty-colored in Lockwood's day, the two niches to the left and right of the art gallery entrance were painted a darker greenish-grey to contrast with the white marble figures they contained. These sculptures, both by Joseph Mozier, were *Pocahontas*, modeled in 1850, and its later pendant *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, modeled around 1853 (figs.63-64). It may have been Lockwood's versions of these figures that were shown, along with Adelia Acklen's version of *The Peri*, in Mozier's exhibition at the Tenth Street Studio Building in New York in October and November of 1866.¹⁷ If so, Lockwood probably acquired them with his new house in mind during his 1865 trip to Rome with his family.¹⁸ In Lockwood's

¹⁷ For reviews of Mozier's 1866 New York exhibition, see "Mozier's Sculpture," *New York Post*, 16 October 1866: 3; "Art Matters," *American Art Journal* 5 (18 October 1866): 408; "Art," *The Round Table* 4 (3 November 1866): 227; An article published shortly before this exhibition closed noted that only three of the sculptures were not owned by private collectors. The others, including *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, would be returned to their owners. "Mozier's Statuary," *New York Post*, 7 November 1866, 1. Lockwood allowed his painting, *The Domes of the Yosemite*, to be shown by the artist, Albert Bierstadt, at the Tenth Street Studio Building in May, 1867. To make it clear who owned the painting, it was shown in an ornate gold frame inscribed with Lockwood's initials.

¹⁸ It has been suggested that a pair of these two sculptures owned by the Hirschl & Adler Gallery in 1982, inscribed with the date 1859, were the pair originally owned by Lockwood. This argument is based on the facts that this is the only known pair of *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* that were carved in the same year, and that their marble pedestals, which are identical, appear to match the pedestals in early photographs of Lockwood's entrance hall; however, the version of *Pocahontas* now in the Art Institute of Chicago has an identical pedestal, suggesting that these items were standardized. See Eric W. Baumgartner, *Carved and Modeled: American Sculpture, 1810-1940*, exh. cat. (New York: Hirschl & Adler Gallery, 1982), 10, 26-27 and Judith A. Barter, Kimberly Rhodes and Seth Thayer, eds. *American Arts at the Art Institute of Chicago: From Colonial Times to World War I* (Chicago: The Art Institute, 1998), 201-202. Because Mozier's studio papers are lost, it is impossible to determine exactly when Lockwood purchased his versions of *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*. After one hundred and thirty-two years, versions of these two sculptures were permanently installed (or re-installed) in the entrance hall of Elmwood (now the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum). The mansion served as the setting for the 2004 Paramount Pictures

entrance hall, the sculptures stood in their respective niches, indirectly illuminated by sunlight from the vestibule and from the tall, narrow windows in the two niches of the west wall. These angled windows directed light across the surface of the sculptures, emphasizing their contours. In the relatively spare environment of the entrance hall, *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* were striking focal points that framed the Lockwoods' art gallery and the rest of their home.

Pocahontas was one of Mozier's earliest and most popular productions. He made at least five copies, and probably many more.¹⁹ He began by modeling a bust version of the sculpture in 1848, but encouraged by the praise of Margaret Fuller and others, he decided to work his bust into a full-length, life-size figure two years later, just after he settled in Rome.²⁰ His subject is the highly mythologized, adolescent girl who supposedly saved the life of the English Captain John Smith when her father, a seventeenth-century Powhatan Indian Chief, threatened to execute him. In 1614, when she was seventeen years old, "Pocahontas" (whose actual name was Matoaka—in the Powhatan language "Pocahontas" simply means "brat") converted to Christianity, took

re-make of the 1974 film *The Stepford Wives*. Grasping the expressive potential of these marble figures in a film about gender ideals, the film makers acquired the Hirschl and Adler Gallery's paired 1859 versions for the museum.

¹⁹ Other early owners include Joseph Harrison, Jr. of Philadelphia, E.B. McCagg of Chicago and G.G. White of Brooklyn. See Clark, *Great American Sculptures*, 120-21. Yet another copy, originally owned by a family in Nashville, Tennessee, is now displayed in the Belmont Mansion Museum. For more information about Mozier's *Pocahontas*, see Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 128-31.

²⁰ In particular, Fuller praised "the union of sweetness and strength with a princelike, childlike dignity." Margaret Fuller, *At Home and Abroad; or, Things Thought in America and Europe* (New York: The Tribune Association, 1869), 371. Presumably, the composition of Mozier's bust was retained in the full-length version of *Pocahontas*.

the name Rebecca, and married the Englishman John Rolfe. Several years later, she moved with him and their young son to England, where she enjoyed a brief period of celebrity before dying, probably of smallpox, at the age of twenty-two. In reality, the John Smith incident probably never occurred and Matoaka, who was a hostage in the Jamestown colony at the time of her conversion and marriage, most likely became a Christian and an Englishman's wife unwillingly. Nevertheless, the story of a beautiful Indian princess who saves the life of one Englishman, converts to Christianity, and marries another Englishman was (and is) deeply appealing to Americans. The Pocahontas myth reframes the complex, brutal history of disenfranchisement and genocide perpetrated on Native Americans as a romance, in which child-like, feminized, "good" Indians spontaneously embrace European culture and are domesticated.²¹

During the nineteenth century, dozens of popular plays sentimentalized the story of Pocahontas.²² Heavily influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's eighteenth-century idealization of the "noble savage," many of these dramas emphasized Pocahontas's essentialist affinity with the natural world (one need only look to Walt Disney's 1995

²¹ For the Pocahontas myth in American culture, see Robert Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 90-95; William M. S. Rasmussen and Robert S. Tilton, *Pocahontas: Her Life and Legend*, exh. cat. (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1994); Robert S. Tilton, *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); S. Elizabeth Bird, ed. *Dressing in Feathers: the Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (New York: Westview Press, 1996), 1-12; Susan Scheckel, *The Insistence of the Indian: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 41-69.

²² In 1808 the first Pocahontas drama was performed in Philadelphia. It was James Nelson Barker's *The Indian Princess; or, La Belle Sauvage*. Some thirty plays by various authors followed. Scheckel, *The Insistence of the Indian*.

animated feature, *Pocahontas*, to witness the persistence of this idea); however, while Rousseau (like Disney) presented humanity's primal, "savage" state as good in itself, nineteenth-century formulations of the Pocahontas myth stressed Christian civilization's pre-determined moral imperative to spread across the North American continent. In these narratives, the wilderness appears as a feminized but untamed space, to be conquered through romantic love and the assertion of domestic values.²³ As in these nineteenth-century popular dramas, Mozier's depiction of Pocahontas discovering Christianity accidentally in the course of her woodland wanderings combines Rousseau's "noble savage" ideal with the newer ideology of Manifest Destiny. The sculpture also associates Pocahontas's virginal body (made more appealing and vulnerable by her exposed breast and legs) with the yet-untouched American wilderness.²⁴

Pocahontas is one of Mozier's most accomplished works. The figure stands at ease, in a graceful contrapposto pose. As in Erastus Dow Palmer's *Indian Girl, or, The Dawn of Christianity* (fig.65), which was almost certainly based on Mozier's figure, the girl's eyes are downcast as she contemplates the crucifix in her right hand. Whereas Palmer's Indian girl holds a fold of her buckskin garment in her left hand, *Pocahontas* holds the leash of a tame fawn, which rests behind her, leaning its head affectionately against her right leg. Like most of Mozier's figures, *Pocahontas* is youthful and plump.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ For the conflation of Pocahontas's body and the American wilderness, see Rebecca Blevins Faery, *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race, and Sex in the Shaping of an American Nation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 17. The importance of the Pocahontas myth as a foundational national narrative can be witnessed from its incorporation into the decorative program of the United States Capitol building. See Vivien Green Fryd, *Art and Empire: The Politics of Ethnicity in the United States Capitol, 1815-1860* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 47-51.

Her rounded limbs are dimpled at elbows and knees, her skin smooth, her features peaceful and regular. Mozier lavished attention on the details of *Pocahontas*'s costume. Her "authentic" coiffeur, feather headdress and short, fur tunic attracted much attention at the 1859 Chicago Exhibition of Fine Arts—one of several large, mid-nineteenth-century exhibitions where Mozier's patrons displayed their versions of the sculpture.²⁵ The iconography of Mozier's figure is straight-forward. In picking up the crucifix, she leaves a broken arrowhead lying in the dirt at her feet. She has been rendered as gentle as her pet deer by her encounter with Christianity. The description of *Pocahontas* that appeared in the 1872 sale catalogue of Lockwood's art collection reads, "This chaste figure is one of the finest expressions of the artist's power. The forms are carefully and satisfactorily modeled, and the idealized Indian face expressive of thought and feeling. Her contemplation of the cross suggests her conversion to Christianity, as the deer is the symbol of her affectionate and faithful nature."²⁶

Although one particularly critical reviewer of Mozier's 1866 Tenth Street Studio exhibition noted, "'Pocahontas' and 'The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish' are the poorest sculptures in the collection, being trivial in conception and bad in drawing, utterly unworthy of Mr. Mozier's talent," *Pocahontas* was praised by most critics.²⁷ A reviewer for the London-based *Art Journal* described the sculpture in 1854 as being "full of deep

²⁵ "The Art Exposition," *Chicago Press and Tribune*, 21 June 1859: 2. *Pocahontas* was also shown at the 1864 Philadelphia Sanitary Fair and the Brooklyn and Long Island Sanitary Fair the same year. *American Arts at the Art Institute of Chicago*, 202.

²⁶ *The Entire Collection of Important Modern Paintings, Statuary, Bronze, Articles of Vertu, Etc. Belonging to the Late LeGrand Lockwood*, 27.

²⁷ "Art Matters," *American Art Journal* 5 (October 1866): 408.

sentiment and unaffected purity, with a striking originality as to costume and treatment.”²⁸ In general, negative criticism of *Pocahontas* centered on the figure’s face, which did not look Indian enough to satisfy some viewers. “The ‘Pocahontas’ is graceful in pose,” wrote a critic for the *Round Table*, “but the type is false to the character of the aboriginal Indian.”²⁹ Although Mozier made a gesture toward ethnographic accuracy by giving his Indian girl high cheekbones and a slightly prominent nose, her face generally conforms to the classical, western canon of beauty. Rather than reflecting a lack of skill or attention on Mozier’s part, *Pocahontas*’s European features serve an important symbolic function. Together with the white marble from which she is carved, they emphasize her assimilation into white culture, which erases her ethnicity along with her past.

The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish is one of only a few American ideal sculptures based on a novel, in this case James Fennimore Cooper’s 1829 tale of the same title.³⁰ Cooper’s story centers on the Puritan community of Wish-ton-Wish, deep in the wilds of seventeenth-century Connecticut. There, the Heathcote family captures an orphaned Narragansett Indian boy, Comanchet, and attempts to raise him in their home. During a raid by the boy’s tribe, Comanchet rescues the Heathcotes’ little daughter Ruth in a scene that perfectly mirrors Pocahontas’s mythic rescue of John Smith. Believing her parents to be dead, he returns with Ruth to his tribal home. Raised as a member of the tribe, she

²⁸ Florentia, “A Walk Through the Studios of Rome,” 185.

²⁹ “Art, The Picture Galleries,” *The Round Table*, 61 (3 November 1866): 227.

³⁰ James Fenimore Cooper, *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish: A Tale* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Carey, 1829).

eventually loses all memory of her parents, marries Comanchet, and has a child of her own. Meanwhile, Ruth's mother has never given up hope of recovering her lost daughter. When Comanchet learns that the Heathcotes are alive, he is moved by the seeds of piety and domesticity they planted in him long ago to return his wife to her parents. Ironically, it is Ruth's own domestic nature—the sign of her origin in a Christian home—that pulls her away from civilization and sends her fleeing back to her Indian husband and child. Though she is ultimately reunited with her parents after Comanchet's heroic death, she remains hopelessly conflicted, and soon dies of a broken heart.

As Laura Mielke has recently observed, Cooper's novel constructs Anglo-Indian conflict in domestic terms. Through the character of Ruth Heathcote, Puritans and Indians are briefly joined in a single, extended family. The dramatic tension of the novel stems, in part, from its characters' struggles for control over domestic space, and for familial integrity.³¹ Unlike the mythic Pocahontas narrative, with its smooth trajectory from savagery to domesticity, Cooper's novel is full of complex and contradictory entanglements.

In his sculpture *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, Mozier depicted the scene from Cooper's novel in which Ruth, now called Narra-mattah, is reunited with her family for the first time. She stands transfixed, listening to her mother sing a cradle song that had lulled her to sleep as a baby. The sculptural quality of this scene is suggested by the text itself.

At the first low-breathing notes of this nursery song, Narra-mattah became as motionless as if her rounded and unfettered form had been wrought in marble.

³¹ Laura L. Mielke, "Domesticity and Dispossession: Removal as a Family Act in Cooper's *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* and *The Pathfinder*," *ATQ* 16 (2002): 9-30.

Pleasure lighted her eyes, as strain succeeded strain; and ere the second verse was ended, her look, her attitude, and every muscle of her ingenuous features, were eloquent in the expression of delight.³²

The pose of Mozier's figure is very similar to that of *Pocahontas*; however, Narra-mattah brings her right hand to her face in a distracted, thoughtful gesture. Her left hand holds a swag of heavy drapery that surrounds and frames her lower body. Although she stands in the same graceful, contrapposto pose as her companion, Narra-mattah's head is tilted in a listening attitude rather than bowed in contemplation, and her eyes are wide-open and haunted. The strain in Narra-mattah's face alludes to the tension in Cooper's novel; however, by isolating the moment when Narra-mattah is recalled to the knowledge of her original family and people by maternal love, Mozier simplified and sentimentalized Cooper's narrative.

Mozier re-worked *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* in 1864, varying her shell headdress slightly, simplifying her moccasins, and making her hair less wavy.³³ *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* was not exhibited as widely as *Pocahontas*. Despite Henry Tuckerman's contention in 1867 that several versions had already been ordered by American buyers, Mozier's reworking of the sculpture and, later, his attempts to tint it, suggest that he was struggling to make it more appealing to potential patrons.³⁴ When Mozier exhibited the first version of the *Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* at the London

³² Cooper, *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, vol.2, 166.

³³ From the stereographs of Elmwood's interior, it is impossible to tell whether Lockwood owned Mozier's original version of the sculpture or his re-tooled, 1864 version. If, as seems logical, Lockwood purchased his sculptures of *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* during either his 1865 or his 1867 trip to Italy, he would have owned the later version.

³⁴ Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 591.

International Exhibition of 1862, the British art critic J. Beavington Atkinson was disturbed by a “peculiar cast of the eye,” which he believed violated the air of peaceful repose an ideal sculpture should possess.³⁵ Mozier’s modified *Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* fared little better. It was designated by one critic as being one of the two weakest works in Mozier’s 1866 New York exhibition.³⁶ Other critics of this exhibition simply ignored the figure.

The largest body of critical response to *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* centers around the tinted version exhibited in Mozier’s posthumous, 1873 studio sale. “As in all previous attempts at introducing color into marble statuary, there is nothing but failure in such bedizening of that rather pretty sculpture, ‘The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish,’ with her pink skirt and orange hair,” wrote the critic for the *Arcadian*.³⁷ The ever-caustic Clarence Cook compared the work to a “tobacconist’s sign, manufactured without regard to expense.”³⁸ Tinted marble sculpture was widely reviled by nineteenth-century American critics, who felt color degraded the essential purity and spirituality of ideal figures. In the case of *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, Mozier’s tinting also recalled, disturbingly, the threat of miscegenation that lies at the heart of Cooper’s narrative. Cooper repeatedly stressed his heroine’s fair skin (even the name Narra-mattah means “driven snow”), and he ultimately re-united her with her white family and her natal Christian faith. Nevertheless,

³⁵ J. Beavington Atkinson, “Modern Sculpture of All Nations in the International Exhibition, 1862,” *Art Journal* 9 (1863): 313-324.

³⁶ “Art Matters,” *American Art Journal* 5 (18 October 1866): 408.

³⁷ “The Mozier Statues,” *Arcadian* 1 (20 March 1873): 10.

³⁸ “Art: The Mozier Marbles,” *New York Tribune*, 17 March 1873: 5.

the alarming idea that a white, Christian woman, the very symbol of American domestic culture, might be willingly absorbed into an Indian community is a disturbing subtext of the novel. While Mozier's un-tinted *Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* was never as popular as *Pocahontas*, its whiteness at least reassured viewers that Narra-mattah remained essentially and permanently white, despite her immersion in a non-white culture.

Rebecca Blevins Faery has argued that the paired images of the white female captive and the welcoming Indian maiden were "central props" in the nineteenth-century effort to expand the borders of the United States and define it as a civilized, white nation.³⁹ Whereas the former expressed the threat that Indian "savagery" posed to white, domestic culture, the later reassured its audience that the eventual domestication of the American Indians and, by extension, their land, was inevitable. This was certainly the message Erastus Dow Palmer intended to convey with his pendant marble sculptures, *Indian Girl* and *The White Captive* (fig.19), originally owned by the New York politician Hamilton Fish.⁴⁰ In a letter to his friend John Durand, Palmer related that he intended the first sculpture "to show the influence of Christianity upon the savage," and the second to

³⁹ Faery, *Cartographies of Desire*, 153.

⁴⁰ Fish purchased *Indian Girl* first, and commissioned *The White Captive* shortly after installing it in his home. See Webster, *Erastus D. Palmer*, 149-50, 180-184 and Thayer Tolles, "Modeling a Reputation: The American Sculptor and New York City," in *Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861*, 164-67. A photograph of Fish's drawing room, taken in the early 1880s, shows *Indian Girl* standing in his music room, just outside the entrance to the drawing room. *The White Captive* probably stood opposite it, on the other side of the room, but is obscured by a hanging curtain. See *Artistic Houses*, vol.2, 94-95.

show “the influence of the savage upon Christianity.”⁴¹ The two sculptures are a study in contrasts. Although both stand in a contrapposto pose, their weight is placed on opposite legs. The *Indian Girl* is calm and poised. An aura of stillness surrounds her as she contemplates the crucifix in her hand. Her left hand, hanging at her side, is relaxed. *The White Captive*, on the other hand, stands in a strained and awkward position. Her face is contorted by fear and her right hand clutches at the tree stump to which she is bound. As I discussed at greater length in Chapter 3, Palmer’s *White Captive* remains a deeply disturbing sculpture to this day. Despite the praise it received from critics during Palmer’s lifetime, it was not a popular domestic ornament. Even the placid, reassuring presence of Palmer’s *Indian Girl* fails to diffuse the tension it creates. Rather than presenting the spread of Christian civilization a triumphal narrative, these two sculptures show the conflict between white and Indian cultures as an undecided contest, with “the influence of the savage upon Christianity” ultimately packing a greater emotional punch than “the influence of Christianity upon the savage.”

Mozier’s pair of statues tells a different story. Although Joy Kasson noted astutely that Lockwood’s pendant sculptures, like Palmer’s, raised “the question of whether the white woman might ever fail to resist transformation” by an alien culture, she failed to note how this tension was diffused by the sculptures’ formal relationship to one another, their embedded narratives, and the domestic context in which they were displayed.⁴² By purchasing an un-tinted version of *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*,

⁴¹ Erastus Dow Palmer to John Durand, 11 January 1858, Dreer Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, quoted in *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 70.

⁴² Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 93.

Lockwood ensured that the piece would match *Pocahontas* both formally and thematically. In their respective niches, *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* do not mirror, but rather echo one another. Unlike Palmer's sculptures, their bodies are arranged in nearly identical poses, and their associated narratives follow the same trajectory. Pocahontas (guided by Christianity) and Narra-mattah (guided by maternal love) take their first steps toward white culture in tandem. Together, Lockwood's two sculptures reinforce a single, reassuring idea: assimilation can occur in only one direction, and must result from the spread of white, Christian, domestic culture—a culture embodied by the genteel, private dwelling in which the sculptures were displayed.⁴³ Amy Kaplan has asserted that nineteenth-century domestic interiors generated “notions of the foreign against which the nation can be imagined as home,” and thereby defined imperialism as a “process of domestication, which entails conquering and taming the wild, the natural, and the alien.”⁴⁴ In the Lockwood's entrance hall, *Pocahontas* and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* functioned in precisely this way.

In the United States, the post-bellum era was marked by particularly violent Indian resistance as white Americans pushed the frontier westward, devastating native people's food supplies and spreading disease and murderous violence. The railroad's crucial role in the annihilation of the American Indians was clearly indicated in an 1867

⁴³ For a discussion of this idea's effect on United States governmental policy, see Michael Paul Rogin, *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian* (New York: Knopf, 1975).

⁴⁴ Amy Kaplan, “Manifest Domesticity,” in *No More Separate Spheres!*, 184.

report by a special Congressional committee appointed to investigate “the state of the Indian tribes.”

Two lines of railroads are rapidly crossing the plains, one by the valley of the Platte, and the other by Smoky Hill. They will soon meet the Rocky Mountains, crossing the center of the great buffalo range in two lines, from east to west... Another route further north, from Minnesota by the Upper Missouri, and one further South from Arkansas by the Canadian, are projected, and will soon be put forward. These will drive the last vestige of the buffalo from all the region east of the Rocky Mountains, and put an end to the wild man’s means of life.⁴⁵

Many Americans, both within Congress and among the general populace, took the view that the American Indians’ displacement and imminent demise was simply a case of natural selection, in which a “superior race supplants a neighboring inferior one.”⁴⁶

Others, however, adopted what they believed to be a more humane and Christian approach to the “Indian problem.” In response to the 1867 Congressional report, social reformers and protestant charities petitioned the government to save the American Indians by “civilizing” them. Though less merciless than their social Darwinist counterparts, these reformers provided the impetus behind the system of reservations and government-run boarding schools that, ultimately, struck at the heart of the American Indians’ communal cultures.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ United States Congress, Joint Special Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Indian Tribes, *Condition of the Indian Tribes. Report of the Joint Special Committee, Appointed Under Joint Resolution of March 3, 1865. With an Appendix.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1867), 6.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*, 166-75. The Federal Government ultimately enlisted the aid of Protestant churches in the management of the reservation system. In 1873, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Columbus Delano, wrote that “through the aid of Christian organizations... [the Indians’] intellectual, moral, and religious culture can be prosecuted, and thus it is hoped that humanity and kindness may take the place of

A number of American ideal sculptures, including Hiram Powers' *The Last of the Tribes* (modeled 1870-71; Houston Museum of Fine Arts), and Mozier's own work, *The Indian Girl's Lament* (1857; Hearst Castle), have as their theme a dying Indian whose fate is made to seem both natural and inevitable. *Pocahontas* and the *Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, on the other hand, propose an alternate solution to "the Indian problem." Rather than fleeing or collapsing before the advance of white civilization, these figures turn to meet and accept it. The fact that Lockwood selected this pair of statues to decorate his entrance hall suggests that he embraced the idea (common among liberal reformers in the East) that the American Indians could be saved and, ultimately, assimilated into American culture through the teaching of Christianity and domestic values. This view was not only sanctioned, but actively supported by Lockwood's own, northern, "New School" branch of the Presbyterian Church.⁴⁸ At a December, 1867 meeting in New York City, Presbyterian ministers expounded on the need for missionaries to work with the Indian tribes in the far west, and focused on the railroads as agents for "the immediate evangelization of our country."⁴⁹ Whereas the 1867 Congressional Report presented railroads as the instrument that would bring about Native Americans' destruction, these

barbarity and cruelty." *Secretary of the Interior, Annual Report, 1873-74*, quoted in *ibid.*, 169.

⁴⁸ LeGrand Lockwood's father-in-law was the editor of the *New York Evangelist*, a New School Presbyterian newspaper that championed abolition. See Hugh Davis, "The New York Evangelist, New School Presbyterians and Slavery, 1837-1857," *American Presbyterians* 68 (Spring 1990): 14-23. After the Civil War, the *Evangelist* tuned increasingly to the issue of spreading Christianity among American Indians in the West.

⁴⁹ "Local Intelligence: Home Missions," *New York Times*, 16 December 1867: 8.

reformers embraced railroads as benign conduits for civilization and Christianity—an idea that Lockwood must have found deeply appealing.

The Art Gallery

After leaving the entrance hall, the Lockwoods' visitors passed through a short corridor into a rotunda, 33 x 38 feet across, lit by a double skylight forty-two feet above the floor. While the entrance hall of Elmwood derives from ancient Roman architecture, the soaring, octagonal art gallery recalls Christian chapels, for instance the palace chapel of Charlemagne which forms the core of Aachen Cathedral. The wainscoting, moldings and other woodwork are carved from two types of walnut, and a parquet floor in an interlocking diamond pattern (now covered), once complemented the floor of the entrance hall. Here too, accent lines broke the pattern, directing viewers to points of interest around the room. To the north, a grand staircase sweeps up in low, deep steps to a wide landing, then divides and climbs up to the octagonal, second floor gallery overlooking the room below. A low, marble fireplace on the south wall is surmounted by a recessed, etched glass panel depicting Pomona, the Roman goddess of fecundity, with Cupid sitting at her feet. This panel is also visible on the other side of the wall, above the fireplace in the music room. The 1869 *New York Sun* article described Elmwood's art gallery in glowing terms. "The great hall tessellated with varied woods would hold an ordinary house within its compass, and is a model of rich simplicity. The walls and ceilings are of light drab and lavender, mingled with gold and delicate rose."⁵⁰ High

⁵⁰ "LeGrand Lockwood's Residence," 2.

above, on the wide, inward-leaning cove surrounding the skylight, LeGrand and Anne Lockwood's monograms were frescoed in two-foot high letters, decorated with gold leaf.

Noting that the Lockwoods' art gallery was located in the center of their home, and was not directly accessible from outside, Anne Bolin has concluded that it "was designed primarily for the benefit of friends and family" and "was not designed to accommodate the public."⁵¹ Because the Lockwoods had very little time to live in their country house with their art collection in place, we can't know for certain how accessible they would have made their gallery; however, a number of factors suggest that they intended it to serve a semi-public function. For one thing, the social networks maintained by wealthy Americans in the second half of the nineteenth century were extensive, typically comprising several thousand individuals.⁵² Although Elmwood was a private residence, its size and grandeur suggest that the Lockwoods intended to use it for both private, family life and large-scale social functions. Members of their New York social circle and many residents of the town of Norwalk would have visited Elmwood for parties, balls, dances, dinners and social calls. The Lockwoods probably distributed stereographs of Elmwood to at least a hundred family members and friends. The press, and by extension a broad popular audience, were also given access to the house and the Lockwoods' art collection. At least one critic, writing about an ideal sculpture destined for Elmwood, commented that, "It is intended for the house of one of our merchant princes in Connecticut, and will reward many a pilgrim for a journey thither," implying

⁵¹ Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 172.

⁵² It was not uncommon for men and women of the Lockwoods' social standing to issue 1,500 invitations to a reception or ball.

that such “pilgrimages” to private art galleries were commonplace and expected.⁵³

Finally, the gallery was clearly visible from the mansion’s main entrance. Anyone standing in the vestibule would have seen the large artworks arranged in the entrance hall, the center of the gallery, and hanging on the gallery’s two back walls.

The figure that appears in the stereographs of Elmwood’s art gallery, standing in the center of the room directly below the skylight, is James Henry Haseltine’s (1833-1907) depiction of an intrepid youth, *Excelsior* (1866; location unknown) (fig.66). Haseltine, a native of Philadelphia, took the unusual step of studying sculpture in Paris before setting up his studio in Rome. His career had hardly begun when the Civil War broke out, and he came home to Pennsylvania to serve as a Major in the Union Army. The Lockwoods’ commission must have been among the first he received after his return to Rome in 1865. Samuel Osgood described Haseltine as “... a sculptor of much versatility and most fertile brain and ready hand, perhaps too eager to press his fancies into marble embodiment; yet evidently encouraged by ready patrons, and abounding in home affections and patriotic sentiments such as win favor with our people.”⁵⁴ Lockwood was an avid supporter of the Union and, if his art collection is any indication, he appreciated both “home affections” and “patriotic sentiments.”⁵⁵

⁵³ Samuel Osgood, “American Artists in Italy,” *Harper’s Monthly*, 41 (August 1870): 421.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 422.

⁵⁵ LeGrand Lockwood adopted Company F of the 17th Connecticut Regiment, which was named after him. He paid each enlistee \$25 and supported their families financially for the duration of the war. See *LeGrand Lockwood (1820-1872)*, 27.

Haseltine took as his subject the young hero of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's 1841 poem, "Excelsior," who rushes up the side of a mountain, heedless of the warnings of his sweetheart and various other observers. In response to their pleas for caution, he answers only "Excelsior!" (Higher!), a motto which is reiterated on the flag in his hand. A group of monks, who find the youth's frozen body the following morning, seem to hear his faint cry of "Excelsior!" echoing down from heaven. A literary critic, writing in 1867, described Longfellow's poem as old fashioned and permeated with "sickly sentiment"; however, the Lockwoods' tastes were probably more in line with those of an 1853 reviewer, who declared that "Excelsior" "stirs even stagnant souls as with the sound of a trumpet... heard from the battlement of a temple not made with human hands."⁵⁶

Haseltine's interpretation of Longfellow's poem depicts a young man in Elizabethan garb, striding determinedly up a steep incline with the staff of a half-furled flag over his right shoulder and a mountain climber's walking stick in his left hand. His chin is raised and his eyes trained upwards. According to an anonymous viewer quoted by Henry Tuckerman, who saw a bronze version of the sculpture in Haseltine's studio:

"Excelsior" gives effectively the ascending movement of the aspiring youth—while Love, Wisdom, Experience and Death are represented in appropriate figures in the bas-reliefs of the pedestal... bringing out [the poem's] substantial thought—the career of irrational, insatiable, but inflexible ambition, admired, mourned, and condemned by turns.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ "'Longfellow,' from The Spectator," *The Living Age*, 98 (25 July 1867): 241; "American Authorship, no. VII: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow," *The Living Age*, 39 (12 November 1853): 417.

⁵⁷ Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 598.

This observer, and also Anne Bolin saw a cautionary, moralizing tale in both Longfellow's poem and Haseltine's sculpture; however, the young man's implied heavenly ascent contradicts this interpretation. His ambition is evidently spiritual as well as temporal, and it is divinely sanctioned and rewarded.⁵⁸ The surrounding artworks, in particular Albert Bierstadt's monumental *The Domes of the Yosemite* and Petrus Van Schendel's (1806-1870) equally large *Annunciation* (c.1863; location unknown), link the forward momentum of Longfellow's young hero to the ideas of Manifest Destiny and the evangelism of the West.⁵⁹ Like his courageous, heavenward ascent, the movement of white settlers across the North American continent is difficult and potentially fatal, but divinely ordained. Not surprisingly, two of the stereographs of Elmwood's art gallery show *Excelsior* standing against the backdrops of Bierstadt's and Van Schendel's paintings.

Stereographs of Elmwood's gallery also show a wood and leather sofa just below *The Domes of the Yosemite*, and another on an opposite wall. In fact, there were four of these carved walnut and marquetry sofas, designed by Herter Brothers, against four walls of the art gallery.⁶⁰ Their inlaid Greek key pattern matched the newel posts of the grand

⁵⁸ Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 175.

⁵⁹ See Nancy K. Anderson, "'The Kiss of Enterprise': The Western Landscape as Symbol and Resource," in William H. Treutner, ed. *The West as America: Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1991), 241-42.

⁶⁰ For information about the sofas, see Howe, "Elm Park: The LeGrand Lockwood Residence"; *Unique and Artistic Furniture From the House at Norwalk, Conn. of the Late LeGrand Lockwood, Esq.*, 9; Howe, "Elm Park: The LeGrand Lockwood Residence," 140-41; Additional information about the carved designs was obtained from Elizabeth Montgomery, Registrar, Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum, July 2003.

staircase, suggesting that they were designed specifically for Elmwood's rotunda. Though nearly identical, each sofa had a different motif carved into the lunette above the center back panel. The sofa that remains at Elmwood shows an artfully arranged cluster of musical instruments (fig.67). The relief carvings on two other sofas depicted stacked books, and an artist's palette and brushes. The fourth sofa had a carving of a train. This last sofa is clearly visible in a stereograph of the art gallery's south-west wall, below two mountainous landscapes, probably the two Rocky Mountain scenes by Bierstadt (fig.68). The intended symbolism here is impossible to misconstrue—the railroads that were the basis of the Lockwoods' wealth are also instruments of High Culture, responsible for bearing civilization westward across the continent.

Excelsior's placement in the center of Elmwood's art gallery, though eloquent, was most likely provisional. It was well-known that LeGrand Lockwood had commissioned a larger, more elaborate sculpture as the centerpiece of his collection—Larkin Goldsmith Mead's (1835-1910) *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* (1868-71), now in the California State Capitol in Sacramento (fig.69).⁶¹ Had Lockwood's financial vicissitudes not occurred, Mead's sculpture would likely have taken *Excelsior's* place once it was completed in 1871.⁶²

⁶¹ See Osgood, "American Artists in Italy," 141; S.H.W., "Editorial Correspondence," *Scientific American*, 18 (29 February 1868): 131. H. Nicholas B. Clark has written of this sculpture as being complete and installed in Elmwood by 1870; however, there is no evidence that this was the case. The sculpture does not appear in the 1872 sale catalogue of Lockwood's art collection. Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 237.

⁶² Osgood claimed that the sculpture was "nearly complete" in October, 1869. See Osgood, "American Artists in Italy," 141.

Larkin Mead, a native of Brattleboro, Vermont, studied under Henry Kirke Brown (1814-1886) in New York before setting up a studio in Florence, Italy in 1863.⁶³

Lockwood may have met Mead in Florence during one of his trips to Europe, or he may have met the sculptor in the spring of 1866, when Mead brought a selection of his recent works to New York and exhibited them at the Tenth Street Studio Building. In either case, Lockwood would have seen Mead's ideal figure *Echo* (c.1862; Corcoran Gallery of Art), as well as several genre pieces including *The Battle Story* (1865; Chrysler Museum of Art)—an over-life-size, two-figure group which depicts a Union officer holding an absorbed young girl (variously interpreted as his daughter or the daughter of a fallen comrade) on his lap as he relates his tale. This latter work received the lion's share of critical attention at Mead's 1866 New York exhibition.⁶⁴ Like the critics, Lockwood was probably impressed by *The Battle Story*'s combination of tender, domestic sentiment and patriotism.

Whatever moved Lockwood to commission *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* from Mead, the sculpture was well underway by February, 1868, when a correspondent for *Scientific American* noted:

The chief work in [Mead's] studio is a fine group for LeGrand Lockwood, representing Columbus's last appeal to Queen Isabella. The Queen is attended by her page, and the group is intended to represent the moment when Isabella has decided to further the project of Columbus... It is a grand, life size composition and will require from three to four years to complete.⁶⁵

⁶³ For biographical information about Larkin Mead, see Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 233-42.

⁶⁴ "Fine Arts," *New York Evening Post*, 1 May 1862: 2; "American Art Feuilleton," *New York Times*, 3 May 1866: 4.

⁶⁵ S.H.W., "Editorial Correspondence," 131.

When it was completed, Samuel Osgood noted, the sculpture was destined for Lockwood's Connecticut home.⁶⁶ *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* measures seven feet across and weighs five tons, not including the base.⁶⁷ It could have been placed in no other room in Elmwood besides the art gallery. Mead's sculpture depicts a youthful, comely Isabella looking down into the earnest face of a kneeling Columbus on her left. With her left hand, she gestures toward the globe he presents for her inspection. With her right, she proffers a sash of woven pearls which is looped around her waist as a belt. A curly-headed page boy kneels on a cushion to her right, waiting to carry out her orders. An inscription on the base of the sculpture reads, "I will assume the undertaking for my own crown of Castile, and am ready to pawn my jewels to defray the expense, if the funds in the treasury shall be found inadequate."

The three figures of *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* are arranged in a rough triangle, with Isabella's crowned head at its apex. It is Isabella, rather than Columbus, who is the focal point of Mead's sculpture. In this regard, Mead departed from sculptural precedents that portrayed Columbus as a conquering hero, for instance,

⁶⁶ Osgood, "American Artists in Italy," 141.

⁶⁷ *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* weighs five tons, and its pedestal weighs an additional four tons. Elmwood's first floor is supported by brick piers and vaulting in the basement. See the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) records for "The Lockwood-Mathews House, Veterans' Memorial Park, Southeast, Norwalk, Fairfield County, CT" in the "America Builds" database of the Library of Congress website, *American Memory*, <http://memory.loc.gov> (accessed June 2004). It would have had to have been reinforced, from the main entrance to the rotunda, with at least a dozen additional piers extending two feet into the foundation in order to bear the sculpture's weight. I am grateful to architect Juan Fried, of the Chicago firm Ross Barney + Jankowski, for reviewing Elmwood's plans and providing me with this information. The existing architecture shows no evidence that such alterations had even been begun; however, the sculpture's projected completion was still at least a year in the future when Lockwood lost his fortune. See S.H.W., "Editorial Correspondence," 131.

The Discovery of America (1837-43; United States Capitol) by the Neapolitan-American sculptor Luigi Persico (1791-1860).⁶⁸ Persico's monumental sculpture originally stood to the left of the entrance on the east façade of the U.S. Capitol. In it, Columbus strikes a triumphant pose—head erect, right leg aggressively forward, left hand on his hip, right hand holding aloft a globe. A scantily clad Indian girl cowers away from him in awe or terror. Masculine and martial, this Columbus has come to impose his will upon the Americas. As Vivien Green Fryd has noted, "Persico's sculpture proclaims the dominance of the white man over the effeminate and, by implication, weak and vulnerable Indian."⁶⁹

Mead's more deferential Columbus, which he designed with a domestic setting in mind, tells a different story. The inscription on the base of *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* is taken from the American historian William Hickling Prescott's oft-repeated 1836 account of Columbus's pivotal audience with the Spanish queen, during which she supposedly offered to pawn her jewels to pay for his voyage.⁷⁰ Prescott's

⁶⁸ As Ann Uhry Abrams has argued, images of Columbus "discovering" the Americas played an important ideological role in antebellum American culture. Together with nationalist written accounts of Columbus's life and adventures, they constructed a vision of the Italian explorer as "a repository for concurrent North American social, political, religious, ethnic and cultural values." Ann Uhry Abrams, "Visions of Columbus: The 'Discovery' Legend in Antebellum American Paintings and Prints," *The American Art Journal*, 25, nos.1-2 (1993): 96. For a range of depictions of Columbus over the course of four hundred years, see Néstor Ponce de León, *The Columbus gallery: the "Discoverer of the New World" as Represented in Portraits, Monuments, Statues, Medals and Paintings* (New York, privately printed, 1893). Mead's sculpture is discussed on page 128.

⁶⁹ Fryd, 94.

⁷⁰ William H. Prescott, *The History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic*, vol.2 (Boston: American Stationer's Co., 1838), 128.

heavily mythologized story emphasizes Isabella's crucial role as the patroness of Columbus's voyage of discovery and, by extension, the "New World" itself. This idea was picked up by Prescott's contemporary Samuel G. Goodrich. In his 1843 book *Lives of Celebrated Women*, Goodrich praised "the generous patronage [Isabella] bestowed upon Columbus," noting that:

After he had failed in all his attempts in other quarters he at last found a friend in the queen, who, rejecting the advice of her narrow-minded and timid counselors, exclaimed, "I will assume the undertaking for my own crown of Castile and am ready to pawn my jewels to defray the expense of it, if the funds in the treasury shall be found inadequate." Under her auspices, Columbus achieved his great discovery; and Isabella may be called the mother of the Western world.⁷¹

Probably because she was Catholic and an instigator of the Spanish inquisition, Isabella does not appear frequently in nineteenth-century American visual culture. When she is represented in images of Columbus's endeavor, she is generally accompanied by her aloof and watchful husband, King Ferdinand. This is the case, for instance, in Randolph Rogers' relief of Columbus's audience with the Spanish court, one of nine scenes depicting Columbus that Rogers modeled for the bronze doors of the United States Capitol rotunda in 1855-59. In Mead's sculpture, on the other hand, Isabella appears alone with the explorer and her page. The three-figure composition emphasizes Isabella's role as the "mother of the Western world" by recalling sentimental, nineteenth-century images of mothers "enthroned" in domestic interiors with their families gathered around them, for instance Arthur Draper Shattuck's (1832-1928) portrait of his own mother, with his wife and child (1865; Brooklyn Museum of Art).

⁷¹ Samuel G. Goodrich, *Lives of Celebrated Women* (Boston: Brown and Taggard, 1860), 342. Goodrich's book was first published in 1843.

Benson Lossing, in his 1851 history of the United States, related that Columbus “eloquently portrayed to the Queen the glorious prospect of extending the influence of the Gospel over benighted heathens,” and that “the religious zeal of Isabella was fired.”⁷² He then repeats the same quotation that appears on the base of Mead’s sculpture. In Lossing’s history, Columbus set forth on his journey of discovery as Isabella’s emissary, bearing her Christianizing influence to the New World. Mead reiterates this theme in his sculpture.⁷³ Like a good Victorian mother, Isabella uses her influence to spread the gospel. Amy Kaplan has described how, in sentimental, antebellum texts, “the Manifest Destiny of the nation unfolds logically from the imperial reach of woman’s influence emanating from her separate domestic sphere.”⁷⁴ Enclosed within the Lockwoods’ domestic interior, Mead’s depiction of a maternal and quasi-religious Isabella and her envoy Columbus would have made exactly this point.⁷⁵

Although *Columbus’ Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* was probably finished a year before Lockwood died, it never came to Elmwood. Instead, it remained in Meade’s Florence studio until the financially strapped Anne Lockwood sold it to the San Francisco banker Darius Ogden Mills, who in turn gave it to the state of California as a Christmas

⁷² Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1851), xxii-xxiii.

⁷³ Probably because of its close emulation of historical texts by Prescott, Goodrich and Lossing cited above, Samuel Osgood claimed that Mead’s sculpture was “a chapter in history as well as a study in art.” Osgood, “American Artists in Italy,” 141.

⁷⁴ Kaplan, “Manifest Domesticity,” 198-99.

⁷⁵ By commissioning a sculpture that celebrates Isabella’s role as the patroness of Columbus’ voyage of discovery, Lockwood also indirectly lauded his own role as the patron of voyages made by Albert Bierstadt and William Bradford.

gift in 1883.⁷⁶ If the sculpture had been completed in time to be installed in Elmwood's art gallery, it would have taken *Excelsior's* place between Bierstadt's *The Domes of the Yosemite* and Van Schendel's (1806-1870) *Annunciation*. This second painting was described in the 1872 sale catalogue of the Lockwoods' art collection as follows: "The kneeling virgin is eminently graceful and dignified; her drapery, and that of the *pries Dieux* exhibit exquisite technique. The figure of the announcing angel is posed with infinite grace, and the light effect is brilliant, which suggests the immediate presence of the Holy Ghost."⁷⁷ Lockwood's intended message is clear. Like the kneeling Mary in Van Schendel's painting, the kneeling Columbus receives his mission from God. The westward movement of Christian civilization which he began will continue, Bierstadt's painting implies, spreading across the American wilderness to California.⁷⁸

Seen from Elmwood's vestibule, *Columbus' Last Appeal to Queen Isabella* would have stood framed by the entrance to the art gallery and flanked by *Pocahontas* on the left and *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* on the right. Mozier's pendant sculptures, with their paired narratives of domestication through Christianity and maternal love, would have

⁷⁶ See "The Columbus Statue," *Sacramento Daily Record*, 22 August 1883: 3; "The Columbus Group," *Sacramento Daily Union*, 24 December 1883: 3; James Dufur, "The Untold Story of How Columbus Came to California," *California Journal*, 4 (March 1973): 107, cited in Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 123n192.

⁷⁷ *The Entire Collection of Important Modern Paintings, Statuary, Bronze, Articles of Vertu, Etc. Belonging to the Late Mr. LeGrand Lockwood*, 25. When Schendel's *Annunciation* was eventually donated by its buyer, a Mr. D. Barnes, to the Brooklyn Art Association in 1873, Horace Greeley had a somewhat different reaction to the work. "That's no angel," he exclaimed, "That woman weighs 150 pounds!" "A Reminiscence of the Association's Gallery," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 24 August 1874: 3.

⁷⁸ Yosemite became protected Federal land in 1864; however, The United States Army had already expelled the native Ahwaneechee people between 1851 and 1855.

reinforced Mead's missionary and maternal depiction of Columbus and Isabella. Once a visitor passed into Elmwood's art gallery, other artworks would have played similar supporting roles. For instance, an apparently unique bronze version of Randolph Rogers's sculpture *Isaac* (fig. 70) expressed, in sentimental terms, the paired ideas of children's obedience to their parents and parents' (specifically fathers') love for their children.⁷⁹ *Isaac's* kneeling posture and upturned face, full of trust and supplication, recall Rogers' earlier sculpture *Ruth Gleaning*, discussed at length in Chapter 4. Like *Ruth*, *Isaac* invites both admiration and sympathy. Whereas, *Ruth* places viewers in the position of her protector, Boas, *Isaac* invites viewers to imagine themselves as the boy's father, Abraham. Sentimental, nineteenth-century readings of the Book of Genesis stressed Abraham's anguish at the prospect of sacrificing his adored child. For instance, the theologian and historian Joel Tyler Headley wrote:

Oh, who can tell the pleading looks and still more pleading language, and the tears with which [Isaac] prayed his father to spare him! And who can tell the anguish of that paternal heart as it met each sob and agonizing cry with the stern language, "My son, God has chosen thee as the lamb for the burnt offering." Methinks, as fear gradually yielded to obedience, and the moving words, "*my mother, my mother,*" died away in indistinct murmurs, that Isaac did not close his eyes against the fatal blow, but opened them instinctively on his father, his only help in that fateful hour... as his hand put back the clustering ringlets from that fair young forehead, and his glance pierced the depths of those eyes fixed so lovingly but despairingly on him.⁸⁰

Roger's sculpture could almost be an illustration of Headley's sentimental narrative.

Looking into *Isaac's* sweet, childish face, and observing his utter helplessness, a nineteenth-century viewer would presumably have been filled with sympathetic feelings

⁷⁹ See Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 93, 96, 98, 207; Clark, *A Marble Quarry*, 208-11.

⁸⁰ Joel Tyler Headley, *The Sacred Mountains* (New York: C. Scribner, 1862): 39.

of parental love. The words from Genesis on the statue's pedestal, "Abraham, Lay Not Thy Hand Upon the Lad," which stay Abraham's hand, remind viewers of God's own loving, parental role.

In addition to *Isaac*, the Lockwoods' art collection included many other sentimental depictions of children, including a marble version of the infant Samuel praying by Emma Stebbins (1810-1882), a pair of marble kissing cherubs by James Henry Haseltine, and a wealth of genre paintings by artists including Christian-Edouard Boettcher (1818-1889), John George Brown (1831-1909), Seymour Joseph Guy (1824-1910), Henry Dillens (1812-1872), Karl Sohn (1805-1864), Meyer von Bremen (1813-1886), William Sydney Mount (1807-1868), Enoch Wood Perry 1831-1915), John Beaufrain Irving (1826-1877), Jules Schrader (1815-1900) and Hubert Salentin (1822-1910).⁸¹ As I discussed in Chapter 4, idyllic scenes of childhood innocence celebrated the bourgeois domestic sphere, whose primary function was to nurture and protect children. It was domesticity, many nineteenth-century Americans argued, that set civilized people apart from savages. Writing of "the domestic life of the Indians" in 1845, Sarah Hale, the editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, noted, "The charm, which many writers of romance and history have attempted to throw around savage life, is all illusory. The real forest life of the poor Indian is now known to be one of hardship and suffering."⁸² The accompanying illustration, by F.O.C. Darley (1822-1888), is a kind of anti-sentimental genre scene (fig.71). It depicts a Native American man and woman

⁸¹ See *The Entire Collection of Important Modern Paintings, Statuary, Bronze, Articles of Vertu, Etc. Belonging to the Late Mr. LeGrand Lockwood*.

⁸² [Sarah Josepha Hale], "Domestic Life Among the Indians," *Godey's Lady's Book*, 30 (June 1845): 252.

squatting in the dirt before their camp fire. The woman, her baby strapped to her back, pokes the fire with a stick while her husband stares glumly into space. At the base of liberal reformers' efforts to "civilize" American Indians in the 1860s was the idea that their salvation lay in adopting a western model of family life. Writing in 1863 of Native American girls who "had been educated in the families of missionaries, and in small schools taught by Christian ladies," the missionary William Graham effused, "When these educated young Indian women were married, their houses were homes of neatness, order, and Christian refinement, which contrasted strangely with the rude hovels of their neighbors, over which an uneducated squaw presided, or, rather, neglected to preside."⁸³

As Anne Bolin has correctly noted, the "significant juxtapositions" of artworks within Elmwood's gallery inflected the meaning of each one, reinforcing a dominant, overarching theme.⁸⁴ Bolin argued that this theme was didactic, and that LeGrand and Anne Lockwood arranged their art gallery to teach lessons of piety, self-restraint and obedience to their children. Seen as a whole, however, the artworks in the Lockwoods' collection seem to form a text that is less moralizing than triumphal. The Lockwoods' art collection, installed in and around their gallery at Elmwood or destined for that gallery, celebrated the westward spread of white domestic culture across the North American continent while presenting that spread as benign and divinely ordained. In particular, Elmwood's art gallery framed LeGrand Lockwood—art collector, railroad magnate and

⁸³ Rev. William Graham, A.M., "Frontier Sketches: IV. New Hope," *The Ladies' Repository*, 24 (July 1864): 411.

⁸⁴ Bolin, "Art and Domestic Culture," 138.

patron of exploration—as a missionary, motivated not by mercenary interests but by obedience to God’s will and paternal, Christian love.

LeGrand Lockwood’s Manifest Domesticity

The image of LeGrand Lockwood that emerges from documents published at the time of his death, in February 1872, is that of a principled businessmen and loving parent. His obituary in the *Norwalk Gazette* stressed his business acumen and civic-mindedness, but also his domestic nature. “Those who were admitted to the inner circle of his friendship, his home, and his hospitality can testify to the warmth and constancy of his domestic and social nature, that he was at once the strength, the light, and the joy of his home...”⁸⁵ In his funeral oration for Lockwood, the minister Ebenezer Platt Rogers noted that:

No business cares or anxieties were allowed to interfere with his family duties or pleasures, to separate him a moment from the most tender and genial companionship with his own. When he was engaged in the most gigantic and responsible undertakings, and was sustaining the most grave and far-reaching responsibilities, he would come home to his household with a cheerful smile and loving embrace, to be a child with his children, to read for their entertainment or instruction, to enter into all their personal plans and enjoyments, as if nothing outside his household claimed the slightest thought or attention. Home was emphatically the shrine of all his fondest affections, and there he loved to worship.⁸⁶

As Bolin has noted, such testimonies bear witness to Lockwood’s personal devotion to his home and family; however, they also attest to the importance of sentimental domesticity within the mid-nineteenth-century construction of moral, Christian manhood.

⁸⁵ “LeGrand Lockwood,” *Norwalk Gazette*, 27 February 1872: 1.

⁸⁶ E. P. Rogers, *Address Delivered at the Funeral of LeGrand Lockwood* (privately printed, 1872), 11.

It's likely that Rogers (a Presbyterian minister who held a pulpit in a Dutch Reformed church in Manhattan by 1872) was personally acquainted with Lockwood. He was also, however, a popular public speaker who specialized in funeral orations. His description of Lockwood does not differ markedly from his descriptions of Teunis Van Vechten, Francis Parsons, Samuel Bass, Jacob Ten Eyck or Samuel Bancroft Barlow, and his funeral orations for all these men echo the sentiments expressed in his published sermons on the religious duties of professional men, particularly *The Dangers and Duties of Men of Business*, which he wrote in 1855.⁸⁷ What Rogers presented in his funeral oration for Lockwood was not just an image of a virtuous individual, but a type—that of a moral, Christian businessman, driven not by acquisitiveness or the desire for power, but by a paternal interest in the well being of his family and his fellow men. In short, Rogers' funeral oration echoed the way Lockwood had already presented himself through his art collection.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ See the following by E.P. Rogers: *The Dangers and Duties of Men of Business* (Philadelphia: W.S. and A. Martien, 1855); *A Memorial of Hon. Francis Parsons* (Hartford, Conn.: privately printed, 1861); *Address in Memory of Jacob H. Ten Eyck* (New York: Bradstreet Press, 1872); *Funeral Address: In Memory of Samuel W. Bass, Jr.* (New York: privately printed, 1873); *Address Delivered at the Funeral Services in Memory of Samuel Bancroft Barlow, in the South Reformed Church, New York* (New York: privately printed, 1876). Rogers' descriptions of virtuous businessmen, motivated almost entirely by civic, religious and domestic concerns, seems particularly quaint in the rapacious social context of the 1870s.

⁸⁸ Maria Castellanos has argued that the image of white, American men as domestic protectors and patriarchs, which appears often in nineteenth-century sentimental novels, legitimized both westward expansion and the speculative adventures of the market, framing men's engagement in these activities as an extension of their domestic role. Maria Susana Castellanos, "Sentiment, Manhood, and the Legitimation of American Expansion, 1820-1860," Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 2000.

In the week before Lockwood's art collection was sold, on April 18 and 19, 1872, large crowds thronged the New York galleries where his paintings and sculptures were displayed, and newspapers published descriptions of the artworks on view. Nevertheless, the results of the sale were disappointing.⁸⁹ Lockwood's artworks were removed from their domestic setting and from one another. While his paintings were on view at the Leavitt Art Rooms, his sculptures were displayed at Clinton Hall, making it impossible for viewers to get any clear sense of what their meaning and value had been for Lockwood. Even if this were not the case, it is doubtful whether the results of the sale would have been significantly better. Lockwood's tastes were beginning to seem old-fashioned by the early 1870s. As French art gained ascendancy after the Civil War, sentimental genre scenes, Düsseldorf-style landscapes and ideal sculpture all lost popularity year by year. Furthermore, against the backdrop of Lockwood's recent downfall in the gold panic, the vast, ostentatious extent of his art and furniture collections must have appeared somewhat foolish. Many viewers must have associated his conspicuous consumption with the dangers of speculation and overweening ambition.

The diminished appeal of Lockwood's collection was exacerbated by the fact that a late-nineteenth-century celebration of "strenuous" masculinity was, by the 1870s, displacing the sentimental, mid-nineteenth-century ideal of domestic manhood that had been central to Lockwood's self-fashioning.⁹⁰ Men in the last quarter of the nineteenth

⁸⁹ For instance, Bierstadt's *The Domes of the Yosemite*, which Lockwood had purchased for \$25,000 six years earlier, sold for a mere \$5,100 "amid murmurs of surprise." *Norwalk Gazette* (Conn.), 23 April 1872, quoted in *LeGrand Lockwood (1820-1872)*, 22.

⁹⁰ See E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: basic Books, 1993), 222-46.

century increasingly defined themselves in opposition to the domestic sphere. In the popular imagination, the appeal of the American frontier began to lie precisely in the fact that it was not yet domesticated. The West became a mythic space of male regeneration, where the Primitive could be embraced and emulated rather than tamed and civilized. Like other sentimental art forms, ideal sculpture, which was symbiotically connected to the domestic sphere and relied for its effectiveness on a deeply felt, sympathetic response, began to be viewed as feminine.⁹¹ The links between masculine identity, sentimental domesticity, and westward expansion that Lockwood had made with his art collection at Elmwood just a few years earlier were simply less relevant and appealing in the cultural climate of the 1872 sale.

⁹¹ The coding of sentimental culture as feminine was so ingrained by the turn of the century that, in her 1896 book *Bringing Up Boys*, Kate Upton Clark included a chapter titled “Boys Versus Sentimentality,” in which she argued that “...the mind of the boy is naturally averse to dwelling upon the emotional aspects of life.” Clark, *Bringing Up Boys* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1896), 41.

SECTION III

LOOKING AND LONGING: TWO SCULPTURES BY RANDOLPH ROGERS IN TWO ARTISTIC INTERIORS

In this section, I will examine two thematically related sculptures by the American artist Randolph Rogers in two artistic interiors. *Nydia, the Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii*, modeled in 1855, appeared in the hall of Bloomfield and Clara Jessup Moore's Philadelphia home, and *Merope, the Lost Pleiad*, modeled in 1875, formed the centerpiece of the art gallery in Jennie McGraw Fiske's house in Ithaca, New York. Like all nineteenth-century ideal sculpture, *Nydia* and *Merope* are sentimental objects. Through their embedded narratives of love and loss, the sympathetic responses they evoke and their placement in domestic interiors, they contributed to a sentimental construction of the domestic sphere; however, as depictions of anxious, yearning, striving women, *Nydia* and *Merope* also struck dissonant notes within the harmoniously arranged, aesthetic interiors that housed them.

The 1870s marked a dramatic shift in the culture of the American domestic interior. The influence of the English Aesthetic Movement, the availability of mass-produced and imported goods, the rise of department stores, and the power of the press to quickly disseminate fashions contributed to the formation of a new idea, "interior decoration."¹ The home began to be seen as a work of art, and individual objects within

¹ A search of Cornell University's *The Making of America* full-text database of twenty-two American nineteenth-century periodicals revealed that the term "interior decoration" occurred only seven times in the period 1860-1870, fifty-six times between 1870 and 1880, and ninety-two times between 1880 and 1890. Cornell University, *The Making of America*, <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa> (accessed 13 June 2002).

it became parts of a larger ensemble—the artistic interior.² This new way of thinking offered the promise that one could assemble, from disparate objects carefully selected and arranged, a beautiful and fulfilled (literally full-filled) surrogate for the self.³

Artistic interiors also promised escape from the turmoil and stress of modern life.⁴

In his influential 1878 stylebook *The House Beautiful*, Clarence Cook described an ideal domestic interior as follows.

Here is the bit of Japanese bronze, or the Satsuma cup, or the Etruscan vase, or the Roman lamp, or the beautiful shell, or the piece of English or Venetian glass. Here too is the tumbler filled with roses, or the red-cheeked apple, or the quaintly painted gourd, or the wreath of autumn leaves. And here, too, must be the real candlesticks, with real candles to be lighted at twilight, before the hour for the lamps, in the hour of illusion and of pensive thought, casting a soft, wavering gleam over the down-looking picture and the mysterious cast, and bringing a few moments of poetry to close the weary, working day.⁵

² The British term “aesthetic interior” was rarely used by decorators, in part because Aesthetic Movement principals were only one contributing strain within the eclectic and flexible mix of styles known as “artistic” interior decoration. See Charlotte Gere and Lesley Hoskins, *The House Beautiful: Oscar Wilde and the Aesthetic Interior* (London: Lund Humphries, 2000), 110-11 and Marilyn Johnson, “The Artful Interior,” in Doreen Bolger Burke, et. al., *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 111-141.

³ Jean-Christophe Agnew has described the late nineteenth-century tasteful interior, assembled from purchased commodities, as a fantasy in which goods serve as “objects of reflection,” which both construct and confine the self. See Agnew, “A House of Fiction,” in *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920*, (Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, 1989), 136.

⁴ Mary Blanchard has argued that the popularity of aesthetic décor after the Civil War was due to a broader shift in the way Americans thought of the domestic sphere—from the home as a teacher of moral principles to the home as a therapeutic environment. See Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde’s America: Counterculture in the Gilded Age* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁵ Clarence Cook, *The House Beautiful: Essays on Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1878), 123. An early version of this book had been published in a series of articles for *Scribner’s Monthly* in 1876.

In Cook's imagined interior, objects possess almost magical power. Properly arranged and illuminated, they create a sheltered realm of comfort and aesthetic pleasure through their authenticity and inherent beauty.

Conversely, Cook acknowledged that the restlessness of desire ran like an invisible current through the seemingly restful artistic interior. In the 1881 edition of *The House Beautiful*, he summed up the reaction of a representative "pretty, young, American" reader, who complains:

But you talk about Cottier's and you publish the most provokingly pretty pictures of elegant and costly things, and you describe them and descant upon them, and *aggravate* us so... that we can't rest till we have tried to get things like them, and then we find they are far too dear... What makes you show them to us if you know we can't get them? What's the use?⁶

With its emphasis on accumulation and display, artistic décor was tightly bound to a culture of longing that increasingly permeated the lives of middle and upper-class Americans in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.⁷

In making his representative reader a woman, Cook followed a Gilded Age trend of attributing the prevailing avarice of the period to restless and dissatisfied American females. Beth Anne Fisher has linked this trend to widespread anxiety about woman's

⁶ Cook, *The House Beautiful*, 320.

⁷ T. J. Jackson Lears made the connection between the late nineteenth century American impulse toward "self-fulfillment through voracious acquisition" and a pervasive feeling of longing and loss. See Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 309. For a cogent study of how this longing was encouraged and exploited by merchants, see William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

nature and proper place.⁸ As their writings make clear, Moore and Fiske felt such anxiety personally. Although Mary Blanchard has argued that the rage for aesthetic décor in the United States was part of a feminine rebellion against the constraints of mid-nineteenth-century domesticity, the situation was not really so clear-cut.⁹ Like many other American women, Moore and Fiske continued to define themselves in traditional, domestic terms even as they embraced the latest trends in home decoration; however, each woman also used her statue in its artistic setting to express her ambivalent feelings about domesticity, aestheticism and female power.

As Grant McCracken has argued, domestic objects often communicate meanings that their creators and owners do not put into words.¹⁰ *Nydia* and *Merope* sentimentalized their aesthetic settings, but they also gave physical expression to the anxieties and longings that permeated domestic interiors during the transitional decade of the 1870s as the “cult of true womanhood” waned and the first generation of “New Women” prepared to emerge from colleges and universities.

⁸ See Beth Ann Fisher, “Fictions of Female Desire: Extravagant Women and Social Disorder in Gilded Age America,” Ph. D. dissertation (The University of Iowa, 2001).

⁹ Mary Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde’s America*.

¹⁰ Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption*.
213

CHAPTER 6
RANDOLPH ROGERS' NYDIA IN
BLOOMFIELD AND CLARA JESSUP MOORE'S HALL

Four photographs of the interior of Clara Jessup Moore's Philadelphia mansion appeared in the 1883 folio book *Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States with a Description of the Art Treasures Contained Therein*.¹ One of them shows Randolph Rogers' sculpture *Nydia, The Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii* struggling forward within the incongruously sumptuous artistic interior of Moore's entrance hall (fig. 72). Although the accompanying description is brief, the author confers special notice upon *Nydia*.

And if we leave [the reception room], and pass down the hall, in the midst of surroundings of massive old carved chests, cabinets, chairs, and mirrors, immense Japanese vases, marquetry tables, a Silenus by Rubens, and a marble statue of "The Blind Girl of Pompeii," by Randolph Rogers—very clever in pose and modeling it is—we shall, after crossing the dining room, reach the picture gallery, at the extreme end of the house.²

In the illustration too, *Nydia* stands out. Framed by the dark staircase behind it, the sculpture appears to be walking inward toward the dining room. Following her trajectory, a viewer's eye crosses the hall and settles on the bronze cast of the Venus de Milo, then passes on through the arched doorway to the dining room beyond. *Nydia* was equipped with a rotating, crank-operated pedestal and could easily have been turned to face any

¹ *Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States with a Description of the Art Treasures Contained Therein* (New York: D. Appleton, 1883). Arnold Lewis, James Turner and Steven McQuilin have identified George Sheldon as the anonymous author of *Artistic Houses*, and have also researched the history of its publication. See *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age* (New York: Dover Publications, 1987).

² *Artistic Houses*, 154-155.

direction.³ Given how well the statue works as a compositional device (anchoring the photograph, balancing the arched doorway on the left, and guiding the viewer's eye into the picture) it seems likely that it was oriented specifically for the photograph. The resulting image beckons the viewer to enter and stand in the deserted hall, a virtual visitor, surrounded by Moore's beautiful objects.

Using this photograph and others from *Artistic Houses* to illustrate her point, Joy Kasson argued that ideal sculpture in private homes functioned less as sentimental texts than as "backdrops for social interactions," affirming the wealth and status of their owners and the good taste and erudition of visitors who could recognize and appreciate them.⁴ Yet, as the photograph of Moore's hall makes clear, *Nydia* was a prominent feature of the room, where its size, color and emphatic gesture made it a natural focus of attention. Furthermore, *Nydia* was an icon, redolent with cultural associations that would have been familiar both to Moore's visitors and to the readers of *Artistic Houses*. By displaying *Nydia* in the most public area of her house, Moore deployed it as both a marker of status and a bearer of cultural meaning.

Moore probably acquired her version of *Nydia* during an 1863 trip to Italy with her husband, the paper manufacturer Bloomfield Moore.⁵ Although no written account

³ I am indebted to Christopher Johns for drawing my attention to Rogers' rotating pedestals.

⁴ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 23-25.

⁵ Moore's trip though Italy is documented in her writing. She wrote a number of poems there, including those published in three later anthologies, Clara Bloomfield Moore, *Miscellaneous Poems* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1875); Mrs. Bloomfield H. Moore, *Gondalina's Lesson* (London: C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1881); and Clara Bloomfield Moore, *The Warden's Tale; San Moritz; The Magdalene and Other Poems, New and Old* (London: Remington and Co., 1883).

survives, it was most likely Clara Moore, the active art collector in the family, who selected the sculpture. A fifth of *Nydia*'s recorded buyers were women, a figure high for the period.⁶ As Kathleen McCarthy has observed, American women at mid-century were only beginning to gain control over their own property and income.⁷ Female patronage extended beyond legal ownership, however. Although married women in the nineteenth century rarely purchased works of art under their own name, their role as cultural custodians within the home empowered them to select works of art that would be displayed there. Clara Moore herself later wrote, in her book *Sensible Etiquette of the Best Society*, that women should be educated to bring art and refinement into the

⁶ At least eleven of the forty-nine original buyers of the reduced version of *Nydia* listed in Rogers' accounts were women. The full sized version's price of \$1,700 to \$2,000 placed it beyond the means of even the most enterprising female patron at this time. The smaller version's cost of \$800 to \$1,000 made it more attainable. See Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 192-229. Only ten percent of the recorded buyers of Hiram Powers' extremely popular *Proserpine* were women, despite its lower cost of \$300 to \$450. A list of patrons for Powers' *Proserpine* can be found in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol.2, 188-204. Although Powers modeled *Proserpine* in 1843, he continued to sell copies throughout the period of *Nydia*'s popularity.

⁷ Kathleen D. McCarthy, *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art, 1830-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 4. See also Elizabeth Bowles Warbasse, *The Changing Legal Rights of Married Women* (New York, Garland, 1987). A telling illustration of women's disenfranchisement can be found in Rogers' journal entry for the account of Mrs. Judge T. L. Jewett of Steubenville, Ohio, who ordered a copy of *Nydia* in 1869. Beside her name and address, Rogers recorded the presence of a male witness. Under Ohio law at this time, Mrs. Jewett could not enter into a legal contract, and so could not commission the sculpture herself. She required the backing of a man, whose word on her behalf would be legally binding. The Ohio law forbidding married women to enter into contracts was not amended until 1887. See the Ohio "Married Women" act of 1887 in, *The State of Ohio, General and Local Acts Passed, and Joint Resolutions Adopted by the Sixty-seventh General Assembly and its Adjourned Sessions, Begun and Held in the City of Columbus, January 4, 1887* (Columbus: Columbian Printing Co., 1997), 132-34.

domestic sphere.⁸ Looking back on the middle decades of the nineteenth century in 1882,

F. Marion Crawford, the son of the American sculptor Thomas Crawford, recalled that,

[American men] soon found out... as it became easier to cross the ocean, that what they wanted was art, or, to speak accurately, the sensations produced by objects of art; and with scant time but unlimited money at their command, they handed over to wives and daughters, by tacit and very willing consent, the task of supplying the deficiency.⁹

Sculptors like Rogers were well aware that their success rested on pleasing the tastes, and addressing the interests, of wealthy American women.¹⁰

Rogers, a native of Ann Arbor, Michigan, had set up a studio in Rome in 1851. *Nydia*, which he modeled between 1853 and 1855, made his reputation and his fortune (fig.46). Almost immediately following its debut in marble in 1856, it became a popular icon, winning Rogers wide acclaim and many commissions in both the United States and Europe. Writing in 1920, the American artist David Maitland Armstrong recalled that the sculpture, “was a great popular success, particularly among Americans, who ordered

⁸ “...in the fierce competition of modern society the only class left in the country possessing leisure is that of women supported in easy circumstances by husband or father, and it is to this class that we must look for the maintenance of cultivated and refined tastes, for that value and pursuit of knowledge and of art for their own sakes which can alone save society from degenerating into a huge machine for making money, and gratifying the love of sensual luxury.” Harietta Oxnard Ward [Clara Jessup Moore], *Sensible Etiquette of the Best Society, Customs, Manners, Morals and Home Culture* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coats, 1878), 316.

⁹ F. M. Crawford, “False Taste in Art,” *The North American Review*, 135 (July 1882): 95.

¹⁰ Sarah Burns has described the many women who frequented artists’ studios, buying works of art in their husbands’ name as “mediators between raw money from the arenas of commerce and the pure, transcendent sphere of art.” See Sarah Burns, “The Price of Beauty: Art, Commerce and the Late Nineteenth-Century American Studio Interior,” in David C. Miller, ed. *American Iconology* (New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 1993), 230.

many replicas for their houses.”¹¹ Over the course of his career, Rogers made approximately \$70,000 selling as many as one hundred copies of *Nydia*, which he produced in two sizes, a life-sized 55-inch version and less expensive 36-inch reduction.¹² In 1863, Moore’s reduced version of *Nydia* would have cost 140 British pounds.¹³ Given skyrocketing war-time inflation, this amounted to roughly \$1,000 (the equivalent of about \$18,500 today) plus additional costs for the pedestal and for shipping the statue home. Clearly, ideal sculptures were luxury items. They were tangible evidence of wealth and also trophies of European travel; however, patrons were selective. American travelers following the established tourist route through Italy typically visited dozens of artists’ studios, purchasing only those artworks that they found personally

¹¹ D. M. Armstrong, *Day Before Yesterday: Reminiscences of a Varied Life*, (New York: privately published, 1920), 194-95, quoted in Joyce K. Schiller, “Nydia: A Forgotten Icon of the Nineteenth Century,” *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Art* 67 no.4 (1993): 42.

¹² See “Randolph Rogers, the Sculptor,” *Harper’s Weekly*, 6 Feb. 1892: 465. Like most sculptors of the period, Rogers first modeled his figures in clay. Once a statue was cast in plaster, he sold copies carved in marble by skilled Italian artisans. The number of copies Rogers produced is impossible to determine exactly. Accounts listed in Rogers’ journals include mention of fifty-two copies, but his journals do not cover the years before 1868. These works, together with five additional copies mentioned in letters or contemporary publications, are listed in Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 200-203. A number of other copies, including the one owned by Clara Jessup Moore, do not appear in any of Rogers’ records. These were either commissioned before 1868 or Rogers failed to note them in his journals. An 1869 publication refers to forty copies of the sculpture already existing in European and American collections. If this figure is accurate, it would bring the total number of copies close to one hundred, the number cited by Loreda Taft, in his *History of American Sculpture*, 159. See “Randolph Rogers,” *The Michigan University Magazine* (April 1869): 250. Rogers himself claimed to have produced 167 copies of *Nydia*. See *The Nutshell*, 13 (April/June 1927): 2, quoted in J. Falino’s and Erica E. Hirschler’s entry on *Nydia* in *The Lure of Italy*, 266.

¹³ Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 202.

affecting.¹⁴ Emma Huidekoper, an American tourist who visited Rome in 1866, wrote in her diary of a day spent touring studios.

At two we went to Mr. Strutt's studio; I do not care as much for his pictures as for some others. They are cold and flat; they want the light and warmth and atmosphere of Knebel. Next we went to Gibson's studio, to Miss Hosmer's also and I admired her "Puck" the perfection of mischief, life, fun and spirit. Her "Zenobia" is of course grand; also the "Cenci"... We proceeded to Rogers' where we saw the fine doors for the Capitol in Washington; a huge figure of a soldier for a monument in Cincinnati, and the lovely "Nydia," the blind girl of Pompeii. The lines of her brow, the perfect sightlessness of her eyes, the intense effort to see in the face was dreadful yet perfect. Next we went to Mosier's. [sic]¹⁵

That so many traveling Americans purchased copies of *Nydia* speaks to the great power this sculpture held for its audience. In order to understand the associations Moore's version of the sculpture carried with it into the domestic sphere, it is worth exploring how *Nydia* was perceived in the public arenas of Rogers' studio and the exhibition hall.

Among the flock of white marble maidens produced by American sculptors in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, *Nydia* is striking. Rogers' figure is neither still nor contemplative, but full of vigorous motion. The strain of intense concentration distorts her classical features. She is off-balance, caught in mid-step, and bent forward against a stiff wind that seems (judging by the chaotic swirl of her dress and hair) to blow in several directions at once. Her body, echoing the diagonal line of her firmly planted staff, thrusts forward with palpable urgency into the viewer's space. Her robe's entangling coils curl around her waist, her legs, and even her staff, signifying the wind that impedes her. Her robe is blown down below one breast, expressing her vulnerability

¹⁴ Gerds, "Celebrities of the Grand Tour," 66-93.

¹⁵ Diary entry for February 22, 1866 in *Emma Cullum Cortazzo, 1842-1918* (Meadville, Pennsylvania: E. H. Shartle, 1919), 307.

but also emphasizing her forward motion through the gale. Her distress and the excitement of her flight are tangible and compelling.

Nydia was a character in Edward Bulwer Lytton's popular historical romance *The Last Days of Pompeii*.¹⁶ The novel was inspired by the idea that in the darkness of a volcanic eruption, a blind person would have an advantage over those with sight. At the climax of the novel, Nydia (who is small, frail and a slave in addition to being blind) becomes, if only briefly, a leader. Bravely, she guides her beloved and her mistress to safety while Pompeii crumbles around them. In his sculpture, Rogers chose to depict the moment during their flight when Nydia is separated from her comrades and strains to hear their voices above the din. Desperate at first, she masters her panic as she sets out to find them. Nineteenth-century critics commonly cited the following passage in their discussions of the sculpture.

Guiding her steps, then, by the staff which she always carried, she continued, with incredible dexterity to avoid the masses of ruin that encumbered the path- to thread the streets- and unerringly (so blessed now was that accustomed darkness, so afflicting in ordinary life!) to take the nearest direction to the sea-side. Poor Girl! Her courage was beautiful to behold! And fate seemed to favor one so helpless! The boiling torrents touched her not, save by the general rain which accompanied them; the huge fragments of scoriae shivered the pavement before and beside her, but spared that frail form; and when the lesser ashes fell over her, she shook them away with a slight tremor, and dauntlessly resumed her course. Weak, exposed, yet fearless, supported by her one wish, she was the very emblem of Psyche in her wanderings; of Hope, walking through the Valley of the Shadow; of the Soul itself- lone but undaunted, amidst the dangers and snares of life!¹⁷

¹⁶ Edward Bulwer Lytton, *The Last Days of Pompeii* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834).

¹⁷ William J. Clark quotes this passage in his discussion of the sculpture. See Clark, *Great American Sculptures*, 75.

Clearly, the toppled Corinthian capital at the feet of Roger's *Nydia* symbolizes more than just the destruction of Pompeii. It also symbolizes the inversion and irony of the blind girl's situation, in which the high are brought low and she herself is elevated to a position of responsibility and leadership. The tension evident in Nydia's face reflects not only her concentration but the strain of assuming an unaccustomed role.

One thing that set *Nydia* apart, and contributed to the sculpture's popularity, was its unusual composition, which violated the precepts for ideal sculpture described by Nathaniel Hawthorne in his novel of 1860, *The Marble Faun*. In the first scene of the novel, Kenyon (a thinly veiled portrayal of Hawthorne's friend, the American sculptor William Wetmore Story) expresses his views on the subject as follows.

Flitting moments—imminent emergencies—imperceptible intervals between two breaths—ought not to be encrusted with the eternal repose of marble; in any sculptural subject there should be a moral standstill, since there must of necessity be a physical one. Otherwise it is like flinging a block of marble up into the air and, by some enchantment, causing it to stick there. You feel it ought to come down, and are dissatisfied that it does not obey the laws of nature.¹⁸

Hawthorne's sympathy for this point of view is evident later in the novel when he likens sculptors to poets or priests, whose works in marble should embody the timeless and the sacred.¹⁹

By contrast, Roger's *Nydia* emulated the formal qualities of the novel on which it was based. Reviewers of Bulwer Lytton's *The Last Days of Pompeii*, from its publication

¹⁸ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 135-6.

in 1834 through the 1880s, stressed its capacity to excite the reader and absorb her in its narrative.²⁰ The following review is typical.

Mr. Bulwer's pictures, in all his works that we have read, are too gaudy,- too highly wrought,- and therefore too much above nature,- and want the delightful repose and serene features which distinguish the great Scottish magician [Sir Walter Scott]. He is, nevertheless, an author of vivid and powerful fancy, of extensive learning and of high capacity to seize upon his readers and enchain them by fine imagery and impassioned eloquence.²¹

Despite such qualified praise, *The Last Days of Pompeii* was tremendously popular and almost universally known among upper and middle-class Americans throughout the nineteenth century. It was precisely Bulwer's ability to "seize" and "enchain" an audience that Rogers sought to imitate with his *Nydia*. In order to create the same sense of dramatic tension and excitement in his sculpture that readers would encounter at the climax of a novel, Rogers used the formal language of Hellenistic and Baroque sculpture. This was a gamble, because it forced him to charge a higher than usual price for each copy of *Nydia*. As Rogers commented in a letter of 1859, "The Nydia is a very expensive statue to execute in marble. In the first place it requires a very large block of marble, on account of the position of the figure. Then the flying drapery, deep cutting and undercutting make it a very laborious undertaking."²² As the great popularity of the

²⁰ Readers of romance novels throughout the mid-nineteenth century were most frequently assumed to be women. See for example John E. Edwards, "Novel Reading," *The Ladies' Repository* 3 (April 1843): 115-117. See also Helen Waite Papashvily, *All the Happy Endings: A Study of the Domestic Novel in America, the Women Who Wrote it and the Women Who Read it in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1956).

²¹ "Original Literary Notices," *The Southern Literary Messenger* 1 (January 1835): 241.

²² Letter to Henry Frieze, 3 April 1859, Randolph Rogers Papers, Michigan Historical Collection, Ann Arbor, Michigan, microfilmed by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Reel 501. A full-size version of Rogers' earlier sculpture *Ruth*

sculpture attests, Rogers' gamble paid off. Patrons were willing to pay a higher price for *Nydia*'s more dramatic composition. Josephine Young, an American girl who visited Rogers studio in 1855, wrote in her journal that,

...as soon as we entered the room, I was struck with the statue of the blind girl. Nydia is represented in the act of flying from Pompeii during the eruption. Her hand is raised to her ear, she was listening for Glaucus, Glaucus for whom she had sacrificed everything for [sic.]. The expression of pain on the countenance [was] admirably depicted and realized Bulwer's idea of this strange yet beautiful Thessalian. This was all I cared for and looked at there. I gazed and gazed, and never took my eyes from it till we got into the carriage and came home.²³

Young's response to the sculpture is telling. By depicting Nydia's highly wrought emotion and emphasizing the drama of her plight, Rogers effectively seized viewers' attention and evoked their sympathy.

Rogers' was not the only nineteenth century artist to depict Nydia, but he was the only one to show her during the climax of Bulwer's novel. Other examples by George Fuller, Louis Lang and Holme Cardwell stress the sweetness and vulnerability of the blind flower girl (figs.73-75). A reviewer for *The Crayon* described Lang's nearly contemporary painting *Blind Nydia* as, "most expressive of the feeling of the subject."²⁴ In it, Nydia seems almost to float forward, feeling her way tentatively with one graceful, outstretched hand. Fuller's painting, according to Sidney Dickinson, "...was started with the idea of presenting the helplessness of blindness."²⁵ His Nydia recedes, ghostlike, into

Gleaning, which was executed in a neo-classical style, cost only \$1,200 as opposed to the \$1,700 to \$2,000 Rogers charged for a full-sized version of *Nydia*.

²³ Josephine Churchill Young, *Journals of Josephine Young* (New York: privately printed, 1915), 144-47.

²⁴ "National Academy of Design, Second Notice," *The Crayon*, 6, no.6 (1859): 192.

²⁵ Sidney Dickinson, "George Fuller," *The Bay State Monthly* (June 1884): 376.

the shadows that constitute her world. Holme Cardwell's *Marble Group of Iona and Nydia* of 1868 depicts the blind girl clinging, submissive and vine-like, to the woman she would later lead to safety. By contrast, Rogers' *Nydia* surges forward with all the energy of Eugene Delacroix's dynamic personification of Liberty in his well-known painting *Liberty Leading the People* of 1831 (fig.76). Indeed, the pose of the two figures is strikingly similar.²⁶

The Italian sculptor Pietro Guarnerio (1842-1881) sought to capitalize on Roger's success with his own version of the subject, *Pompeii*, which was exhibited in 1876 at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia where Rogers' *Nydia* was also on display (fig.77). The art critic Earl Shinn (writing under his pen name Edward Strahan) compared the two works as follows.

In Mr. Roger's statue we see the sightless slave hurrying through the streets of Pompeii, never heeding the falling column that the disturbance has hurled at her very feet, and intently listening for every trace that will guide her to her Greek lover. The figure perfectly represents the act of walking by the sense of the ear, and not of the sight... The statue illustrating "The Last Days of Pompeii" by Guarnerio... forms a fitting *pendant* to that of Mr. Rogers, as showing another phase of the calamity. While the "Nydia" expresses above all the darkness and the perplexity of finding one's way throughout a city overwhelmed, the statue of the Italian sculptor expresses the suffocation and the lethargy. His figure of the terrified victim is huddled as if in a corner, crouching, hesitating and afraid to move. If she steps, it is with the shifting and doubling pace of the hunted creature, who feels the toil closing around her.²⁷

²⁶ Delacroix was well-known and admired in the United States by 1855. Although *Liberty Leading the People* does not appear to have been reproduced as a print until 1885, it was on public view at the Galerie de Luxembourg after 1831, when it was purchased by the French government. Rogers may well have seen it there.

²⁷ Strahan [Shinn], *The Masterpieces of the Centennial International Exhibition Illustrated*, vol. 1, 299-302.

Unlike Guarnerio's hapless victim, or the many other depictions of Nydia that date from this period, Roger's *Nydia* has agency. As Shinn perceived, not only did the sculpture excite and captivate its audience, it offered an active rather than a passive model of female heroism. In this respect, *Nydia* differed from the vast majority of nineteenth century depictions of women in marble, which as Kasson noted, were characterized by "sentimental narratives of female powerlessness."²⁸ Whereas viewers contemplating Hiram Powers' celebrated *Greek Slave* could admire her Christian faith and stoic composure in the face of impending disaster, viewers of Rogers' *Nydia* could experience the vicarious thrill of a woman acting assertively. The fact that Nydia's power was circumstantial, temporary, and ultimately for the benefit of others made it feminine and acceptable.

Published accounts of another exhibition convey a sense of how audiences responded to Rogers' *Nydia* in a public setting. Before arriving in Ann Arbor, the copy of the sculpture destined for the University of Michigan's art gallery was displayed at the Young Men's Hall in Detroit for several weeks, beginning on April 10, 1862.²⁹ A "large and fashionable assembly" gathered for the unveiling, which was preceded by music, a lecture on the history of art and a reading from the relevant portion of Bulwer Lytton's text. Following this, a curtain was lifted to reveal the sculpture displayed on a stage at the front of the hall. The audience responded with "thunderous applause," after which they regarded *Nydia* in silence for several minutes as another piece of instrumental music was

²⁸ Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 142.

²⁹ The University of Michigan's copy of *Nydia* is the only version I have found record of which was originally purchased for public, rather than domestic, display.

played. Given the late hour of the unveiling (some time after 8:00 in the evening), the sculpture would almost certainly have been illuminated with gas footlights, probably in a darkened auditorium.³⁰ This lighting would have thrown the sculpture into high relief, increasing the drama of Rogers' composition. Following a brief, concluding sermon on the spiritual aspects of art, viewers were encouraged to leave their seats and examine the sculpture at close range.³¹ The church-like atmosphere of the unveiling, and the audience's decorous and controlled behavior, reflect the new sacralization of art in American culture. As Lawrence Levine has argued, paintings and sculptures were increasingly aligned with religion after mid-century. Like religion, art demanded bodily control as an outward sign of reverence.³²

The enthusiastic response of *Nydia's* audience in Detroit was conditioned, at least in part, by the review of the sculpture that appeared in *The Detroit Free Press* earlier that day. The anonymous reviewer informed readers of *Nydia's* significance.

The *Nydia* of Rogers has the distinguishing merit over many other statues of being entirely original, the realization of the vision conceived by the sculptor through the beautiful descriptions of the poet-novelist. It differs also from most works in marble in expressing *strong emotion*, and in its ability to draw forth a corresponding feeling in the beholder.

³⁰ By the 1860s, most small theaters had centrally controlled gas lighting. Although the Young Men's Hall would almost certainly have had gas footlights, it's doubtful that more expensive, and potentially dangerous spotlights would have been installed in this multi-purpose venue. For a contemporary, fictional description of a public hall being used for an evening performance of tableaux vivants, solely illuminated by gas footlights, see Katherine F. Williams, "Tableaux Vivants," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 27 (October, 1863): 698-704.

³¹ "Unveiling of the Statue *Nydia*," *Detroit Free Press*, 11 April 1862, 1.

³² Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 149-51.

In contrast to, “the statues that fill the cities of the old world... which are for the most part devoted to perfection in form and outline, and are calculated to give delight to our sensuous nature, without stirring any moral sentiment,” the reviewer explained that *Nydia* evoked *sympathy* in the viewer.³³ In this way, he identified *Nydia* as a sentimental object. The feelings of sympathy the sculpture evoked would, he implied, prevent its being perceived as an erotic or decorative object, defined by “form and outline” rather than moral and emotional content. Nineteenth-century audiences, and women in particular, would (like Josephine Young) have sought to identify with the subject depicted in Rogers’ sculpture and experience her emotions sympathetically.³⁴

For most of the men and women who attended *Nydia*’s unveiling in Detroit, the experience was a new one; however, the music, narrative and theatrical trappings surrounding the sculpture were probably already familiar to them from *tableaux vivants*. These parlor performances featured varying numbers of (predominantly female) players who posed in dramatic attitudes before an audience, usually accompanied by music, stage lighting and interpretive readings. They were in much vogue among middle and upper-class Americans during the second half of the nineteenth century. Even the subject of Rogers’ sculpture would have been familiar, as *Nydia* was a frequently performed character in tableaux. By 1882 Rogers’ version of this subject was so well known that

³³ “The Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii,” *Detroit Free Press*, 10 April 1862: 1.

³⁴ Recently, Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler have challenged the almost exclusive focus on women that has characterized scholarship on sentimentalism. I agree that men participated fully in nineteenth-century sentimental culture. Men, like women, experienced intense emotions in response to ideal sculptures; however, I maintain that women, to a much greater extent than men, *identified* with the female characters depicted in these sculptures, as they did with female characters in novels. Chapman and Hendler, eds. *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture*, 2-16.

one manual of tableaux suggested that a “living statue” of Nydia could simply be copied from “Rogers’ celebrated sculpture.”³⁵ Such manuals, which were published by the dozen during the second half of the nineteenth century, claimed to cultivate, “...a love for the beautiful in art, poetry and music, and awaken a quicker sense of the grace and elegance of familiar objects, pictures, statuary, etc.”³⁶ By observing *tableaux vivants*, Americans could practice correct ways of viewing. Like ideal sculptures, these sentimental performances encouraged refined behavior and sympathetic bonding within the home.

For the women who performed *tableaux vivants*, the experience must have profoundly affected the way they viewed ideal sculptures. Performers of the popular “statuary tableaux” coated themselves with cocoa butter and powdered chalk, wrapped themselves in white muslin, mounted pedestals and assumed the poses of real or imagined ideal statues. Even ordinary tableaux required performers to assume a fixed pose and hold it for a minute or more. Such performances encouraged a sense of bodily empathy with works of art. The nineteenth-century art theorist Hippolyte Taine wrote, “... it is sympathy or involuntary semi-imitation which renders the work of art possible; without this it is not understood, not born.”³⁷ By placing themselves in the positions of sculptures, women could more successfully identify with the subjects of these works,

³⁵ *Dick’s Parlor Exhibitions* (New York: Dick & Fitzgerald, 1882), 43. For further references to tableaux involving Nydia, see “Godfrey’s White Queen,” *The Living Age*, 143 (25 October 1879): 210, and Willa Cather, *One of Ours* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1922), 80. An illustration of *Nydia* being performed as a tableau appears in *The Quarterly Illustrator* 2 (1894): 97.

³⁶ Tony Denier, *Parlor Tableaux; or Animated Pictures* (New York: Samuel French, 1869), v.

³⁷ Quoted in James D. Phelan, “The Old World Judged by the New,” *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* 17 (April 1891): 480.

understanding them by "being" rather than "seeing." If, as Karen Halttunen has argued, the popularity of tableaux vivants attests to a new emphasis on theatricality within the late nineteenth-century domestic sphere, it also attests to the continuing importance of sentiment.

Tableaux vivants also allowed women (both in the audience and on the stage) to identify with female characters in moments of power. Mary Chapman has written that tableaux, "...contributed to nineteenth-century constructions of women as silent and immobile," constructions which women "resisted" to varying degrees.³⁸ While this was true in some cases, tableaux such as J. H. Head's "Joan of Arc at the Siege of Orleans" hardly support Chapman's argument. Head describes the scene as follows:

[Joan's] position is, near the cannon, the right foot on top of the ramparts or cannon, the left a few inches lower, on a box placed behind the ramparts; the body bent forward; right hand grasping a sword and stretched out at arms length toward the ceiling, the left holding the banner, which is held at the side of the body, the head turned to the troops at the right; eyes directed partially to them; countenance animated.³⁹

Like *Nydia*, Head's tableau calls to mind Dealcroix's heroic *Liberty Leading the People*. Martha Banta noted that "heroines of history, literature, and legend" were the most popular subjects for tableaux.⁴⁰ Not surprisingly, these were also the most popular subjects of ideal sculpture.

³⁸ Mary Chapman, "'Living Pictures': Women and Tableaux Vivants in 19th-Century American Fiction and Culture," 27. For a more nuanced reading of tableaux vivants see Robin Veder, "Tableaux Vivants: Art Reproductions in the Flesh," in James Drobnick and Jennifer Fisher, eds. *Living Display: Rethinking Human Exhibition* (forthcoming, University of Chicago Press).

³⁹ Head, *Home Pastimes*, 181.

⁴⁰ Martha Banta, *Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 642.

During the period when *Nydia* was on view in Detroit, the crisis of the Civil War was omnipresent. In the *Detroit Free Press*, headlines about battles surround the review of the sculpture and the report of its unveiling. A story titled “Devotion of a Wife” appears near a classified advertisement urging readers to view *Nydia* at the Young Men’s Hall. The story tells of a woman who rescued a young man from the battlefield.

Finding her husband determined to go, she says, “I go with you to take care of you and help you fight the battles.” She dressed herself in the true Bloomer costume, and with mini rifle in hand she went into the fight, and was in three battles- the last at Newberne. When finding her husband missing, she went in pursuit and in her travels found young Smith lying in low ground and apparently dead, but on turning him over found that he had life. She gave him some cordials, he revived, and she sent for an ambulance and carried him to the hospital.⁴¹

Such narratives of female heroism were common in the popular press throughout the years of the war.⁴² They are echoed in Rogers’ depiction of *Nydia* rescuing her beloved from the ruins of Pompeii. Whether true or fictional, these stories held an obvious appeal for American women, many of whom were anxious to play a more active role in the war. Clara Moore was one such woman. In 1863, she wrote a poem expressing her longing for a more active role in the war effort.

⁴¹ “Devotion of a Wife,” *Detroit Free Press*, 17 April 1862, 4.

⁴² See also Harriet Beecher Stowe, “House and Home Papers,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, 14 (July, 1864), 94. In this story, one character exclaims, “I have heard of certain fair ladies wishing that they were men, that they might show with what alacrity they would sacrifice everything on the altar of their country; life and limb would be nothing; they would glory in wounds and bruises, they would enjoy loosing a right arm, they wouldn’t mind limping about on a lame leg the rest of their lives *if only they were John or Peter*, if only they might serve their dear country.” Recently, DeAnne Blanton and Lauren M. Cook have discussed women’s covert participation as soldiers in *They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002). See also Barbara Cutter, *Domestic devils, Battlefield Angels: The radicalism of American Womanhood 1830-1865* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), 154-71.

What shall I do for thee, my land,
In this thy hour of need?
Thy cry goes up unto the skies,
And shall I take no heed?

Shall all my nights be spent in rest,
And all my days in ease,
While thousands sleep in tented fields
Beneath the wintry breeze?⁴³

Another significant factor that contributed to *Nydia*'s popularity, with women in particular, was its source in a popular historical romance. Such novels were consumed in great numbers by middle and upper-class women in the nineteenth century. As many feminist and literary scholars have remarked, novels allowed women readers to experience vicarious pleasure through identification with strong female characters.⁴⁴ Cultural authorities commonly described novels as frivolous or even corrupting, precisely because of their capacity to absorb readers in a separate, imaginative world. As one writer commented in an 1857 issue of *Putnam's Monthly*,

[Novels] exert a bad influence on growing minds, especially on feminine minds, by nature inclined to an overbalance on the side of feeling. They excite the imagination, arouse morbid emotions and aspirations, and so render them unfit for the homely duties and aims of common life... young women, being generally great novel readers and strongly impressed by what they read, are apt unconsciously to copy the types of womanhood therein set forth... How many girls, so influenced, have learned absolutely to *cultivate* a passionate temperament, as something rather fine than pitiable, and have clenched their hands, uttered fierce words,

⁴³ Mrs. Bloomfield H. Moore, "My Country," in *Gondalina's Lesson*, 171-72. The poem is dated 1863.

⁴⁴ See Tompkins, *Sensational Designs*; also Mary Anne Schofield, "Romance Subversion: Eighteenth Century Feminine Fiction," in *Sexuality, the Female Gaze, and the Arts* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1992), 75-86. In her study of late twentieth-century readers of sentimental romance novels, Janice Radway concluded that women read them for emotional fulfillment and release. See Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

rushed about the house, knocked about the things nearest them, in a fashion most dismaying to their quieter relatives and friends...⁴⁵

With few exceptions, nineteenth-century sculptors drew their literary subjects from poetry.⁴⁶

Rogers' conceived his *Nydia* in 1853, just as the cultural status of some novels was beginning to improve, and his depiction of Bulwer's heroine in white Carara marble conferred a mantle of legitimacy on both the novel and its readers.⁴⁷ Drawing his subject from a popular novel also made Rogers' statue accessible to a wider audience, including women and middle-class viewers. While *Nydia* looked "classical," it didn't require that its audience have a classical education. Rogers' choice of *The Last Days of Pompeii* as the source of his figure was significant for another reason. Like other historical romance novels, it presented a particular vision of history that ran counter to the prevailing mode of great men and military battles. In its careful attention to the details of Roman domestic life, Bulwer's novel allowed ordinary people, and women in particular, to insert themselves imaginatively into the classical past, affording them a foothold in what served as a shared basis for "high" culture in Europe and America. At the same time, it

⁴⁵ "Novel Reading," *Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art*, 10 (September 1857): 384-386.

⁴⁶ See William H. Gerdts, *American Neo-Classical Sculpture*, 120-121. For a catalogue of nineteenth-century American sculpture with literary themes see Margaret Farrand Thorp, *The Literary Sculptors* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1965).

⁴⁷ For discussions of the history of reading in America, see David Paul Nord, "Religious Reading and Readers in Antebellum America," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 15 (Summer 1995): 241-271 and David D. Hall, "Readers and Reading in America: Historical and Critical Perspectives," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 103 (October 1993): 337-357.

domesticated that past, infusing it with nineteenth-century ideas about gender and domesticity, and making those ideas seem timeless and natural.⁴⁸

One last factor that undoubtedly influenced *Nydia*'s popularity was the allure of Pompeii itself—a popular destination for American travelers on the Grand Tour. Walking through the ancient city in 1860, twenty-one-year-old Kate Gansevoort of New York made note in her journal of all the places that appeared in Bulwer's novel. After looking rapturously at the jewelry that had been recovered from the ruins, she went shopping to buy souvenir jewelry for herself.⁴⁹ A similar impulse may have motivated many of *Nydia*'s buyers. Tourists following the established route through Italy arrived in Rome after visiting Herculaneum and Pompeii. A new, systematic excavation of the cities had begun in 1860, and Rogers joked that visitors to his studio sometimes mistook *Nydia* for one of the plaster casts made of victims' bodies, which were on view in the Museum of Antiquities in Pompeii.⁵⁰ With the memory of the ruined cities fresh in their minds, tourists must have found Rogers' sculpture particularly moving. For those who could afford such a purchase, *Nydia* served as a fitting memento of their journey, making their experience more meaningful by connecting it to a sentimental narrative of ancient Rome. In 1898, after ideal sculpture had fallen out of fashion, Eliot Gregory recalled sardonically that,

⁴⁸ Rogers' wife, Rosa Gibson Rogers, later recounted that her husband modeled *Nydia* shortly after they met. It is provocative to think of Rogers choosing a subject so appealing to women during the initial stages of his courtship. See Rosa Gibson Rogers' biographical notes, Randolph Rogers Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁹ Kenney, "Kate Gansevoort's Grand Tour," 351-52.

⁵⁰ "Editor's Drawer," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 62 (May, 1881): 960.

[American] tourists also developed a taste for large marble statues, “Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii” (people read Bulwer, Byron and the Bible then) being in such demand that I knew one block in lower Fifth Avenue that possessed seven blind Nydias, all life-size, in white marble, a form of decoration about as well adapted to those scanty front parlors as a steam engine or a carriage and pair would have been.⁵¹

Clara Moore

Clara Sophia Jessup was born in 1825 in Philadelphia, the daughter of a professional mineralogist.⁵² She attended several exclusive boarding schools before marrying (against her family’s wishes) Bloomfield Moore, a Quaker, when she was seventeen. Despite her parents’ initial objections to her marriage, her father and husband soon became business partners in the flourishing paper manufacturing firm of Jessup & Moore. By the time he died in 1878, Bloomfield Moore had amassed a fortune of more than seven million dollars. In many ways, Clara Moore typified a woman of her class and generation. She was a newly rich society woman who became an active philanthropist during the Civil War, when she served as Corresponding Secretary of the Women’s Pennsylvania Branch of the United States Sanitary Commission. After the war, she helped found an orphan asylum and a veteran’s home in Philadelphia and contributed both money and artworks to museums, libraries and other cultural institutions.

Shortly after her marriage, Moore began writing poetry and short stories for newspapers and magazines. Over the next thirty years, she wrote three volumes of poetry,

⁵¹ Eliot Gregory, *Worldly Ways and Byways* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1898), 246.

⁵² See the entry for Clara Sophia Jessup Bloomfield Moore in *American National Biography* vol.15, 741-42 and “Mrs. Bloomfield Moore is Dead,” *Philadelphia Evening Telegraph*, 5 January 1899: 2.

a novel, several children's stories and an etiquette book. Her writing, which is very much in the sentimental vein, dwells on romantic love, Christian piety and domestic life.

Moore was a diehard supporter of the rhetoric of separate spheres. She advocated higher education for women to aid them in their primary roles as wives and mothers. Women, she believed, should exert influence from within the home rather than power outside it.

"What do women want with votes," she asked, "when they hold the scepter of influence with which they can control even votes, if they wield it aright?"⁵³

Recently, a number of scholars have rightly challenged the notion that actual, separate public and domestic spheres existed in the nineteenth century.⁵⁴ Indeed, the elaborate interior of Moore's house was symbiotically related to both imperialism and market capitalism. Nevertheless, the *idea* of a separate domestic sphere, hermetically sealed off from the corrupting, dog-eat-dog worlds of business and politics, was powerful and pervasive in the nineteenth century. Like many women of her class, Clara Moore was deeply invested in maintaining this idea because she had formed her identity, and her sense of her own power, upon it. She wrote,

Home is by heritage a woman's kingdom; there at least she reigns supreme; and, surely, to embellish that home, and to make happy the lives of the near and dear ones who dwell within it, is a task of no little honor, rewarded by no scant meed of gratitude and praise.⁵⁵

After Bloomfield Moore's death, Clara Moore allowed nothing in her house to be altered. Even a temporary wooden platform, which had been set up overlooking the

⁵³ Moore, *Sensible Etiquette of the Best Society*, 152.

⁵⁴ See, in particular, *No More Separate Spheres!*

⁵⁵ Moore, *Sensible Etiquette of the Best Society*, 353.

billiard room for a concert shortly before his fatal bout of pneumonia, was left standing.⁵⁶

In this way, she continued to use her house to define herself in sentimental, domestic terms—now as a grieving widow. Because its decorative scheme remained unchanged after 1878, both *Artistic Houses* and the catalogues and newspaper accounts of Clara Moore's 1892 estate auction provide a record of the way the house would have appeared to visitors in that year.

Clara and Bloomfield Moore's Hall

The Philadelphia architects Frank Furness (1839-1912) and George W. Hewitt (1841-1916) designed the Moores' mansion in 1872.⁵⁷ It was located at 510 South Broad Street, a fashionable neighborhood of Philadelphia. At the time the Moores hired them to design their new home, Furness and Hewitt were already well-known for their fanciful and eclectic buildings, one of which, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, was rising less than a mile away on the same street. Unfortunately, the single extant photograph of the exterior of the Moores' house was taken after a later architect had removed Furness and Hewitt's polychromatic, asymmetrical façade. Still, some sense of the impression it made can be gathered from the reaction of the architect Louis Sullivan (1856-1924), who

⁵⁶ See "Eager Buyers Crowd the Broad Street Mansion of Mrs. Bloomfield Moore," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, 29 November 1892: 7.

⁵⁷ George E. Thomas, *Frank Furness: The Complete Works* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), 63, 168-169. Arnold Lewis, James Turner and Steven McQuilin mistakenly attributed this building to Charles M. Burns, who redesigned the façade in 1900. See Lewis, Turner and McQuilin, *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age*, 62.

called the house a “flower by the roadside.”⁵⁸ As late as 1902, *King’s Views of Philadelphia* described it as, “unquestionably the handsomest residence on South Broad Street, and one of the finest in the city.”⁵⁹ Inside and out, the Moore’s house resembled an elaborate jewel box for the display of their artfully arranged possessions.

The catalogue of Clara Moore’s estate sale described her house as follows.

Elegant 3 1/2-story, brown and freestone residence, with mansard roof, containing 36 rooms, viz: In the basement- Kitchen; Laundry; Servants’ Hall; Billiard Room and Cellar; 1st floor, Library, solid Walnut finish, with elaborately carved mantle and French plate mirror, Lois XIII Bronze Chandeliers; Drawing Room, finished in white and gold, with cut-glass chandeliers; Reception Room finished in Walnut, Tennessee marble mantle, open fireplace and Barbidienné Bronze Gas fixtures; Dining Room, elegant Walnut mantel, carved figures, heavy Walnut wainscoting, Hardwood floors and bay windows on side; large pantry; Art Gallery in rear of Dining Room, heavy Walnut wainscoting, Hardwood floor and Skylight; handsome tile vestibule; large Hall, with half-pace stairway, all solid Walnut finish. 2nd floor Writing Room, three Dressing Rooms, three Chambers, three Bath-Rooms; very large closets for each room and large Hall; 3rd Floor, three Bed-Rooms, three Bath-Rooms, Sewing-Room and Dressing-Room; 4th floor, six Servant’s Rooms and two large Bed-Rooms. This residence has one of the most finely finished interiors, having every modern appointment for convenience and comfort, including the latest improved sanitary plumbing, etc.⁶⁰

As Kenneth Ames has argued, spaces within middle and upper class American homes became increasingly specialized over the course of the nineteenth century, and the domestic life these spaces ordered and contained became increasingly ritualized and self-conscious.⁶¹ The proliferation of specialized rooms in Moore’s house bears witness to this trend. Their arrangement is also telling, with service areas like the kitchen, laundry

⁵⁸ Thomas, *Frank Furness: The Complete Works*, 63.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Lewis, Turner and McQuilin, *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age*, 62.

⁶⁰ *Elegant Mansion and Handsome Furniture of Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, 510 South Broad Street*, (Philadelphia: M. Thomas & Sons, Auctioneers, 1892).

⁶¹ Ames, *Death in the Dining Room*, 8.

and servants' rooms placed out of sight in the basement and on the upper floor. A Fire Insurance survey of the house reveals that it had a back stairway, allowing servants to bypass the hall and the formal stairs completely.⁶² This segregation of formal and utilitarian spaces within the home mirrored the social segregation of servants and served within the household. Late nineteenth-century upper-class homes were designed to emphasize ritual, hierarchy and control, and this was nowhere more evident than in the hall.

Although servants and delivery men would have entered Moore's house through a separate service entrance (probably at the back), all other visitors passed through the front door and into a tiled vestibule before entering the large, central hall. The function of the vestibule was partly utilitarian. It prevented rain, snow and cold air from passing directly into the house; however, it also functioned symbolically to emphasize the separation of the home from the street, the private from the public sphere. In addition, the vestibule increased the drama of entering the house by revealing the interior in stages, through a planned progression of increasingly large and elaborate spaces.⁶³ Emerging from the vestibule, a visitor would have found herself standing with much the same view as that shown in the illustration for *Artistic Houses*. Despite Marilyn Johnson's assertion that artistic interiors, "depended upon the intricate balancing of all components so that no one element would be visually dominant," *Nydia* must have immediately attracted the attention of anyone entering Moore's hall. The sculpture stood in front and slightly to the right of the entrance, framed by the dark wood of the staircase. Decorators in the second

⁶² Franklin Fire Insurance Survey, dated 25 July 1876, policy 47801, excerpted in Thomas, *Frank Furness: The Complete Works*, 169.

⁶³ Ibid. 244n9.

half of the nineteenth century avoided the extensive use of white in public areas of the home.⁶⁴ Amidst Furness and Hewitt's polychromatic decorative scheme, *Nydia* constituted the largest and most noticeable area of white. In the morning, when Moore typically received visitors, sunlight would have streamed into the hall from the vestibule, illuminating the sculpture.⁶⁵

In his influential essays on interior decoration, Clarence Cook described the hall as the place where first impressions were made and managed.⁶⁶ Through their decorative scheme for the Moores' hall, Furness and Hewitt created an impression of splendor and power restrained by good taste.⁶⁷ Wedding ornament to structure, they designed the cruciform gasoliers, and the gothic-revival banister and newel post. They decorated the moldings and ceiling beams with stylized, aesthetic calla lilies and stenciled a head-high frieze of these flowers on the wall beside the stairs.⁶⁸ Painted blue and white, the lilies were no doubt intended to offset Clara Moore's collection of Chinese porcelain, which

⁶⁴ Bridget A. May, "Advice on White: an Anthology of Nineteenth-Century Design Critics' Recommendations," *Journal of American Culture* 16, no.4 (1993): 19-24.

⁶⁵ Moore's house faced east. She stated her preference for morning calls in *Sensible Etiquette*, 55.

⁶⁶ Clarence Cook, "Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks VI," *Scribner's Monthly*, 12 (October 1876): 796.

⁶⁷ My description of Moore's hall is taken from *Artistic Houses*, 153-156, and *Elegant Mansion and Handsome Furniture of Mrs. Bloomfield Moore*, 24-26.

⁶⁸ Lilies were favorite flowers of the aesthetic movement, because of both their decorative shape and their ancient association with renewal and re-birth. In the nineteenth century they also symbolized "magnificent beauty," making them a singularly appropriate motif for the Moores' hall. See Barbara Buehler Lynes, ed. *Georgia O'Keefe and the Calla Lily in American Art*, exh. cat. (Santa Fe: Georgia O'Keefe Museum, 2002), and Sarah Josepha Hale, *Flora's Interpreter: Or, the American Book of Flowers and Sentiments* (Boston: B.B. Mussey, 1847), 35.

was scattered around the room on shelves and tables. The floor and stairs were covered with hand-woven, English Axminster carpet in an abstract, floral pattern. Opposite the stairs, a potted plant grew in a painted French jardinière. Large Japanese porcelain vases stood on the floor, and antique weapons, arranged to form a coat of arms, hung above the entrance to the dining room, flanked by two large, bust-length portraits which, if they did not represent the Moores' actual ancestors, at least gave the impression that they did.

Among the works of art on display were a number of bronze sculptures. These included French copies of the Venus de Milo and the Augustus of Prima Porta, and a Roman statue of Narcissus purportedly retrieved from the ruins of Pompeii. Like *Nydia*, these statues referenced the classical past, introducing it as one element in the complex mosaic of objects from various nations and historical periods that made up the décor of the hall. All three sculptures also expressed the Moores' particular interests—the Augustus symbolized Imperial power, the Venus de Milo was a virtual mascot of the Aesthetic Movement, and the Narcissus (aside from being a souvenir of the Moores' journey through Italy) recalled the Greek myth in which a boy loses himself in contemplation of his own beauty (the irony of this last sculpture was perhaps lost on its owners).⁶⁹ Although these bronzes were, like *Nydia*, large, three-dimensional works of art, their placement near the walls and their darker color made them less obtrusive.

⁶⁹ Reproductions of the "Venus de Milo," a second century BCE Hellenistic sculpture found in 1820 on the Greek island of Melos, were widely available in parian, plaster, marble and bronze by the 1870s. Images of "artistic" interiors often feature large or small-scale copies of the statue. See for example, Eastman Johnson's painting, *Not at Home* (c.1873, Brooklyn Museum of Art) and M.E.W. Sherwood, "Certain New York Houses," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 65 (October 1882): 680.

Bronzes were also far less valuable than marbles, and their status as fine art was more contested.⁷⁰

Four large mirrors hung on the walls of the Moores' hall, one measuring nine by seven feet. Antique, brocade-covered chairs and a settee stood here and there, one (if the photograph from *Artistic Houses* is accurate) placed quite close to *Nydia*. These appear marginally more comfortable than the hard bench Clarence Cook recommended for "messenger boys, book agents, the post-man, and the bereaved lady who offers us soap" (i.e. the sort of people who would be kept waiting in the hall); nevertheless, the hall was designed more to impress than to comfort the Moores' visitors.⁷¹ In it, they were screened through the elaborate social ritual of calling.

Nineteenth-century men and women created and maintained hierarchical social networks through the practice of calling. In its basic outline, this complex ritual required a caller to give her card to a servant in the hall, who would deliver it to the lady of the house. If the lady was "at home," (i.e. receiving visitors) the caller might be sent away, met in the hall, or ushered into the parlor. If the lady were not "at home," the visitor would leave her card in a specially designated receptacle before leaving. The entrance to Moore's hall was flanked by two carved Venetian stands, on which stood elaborate

⁷⁰ Earl Shinn commented in 1876 that, whereas bronze statues were relatively easy to reproduce, works in marble, "where a false blow of the hammer would lay the beautiful image low at once," were more difficult to make, and therefore more precious. See Strahan [Shinn], *The Masterpieces of the Centennial International Exhibition*, 58. Until nearly the end of the nineteenth century, works in marble also enjoyed a status above those in bronze because the color and translucency of the material made them seem less corporeal and more spiritual in nature. See Hawthorne, *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, vol.2, 24.

⁷¹ Clarence Cook, "Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks VI," 798.

porcelain and cloisonné calling card receivers. More card receivers and stands, five in all, stood scattered about the interior of the hall. Both men and women paid calls and left cards, but calling was primarily a woman's duty.⁷² Based on how far she was able to penetrate into the domestic interiors of those upon whom she called, a lady could determine where her family ranked in the social hierarchy of a particular city. In order to participate in the ritual, she had to receive calls herself in an appropriately located and appointed house, with its own hall, parlor, card-receiver and servant. She also had to know the rules, and these were quite intricate.

In her book *Sensible Etiquette*, Moore devoted forty-four pages to "the ceremony of leaving cards," more space than she allotted to any other single topic.⁷³ She defended this ritual on two interrelated grounds. First, by assigning every person a place and a role, it ameliorated the ambiguity that characterized the fluid, late nineteenth-century social landscape.⁷⁴ Second, it allowed women to maintain very large social networks. Like most of the social rituals Moore advocated, calling was both affected and exclusive; however, she defended it with the rhetoric of sentimentalism. Only by excluding unrefined visitors, Moore reasoned, could delicate sensibilities be protected and sentimental bonding ensured.

When those in whom heroic dispositions are native possess that love of the beautiful in conduct as well as in other things, and that delight in the intercourse of refined and cultivated minds which leads them to exclude coarse natures,

⁷² See, for instance, Ames, *Death in the Dining Room*, 35-43; Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 96-103 and Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility*, 174-76.

⁷³ Moore, *Sensible Etiquette*, 53-97.

⁷⁴ "Etiquette keeps every cog and wheel in place and at its own work," she wrote, "which prevents jostling, and carries all things along to their consummation." *Ibid.*, 97.

whose acts, and speech, and manners, grate upon the finely-attuned cords of their sensibilities and turn harmony into discord, then exclusiveness becomes praiseworthy, and is no longer bad form.⁷⁵

The effect of the Moores' elaborate décor was complex. As what Thorstein Veblen termed "conspicuous consumption," it communicated their vast, expendable wealth and the copious leisure time Clara Moore could afford to use traveling and shopping.⁷⁶ As what Pierre Bourdieu defined as "cultural capital," it expressed their good taste and their knowledge of the latest fashionable trends, signifying their affiliation with an elite social class.⁷⁷ As an aggregate of diverse objects and styles, brought together from distant lands and reassembled under the rubric of a single, overarching decorative scheme, the Moores' décor also expressed the corporate and imperial sources from which their wealth and power flowed.⁷⁸ Beyond this though, Clara Moore sought to construct herself as a sentimental woman, and her home as a haven of sentimental domesticity.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 181.

⁷⁶ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), 68-101.

⁷⁷ Pierre Bordieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 30-31. As Sylvia L. Yount has argued, the English Aesthetic Movement was embraced early-on by members of the Philadelphia elite, who used its reformist rhetoric to strengthen their position as cultural leaders. Yount, "Give the People What they Want: The American Aesthetic Movement, Art Worlds, and Consumer Culture, 1876-1890," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1995, 21-66. Yount specifically cites the Moores and their house to back up her argument. There is no doubt that Moore saw herself as a reformer. She donated portions of her art collection and her fortune to the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art with the goal of improving the arts of design in the United States. See "Mrs. Bloomfield Moore is Dead."

⁷⁸ See Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity" and Kristin Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865-1920," *American Historical Review* 107 (February 2002): 55-83.

A cornerstone of artistic interior design was the understanding that individual objects, though part of a larger decorative ensemble, communicated discrete, culturally determined meanings. Through the tasteful combination of these objects-as-signs, homeowners made statements about their identities. Clara Moore's prominently displayed collection of antique blue and white china, for instance, spoke of her Puritan ancestry, evoking nostalgic visions of a simpler, less artificial time.⁷⁹ *Nydia* functioned in a similar way to construct Moore as a sentimental woman. As a souvenir of both her actual travels in Italy and her imaginative travels through Bulwer's fiction, the sculpture was intimately connected with her personal history and tastes. Through its embedded narrative of heroism and selfless love, *Nydia* also celebrated the power of sympathetic, emotional bonds. Just as she used sentimental rhetoric in her etiquette writing to rationalize her undemocratic and exclusive social practices, Moore used sentimental rhetoric in her décor to emphasize her sympathetic and domestic nature, and to soften the impact of her materialism and affectation.⁸⁰

Moore's hall was also the place where her visitors created their own first impressions. Its great quantity of mirrored glass magnified light and space, but also emphasized the appearance of the room's occupants. According to John Kasson, the proliferation of mirrors in nineteenth-century homes, "taught users to appraise their images and the emotions they expressed frequently and searchingly, anticipating the gaze

⁷⁹ See Yount, 229-30.

⁸⁰ Karen Haltunnen has described the difficulty, faced by bourgeois men and women in the nineteenth century, of reconciling sentimental culture, which lionized sincerity and openness, with an increased emphasis on theatrical performance and self-display. See Haltunnen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 92-123.

of others.”⁸¹ Standing in Moore’s hall, surrounded by reflecting surfaces, visitors not only looked at the various objects the room contained, they looked at themselves looking. As they waited to be welcomed or sent away, they could self-consciously compose themselves in relation to these objects.

As with the public viewing of *Nydia* in Detroit, the abundance of art objects in Moore’s hall (and the artistic space itself) imposed a code of genteel behavior on visitors who wished to define themselves as cultured. *Nydia*, as a sentimental object, also encouraged viewers to open their hearts. “How shall we meet the beautiful wanderer from Pompeii, appealing to us with mute eloquence, more powerful than speech, for sympathy and protection?” asked a critic of the 1862 Detroit exhibition.⁸² The question was purely rhetorical, for nineteenth-century audiences understood that an intense, sympathetic reaction to sentimental works of art would mark them as refined and sensitive, indicating that they possessed the “heroic dispositions” of natural aristocrats. Standing in the Moores’ hall, visitors confronted *Nydia* knowing that a failure to be moved would reveal them as coarse, placing them outside the bounds polite society.

The Moores’ visitors must also have noticed the tension between the figure and its aesthetic surroundings. Holding firmly to her staff, *Nydia* struggled against an environment that threatened to subsume her. In 1876, the art critic William J. Clark, Jr. described ideal sculpture as, “an art adapted, in a language so delightful, to enforce the lessons of wisdom and virtue and utter the records of the heart.”⁸³ Even as he wrote, this

⁸¹ John Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility*, 166.

⁸² “The Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii,” *Detroit Free Press*, 10 April 1862, 1.

⁸³ Clark, *Great American Sculptors*, 44.

sentimental understanding of ideal sculpture was increasingly threatened. As early as 1867, writing of the American sculptures displayed at the Paris Exposition that year, M. D. Conway protested that they were treated like mere decorations rather than fine art.⁸⁴ Fifteen years later, in an attack on artistic interior decoration, F. Marion Crawford complained that,

The eye, accustomed to the endless knickknack, bric-a-brac, and arabesque, can no longer follow the pure lines of a great statue, or grasp the drawing and the color of a master's painting; rather does the perverted understanding regard the statue as a piece of furniture, while it values the picture according as its coloring suits the room for which it was bought.⁸⁵

Crawford's criticism strikes at the heart of the dilemma. By blurring the line between fine art and decoration, artistic décor threatened to erode both the sacred fine art status of ideal sculptures and their sentimental content.

Unlike many other ideal sculptures, *Nydia* resisted being overwhelmed by the artistic interior that housed her. Not only was the sculpture formally at odds with its surroundings, but its subject of a woman acting aggressively outside the domestic sphere challenged aesthetic constructions of femininity as passive, and of the home as self-contained. *Nydia* deviated strikingly from the prevailing mode, which presented women

⁸⁴ "Once upon a time, when all Boston was at a white heat about the works of Greenough, Crawford, and one or two of the younger American sculptors, Mr. Emerson caused a sentimental swoon in all the drawing rooms of that city by suggesting that sculpture was as an art *blasé*, and would probably be used by posterity for decorative purposes. If any of the sufferers by that prophecy have been among those who have, as the French allege, given an 'American tone' to the society of the exhibition, they must often have felt their wounds smart. Not only have sculptures been placed in the catalogue in the same class with 'die-sinking, stone and cameo engraving, etc.' but this classification corresponds with the fact that nearly all the sculpture here is used as ornamentation for the central garden!" M. D. Conway, "The Great Show at Paris Again," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 35 (November, 1867): 783-784.

⁸⁵ Crawford, "False Taste in Art," 90-91.

in artistic interiors as passive to the point of unconsciousness. Paintings and sculptures of beautiful, erudite women lounging sleepily in artistic settings proliferated in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As Bailey van Hook has argued, these images served as emblems of leisure, culture and taste—qualities increasingly associated with American women of the upper class and the private world of the domestic interior.⁸⁶ Such images were created with artistic interiors in mind and were made to harmonize with their environment—to be soothing rather than jarring, restful rather than dramatic.

An example of a large, marble sculpture made specifically for an artistic interior is Olin Levi Warner's (1844-1896) *Twilight* of 1877-78 (fig.78). Warner had his studio in the art and furniture dealer Daniel Cottier's New York gallery. Cottier, whose gallery featured prominently in Cook's *The House Beautiful*, was instrumental in bringing artistic décor to the United States. *Twilight* was commissioned by Cottier's patron and business associate Ichabod T. Williams for the elegant interior of his New York brownstone. Warner gave *Twilight* an allegorical subject with no distracting sentimental narrative. Unlike *Nydia*, *Twilight* is all graceful, flowing lines. The figure's feet rest close together, and her raised arms curve inward toward herself as she draws a long swag of cloth around her body and over her head. Her action is reflexive and her body is self-contained. As Charles de Kay wrote of the piece, "Instead of robustness, there is refinement of contour... instead of theatrical effect... there are restraint and loveliness..."⁸⁷ Recalling the self-contained stillness of earlier nineteenth-century ideal sculpture, Warner's

⁸⁶ Bailey Van Hook, *Angels of Art: Women and Art in American Society, 1876-1914* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).

⁸⁷ Quoted in *American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 206.

sculpture harmonized perfectly with Williams' aesthetic décor and his extensive collection of Barbizon paintings.⁸⁸

So powerful and pervasive were images of languid, inward-looking women in the last three decades of the nineteenth century that when the successful American decorator Elsie de Wolfe (1865-1950) was photographed in an artistic interior she herself had designed, she placed herself in a graceful, supine pose—like an ornament instead of an artist (fig.79).⁸⁹ By the 1870s, *Nydia*'s active stance, her expression of palpable anxiety and intense longing, and her embedded narrative of role reversal and female empowerment constituted a rebellion against the late nineteenth-century ideal of inert femininity. Writing of female characters in film, Mary Ann Doane pointed out that blindness is a common trope that functions to negate their gaze, reducing them to erotic objects.⁹⁰ Blind *Nydia*, with her hair and drapery disarranged, her arms, legs and breast exposed, her eyes closed and her lips slightly parted, is certainly eroticized. Nevertheless, in the moment Rogers depicted her, she is actively "looking." Whereas Warner's *Twilight* covers her eyes in order to embrace an interior world, all of *Nydia*'s senses are directed outward. If, as Mulvey hypothesized, the gaze is an instrument of power, then *Nydia*'s struggle to see can be read as a struggle to claim power for herself.

⁸⁸ Williams' estate is described in *ibid.*

⁸⁹ Mary Warner Blanchard has argued that the popularity of the Aesthetic Movement in the United States empowered women by allowing them to become decorators and designers. Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde's America*. De Wolfe's professional success would seem to support Blanchard's thesis; however, despite her formidable energy and ambition, her aesthetic self-fashioning in her portrait photograph equates cultured femininity with indolence.

⁹⁰ See Mary Ann Doane, "Film and Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," *Screen* 23 (1982), 74-87.

Not only could Clara Moore relate to *Nydia*, she could use the sculpture to express (albeit in veiled terms) feelings she could not articulate more explicitly without threatening her status as a genteel, domestic woman.⁹¹ In Bulwer's novel, Nydia longs to rejoin her companions and escape with them to safety. In the more ambiguous medium of sculpture, her longing is less fixed and more open to interpretation. In Moore's hall, she seems to seek, vainly, to escape the domestic sphere itself.

After her husband died, Moore became a patron of the pseudo-scientist John Ernest Worrall Keely, who claimed to be perfecting a motor powered by "harmonic vibrations" (his "invention" was, in reality, an air compressor). Like the spiritualists, from whom he drew many of his ideas, Keely preached that the physical and spiritual planes were united by omnipresent, invisible ether, and that the existence of the human soul could be scientifically proven.⁹² Such ideas appealed to a large number of Americans who (like Moore) longed for some tangible proof that the sympathetic bonds of family and community could extend beyond the grave.⁹³ Keely also fanned the flames of Moore's ambition to achieve greatness through her support of a great man.

Alarmed by her increasing support of Keely, Moore's family seized control of most of her assets in 1888, leaving her only her house and a modest income to dispense

⁹¹ Joy Kasson has acknowledged that ideal sculptures allowed women to fantasize subversively about power and fulfillment; however, she fails to take into account how displaying these sculptures in a domestic setting allowed them to incorporate these fantasies into their identity. See Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 72.

⁹² Moore's book about Keely, which she published five years before his fraud was exposed, summarizes his theories, which she called "sympathetic philosophy." Mrs. Bloomfield-Moore, *Keely and his Discoveries, Aerial Navigation* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Treubner & Co., 1893).

⁹³ See Molly K. McGarry, "Haunting Reason: Spiritualism and the Cultural Politics of Nineteenth-Century America," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1999.

with as she chose.⁹⁴ It was probably for the benefit of Keely that Moore sold her mansion and its contents in November of 1892. It is telling that the auctioneers, M. Thomas & Sons, placed *Nydia* in the “household furniture and effects” portion of the sale instead of with the “Fine Art.” Still, the sculpture’s selling price of \$2,500 made it the single most valuable object in the sale, with the exception of the house itself, testifying to the continuing popularity and relevance of ideal sculptures generally and of *Nydia* in particular into the last decade of the nineteenth century.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ See “Rid of Keely at Last,” *New York Times* 18 December 1890: 1.

⁹⁵ “Mrs. Moore’s Collection,” undated newspaper clipping tipped into the Thomas & Sons sales catalogue, Philadelphia Museum of Art Library.

CHAPTER 7
“SWEET ASSURANCE OF SYMPATHY AND LOVE”:
***MEROPE, THE LOST PLEIAD* IN JENNIE MCGRAW FISKE’S ART GALLERY**

In 1879, equipped with a copy of Clarence Cook’s *The House Beautiful*, a thirty-seven year old heiress named Jennie McGraw traveled to Europe where she purchased the second copy of Randolph Rogers’ sculpture *Merope, the Lost Pleiad*. She shipped it home to Ithaca, New York, where it was installed in her palatial new house. Four years later, the photographer Joseph Dunlap Eagles (1837-1907) published a series of stereoscopic views of Ithaca. Among them are several exterior and interior views of McGraw’s mansion.¹ One of these shows *Merope* positioned in the exact center of her octagonal art gallery (fig.80). The life-size marble sculpture seems to survey the room, peering intently at the surrounding paintings and tapestries. It dominates the space. Another view, taken from just inside the villa’s grand entrance, shows the sculpture directly ahead, framed by the double doorways of the hall and the gallery (fig.81). This view makes it clear that *Merope* was the most significant object confronting the visitor upon entering. Arguably, it was the centerpiece of the mansion itself.

In this chapter, I will address the questions of why McGraw purchased this particular sculpture, how she intended it to function within her elaborate, artistic interior and how, in fact, the sculpture was viewed in that space. *Merope* reiterates a common

¹ J. D. Eagles, *Views of Ithaca and Vicinity* (Ithaca, New York, 1883). An incomplete set of twenty-eight stereographs from this series are in the Robert Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views, Photography Collection, Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints & Photographs, The New York Public Library. Another incomplete set of fifty-two stereographs from the series, some but not all of which duplicate those in the New York Public Library, is held by the DeWitt Historical Society in Ithaca, New York. Other sites photographed by Eagles include views of the Cornell campus and individual university buildings, various waterfalls and gorges, and Henry Sage’s mansion.

theme of ideal sculpture. Through its sentimental portrayal of exile and longing it constructs Home as the site of fulfillment and peace; however, when McGraw's home was thrown open to a popular audience, unfamiliar with the sculpture's mythical narrative, *Merope* took on other, less sentimental meanings which are equally revealing of the ways that ideal sculptures functioned in domestic interiors in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

Merope

Perhaps because his sculpture *Nydia, the Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii* was so successful, Randolph Rogers chose to explore the subject of a searching, longing woman again in his 1875 statue *Merope, the Lost Pleiad* (fig.47) The later work's diagonal composition, searching gesture and emphatic forward motion recall Rogers' earlier sculpture, as does its theme. The first century Roman poet Ovid described the constellation of seven sister stars, the Pleiades, thus,

They are seven in name, but only six we see.
Why so? These six embraced divinity
(Sterope lay with Mars, the stories go,
Halcyon with Neptune, you too, lovely Celaeno,
Maia, Electra, Taygete with Jove)
but the seventh, Merope, gave her love
to you, Sisyphus, a mortal; she was your bride.
But now she feels regret; shame makes her hide.²

The Pleiades, and Merope in particular, appear frequently in nineteenth-century poetry and literature but less often in painting and sculpture. A painting of 1855, now lost, by the American artist Thomas Buchanan Read (1822-1872), depicted a suicidal

² Ovid, *Fasti*, IV, trans. Sir James George Frazer (London: W. Heinemann, 1931), 170-178.

Merope plummeting to earth, leaving behind her unperturbed and sweetly smiling sisters.³ William Adolphe Bouguereau's (1825-1905) painting, *L'Etoile Perdue* (fig.82) is a fairly literal illustration of Ovid. Merope, her lovely back turned to the viewer, floats at a distance from her sisters, hiding her face in the crook of one arm. Elihu Vedder's (1836-1923) painting of the subject, *The Pleiades* (fig.83) depicts the sisters dancing in a circle and swinging their stars above their heads on sinuous loops of chord.⁴ Vedder positioned Merope prominently, in the center foreground. Her loop of cord has broken and her star spins off into space, leaving her in shadow. A rare, popular treatment of the myth appeared in *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1854 (fig.84). The steel engraving depicts Merope flying heavenward with her sisters, distinguished only by her raised arm which obscures the star on her crown. The accompanying poem offers a moral homily on chastity. "A star hath left its native sky\ To touch our cold earth and to die;\ To warn the young heart how it trust\ to mortal vows whose faith is dust;\ to bid the young cheek guard its bloom\ from wasting by such early doom."⁵

The Latin inscription at the base of Rogers' sculpture, "MEROPE MORTALI NUPSIT" (Merope married a mortal), indicates that Rogers, like Bouguereau, used Ovid as his source; however, he differed sharply in his interpretation of the subject.⁶ A lover

³ "Art in Florence," *The Crayon* 2 (July, 1855): 20-21.

⁴ Vedder's painting follows the composition of his 1884 illustration of the subject for Edward Fitzgerald's translation of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. See N. A. Spassky, ed. *American Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, vol. 2 (New York: The Museum in association with Princeton University Press, 1980-), 509-511.

⁵ "The Pleiades," *Godey's Lady's Book* 68 (January 1854), frontis piece and 21.

⁶ The Latin text of Ovid's *Fasti* reads, "septima mortali Merope tibi, Sisiphe, nupsit."

of irony and reversal, Rogers flipped Ovid's story on its head. Rather than depicting Merope hiding and thus lost to view, he portrayed her as simply lost. It is *her* view that is frustrated as she peers into the surrounding clouds. Her intent gaze, her searching gesture and her vigorous forward motion all indicate the intensity of her longing for her family. Rather than flying away from her home, she seeks only to return. She embodies a desire that is both sentimental and domestic.

Of sentimentalism in nineteenth-century American literature, Joanne Dobson has written that,

The principal theme of the sentimental text is the desire for bonding, and it is affiliation on the plane of emotion, sympathy, nurturance or similar moral or spiritual inclination for which sentimental writers and readers yearn. Violation, actual or threatened, of the affectional bond generates the primary tension in the sentimental text and leads to bleak, dispirited, anguished, sometimes outraged, representations of human loss, as well as idealized portrayals of human connection or divine consolation.⁷

The same idea holds true for ideal sculptures, which, like the novels Dobson discussed, were products of nineteenth-century sentimental culture. In these works, a heroine's loss of home or loved ones served to highlight the central importance of both—to women in particular. In order to more powerfully express the themes of loss and longing in his sculpture, Rogers made Merope's story mirror that of her husband, Sisyphus. In Rogers' sculpture, Merope is, like Sisyphus, condemned to endless, fruitless labor; however, true to nineteenth-century gender roles, he defined her labor as primarily emotional. While Sisyphus' doom is to forever push and strain, Merope's is to forever look and long.

In 1875, when Rogers modeled his version of *Merope*, he was nearing the end of his career. Although ideal sculptures remained popular in the United States, tastes were

⁷ Dobson, "Reclaiming Sentimental Literature," 266-67.

shifting. The dramatic, neo-baroque work of the French sculptor Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827-1875) had attracted a lion's share of favorable critical attention at the 1867 Exposition Universelle in Paris. In his report on the Exposition, the United States Fine Arts Commissioner lamented, "There are very few works in marble or bronze in the American gallery... The world, familiar with their names, looked in vain for the work of Powers, Story, Rogers, Reinhardt, Mozier, Brown and others who have done so much to vindicate the American name in this department of art."⁸ Increasingly, young American sculptors began their careers by enrolling in the Academie des Beaux Arts in Paris rather than by serving an apprenticeship and setting up a studio in Rome or Florence, and American patrons began to favor sculptures executed in the more decorative, French style.⁹ Rogers may have felt his own star was fading when he chose the Lost Pleiad as the subject for his last ideal work. His *Merope*, with her flying hair and drapery and her graceful, diagonal pose, clearly shows the influence of the Beaux Arts style. In fact, the work closely resembles Joseph Michel-Ange Pollet's (1814-1870) sculpture *Une Heure de la Nuit* (fig.85), which won a first-class medal at the Paris Salon of 1850 and which

⁸ United States Commission to the Paris Exposition, *Reports of the United States Commissioners to the Paris Universal Exposition, 1867* (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1870), 34.

⁹ By 1913, Charles Caffin was able to assert that, "With only a few exceptions all our sculptors of the present generation have acquired their training, either wholly or in part, in Paris; that is to say, in the best school in the world." Caffin distinguished the work of Paris-trained artists, which he saw as "characterized by technical perfection and elegance of style," from the "unconvincing and grandiloquent or, at best, innocuously sentimental" sculptures produced fifty years earlier in Rome and Florence. Caffin, *American Masters of Sculpture*, vi, ix.

remained on public view in France throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ Like Pollet's allegorical figure, *Merope* is partially nude and her left arm is raised; however, whereas Pollet's figure closes her eyes, signifying the darkness of night and the oblivion of sleep, *Merope* shields her eyes from the sun as she turns her head, scanning the sky for her sisters. As in the case of *Nydia*, *Merope*'s furrowed brow signifies the intensity of both her gaze and her distress. Unlike *Nydia* though, *Merope*'s reliance on vision alone renders her truly blind.¹¹

Before modeling *Merope*, Rogers had avoided mythological subjects for his ideal works.¹² Instead, he chose subjects drawn from American history, the bible or popular literature, as well as genre scenes, all of which would have been accessible to the average American tourist. At mid-century, such tourists were generally gifted with more money than education. As Lawrence Levine has pointed out, the last decades of the nineteenth-century were marked by affluent Americans' growing desire to set themselves apart as cultural authorities, possessed of erudite and esoteric knowledge.¹³ A demonstrable familiarity with the works of Ovid would certainly have fed this need, as Rogers must have known when he modeled *Merope*. His addition of a Latin inscription to the

¹⁰ See Marina Elena Pacini, "Randolph Rogers' *The Lost Pleiad*," MA Thesis, University of Delaware, 1988, 18, 28 and Mortimer Schiff, ed. *William Bouguereau*, exh. cat. (Paris: Musee du Petit-Palais, 1984), 120.

¹¹ By interpreting the myth of the Lost Pleiad in this way, Rogers may have intended to subtly criticize his American patrons' growing preference for sculptures in the Beaux-Arts style, which they appreciated more for their formal, decorative merits than for their narrative and sentimental content.

¹² One exception is his 1871 bust portrait of his young daughter Nora, to which he ascribed the title *Infant Psyche*.

¹³ Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*.

sculpture's base underscored the figure's status as a highbrow art object. In 1879, Rogers was charging \$4,000 for a full-size version of *Merope*—the equivalent of roughly \$77,000 today, according to the Consumer Price Index, and twice what he was concurrently charging for a full-size version of *Nydia*.¹⁴ Only the most affluent travelers could afford to buy such a sculpture.

The mythological narrative that *Merope* embodies is also significant because of its relevance to the pervasive, late-nineteenth-century anxiety about woman's nature and proper place. As Claude Levi-Strauss has demonstrated, myths function within a culture to address and contain contradictory beliefs.¹⁵ The myth of the Lost Pleiad, as presented in Rogers' sculpture, functioned in just this way for its American audience. One basic contradiction inherent in the sculpture's narrative concerns where and how a woman's identity is formed—in relation to, or in separation from, others. Only by dividing herself from her family does Merope become an individual, but her distinct identity is meaningless in isolation. Unlike earlier nineteenth-century versions of the myth, which simplified it with a neat, moralizing ending, Rogers emphasized Merope's liminal position and the interminable longing it induced. His sculpture seems to presage an 1880 article titled "The Transitional American Woman," in which Kate Ganette Wells reflected, "The expression in the faces of the past and present woman indicates a change... The peace and equipoise, the hauteur, united with unconsciousness of self, are all gone. The face of to-day is stamped with restlessness, wandering purpose, and self-

¹⁴ Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 202, 220.

¹⁵ See "The Structural Study of Myth," in Claude Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 202-212.

consciousness.” While Wells acknowledged the “capacity of woman to exist for herself alone,” she wondered if such existence could truly lead to happiness. Eventually, she believed, American women would have to find a balance between the seemingly irreconcilable demands of self and family.¹⁶

Although *Merope* never rivaled the popularity of *Nydia*, Rogers produced at least twenty copies of the sculpture in two sizes.¹⁷ All but three were purchased during the 1880s, belying the notion that ideal sculptures were hopelessly out of fashion by this time. By 1878, many state legislatures had passed married women’s property acts, allowing women greater control over their property and income. In larger numbers than ever before, wealthy American women purchased artworks under their own names. Women overtly purchased two of the four full-sized versions of *Merope*, and five of the sixteen reduced versions.¹⁸

In 1883, a wealthy Chicagoan named Elizabeth Stickney loaned her copy of the sculpture to the Art Institute of Chicago, where it was displayed for a month. A reviewer for the *Chicago Tribune* effused,

The principal object of interest at the Art Institute at present is a very beautiful piece of sculpture just received from Rome... It is an ideal figure called “The Lost Pleiad”... This lovely lost star is carved from a block of the purest white marble, without flaw or speck, and is a type of the most delicate and refined womanhood, and it may be mentioned in this connection that it was modeled after an American lady. It is a creation simple yet difficult of description. The lovely figure with its

¹⁶ Kate Gannett Wells, “The Transitional American Woman,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, 46 (December 1880): 817-824.

¹⁷ Rogers, *Ranolph Rogers*, 220-221.

¹⁸ Ibid. The buyer of the first full-size marble version of *Merope* is recorded in Rogers’ account ledger as Mr. Theodore Shillaber of San Francisco; however, Rogers’ wife later recounted that the sculpture was actually ordered by Mrs. Shillaber. Ibid, 142.

floating drapery seems poised above a bank of clouds. One hand shades her eyes as she peers into the darkness, while the other is outstretched behind her as if hushing into silence the noises of the night. There is a look of anxiety upon the sweet face as she searches far and wide for her sister stars, while nothing could surpass the exquisite delicacy of the hands and feet and the subtle refinement with which the entire work is imbued.¹⁹

This reviewer's emphasis on *Merope's* sentimental narrative, and on the purity, delicacy and refinement of the figure, is consistent with the way ideal sculptures had been described in the United States since the 1840s; however, the connection s/he made between the figure's refinement and its model, an "American lady," relates to late nineteenth-century, pseudo-scientific theories that placed white, upper-class, American women at the apex of the evolutionary chain.²⁰ With such theories in mind, viewers could connect *Merope's* palpable anxiety to the supposed dark side of a highly refined female temperament—a tendency towards nervousness and over sensitivity, which could lead to feelings of restlessness and brooding dissatisfaction.²¹

¹⁹ "Easel and Chisel: Randolph Rogers' Great Work, 'The Lost Pleiad' at the Art Institute," *Chicago Tribune*, 25 February 1883: 9. The reviewer described the owner as "a lady of this city." This was almost certainly Elizabeth Stickney, the only Chicagoan known to have owned a copy of *Merope* in 1883. Significantly, the reviewer described the sculpture as *her* property, despite the fact that her husband was still living. Stickney bequeathed the sculpture to the Art Institute of Chicago after her death.

²⁰ See *Women on the Verge: The Culture of Neurasthenia in Nineteenth-Century America*, exh. cat. (Stanford, Ca.: The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for the Visual Arts at Stanford University, 2004) and Kathleen Pyne, *Art and the Higher Life: Painting and Evolutionary Thought in Late-Nineteenth-Century America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 188-200. Rogers, a cagy businessman, often told potential buyers that he used young American ladies as models. Though almost certainly a fiction, this story diffused any potential association between his ideal figures and naked, working-class Italian models. For an earlier iteration of this story relating to *Nydia*, see James E. Freeman, "Chapters on Models, Part I," *Appleton's Journal* 1 (August 1876): 156-162.

²¹ In 1881, the neurologist George Miller Beard had defined the "disease" of neurasthenia as a nervous ailment of the upper class, whose members' refined, sensitive nervous systems were overwhelmed by the pace of modern life. While men were sometimes

Jenny McGraw Fiske

Born in 1840, Jenny McGraw was the daughter of John McGraw, a New York lumber baron. After her mother's death from tuberculosis when she was seven, she was raised in the tight-knit community of her large extended family.²² She lived in her father's house in Ithaca, New York for most of her life. Like many women of her class and era she kept a diary, and her entries during the 1870s record a life that followed, quite closely, the "female world of love and ritual" described by Carol Smith-Rosenberg.²³ With her aunts and female cousins, to whom she was deeply attached, she divided her time between self-improving studies of languages and music, household tasks, church, shopping, and social calls. Andrew White, the first president of Cornell University, described Jennie McGraw as "a woman of kind and thoughtful nature, [who] had traveled in her own country and

afflicted with neurasthenia, delicate women came down with the ailment most frequently. See Beard, *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1881) and Kathleen Spies, "Figuring the Neurasthenic: Thomas Eakins, Nervous Illness, and Gender in Victorian America," in *Women on the Verge*, 37-51.

²² One published biography of McGraw exists. It is Ronald John Williams, *Jennie McGraw Fiske: Her Influence Upon Cornell University* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949). In addition, extensive biographical information is included in Kermit Carlyle Parsons, *The Cornell Campus: A History of Its Planning and Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), 50-51, 115-129, 152-168.

²³ Carol Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," in Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 53-76. Jennie McGraw's diaries for 1875 and 1877, and a collection of her letters, are held by the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

abroad to good purpose,” and who took a serious interest—uncommon, he believed, for women at the time—in a broad range of intellectual pursuits.²⁴

When John McGraw died in March, 1877, Jennie McGraw inherited more than two million dollars in addition to all of his extensive business interests.²⁵ The loss of her father, to whom she was devoted, was a painful blow. Adding to her distress was the reaction of her family to the terms of John McGraw’s will. McGraw’s cousin Tom McGraw, who had hoped to inherit his uncle’s business, was particularly angry and disconsolate. Bitter arguments ensued and McGraw’s diary entries from this period record her extreme unhappiness. “Anxiety and trouble increasing,” she wrote on May 26.²⁶ The next day she wrote, “I am about sick, and can think of nothing but my sorrow.”²⁷ In July she took a train to Detroit to meet and discuss business with dissenting family members. “Uncle John and Tom not in [to meet me] at the depot,” she wrote, “I was taken to Tom... Saw the family. Oh dear, why is love so scant!”²⁸

In November, McGraw’s stepmother announced plans to tear down the house where McGraw had lived most of her life and to build a larger, more imposing residence for herself on the same spot.²⁹ McGraw responded by making building plans of her own.

²⁴ Andrew Dickson White, *The Autobiography of Andrew Dickson White, with Portraits*, vol.1 (New York: The Century Co., 1914), 418.

²⁵ “Will of John McGraw,” *Ithaca Democrat*, 24 May 1877: 3.

²⁶ Jennie McGraw Diary, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, entry dated May 26, 1877.

²⁷ Entry dated May 27, 1877 in *ibid.*

²⁸ Entry dated July 3, 1877 in *ibid.*

²⁹ See *Ithaca Weekly Democrat*, 8 November 1877: 1.

She purchased thirty acres of property positioned high on the brow of East Hill near the edge of the Cornell University campus and hired William H. Miller (1842-1922), the same architect who was building her stepmother's house, to build a far larger and more elaborate mansion for herself.

Probably as a direct result of the cooled relations with her family, McGraw became closer to her father's former associates in the Cornell University community, particularly Judge Douglas Boardman, who was a trustee. Vacationing with Boardman's family in July of 1877, just after the difficult visit with her own family in Detroit, she wrote, "Such a salutary influence [they] have upon me! Sweet assurance of sympathy and love."³⁰ She spent Christmas with the family of Henry Sage, another trustee, and it was Sage who gave her a copy of Cook's *The House Beautiful*.³¹

In December, McGraw traveled to New York City where she combed art galleries and department stores and met with the artist and interior decorator Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), whom she probably considered hiring to decorate her house.³² McGraw's interest in Tiffany reveals her taste for the new aesthetic style which was then transforming the fashionable interiors of the United States and England. The aesthetic-influenced, "artistic" interior, which was understood to reflect the personality and taste of the homeowner, resulted from the careful blending of a multitude of beautiful objects.³³ Clarence Cook noted that, "'Picking-up' is an easy art in Europe, where, after all that has

³⁰ Entry dated July 5, 1877 in Jennie McGraw Diary, volume for 1877.

³¹ Entry dated December 27, 1877 in *ibid*.

³² See entry dated December 16, 1877 in *ibid*.

³³ See Marilyn Johnson, "The Artful Interior," in Burke, *In Pursuit of Beauty*, 111-141.

been carried off as spoils, there is still an immense deal of old furniture to be bought.”³⁴

McGraw took Cook’s advice to heart. Leaving Boardman and Sage in charge of her affairs, she sailed for Europe on an art and furniture buying trip in March of 1878.

McGraw had clear tastes in art. During a previous trip to Europe in 1875 she recorded her impressions of various artworks in her diary. While she “fancied very much” the “exquisite” work of the French, academic painter Alexandre Cabanel (1823-1889), she found the fleshier paintings of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), “oh so gross.”³⁵ She again demonstrated her preference for classicizing, academic paintings when she enthused over the ethereal maidens painted by the English artist Albert Moore (1841-1893), on view at Goupil’s Gallery in New York in December, 1877.³⁶ McGraw also had a taste for sentimental genre paintings. She had seen and admired three paintings by Seymour Joseph Guy (1824-1910) during a trip to Philadelphia in 1875. Before leaving for Europe in 1878, she hired Guy to paint a portrait of her friend Henry Sage.³⁷

By 1878, McGraw was considerably weakened by advancing tuberculosis. “I have been so miserable for the last fortnight or more that I have avoided writing or

³⁴ Cook, *The House Beautiful*, 160.

³⁵ See entries dated December 10, 1875 and December 17, 1875 in Jennie McGraw Diary, volume for 1875 in McGraw Family Papers. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

³⁶ See entry dated December 18, 1877 in Jennie McGraw Diary, volume for 1877.

³⁷ See entry for December 30, 1877 in *ibid.* and entry dated February 12, 1875 in Jennie McGraw Diary, volume for 1875.

anything to tire my chest, back or brain..."³⁸ she wrote her cousin Lettie McGraw from Rome after nine months abroad. Nevertheless, she persisted in buying furniture, paintings, carpets, tapestries and statues, sending everything home to Ithaca for eventual placement in her house. McGraw was guided in many of her purchases by her architect, who was also her decorator. McGraw's villa was a significant commission for Miller, a recent Cornell graduate, and he took a proprietary interest in its décor. Periodically, he sent her lists of items to buy.³⁹ Although McGraw tried to follow Miller's advice, she also frequently indulged her own tastes, particularly when purchasing paintings and sculpture. In January of 1879, she wrote to Boardman,

Today, I have made a purchase which may make your hair stand on end. I know your eye balls would dictate if you could see it. It is one of the most beautiful statues I ever saw in my life, and the question was now or never and five minutes decided it for me... It is the Pleiad missing in the sky—oh so lovely—I saw it in clay when [I was] here before and thought it promised well, but the marble is so perfect and the whole so exquisite it far exceeded my expectations. I then wrote to Pa of it for the University, now I guiltily take it for myself.⁴⁰

Professions of guilt over her purchases pepper McGraw's letters home, and she several times expressed ambivalence about the excessive grandeur of her new home; still, she

³⁸ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Lettie McGraw, dated January 21, 1879. McGraw-Fiske Collection, DeWitt Historical Society of Tompkins County, Ithaca, New York.

³⁹ In a letter to Douglas Boardman, McGraw noted thankfully that a gallery owner in Rome had agreed to help her find some of the items Miller had requested. Unfortunately, she didn't specify what these items were. See letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman dated February 4, 1879. Douglas Boardman Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁴⁰ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman dated 28 January 1879, Douglas Boardman Papers. McGraw had been to Europe twice before—once as a school girl in 1860 and again with her cousin Lettie in 1875. On the second trip, she apparently visited Rogers' studio for the first time, but without the independent means to buy what she liked. See Williams, *Jennie McGraw Fiske*, 11, 33-36.

wrote of Rogers' sculpture, "I know I shall never regret [buying it] if it reaches home safely."⁴¹

Merope appealed to McGraw immediately, powerfully and on several levels. Formally, it matched her taste for idealized female forms. Although partially nude, the figure has none of the corporeal "grossness" she disliked in Rubens' nudes. Her body is artfully composed and gracefully positioned, and her white flesh is perfectly smooth, unblemished and impenetrable. One appeal of ideal sculpture lay in the whiteness and translucency of marble which, to nineteenth-century eyes, emphasized spiritual essence over physical form. As Hiram Powers famously stated, the whiteness of marble "removed the object represented into a sort of spiritual region, and so gave chaste permission to those nudities which would otherwise suggest immodesty."⁴² This emphasis on spirit over matter also made ideal sculptures seem less like commodities, possibly assuaging some of McGraw's embarrassment over the extravagance of her purchase.

The sentimental narrative *Merope* embodied must also have struck a chord with McGraw. It mirrored her own story of homesickness and alienation. "Everyone says what a delight to have [a European sojourn] in prospect!" she wrote before setting sail in 1878, "...but to feel no essential tie to bind one to a spot on earth is to me a new and frightening sensation."⁴³ In her letters home, McGraw often expressed a sense of being

⁴¹ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman, dated 4 February 1879, Douglas Boardman Papers.

⁴² Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne*, vol.2 (Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1876), 24.

⁴³ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman, dated January 16, 1878. Douglas Boardman Papers.

utterly adrift outside the safe, comprehensible bounds of family life. Shortly before she purchased Rogers' sculpture, she responded to news of her cousin Letty's engagement with something close to despair. "My dear girl," she wrote, "This confession of yours is startling and I confess gave me a frightful sense of pain... I have felt in a very full sense that you were to be with me in future plans, and I can't help feeling that one more prop falls."⁴⁴ It seems likely that McGraw saw a romanticized echo of her own life in Merope's sad tale of banishment.

Lastly, McGraw must also have related to the sculpture's theme of a woman actively looking and longing. Her letters from Europe are threaded through with longing, not all of it sentimental. "I see many beautiful things all the time which I desire to possess very much," she wrote to Boardman from Paris.⁴⁵ Nor were her desires restricted to art and furniture. From Rome she wrote speculatively, "I think I might become an Italian countess without half trying, and have a nice little Italian husband in the bargain."⁴⁶ Like Merope, McGraw looked and longed; however, unlike Rogers' heroine, she was far from helpless. Her wealth gave her the ability to possess nearly everything she saw.

Perhaps fearing that McGraw would indeed marry in Europe and take her fortune permanently out of Ithaca, Sage and Boardman provided Cornell's Librarian, Willard

⁴⁴ Undated letter from Jennie McGraw to Lettie McGraw, McGraw Family Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Although the letter is undated, its content and the fact that it was written from Rome suggests a date of late December 1878 or early January 1879.

⁴⁵ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman dated May 24, 1878, Douglas Boardman Papers.

⁴⁶ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman dated March 3, 1879, Douglas Boardman Papers.

Fiske, with enough money to travel to Europe in pursuit of her.⁴⁷ After a short courtship, McGraw married Fiske in Germany on July 14, 1880. A year later her failing health put an end to her shopping spree. She sailed for home in September, 1881 and died just after arriving in Ithaca. She never set foot in her newly completed house.⁴⁸

The McGraw-Fiske Mansion

For the site of her house, McGraw chose a plot of land high on East Hill, just below the Cornell University campus. Both Boardman and the university's president, Andrew White, urged her to purchase a smaller lot that was set further back from the brow of the hill, but McGraw was determined. "It's a pretty pickle," she wrote to Boardman of the smaller lot, "but Sissy don't want it!"⁴⁹ McGraw's insistence on the East Hill lot reveals her keen awareness of its advantages. By building her house near the Cornell campus, McGraw literally and symbolically aligned herself with the university.⁵⁰ From the hill, she could also look down on the town and surrounding countryside below (where much of her family lived), enjoying what Albert Boime has termed a "magisterial gaze"—a commanding view which signified her power and ownership. Lastly, the size

⁴⁷ Fiske courted McGraw aggressively. Boardman and other Cornell trustees urged her to marry him. Letter from Jennie McGraw to Alexander McGraw dated 7 July 1881, cited in Williams, 56.

⁴⁸ Fiske, a native of Boston, was a friend of Henry James. It seems more than possible that McGraw served as the model for several of James' later tragic female characters.

⁴⁹ Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman, 2 April 1879, Douglas Boardman Papers.

⁵⁰ In 1880, her house was one of only two structures on or near the campus visible from the town below. The other was McGraw Hall, the building her father had endowed. Parsons, *The Cornell Campus*, 122.

and location of her property allowed McGraw to carefully screen potential visitors.⁵¹ Her house was built on a “hanging delta” left by glacial melt water over the Cayuga River gorge and could be reached by only a single road from the campus.

McGraw’s villa, which took over a year to build at a cost of nearly \$300,000, resulted from an eclectic blending of architectural styles (fig.86). Miller gave it a sprawling, irregular plan with a round tower at one corner and a cluster of high-peaked roofs. He added broad, stone porches along the three sides of the building overlooking Ithaca and the gorge. Inside, he grouped the rooms around a central, three-story rotunda lit from above by a glass ceiling. There were three entrances: a side-entrance from a porte cochere at the south; the grand entrance at the west; and a back entrance which led from the porch at the eastern end of the building directly into the art gallery.

The entrance at the south, which was intended for ordinary visits, led into a paneled, pseudo-Elizabethan stair hall. Here, callers and others would have waited while a servant carried their cards or messages into the house. The room was below the level of the main floor and offered no visual access to the rest of the house.

The presence of the eastern door, which led from the outside directly into the art gallery, suggests that McGraw intended to open her art collection to the public.⁵² Rather than having Miller place her gallery in the center of her house (a popular location for private galleries at the time), she chose to make it directly accessible from outside. A

⁵¹ McGraw’s rejection of the smaller lot was based, in part, on the fact that she considered it “too public.” Letter from Jennie McGraw to Douglas Boardman, 16 July 1878, Douglas Boardman Papers.

⁵² Visitors would probably have been admitted on one or two days of the week. Although private art galleries were common in the homes of the very wealthy, the degree of access granted to the public was idiosyncratic.

drive led around the house, past the dramatic drop-off overlooking the river gorge, to the gallery entrance. Visitors could have walked up a short flight of stairs, across a square, columned porch and, after passing through a set of double doors, found themselves in the gallery. By shutting the interior gallery doors, McGraw could have restricted access to the rest of her house, making it feasible for her to admit visitors from outside her social class.

McGraw's villa was one of many elaborate private residences built by wealthy Americans in the years after the Civil War. These houses served as stages for an increasingly opulent display of wealth and power—a display that was tied to the burgeoning culture of celebrity. Private art galleries were common features of such homes. Anne Bolin has argued that, at mid-century, private galleries were built to house art collections that would instill moral values, contributing to an overall “didactic home environment.”⁵³ Certainly, contemporary theories about the moral influence of art in the home made art collecting more socially acceptable in the United States. Private galleries (McGraw's included) were often octagonal, a shape that recalled Christian shrines and baptisteries; however, these galleries were also connected to the larger culture of self-display. As William Ayres has pointed out, by the 1870s newspapers and magazines played an important roll in popularizing private art galleries by publishing descriptions of them and fostering competition among collectors.⁵⁴

⁵³ Bolin, “Art and Domestic Culture.”

⁵⁴ William Smallwood Ayres, “The Domestic Museum in Manhattan: Major Private Art Installations in New York City, 1870-1920,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 1993.

In 1882, William Henry Bishop wrote “The House of a Merchant Prince,” a serialized novella about a young woman from the country who visits her rich uncle’s family in their new, magnificent New York mansion. Upon entering, Otilie is awed by “the wide entrance hall” decorated with an array of rich and exotic objects including “a porphyry bowl on a pedestal of old Japanese bronze, like a baptismal font [for receiving] the cards of visitors.” The crowning glory of the mansion, however, is its art gallery.

Proceeding past the hall,

...she climbed a staircase so broad and easy that climbing was hardly an effort... The approach to the picture gallery- where her Gerome and plenty of other masters that pleased her better were now to be gazed at to her heart’s content- was past a Musidora and a Sampson in white marble, and up either of two short flights of marble steps, with a balustrade in between.

Not only does the gallery afford Otilie visual pleasure, it also provides an ideal setting for her initiation into the culture of self display. At a reception later in the week, she places herself on public view in the gallery.

...as she reclined in a fauteuil, her fleecy white draperies scattered about the definite nucleus of her slim waist, her arms, and head. “Do *see me!*” she said, admiring herself whimsically, “One would think I had always been used to such magnificence, I take it so calmly. And as to my poor dress, for the last hour I have quite forgotten it!”

“You will find that the fashion reporters, if they be worth their salt, have not been so remiss,” an admirer assures her, “It will certainly appear in the papers.”⁵⁵ Bishop correctly perceived that private art galleries were stages upon which wealthy men and women performed their public identities before a mass audience. Some galleries even

⁵⁵ William Henry Bishop, “The House of a Merchant Prince,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 49 (May, 1882): 664, 668-69.

had actual, built-in stages, upon which their owners and their guests could enact costume dramas and tableaux vivants.⁵⁶ The artworks in private galleries were actors too—they magnified and contributed to their owners' public personae.

Unlike the sculptures of Sampson and Musidora that Bishop relegates to supporting roles in his fictional interior, *Merope* was the star of McGraw's art gallery. The room measured twenty-five feet across and it contained several dozen paintings, tapestries and small bronzes placed on or near the walls. By contrast, *Merope* occupied the center of the room and stood more than eight feet high on its pedestal. Because the figure was diagonally positioned, it also claimed considerable floor space. Its white marble stood out dramatically against the dark walnut paneled walls and inlaid stone floor. It was the largest and the most striking work of art in McGraw's collection.⁵⁷

Thematically, *Merope*'s subject of a woman actively looking was perfectly suited to the gallery, filled as it was with the results of McGraw's own acquisitive gaze. A handle at the sculpture's base allowed it to be easily rotated in any direction so that the figure's searching eyes could be directed at nearly the full range of artworks that surrounded it. These works included a view of Greece by the painter John Rollin Tilton (1828-1888), a Venetian canal scene by Thomas Moran (1837-1928), several German and Italian landscapes, a painting of oxen grazing in the fields outside Rome by Henry Collins Bispham (1841-1882), a Florentine genre scene by Luigi Mion (b.1843) and a

⁵⁶ Bertha and Potter Palmer's gallery in their Chicago mansion had such a stage built into one wall. See photo negative DN-0001495A, *Chicago Daily News* Negative Collection, Chicago Historical Society.

⁵⁷ A newspaper report of McGraw's 1891 estate auction described *Merope* as. "The *chef d'oeuvre* of the whole art and article gallery." "Fiske Mansion Sold," *Ithaca Daily Journal*, 19 February 1891: 3.

painting of Nevada Falls in Yosemite (a place McGraw had visited with her father in 1872) by Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902).⁵⁸ From its vantage point in the center of the gallery, *Merope* seemed to gaze longingly at the places McGraw had been.

In addition to being the centerpiece of the art gallery, *Merope* was also clearly visible from the grand entrance at the west, which offered a seventy-foot view from one end of the house to the other. This entrance was approached by climbing a series of stairs—two flights leading up to the gabled entrance porch, then a third flight leading from the vestibule to the central hall. Eagles made a stereograph near the top of this last flight. It shows the art gallery directly across the carpeted, sunlit expanse of the rotunda. *Merope* stands directly ahead, back-lit by the glass panes of the eastern door. The aerial figure would have risen up before visitors as they climbed the last flight of stairs, enhancing the impression of airiness and light created by the high-roofed, central rotunda. The double doorways of the rotunda and the art gallery, a third doorway on the second story above, and the hanging newel posts of the second floor balcony all framed *Merope* and directed visitors' eyes toward the sculpture. Unlike the narrow stair hall at the south, McGraw's spacious formal entryway was designed for large and ceremonial gatherings. By making *Merope* the focus of the principle view from this entrance, Miller ensured that the sculpture would be a central part of its owner's public image.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ A record of McGraw's possessions can be recreated from a handwritten 1889 inventory of her house, the catalog of her 1891 estate sale, and Eagles' stereographs. "J. McGraw Inventory Book, 1889" ms. and *Executor's Sale, McGraw-Fiske Estate at Ithaca, N. Y. February 19th, 1891*, both in the Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University.

⁵⁹ Because no correspondence between Miller and McGraw survives, it is impossible to determine whether McGraw herself chose *Merope*'s exact placement, or whether the decision was Miller's. Regardless, there's little doubt that McGraw intended her most celebrated and expensive purchase to have a prominent, public position in her home.

The 1870s and 80s were marked by a migration of ideal sculptures out of libraries and parlors and into more public domestic spaces where they could be viewed by a wider audience (an audience which, by this time, often included photographers and the press). For instance, the wealthy Chicago art collector and philanthropist Bertha Palmer had acquired a copy of Harriet Hosmer's (1830-1908) 1859 sculpture *Zenobia* on her wedding trip to Europe in 1871 (fig.87). The sculpture represents the third century Queen of Palmyra who, after resisting the power of the Roman empire for six years, was finally captured and marched through the streets of Rome in chains. When Palmer and her husband, the department store and hotel magnate Potter Palmer, moved to the palatial and imposingly crenellated "Palmer Castle" in 1883, they placed the sculpture at the far end of their expansive entrance hall (fig.88). There, like McGraw's *Merope*, it was the focus of the principal view from the entrance. It was almost certainly Bertha Palmer, the active collector and decorator in the family, who chose this location for *Zenobia*. Her intention can hardly be missed. Though she is chained, *Zenobia*'s power and dignity are palpable.⁶⁰ For anyone entering, she must have evoked the real queen in Palmer Castle, Mrs. Palmer herself. *Merope* played a similar role in McGraw's house.

It is not surprising that, although McGraw had first thought of acquiring *Merope* for Cornell University, she ultimately purchased the sculpture for her home. Every copy of the sculpture was initially destined for domestic display.⁶¹ Unlike many other American sculptors, Rogers was equally successful making ideal figures and public

⁶⁰ See Kassom, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 141-165.

⁶¹ Rogers, *Randolph Rogers*, 220-21

monuments; however, he made a clear thematic and stylistic distinction between these two genres. Although his monumental, public works often feature mythological females, these are invariably Nikes and Minervas—powerful beings with martial and civic associations (figs.89-90). They are never nude, nor are they attached to particular sentimental narratives. *Merope*'s associated narrative, on the other hand, idealizes the bonds of filial love, reinforcing a sentimental construction of the domestic sphere and presenting a domestically unattached woman as a tragic figure. Also, the figure's dramatic pose and expression were intended to elicit a sympathetic emotional response in viewers, placing them in a proper domestic frame of mind. The sculpture itself enacts a sentimental way of looking—*Merope*'s gaze expresses her longing for filial connection within a domestic context.

By displaying *Merope* in her home, McGraw may have sought to present herself as a sentimental and domestic woman, softening her image by symbolically declaring her desire for reconciliation with her family.⁶² Yet this image of a desperately searching, striving woman was at odds with the ideal of Home as a restful haven. At the first large, public gathering in McGraw's house (her posthumous 1891 estate auction) a reporter for the *Ithaca Daily Journal* described the effect of *Merope* in its "esthetic" setting. "The lovely statue looked an embodiment of cold, ethereal scorn at the ignoble scene, as though she were a beautiful slave up for auction and longed to fly away."⁶³ His reaction

⁶² McGraw's family purchased most of the objects sold at her 1891 estate auction, including most of her art collection; however, family members made only a few very low bids for *Merope*. They may have viewed McGraw's sculpture as a public rebuke of them for their coldness to her. See "Fiske Mansion Sold," *Ithaca Daily Journal*, 19 February 1891: 3.

⁶³ Ibid.

was due, in part, to the doleful, commercial atmosphere of the auction itself; however, he was also responding to the sculpture's agitated pose and expression. The reporter, who was probably unfamiliar with the mythological narrative that defined Merope's longing as a desire for home and family, saw an image of a captive woman yearning to flee.

The decades after the Civil War were marked by a broad cultural debate about women's nature and proper place—a debate that caused widespread anxiety. McGraw felt this anxiety personally. Shortly before she purchased *Merope*, she wrote to her Aunt Sarah about her cousin Georgiana's recent marriage and her cousin Lettie's engagement. She added wistfully, "...I hope I may have a home one of these days... I will try to be useful and happy in it."⁶⁴ McGraw was not referring here just to her actual, partially-built house but, more broadly, to the nineteenth-century sentimental ideal of Home. Despite the independence her wealth gave her, McGraw continued to desire the close domestic ties of an idealized Victorian family. Like Clara Bloomfield-Moore, she was born too early to be one of the college-educated, professional "new women" who emerged on the American scene in the 1880s. Her domestic aspirations and her decidedly sentimental outlook placed her closer to the mid-nineteenth-century "cult of true womanhood."⁶⁵ Still, McGraw's assertion that she would "try" to be useful and happy in her home reveals her ambivalence about the limitations of the domestic sphere, and her actions show that

⁶⁴ Letter from Jennie McGraw to Sarah McGraw, 14 December 1878, McGraw Family Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁶⁵ Barbara Welter coined the phrase "Cult of True Womanhood" to describe the mid-nineteenth century sentimental feminine ideal in "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," 151-74. Carol Smith-Rosenberg contrasted this ideal with the "New Woman" type in "The New Woman as Androgyn: Social Disorder and Gender Crisis," in *Disorderly Conduct*, 245-296.

she had no intention of ceding power in the public realm. She kept sole ownership of her business despite the rift this caused with her family, and before she married she required her fiancé to sign a pre-nuptial agreement forgoing any claim on her property or income.⁶⁶ Like many women of her generation, McGraw strove to reconcile seemingly contradictory desires for freedom, power and fulfillment on the one hand and for the “sweet assurance of sympathy and love” on the other. Whether or not she intended it, her statue of *Merope* publicly expressed her ambivalent position. It presented an image of an incomplete self suspended between the outside world of freedom and the inside world of relation, defined by endless, unquenchable longing.⁶⁷

I would like to suggest one other possible interpretation of *Merope* in the context of McGraw’s artistic interior. As Mary Blanchard has argued, artistic interiors created an atmosphere of seductive escape through their profusion of patterned surfaces and exotic, decorative objects.⁶⁸ However, she failed to note that this wealth of commodities also referred to the market culture of the modern public sphere—a sphere in which women, as consumers, were increasingly immersed. Unlike the passive, contented women generally depicted in Aesthetic paintings and sculpture, *Merope* expressed the underlying

⁶⁶ The full text of Fiske’s pre-nuptial agreement is reprinted in “A Victory for Cornell,” *New York Times*, 27 May 1886: 1. In it, he said, “I do contract and agree that she shall have, possess, control and dispose of her property after her said marriage and in the same manner and to as perfect and complete extent as if she remained single and unmarried.”

⁶⁷ Susan Stewart has pointed out the relationship between longing and a divided or incomplete sense of Self. According to Stewart, the urge to collect arises from a need to create a complete, perfected Self. See *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993). McGraw’s acquisitiveness, restless dissatisfaction, and affinity for the sculpture *Merope* all seem to confirm Stewart’s thesis.

⁶⁸ Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde’s America*, 112.

restlessness and dissatisfaction that constituted one driving force behind middle and upper-class women's increasing consumption of non-essential commodities in the 1870s and '80s.⁶⁹ As Janna Jones has argued, shopping offers women a fantasy of self-fulfillment by allowing them to move with (limited) freedom and exercise (limited) power outside the home; however, the ultimate end of shopping remains the body, the family and the home, leading women in a circular path back to where they began.⁷⁰ As Marxist scholars have long pointed out, market capitalism's displacement of individual identity into fetishized commodities leads not to satisfaction, but to incessant, insatiable desire. Small wonder then that, in the decades following the Civil War, American writers frequently evoked the image of a longing woman to symbolize the reigning spirit of avarice that characterized the Gilded Age.⁷¹ Standing in the midst of McGraw's elaborate interior, surrounded by the results of her rampant consumption, *Merope* could be read as just such a symbol.

In 1891, a reporter for the *Ithaca Daily Journal* described the McGraw-Fiske mansion as "famous." It was indeed, but not for the reasons McGraw would have liked. After her death a bitter, three-way fight for her estate ensued between her husband (who chose to contest the prenuptial agreement he had so recently signed), her family and Cornell University. Her house became one focus of this dispute—her husband wanted to live in it, her family wanted to sell it, and the University trustees wanted to convert it into

⁶⁹ See Remy G. Saisselin, *The Bourgeoise and the Bibelot* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 53-74.

⁷⁰ See Janna Jones, "The Distance from Home: The Domestication of Desire in Interior Design Manuals," *Journal of Social History* 31 (Winter 1997): 307-326.

⁷¹ See Fisher, "Fictions of Female Desire."

an art museum. The case lasted ten years and went all the way to the United States Supreme Court, receiving a flood of publicity along the way. Although McGraw had willed most of her property to Cornell University, her husband and family ultimately broke her will and split most of the estate between them. The melodramatic narrative of these events, as it emerged in the press, depicted Fiske (who lived out his days in “princely style” in a Florentine villa) as a heartless gold digger, the McGraw family as distant and uncaring, and the mansion itself as a symbol of “lavish extravagance.” McGraw emerged from this narrative as a hapless, tragic heroine—at the mercy of unscrupulous relations and of her own unregulated desires.⁷²

Not surprisingly, the public took a lively interest in the McGraw-Fiske mansion. It stood isolated and uninhabited for eleven years, inviting curious tourists to wander around its exterior and peek in its windows. As early as 1881, a notice appeared in the *Ithaca Democrat* warning that “...those who wish to inspect the interior of the Fiske house must first gain permission of the architect, Mr. Miller.”⁷³ When Eagles published his stereographs of “Ithaca and the Vicinity,” he confirmed the mansion’s status as a tourist site by including at least ten views of it in the set, more than he devoted to any other single site. Stereographs were a form of popular, mass entertainment. They were printed in large editions on inexpensive cardstock and, when placed in a viewer called a stereoscope, they created the illusion of a three-dimensional image. They quickly

⁷² See for example “Trying to Annul a Will,” *New York Times*, 7 September 1883: 5; “Prof. Willard Fiske,” *Ithaca Daily Journal*, 29 March 1886: 3; “A Victory for Cornell,” *New York Times*, 27 May 1886: 1;. For a useful overview with many pertinent citations, see Robert S. Amdursky, “The Background of and Decisions in the Fiske-McGraw Will Suit,” Honors Thesis, Cornell University, 1959, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁷³ *The Ithaca Democrat*, 1 December 1881: 3.

became a cheap substitute for tourism, offering viewers from a wide range of backgrounds the chance to “travel” to nearly any accepted tourist destination, where they could see (as if hovering, disembodied, within the spaces depicted) all the approved sites.⁷⁴

Through his stereographs of the mansion, Eagles dramatized the already well-known tale of its late owner. *Merope*, featured in at least four of his views, was not only visually striking, it also provided Eagles with a perfect stand-in for McGraw herself. The marble image of an anxious, longing woman surrounded by what the editor of the *Ithaca Daily Journal* termed McGraw’s “vast, prodigious folly” perfectly mirrored the way her story unfolded in the popular press.⁷⁵ Eagles’ stereographs allowed his largely middle-class audience to gaze with voyeuristic pleasure at the decadent but enticing lifestyle of the rich and famous, while simultaneously reassuring themselves of their superior wisdom, happiness and morals.

⁷⁴ See Fowles, “Stereography and the Standardization of Vision,” 89-93, and Steve Hoelscher, “The Photographic Construction of Tourist Space in Victorian America,” *Geographical Review* 88, no.4 (1998): 548-570.

⁷⁵ *Ithaca Daily Journal*, 29 March 1886: 1; Parsons, in his 1968 history of Cornell campus architecture, interpreted the figure of *Merope* in one of Eagles’ stereographs as a “quaint symbol of the missing Jennie.” See Parsons, *The Cornell Campus*, 121. Morris Bishop also viewed the photograph in this way. See Bishop, *A History of Cornell* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), 224.

Epilogue

On a February evening in 1871, the Corcoran Gallery of Art opened its doors for the first time to a throng of several thousand guests who danced in the grand, second-floor exhibition hall until early the next morning. Over their heads, live canaries sang in hundreds of cages suspended between the gas lights. The ball, called "the most magnificent reception ever held in Washington," was attended by President Ulysses S. Grant, Vice President Schuyler Colfax and General William Tecumseh Sherman among other luminaries.¹ As Alan Wallach has argued, it marked the public reconciliation between Washington's native elites, most of whom had—like Corcoran himself—sympathized with the Confederacy, and the Republican-led federal government.²

For Corcoran, the ball also marked the culmination of a long and difficult process. He had begun planning the removal of his private art collection to a public gallery in 1859, immediately following his daughter Louise's wedding. He commissioned the American architect James Renwick (1818–1895) to design a museum building and, by 1861, the imposing French Second Empire edifice stood nearly completed just a few blocks from his home and across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House. During the Civil War, however, Corcoran moved to Europe, leaving the building standing empty. The federal government confiscated it and used it to house the Quartermaster General's Corps of the Union Army. After years of negotiations, Corcoran was finally able to

¹ "The Ball of the Season," *Daily Patriot* (Washington, D.C.), 21 February 1871: 4.

² Alan Wallach, *Exhibiting Contradiction: Essays on the Art Museum in the United States* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 22-37.

reclaim the building in 1869, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art was founded as a public institution.

Among the seventy-eight paintings and sculptures from Corcoran's original private collection that were installed in the new museum was Hiram Powers' *Greek Slave*, which had served as the altarpiece of his daughter's wedding ten years earlier. Its importance within Corcoran's collection is indicated by the fact that, in 1859, Renwick designed a special room in the new museum to house the sculpture. This small, dome-roofed, octagonal shrine, located on the second floor at the furthest remove from the grand staircase and exhibition hall, set the sculpture apart; however, it also set it aside from the main gallery spaces. Reporters and critics who wrote about the Corcoran Gallery after its official public opening in 1874 nearly all made note of the *Greek Slave*'s presence. Few, however, gave it much attention. It was no longer the focal point of Corcoran's collection, which now encompassed nearly four hundred works of art, including many examples of modern and ancient sculpture.

One writer who did devote several paragraphs to the Corcoran Gallery's *Greek Slave* was the conservative critic for the *International Review*.³ Noting that, "we believe the time is not near at hand when posterity will yield to another [Powers'] position among the foremost of American sculptors," the critic defended the sculpture from recent criticisms, most notably those of the American art critic James Jackson Jarves, who dismissed the *Greek Slave* as "so bad that the popular applause which attended its

³ "Art at the National Capital," *The International Review* 1 (May 1874): 343-45.

appearance may be taken to prove the public ignorance of sculpture.”⁴ As early as 1864, Jarves had begun chipping away at Powers’ popularity, “The sculpture of Powers does not render the real beautiful,” he asserted. “He is rather the sculptor of sentimental prettiness, a dainty workman in marble, as incapable of realizing high ideal motives by his conventional treatment as he is of rendering genuine naturalism.”⁵ Writers in the 1840s and ‘50s had stressed Powers’ sentimental nature *and* his manliness, but for Jarves those qualities were mutually exclusive. Powers’ sentimental, domestic sculpture emasculated him, and was inappropriate for a public setting such as a museum.⁶

Jarves’s opinions about Powers, though far from universal in 1874, signaled a shift in American tastes. As we have seen, the market for ideal sculptures as domestic ornaments continued to exist in the United States into the 1880s and beyond; however, the nearly ubiquitous praise these works enjoyed at mid-century began to erode in the 1860s. Although Americans still believed that sculpture exerted an elevating influence, they increasingly disagreed about where that influence was most effective—in the private domestic sphere or in public museums and galleries of art. Jarves and many other art critics—including the editor of *The Nation* and the future Harvard art historian Charles

⁴ Jarves, *The Art-Idea* (1864; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), 215.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ In 1845, a writer for *Arthur’s Ladies’ Magazine* described Powers at work in his studio as follows: “His figure is tall and well proportioned. His long black hair falls over his face which, though not strikingly handsome, is full of expression. The forehead is fair and high. The eye kindles and flashes as the yielding material grows plastic beneath his hand into the embodiment of the sculptor’s thought, and his whole expression indicates a man of energy and genius.” “Sketches in Italy,” *Arthur’s Ladies’ Magazine* 3 (January 1845): 63. See also Harris, *The Artist in American Society*, 241-251.

Eliot Norton—championed the latter settings. In an 1874 article titled “Chromo-Civilization,” Norton attacked sentimental, household art as the root of such “mental and moral chaos” as the struggle for women’s suffrage.⁷ In an 1870 essay titled “Museums of Art,” Jarves advocated,

...a training which shall teach the public how to discriminate between the permanent and ephemeral, profound and shallow, true and counterfeit, in everything affecting their aesthetic enjoyment and moral well-being. Now, with all due gratitude to those popular artists who have made art a household object to the million, who otherwise might have gone to their graves unknowing and indifferent to it in any shape, it is no wrong to them to hail with satisfaction any means by which the nation may become at once a better judge and patron... Public galleries and museums... by providing adequate sources of comparison and instruction, will enable the people better to decide on the relative merits of artists and schools of art, and thus do fuller justice to their teachers and themselves.⁸

Jarves also stressed in this essay that museums and galleries should be run by “competent experts,” by which he meant male professionals trained in the study of art.⁹

According to the mid-nineteenth-century "cult of domesticity," virtue was a personal matter, to be taught by sentimental men and women in the home. Ideal sculpture was intimately intertwined with this process of private moral education, and with Americans’ construction of themselves as sentimental, domestic subjects. The Civil War and its aftermath disrupted this view. As Lawrence Levine has shown, distinctions between popular and elite culture grew wider after the war.¹⁰ Furthermore, as Michael

⁷ [Charles Eliot Norton], “Chromo-Civilization,” *The Nation* 5 (24 September 1874): 200-01.

⁸ J. Jackson Jarves, “Museums of Art,” *The Galaxy* 10 (July 1870): 52.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰ Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

Clapper has pointed out, this widening divide was marked by a growing bias against artworks that were associated with the implicitly feminine domestic sphere. “The fact that chromos, as well as other objects and images, were in homes became evidence that they were not art; museum collections and displays came to define what was.”¹¹

The normative image of the professional that emerged after the war was masculine, rational, independent and expert—an identity that Gilded Age critics and art historians like Jarves and Norton sought to appropriate for themselves.¹² As civic-minded Americans laid the foundations for public museums and art galleries in the decades after the war, such authorities celebrated the fact that the display of art would no longer be a private, domestic matter, falling within the province of amateurs—women as well as men—but a public concern, to be carried out by male professionals who, they presumed, would be free from sentimental biases. Their point of view flipped the rhetoric of sentimental domesticity on its head: civilization, order and enlightenment could not flow from the domestic sphere—a confused realm of unregulated emotions—but must emanate from professionally organized public institutions.

While commentators on the recently opened Corcoran Gallery largely ignored the *Greek Slave*, they were deeply impressed with the Corcoran’s collection of modern, French sculpture, particularly its complete set of Antoine-Louis Barye’s (1797-1875) bronze *animalier* statuettes. Noting that Powers had “added nothing to art-growth,” S. G.

¹¹ Michael Clapper, “The Chromo and the Art Museum,” in Christopher Reed, ed. *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1996), 40.

¹² Kirsten Swinth, *Painting Professionals: Women Artists and the Development of Modern American Art, 1870-1930* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 6.

W. Benjamin went on to praise Barye's sculptures effusively, calling them "the most remarkable works which the art of sculpture has produced since the death of Michel Angelo."¹³ Earl Shinn too, in his account of the gallery in *The Art Treasures of America*, glosses over the *Greek Slave* as well as Corcoran's versions of Powers' busts *Ginevra* and *Proserpine*, while devoting five full, illustrated pages to the work of Barye.¹⁴

Barye's small bronzes are overtly decorative, serial works of art. Although the versions commissioned for the Corcoran Gallery by its first director, William T. Walters, were produced under the artist's direct supervision, cheaper versions of the same compositions were available for middle-class men and women to purchase as household decorations. What, then, secured Barye's claim to high-art status? The answer is two-fold. In the first place, Barye worked in an elegant, technically masterful, Beaux-arts style. The prodigious taste for French paintings in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century is well-known. In sculpture, too, French style reigned supreme. In particular, critics admired the active surfaces and lively depictions of gesture and expression found in French statues.¹⁵ In 1878, the American sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward advised all aspiring young American sculptors to study in Paris, noting "Paris has the best draughtsmen in the world; its system of teaching is the best, training the eye to

¹³ S. G. W. Benjamin, "The Corcoran Gallery of Art," *The Century* 24 (October 1882): 818-19.

¹⁴ Strahan [Shinn], *The Art Treasures of America*, vol.1, 16-20.

¹⁵ See for instance Theodore Child, "Modern French Sculptors," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 76 (January 1888): 236-66.

the movement of figures and to accuracy of representation.”¹⁶ It is hardly surprising that Walters, one of the most prominent American collectors and advocates of modern, French art, should have selected Barye’s oeuvre as his first large commission for the Corcoran gallery.

Equally important for Barye’s reputation as a serious and masculine artist was his subject matter—wild animals, typically shown locked in combat with men or with each other. In *Tiger Surprising an Antelope*, for instance, a ferocious cat crushes its terrified prey to the earth, biting into its throat with strong, inexorable jaws. (fig.91) The small sculpture’s beautiful modeling and gracefully interwoven forms do nothing to disguise the raw violence of its theme. The result, while emotionally stirring, is decidedly unsentimental. Unlike Powers’ sculptures, which embody mid-nineteenth-century domestic ideals of empathy, filial love, and home-feeling, Barye’s works celebrate power and the primal struggle for survival. By the 1880s, the well-known and often repeated narrative of Barye’s own long, bitter struggle for recognition as an artist mirrored and reinforced the themes of conflict embodied by his sculptures.¹⁷

Barye’s technical mastery (evidence of his consummate professionalism) and the brutal subject matter of his sculptures counteracted the potential stigma of their role as domestic decoration. Their influence flowed, not from the heart of the feminized domestic sphere out into the world, but in the opposite direction. As both museum pieces and domestic ornaments, they disseminated the manly values of the Gilded Age public

¹⁶ G. W. Sheldon, “An American Sculptor,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 57 (June 1878): 66.

¹⁷ See for instance, Theodore Child, “Antoine Louis Barye,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 71 (September 1885): 585-87 and Henry Eckford [Charles de Kay], “Antoine Louis Barye,” *The Century* 31 (February 1886): 483-501.

sphere (competition, aggression, courage, and power) to a broad, middle-class audience.

Historians of American art are heirs to the prejudices against sentimental, mid-nineteenth-century ideal sculptures that artists and critics put in place in the decades following the Civil War. Reacting against art that seemed too feminine and too domestic, our predecessors dismissed the vast majority of these works as frivolous confections, unworthy of serious study by the competent professionals whose role it is to educate the public. Challenges to this dominant view have been impeded by the fact that, removed from the private homes that once framed them, most ideal sculptures are—like the subject of Randolph Rogers' *Lost Pleiad*—exiles. Re-installed in modern, museum settings, their language is only partially comprehensible. It is my hope that, by considering a handful of these works in their original domestic contexts, I have restored some degree of their original depth and complexity.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Manuscript Collections

Acklen, Adelia. Correspondence. Curatorial Files, Belmont Mansion, Nashville, Tenn.

[Acklen, Adelia]. "Will of Adelia Cheatham." Records of Davidson County, Wills and Inventories, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tenn.

"Belmont, Belmont Boulevard & Wedgewood, Nashville, Davidson County, TN." Descriptions, Photographs and Plans. Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Boardman, Douglas. Papers. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

Brown, Mark and John Lancaster. "Catalog of Artwork at Belmont." Typescript. Curatorial Files, Belmont Mansion, Nashville, Tenn.

Brown, Mark. "Chronology of Adelia Hayes Franklin Acklen's Life." Typescript. Curatorial Files, Belmont Mansion, Nashville, Tenn.

Calyo, Nicolino. Curatorial Object Files. Museum of the City of New York. New York, New York.

Carey, Edward Lea. Papers. Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia, Penn. Microfilmed by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Chicago Daily News Negative Collection. Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Ill.

Davis, Alexander Jackson. Papers. Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, New York, New York.

"A Documentation of the History and Restoration of the Lockwood-Matthews Mansion, Norwalk, Connecticut." Ed. Linda R. Kraus. 2 vols. Typescript, 1974. Yale University Art Library, New Haven, Conn.

Durand, John. Papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Eagles, Joseph Dunlap. *Views of Ithaca and Vicinity*. Ithaca, New York, 1883. Robert Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views. Prints and Photographs Division, The New York Public Library, New York, New York.

- Eagles, Joseph Dunlap. *Views of Ithaca and Vicinity*. Ithaca, New York, 1883. DeWitt Historical Society of Tompkins County, Ithaca, New York.
- Fiske, Jennie McGraw. Estate Records. Clarke Historical Library, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Mich.
- Griffith, May. "Powers' Proserpine." Typescript. Edward Carey Garner Collection, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
- Haight, Richard K. Last Will and Testament. Office of Probate Records, Surrogate Court of New York County, New York, New York.
- Haight, Sarah Rogers. "The Travels of Sarah R. Haight Through Switzerland, Austrio Hungary, Bohemia, Bavaria, Prussia, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Russia." Typescript. Research Division, New York Public Library, New York, New York.
- Ives. Chauncey Bradley. Transcript of Studio Book. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Curatorial Object Files of the Department of American Art.
- Lienau, Detlef. Collection. Department of Special Collections, Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University, New York, New York.
- "The Lockwood-Mathews House, Veterans' Memorial Park, Southeast, Norwalk, Fairfield County, CT." Descriptions, Photographs and Plans. Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- McGraw, Jennie. Correspondence. McGraw Family Collection. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.
- McGraw, Jennie. Correspondence. McGraw-Fiske Collection. DeWitt Historical Society of Tompkins County, Ithaca, New York
- McGraw, Jennie. Diaries for 1875 and 1877. McGraw Family Collection. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.
- McHenry, Mrs. Spencer. "Belmont Acklen Estate." Typescript. Curatorial Files, Belmont Mansion, Nashville, Tenn.
- Norton, Charles Eliot. Papers. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
- "Photographic Views of New York City." Prints and Photographs Division, New York Public Library, New York, New York.
- Powers, Hiram. Collection. Cincinnati Historical Society Library, Cincinnati, OH.

Powers, Hiram. Papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Randolph, Richard. "Sundry Memos of R. Randolph, Esq., 1835-37." Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera. Winterthur Library, Winterthur Museum and Country Estate, Winterthur, Delaware.

Rogers, Randolph. Papers. Michigan Historical Collection. Ann Arbor, Michigan. Microfilmed by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Story, William Wetmore. Studio Book. Story Family Collection. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas, Austin.

Walsh, Mother Frances. "The Annals of St. Cecilia Convent, 1860-1888." Typescript. Curatorial Files, Belmont Mansion, Nashville, Tenn.

Ward, Samuel Gray. Papers. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Primary Sources

Aldis, Rev. John. "Grecian Fables." *The Ladies' Repository* 16 (March 1856): 177-78.

America's Successful Men of Affairs: An Encyclopedia of Contemporaneous Biography. Ed. Henry Hall. 2 vols. New York: The New York Tribune, 1895-96.

"Antonio Canova." *The Penny Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* 9 (1840): 365.

Art and Industry as Expressed in the Exhibition at the Crystal Palace New York, 1853-54. Ed. Horace Greeley. New York: Redfield, 1853.

"Art and Its Future Prospects in the United States." *Godey's Lady's Book* 46 (March 1853): 217-221.

"Art Gossip." *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 4 (December 1860): 182.

"Art in Florence." *The Crayon* 2 (July, 1855): 20-21.

Artistic Houses: Being a Series of Interior Views of a Number of the Most Beautiful and Celebrated Homes in the United States with a Description of the Art Treasures Contained Therein. 2 vols. New York: D. Appleton, 1883.

"Arts of Design in America." *The North American Review* 52 (April 1841): 301-320.

- Aylesworth, John R. "Specimens of Taste for our Maturer Age: Neoclassicism as Realized in America in Selected Works of Horatio Greenough and Washington Irving." Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio University, 1985.
- Beard, George Miller. *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences*. New York: Putnam's Sons, 1881.
- Beecher, Catharine E. and Harriet Beecher Stowe. *The American Woman's Home, or Principles of Domestic Economy*. New York: J. B. Ford and Co., 1869; Reprint, Project Gutenberg, 2004. <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/mrwmh10.txt>
- Bradnack, Fowler. "Pluto and Proserpine: A Travesty." *The American Knickerbocker Magazine* 63 (March 1864): 233-36.
- Brock, Sallie A. "My Souvenirs—Buchanan, Read, Rinehart, Powers." *Appleton's Journal*, 14 (7 July 1875): 76-79.
- Browning, Elizabeth Barrett. "Hiram Powers' 'Greek Slave'." *The International Magazine of Literature, Science, and Art* 2 (1 December 1850): 88.
- Bulfinch, Thomas. *The Age of Fable, or, Beauties of Mythology*. Boston: S.W. Tilton, 1855.
- Bulwer-Lytton, Edward. *The Last Days of Pompeii*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834.
- Bulwer-Lytton, Lady Rosina Wheeler [Giberna]. "The Arts—Modern Art and Artists in Italy." *Court Journal* (London), 8 May 1841: 1186-87.
- Caffin, Charles Henry. *American Masters of Sculpture, Being a Brief Appreciation of Some American Sculptors and of Some Phases of Sculpture in America*. Garden City and New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1913.
- [*Catalogue of Statuary after Antonio Canova*]. Boston: Harding's Gallery, 1834.
- Cecilia. "Memories of Home Travels." *Southern Literary Messenger* 20 (January 1854): 29-32.
- "Centre-Table Gossip, Bridal Etiquette." *Godey's Lady's Book* 57 (November 1858): 475.
- Chicago Tribune*. "Easel and Chisel: Randolph Rogers' Great Work, 'The Lost Pleiad' at the Art Institute." 25 February 1883: 9.
- "Children's Dress." *Godey's Lady's Book* 41 (September 1850): 189.
- Cicognara, Count Leopoldo. *Lettere ad Antonio Canova*. Urbino: Argalia, 1973.

- Clark, William J. Jr. *Great American Sculptors*. Philadelphia: George Barrie, 1876.
- Cleveland, Cecilia. *The Story of a Summer; or, Journal Leaves from Chappaqua*. New York: G. W. Carleton & Co., 1874.
- Colman, Henry. *European Life and Manners; In Familiar Letters to Friends*, 2 vols. Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, and London: John Petherham, 1849.
- Conway, M. D. "The Great Show at Paris Again." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 35 (November, 1867): 777-792.
- Cook, Clarence. "Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks VI." *Scribner's Monthly* 12 (October 1876): 796-808.
- Cook, Clarence. *The House Beautiful: Essays on Beds and Tables, Stools and Candlesticks*. New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1878.
- Cooper, James Fenimore. *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish: A Tale*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Carey, 1829.
- Cortazo, Emma Cullum. *Emma Cullum Cortazzo, 1842-1918*. Meadville, Pennsylvania: E. H. Shartle, 1919.
- Crawford, F. M. "False Taste in Art." *The North American Review*, 135 (July 1882): 89-98.
- Dallin, Cyrus Edwin. "American Sculpture—Its Present Aspects and Tendencies." *Brush and Pencil* 11, no.6 (1903): 416-429.
- Davis, Andrew Jackson. *Rural Residences*. New York: New York University, 1837.
- Davis, Jefferson. *Jefferson Davis, Private Letters, 1823-1889*. Ed. Hudson Strode. New York: Harcourt, Brace, World, 1966.
- Denier, Tony. *Parlor Tableaux; or Animated Pictures*. New York: Samuel French, 1869.
- "Destruction of the Academy of Fine Arts, in Philadelphia." *The Anglo American*, 5 (21 June 1845): 208.
- Detroit Free Press*. "The Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii." 10 April 1862: 1.
- Detroit Free Press*. "Devotion of a Wife." 17 April 1862: 4.
- Detroit Free Press*. "Unveiling of the Statue Nydia." 11 April 1862: 1.

- Dick's Parlor Exhibitions*. New York: Dick & Fitzgerald, 1882.
- "Domestic Art Gossip." *The Crayon*, 7 (August 1860): 231-33.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson. *The Architecture of Country Houses*. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1850.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson. *Cottage Residences; or, A Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas*. New York: Putnam and Sons, 1842.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson. "Downing on Landscape Gardening." *The North American Review*, 53 (July 1841): 258-62.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson. *Rural Essays*. New York: G.P. Putnam, 1853.
- Downing, Andrew Jackson. *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1841.
- "Editor's Table." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 14 (March 1857): 557.
- Edwards, John E. "Novel Reading." *The Ladies' Repository* 3 (April 1843): 115-17.
- Elegant Mansion and Handsome Furniture of Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, 510 South Broad Street*. Philadelphia: M. Thomas & Sons, Auctioneers, 1892. A sale catalog.
- Ellet, Mrs. [Elisabeth]. *The Queens of American Society*. Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1867.
- The Entire Collection of Important Modern Paintings, Statuary, Bronze, Articles of Vertu, Etc. Belonging to the Late Mr. LeGrand Lockwood*. New York: Leavitt Auctioneers, 1872. A sale catalog.
- Everett, Edward. "Canova and his Work." *North American Review*, 10 (April 1820): 372-86.
- Farmer's Cabinet* (Amherst, Mass.). "Horace Greeley at Home," 28 December 1854: 1.
- Fern, Fanny [Sara Payson Willis]. *Ruth Hall*. New York: Mason Brothers, 1854.
- Fetridge, William Pembroke. *The American Traveler's Guide*. New York: Fetridge & Co., 1866.
- [Fitch, John]. *Annals of the Army of the Cumberland: Comprising Biographies, Descriptions of Departments, Accounts of Expeditions, Skirmishes, and Battles*. Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1863.

- Florentia. "A Walk Through the Studios of Rome." *Art Journal* (London), 1 (1 June 1854): 186.
- Freeman, James E. "Chapters on Models, Part I." *Appleton's Journal* 1 (July 1876): 58-61.
- Freeman, James E. "Chapters on Models, Part II." *Appleton's Journal* 1 (August 1876): 156-162.
- Fuller, Margaret. *At Home and Abroad; or, Things Thought in America and Europe*. New York: The Tribune Association, 1869.
- Fuller, Margaret. "Canova." *The Dial* 3 (April, 1843): 454-483.
- Gardner, Mrs. H. C. "The Ill-Bred Girl." *The Ladies' Repository* 15 (April, 1855): 205-206.
- "The Genius and Sculptures of Powers." *The American Whig Review* 2 (August 1845): 199-205.
- Greeley, Horace. "The Crystal Palace and Its Lessons." *Graham's Magazine* 40 (May 1852): 473-483.
- Greeley, Horace. *Glances at Europe in a Series of Letters from Great Britain, France, Italy, Switzerland, &c., During the Summer of 1851*. New York: Dewitt & Davenport, 1851.
- Greeley, Horace. *Recollections of a Busy Life*. New York: J.B. Ford & Co., 1868.
- Greeley, Horace. "Remarks." *New York Daily Tribune*, 2 November 1850: 6.
- Greenough, Horatio. *The Letters of Horatio Greenough, American Sculptor*. Ed. Nathalia Wright. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972.
- Greenough, Horatio. "Remarks on American Art." *The United States Magazine, and Democratic Review* 13 (July 1843): 45-48.
- Greenwood, Grace [Sarah Clarke]. *Greenwood Leaves: A Collection of Sketches and Letters by Grace Greenwood*. Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1850.
- Greenwood, Grace [Sarah Clarke]. "Leaves from Over the Sea." *The National Era*, 10 March 1853: 37-38.
- Gregory, Eliot. *Worldly Ways and Byways*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1898.

- Haight, Sarah Rogers. *Jane Brush and Her Cow: A Story for Children Illustrative of Natural History, Altered from the French of Mlle. Trémadeure*. New York: M. W. Dodd, 1841.
- Haight, Sarah Rogers. *Letters from the Old World by a Lady of New York*, 2 vols. New York: Harper & Bros., 1840.
- Hale, Edward Everett. *Ninety Days Worth of Europe*. Boston: Walker, Wise, & Co., 1861.
- Hamilton, Helen. "The Italian Sisters." *Godey's Lady's Book*, 65 (August 1852): 179.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Marble Faun; or, The Romance of Monte Beni*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1860. Reprinted, New York: Penguin, 1990.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Passages from the French and Italian Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne*. 2 vols. Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1876.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Tanglewood Tales, for Girls and Boys; Being A Second Wonder Book*. Boston: Ticknor, Reed and Fields, 1853. Reprint, Eldritch Press, 2002.
<http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/nh/tt.html>.
- Head, J. H. *Home Pastimes; or Tableaux Vivants*. Boston, J. E. Tilton & Co., 1860.
- "Hiram Powers." *The Illustrated Magazine of Art*, 3, no.15 (1854): 207-221.
- "Hiram Powers," *The Living Age* 44 (17 March 1855): 703-704.
- Holly, Henry Hudson. *Holly's Country Seats: Containing Lithographic Designs for Cottages, Villas, Mansions, etc. with Their Accompanying Outbuildings, also, Country Churches, City Buildings, Railway Stations, etc., etc.* New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1863.
- Hone, Philip and Bayard Tuckerman. *The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828-1851*, 2 vols. New York: Dodd and Mead, 1889.
- Hosmer, Harriet Goodhue. *Harriet Hosmer Letters and Memories*. Ed. Cornelia Carr. Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. 1897.
- Howitt, Anna Mary. *An Art Student in Munich* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1853).
- Ingersoll, Lurton Dunham. *The Life of Horace Greeley*. Philadelphia: Potter & Co., 1873.

- James, Henry, Sr. *Love, Marriage and Divorce*. New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1853. Reprinted, Molinari Institute, 2005.
<http://praxeology.net/HJ-HG-SPA-LMD-3.htm>.
- James, Henry. *William Wetmore Story and His Friends; From Letters, Diaries, and Recollections Being Incidents and Anecdotes Chronologically Arranged, Together with an Account of his Association with Famous People and his Principal Works in Literature and Sculpture*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1903.
- Jarves, James Jackson. *The Art-Idea*. Boston, 1864. Reprinted, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960.
- Jarves, James Jackson. *Art Thoughts, the Experience and Observation of an American Amateur in Europe*. New York: Hurd & Houghton; Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1869.
- Jarves, James Jackson. "Museums of Art." *The Galaxy* 10 (July 1870): 50-61.
- Jarves, James Jackson. "What American Women are Doing in Sculpture." *The Art Review* 1 (March 1871): 3-4.
- Jenkins, George Washington. "The Corcoran Wedding." *Harper's Weekly* 3 (16 April 1859): 241-242.
- Leland, Henry P. *Americans in Rome*. New York: Charles T. Evans, 1863.
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. *Laocoon: or, The Limits of Poetry and Painting*. London: J. Ridgway & Sons, 1836.
- Lester, C. E. "The Genius and Sculpture of Powers." *The American Whig Review* 2 (Aug. 1854): 199-204.
- Lewis, E. Anna. "Art and Artists of America: Hiram Powers." *Grahams Magazine*, 48 (November 1855): 397-401.
- Lewis, E. Anna. "To Hebe (A Little Statue on the Mantle in my Study)." *Godey's Lady's Book*, 40 (January 1850): 66.
- Lewis, E. Anna. "To The Genius of Art (A Little Statue on the Mantle in my Study)." *Godey's Lady's Book*, 42 (March 1851): 187.
- Lieber, Francis. *Like a Sponge Thrown into Water: Francis Lieber's European Travel Journal of 1844-1845*. Eds. Charles R. Mack and Ilona S. Mack. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001.
- "Life and Works of Canova." *The North-American Review* 29 (October 1829): 441-79.

- "Life of Horace Greeley, J. Parton." *Putnam's Monthly* 5 (February 1855): 215.
- "Little Ellie." *The American Whig Review*, 3 (June 1846): 610.
- Longworth's American Almanac, New-York Register, and City Directory*. New York: Thomas Longworth, 1839.
- MacDonald, Miss H. B. "The Orpheus and Eurydice of Canova." *Godey's Lady's Book*, 31 (September, 1845): 103.
- "Masters of Art and Literature: Chauncey B. Ives." *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, 4, no.44 (1860): 163-64.
- McSpadden, J. Walker. *Famous Sculptors of America*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1924.
- Merrifield, Mrs. "Dress as a Fine Art." *Godey's Lady's Book* 47 (July 1853): 20.
- "Modern Pilgrimages. No.VIII. The Studio of Canova." *New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* 7 (1823), 28.
- Moore, Clara Jessup [Mrs. Bloomfield H. Moore]. *Gondalina's Lesson*. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1881.
- Moore, Clara Jessup [Harietta Oxnard Ward], *Sensible Etiquette of the Best Society, Customs, Manners, Morals and Home Culture*. Philadelphia: Porter & Coats, 1878.
- "Mythology—Proserpine." *Family Magazine or, Monthly Abstract of General Knowledge* 1 (February 1834): 186.
- "Naked Art." *The Crayon* 6 (December 1859): 877.
- The New York Business Directory for 1841 and 1842*. New York: J. Doggett, Jr., 1841.
- The New York City Copartnership Directory for 1859-60*. New York: John F. Trow, 1859.
- New York Sun*. "LeGrand Lockwood's Residence," 2 October 1869: 2.
- New York Times*. "LeGrand Lockwood," 25 February 1872: 3
- New York Times*. "Palmer's White Captive," 30 December 1859: 2.
- New York Times*. "Palmer's White Captive," 2 January 1860: 4.

- New York Tribune*. "LeGrand Lockwood," 26 February 1872: 5.
- Norwalk Gazette* (Conn.). "LeGrand Lockwood," 27 February 1872: 1.
- "Novel Reading." *Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art*, 10 (September 1857): 384-386.
- O.O.S. "A Lovely Spot." *Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Ky.): 18 May 1881.
- Osgood, Samuel. "American Artists in Italy." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 41 (August 1870): 420-25.
- Ovid. *Fasti*. Trans. Sir James George Frazer. London: W. Heinemann, 1931.
- "Palmer's White Captive." *The Atlantic Monthly* 5 (January 1860), 108-109.
- Parton, James. *The Life of Horace Greeley, Editor of the New York Tribune*. New York: Mason Brothers, 1855.
- Perris, William. *Maps of the City of New York*. 7 vols. New York: Perris & Browne, 1857.
- Philadelphia Evening Telegraph*. "Mrs. Bloomfield Moore is Dead." 5 January 1899: 2.
- Philadelphia Public Ledger*. "Eager Buyers Crowd the Broad Street Mansion of Mrs. Bloomfield Moore." 29 November 1892: 7.
- The Physiognomist's Own Book: An Introduction to Physiognomy Drawn from the Writings of Lavater*. Philadelphia: James Kay Jun., & Brother; Pittsburgh: C. H. Kay & Co., 1841.
- "Powers' Greek Slave." *Putnam's Monthly* 4 (December 1854): 666.
- Powers' Statue of the Greek Slave*. Boston: Eastburn's Press, 1848.
- Preston, Margaret Junkin [M.J.]. "Thoughts, Suggested by Powers' Proserpine." *Southern Literary Messenger* 15 (February 1849): 100.
- "Randolph Rogers, the Sculptor." *Harper's Weekly*, 6 Feb. 1892: 465.
- Robinson, Solon. *Hot Corn*. New York: DeWitt and Davenport, 1854.
- Rogers, E. P. [Ebenezer Platt Rogers]. *Address Delivered at the Funeral of LeGrand Lockwood*. Privately printed, 1872.

- Rogers, Samuel. *The Italian Journal of Samuel Rogers*. Ed. J. R. Hale. London: Farber & Farber, 1956.
- Rogers, Samuel. *Italy, a Poem*. London: J. Murray, 1823.
- S. "American Artists in Florence." *Bulletin of the American Art-Union*, 8 (1 April 1851): 13.
- "Sculpture." *The New-England Magazine*, 5 (December 1833): 480-85.
- Sheirr, Rodman J. "Joseph Mozier and his Handiwork." *Potter's American Monthly*, 6 (January 1876): 24-28.
- Shelley, Mary. "Proserpine, a Mythological Drama in Two Acts." In *The Winter's Wreath, A Collection of Original Contributions in Prose and Verse*, 1-20. London: Whittaker, Treacher & Arnot, 1822.
- Sigourney, Lydia H. "Taste." *Godey's Lady's Book* 20 (February 1840): 88.
- Silliman, Benjamin and C. R. Goodrich. *The World of Science, Art and Industry Illustrated from Examples in the New York Crystal Palace*. New York: Putnam and Co., 1854.
- "Sketches of Italy." *Arthur's Ladies' Magazine* (January 1845): 61-64.
- "Sketchings. Domestic Art Gossip." *The Crayon* 7 (August 1860): 231.
- "Statuary Room of the Boston Athenaeum." *Ballou's Pictorial* 8 (31 March 1855), 200-201.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher [Christopher Crowfield, pseud.]. *House and Home Papers*. Boston: Tichnor and Fields, 1867.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. "Olympiana." *Godey's Lady's Book* 18 (June 1839), 241.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. "Sojourner Truth, The Libyan Sibyl." *The Atlantic Monthly* 11 (April 1863): 473-482.
- Strahan, Edward [Earl Shinn]. *The Art Treasures of America*. 3 vols. Philadelphia: Philadelphia: Gebbie & Barrie, 1879.
- Strahan, Edward [Earl Shinn]. *The Masterpieces of the Centennial International Exhibition Illustrated*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Gebbie & Barrie, 1876.
- Taft, Loreda. *The History of American Sculpture*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903.

Talbot, William Henry Fox. *The Correspondence of William Henry Fox Talbot*. Ed. Larry J. Schaaf. University of Glasgow. www.foxtalbot.arts.gla.ac.uk.

Taylor, Bayard. *Views A-Foot, or, Europe Seen with a Knapsack and Staff*. New York: Hurst & Co, 1850.

Ticknor, Caroline. "The Steel-Engraving Lady and the Gibson Girl." *The Atlantic Monthly* 88 (July 1901): 105-10.

Tuckerman, Henry. *Book of the Artists: American Artist Life, Comprising Biographical and Critical Sketches of American Artists: Preceded by an Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of Art in America*. New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1867.

Unique and Artistic Furniture from the House at Norwalk, Conn., of the Late LeGrand Lockwood. New York: Leavitt Auctioneers, 1873. A sale catalog.

United States Commission to the Paris Exposition. *Reports of the United States Commissioners to the Paris Universal Exposition, 1867*. Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1870.

Wells, Kate Gannett. "The Transitional American Woman." *The Atlantic Monthly*, 46 (December 1880): 817-824.

Westcott, Thompson. "The Physiology of Dandyism: What Dandies Do." *Graham's Magazine* 40 (May 1852): 468-71.

Williams, Katherine F. "Tableaux Vivans." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 27 (October, 1863): 698-704.

Yelverton, Therese. *Teresina in America*. 2 vols. London: Bentley & Son, 1875.

Young, Josephine Churchill. *Journals of Josephine Young*. New York: privately printed, 1915.

Secondary Sources

Abrams, Ann Uhry. "Visions of Columbus: The 'Discovery' Legend in Antebellum American Paintings and Prints." *The American Art Journal*, 25, nos.1-2 (1993): 74-101.

Agnew, Jean-Christophe. "A House of Fiction." In *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920*, edited by Simon J. Bronner, 133-56. Winterthur, De.: Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, 1989.

- American Arts at the Art Institute of Chicago: From Colonial Times to World War I.* Eds. Judith A. Barter, Kimberly Rhodes and Seth Thayer. Chicago: The Art Institute, 1998.
- American Home Life, 1880-1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services.* Eds. Thomas J. Schlereth and J. H. Foy. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992.
- American National Biography.* Eds. John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes. 24 vols. New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- American Material Culture: The Shape of the Field.* Eds. Ann Smart Martin and J. Ritchie Garrison. Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1997.
- American Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Volume I.* Ed. Thayer Tolles. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999.
- Ames, Kenneth L. *Death in the Dining Room and Other Tales of Victorian Culture.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
- Anderson, Nancy K. " 'The Kiss of Enterprise': The Western Landscape as Symbol and Resource." In *The West as America: Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, edited by William H. Treuttner, 237-83. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1991. An exhibition catalog.
- Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861*, Eds. Catherine Hoover Voorsanger and John K. Howat, 135-167. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000. An exhibition catalog.
- Ayres, William Smallwood. "The Domestic Museum in Manhattan: Major Private Art Installations in New York City, 1870-1920." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 1993.
- Baker, Malcolm. *Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture.* Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000.
- Banner, Lois W. *American Beauty.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983.
- Banta, Martha. *Imaging American Women: Idea and Ideals in Cultural History.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- Bassett, Lynne Zacek. " 'The Great Leap': Youths' Clothing in the Early Nineteenth Century." *Annual Proceedings of the Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife.* 22 (1997): 184-202.

- Baumgartner, Eric W. *Carved and Modeled: American Sculpture, 1810-1940*. New York: Hirschl & Adler Gallery, 1982. An exhibition catalog.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt. Glasgow: Fontana, 1973.
- Bergmann, R. and L. Hamilton, "Restoration of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion: Preserving Masterpieces of Craftsmanship." *Technology and Conservation*, 7 (Winter 1982): 14-25.
- Berkhofer, Robert Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Bishop, Morris. *A History of Cornell*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962.
- Blanchard, Mary Warner. *Oscar Wilde's America: Counterculture in the Gilded Age*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Blanton, DeAnne and Lauren M. Cook. *They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the American Civil War*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002.
- Bogart, Michelle. "Attitudes Toward Sculptural Reproduction in America, 1850-1880." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1979.
- Bolin, Anne McNair. "Art and Domestic Culture: the Residential Art Gallery in New York City, 1850-1870." Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 2000.
- Bordieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Bostrom, Antonia. Giovanni Maria Benzoni, Randolph Rogers and the Collecting of Sculpture in Nineteenth-Century Detroit." *Sculpture Journal* 4 (2000): 151-59.
- Brody, Jennifer DeVere. "Shading Meaning." In *Performing the Body/Performing the Text*, edited by Andrew Stephenson and Amelia Jones, 89-106. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Brown, Alexis Giradon. "The Women Left Behind: Transformation of the Southern Belle, 1840-1880." *Historian* 62 (Summer 2000): 759-78.
- Brown, Gillian. *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990.
- Brown, Giselle. *The Confederate Belle*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003.

- Brumbaugh, Thomas Brendle. "Horatio and Richard Greenough: a Critical Study with a Catalogue of their Sculpture." Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1955.
- Buick, Kirsten Pai. "The Sentimental Education of Mary Edmonia Lewis: Identity, Culture and Ideal Works." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1999.
- Burke, Doreen Bolger, et. al. *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986. An exhibition catalog.
- Burnham, Michelle. *Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682-1861*. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1997.
- Burns, Sarah. "The Price of Beauty: Art, Commerce and the Late Nineteenth-Century American Studio Interior." In *American Iconology: New Approaches to Nineteenth Century Art and Literature*, edited by David C. Miller, 209-238. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Burns, Sarah. *Pastoral Inventions: Rural Life in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989.
- Byer, Robert H. "Words, Monuments, Beholders: The Visual Arts in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*." In *American Iconology: New Approaches to Nineteenth Century Art and Literature*, edited by David C. Miller, 163-171. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Campbell, Colin. *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Campbell, Jacqueline Glass. *When Sherman Marched North from the Sea: Resistance on the Confederate Home Front*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Canova. Eds. Giuseppe Pavanello and Giandomenico Romanelli. Venice: Correr Museum and Possagno: Gipsoteca Museo Canoviano, 1992. An exhibition catalog.
- Cardwell, Joan Garcia. "Italianate Domestic Architecture in New Orleans, 1850-1880." Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1975.
- Carlisle, Nancy. *Cherished Possessions: A New England Legacy*. Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 2003. An exhibition catalog.
- Carlson, Julie. "Coming After Shelley." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 41 (Winter 1999): 351-77.

- Cashin, Joan. *Our Common Affairs: Texts from Women in the Old South*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Castellanos, Maria Susana. "Sentiment, Manhood, and the Legitimation of American Expansion, 1820-1860." Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 2000.
- Chapman, Mary. "'Living Pictures': Women and Tableaux Vivants in 19th-Century American Fiction and Culture," *Wide Angle*, 18, no.3 (1996): 22-52.
- Clapper, Michael. "The Chromo and the Art Museum." In *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture*, edited by Christopher Reed, 33-47. London: Thames & Hudson, 1996.
- Clark, Clifford Edward Jr. *The American Family Home, 1800-1960*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Clark, H. Nichols B. *A Marble Quarry: The James H. Ricau Collection of Sculpture at the Chrysler Museum of Art*. New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1997.
- Cleghorn, Cassandra. "Chivalric Sentimentalism: The Case of Dr. Howe and Laura Bridgeman." In *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture*, edited by Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler, 163-80. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Clinton, Catherine. *The Plantation Mistress: Women's World in the Old South*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982.
- Colbert, Charles. *A Measure of Perfection: Phrenology and the Fine Arts in America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Conron, John. *American Picturesque*. University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.
- Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920*. Ed. Simon J. Bronner. Winterthur, Delaware: Henry Francis Du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1989.
- Cooper, Wendy A. *Classical Taste in America, 1800-1840*. Baltimore: The Baltimore Museum of Art, 1993. An exhibition catalog.
- Cott, Nancy F. *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977.
- Crane, Sylvia. *White Silence: Greenough, Powers and Crawford, American Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century Italy*. Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1972.

- Culkin, Katherine Louise. "'Slight a Girl as She Was': Gentility, Reform and Harriet Hosmer." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 2002.
- The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century American Culture*. Ed. Shirley Samuels. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Davis, John. "Children in the Parlor, Eastman Johnson's *Brown Family* and the Post Civil War Luxury Interior." *American Art* 10 (Summer 1996): 50-77.
- Davis, Richard H. *Lives of Indian Images*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Dearinger, David. "American Neoclassic Sculptors and their Private Patrons in Boston." Ph.D. dissertation, City University of New York, 1993.
- Dimmick, Lauretta. "A Catalogue of the Portrait Busts and Ideal Figures of Thomas Crawford, 1813-1857." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1986.
- Doane, Mary Ann. "Film and Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator." *Screen* 23 (1982): 74-87.
- Dobson, Jane. "Reclaiming Sentimental Literature." *American Literature* 69 (June 1997): 263-288.
- Domestic Space: Reading the Nineteenth-Century Interior*. Eds. Inga Bryden and Janet Floyd, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999.
- Douglas, Ann. *The Feminization of American Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977.
- Douglas, Mary and Baron Isherwood. *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*. New York: Basic Books, 1979.
- Dressing in Feathers: the Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture*. Ed. S. Elizabeth Bird. New York: Westview Press, 1996.
- Duffey, Henry J. "New York City Collections, 1865-1895." Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 2001.
- Dye, Nancy Schrom and Daniel Blake Smith. "Mother Love and Infant Death, 1750 1920." *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 329-53.
- Eliot, C. W. J. "'Presents Both Numerous and Costly': The Circuitous Story of a Statue," *Island Magazine* 39 (1996): 32-38.

- Empen, Cynthia Wiedemann. "Public and Exposed: The Female Body Imaged in American Visual Culture, 1848-1875." Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 2003.
- Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. Eds. Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989. Reprinted in University of North Carolina, *Documenting the American South*, <http://www/docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/biography.html>
- Ettlinger, L. D. "Winckelmann." In *The Age of Neo-Classicism*, edited by Hugh Honour, xxx-xxxiv. London, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1972. An exhibition catalog.
- Faery, Rebecca Blevins. *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race, and Sex in the Shaping of an American Nation*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999.
- Farrell, Nancie Clow. "The Slave that Captivated America." *Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin* 22, no.4 (1969): 221-239.
- Faust, Drew Gilpin. *Mothers of Invention; Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993.
- Findlay, Mary E. "Interior Decoration of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion: Color and Design of the Painted Plaster Walls and Ceilings of the First Floor." MA Thesis, Columbia University, 1978.
- Fisher, Beth Ann. "Fictions of Female Desire: Extravagant Women and Social Disorderq in Gilded Age America." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Iowa, 2001.
- Foster, Kathleen. *In Philadelphia: Three Centuries of American Art*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1976.
- Fowble, E. McSherry. "Without a Blush: The Movement toward Acceptance of the Nude As an Art Form in America, 1800-1825." *Winterthur Portfolio*, 9 (1974): 103-121.
- Fowles, Jim. "Stereography and the Standardization of Vision." *Journal of American Culture* 17, no.2 (1994): 89-93.
- Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women in the Old South*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Friberg, Flemming. "The Living Flesh. Canova's *Three Graces* and Carl Jacobsen." *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 26 (1999), 119-37.
- Fryd, Vivien Green. *Art and Empire: The Politics of Ethnicity in the United States Capitol, 1815-1860*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992.

- Gale, Robert L. *Thomas Crawford: American Sculptor*. Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964.
- Gardner, Albert TenEyck. *Yankee Stonecutters: The First American School of Sculpture, 1800-1850*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Columbia University Press, 1972.
- Gerdts, William H. *American Neo-Classical Sculpture: The Marble Resurrection*. New York: Viking Press, 1973.
- Gerdts, William H. "Celebrities of the Grand Tour: The American Sculptors in Florence and Rome." In Theodore E. Stebbins, *The Lure of Italy: American Artists and the Italian Experience 1760-1914*, 66-93. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1992.
- Gerdts, William H. "The Marble Savage." *Art in America* 62, no.4 (1976): 64-70.
- Gerdts, William H. "The *Medusa* of Harriet Hosmer." *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 56, no.2 (1978): 97-107.
- Gerdts, William H. "William Wetmore Story." *American Art Journal* 4, no.2 (1972): 16-33.
- Gere, Charlotte and Lesley Hoskins. *The House Beautiful: Oscar Wilde and the Aesthetic Interior*. London: Lund Humphries, 2000.
- Gere, Charlotte. *Nineteenth-Century Decoration: The Art of the Interior*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989.
- Graham, Elaeonor. "Belmont: Nashville Home of Adelia Acklen." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 30 (1971): 345-68.
- Green, Vivien M. "Hiram Powers's *Greek Slave*: Emblem of Freedom," *American Art Journal* 14, no.4 (1982): 31-39.
- Greenthal, Kathryn, Paula M. Kozol and Jan Seidler Ramirez. *American Figurative Sculpture in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*. Boston: The Museum, 1986.
- Greenwood, Martin. "Victorian Ideal Sculpture, 1830-1880." Ph.D. dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1998.
- Grier, Katherine C. *Culture and Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988.
- Guilding, Ruth. *Marble Mania: Sculpture Galleries in England 1640-1840*. London: Sir John Soane's Museum, 2001. An exhibition catalog.

- Haines, Michael R. "Estimated Life Tables for the United States, 1850-1910." *Historical Methods* 31 (Fall 1998): 149-69.
- Hall, David D. "Readers and Reading in America: Historical and Critical Perspectives." *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 103 (October 1993): 337-357.
- Halttunen, Karen. *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.
- Hammer, Mary. "Black and White? Viewing Cleopatra in 1862." In *The Victorians and Race*, edited by Shearer West, 53-67. Menston, Eng: Scholar Press, 1996.
- Harris, Neil. *The Artist in American Society*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969.
- Headley, Janet A. "English Literary and Aesthetic Influences on American Sculptors in Italy, 1825-1875." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1988.
- Heneghan, Bridget T. *Whitewashing America: Material Culture and Race in the Antebellum Imagination*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2003.
- Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*. Ed. Lori Frankel. Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, 1994. An exhibition catalog.
- Higonnet, Anne. *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998.
- Himmelheber, Georg. *Biedermeier, 1815-1855: Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Decorative Arts Furniture*. Munich: Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, 1988. An exhibition catalog.
- Hoelscher, Steve. "The Photographic Construction of Tourist Space in Victorian America." *Geographical Review* 88, no.4 (1998): 548-570.
- Hoganson, Kristin. "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865-1920." *American Historical Review* 107 (February 2002): 55-83.
- Honour, Hugh. "Canova and his Printmakers." *Print Quarterly*, 12 (September 1995), 253-75.
- Honour, Hugh. "Canova's Three Graces." In *The Three Graces*, edited by Hugh Honour and Aidan Weston-Lewis, 19-45. Edinburgh: The National Gallery of Scotland, 1995.
- Hoobler, James A. Nashville, From the Collection of Carl and Otto Giers. Charleston, S.C.: Acadia, 1999.

- Howard, June. "What is Sentimentality?" *American Literary History* 11 (1999): 63-81.
- Howe, Katherine S. "Elm Park: The LeGrand Lockwood Residence." In *Herter Brothers: Furniture and Interiors for a Gilded Age*, edited by Lori Frankel, 139-47. Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, 1994. An exhibition catalog.
- Howe, Katherine S. and David B. Warren. *The Gothic Revival Style in America, 1830-1870*. Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1976. An exhibition catalog.
- Hyland, Douglas Kirk Samuel. "Lorenzo Bartolini and Italian Influences on American Sculptors in Florence (1825-50)," Ph.D. dissertation University of Delaware, 1980.
- Johns, Christopher M. S. *Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998.
- Johns, Christopher M. S. "Empress Josephine's Collection of Sculpture by Canova at Malmaison." *Journal of the History of Collections*, 16, no.1 (2004): 19-33.
- Johnson, Marilynn. "The Artful Interior." In Doreen Bolger Burke, et. al., *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*, 111-41. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986. An exhibition catalog.
- Jones, Janna. "The Distance from Home: The Domestication of Desire in Interior Design Manuals." *Journal of Social History* 31 (Winter 1997): 307-326.
- Kaplan, Amy. "Manifest Domesticity." In *No More Separate Spheres!*, edited by Cathy N. Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher, 183-208. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002.
- Kasson, John F. *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1990.
- Kasson, Joy. *Marble Queens and Captives: Women in Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Katz, Wendy Jean. *Regionalism and Reform: Art and Class Formation in Antebellum Cincinnati*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2004.
- Kenney, Alice P. "Kate Gansevoort's Grand Tour." *New York History* 67 (October 1966): 343-61

- Kenworthy-Browne, John. "The Sculpture Gallery at Woburn Abbey and the Architecture of the Temple of the Graces." In *The Three Graces*, edited by Hugh Honour and Aidan Weston-Lewis, 61-71. Edinburgh: The National Gallery of Scotland, 1995.
- Kiser, John W. "Scion of Belmont, Part I." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 38 (Spring 1979): 34-61.
- Kiser, John W. "Scion of Belmont, Part II." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, 38 (Summer, 1979): 188-203.
- Klee, Cristina Bishop. "The Happy Family and the Politics of Domesticity, 1840-1870." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 2004.
- Kramer, Ellen. "The Domestic Architecture of Detlef Lienau." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1958.
- Lawrence, Kathleen. "Aesthetic Transcendentalism and its Legacy: Margaret Fuller, William Wetmore Story and Henry James." Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 2003.
- Leach, William. *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- Lears, T. J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.
- LeGrand Lockwood (1820-1872)*. Ed. Mary E. Adams. Norwalk, Conn.: The Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum, 1969.
- Leslie, Virginia Kent Anderson. "The Myth of the Southern Lady: Antebellum Proslavery Rhetoric and the Proper Place of Women." *Sociological Spectrum* 6 (1986): 31-49.
- Lessing, Lauren Keach. "'So Blessed Now That Accustomed Darkness': Randolph Rogers' *Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii* and the Female Gaze." *The University of Michigan Museums of Art and Archaeology Bulletin*, 13 (2000-2001): 53-74.
- Levine, Lawrence W. *Highbrow Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Levi-Straus, Claude. *Structural Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books, 1963.
- Lewis, Arnold and James Turner and Steven McQuilin. *The Opulent Interiors of the Gilded Age*. New York: Dover Publications, 1987.

- Lewis, James R. "Images of Captive Rape in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of American Culture* 15, no.2 (1992): 69-77.
- Linnenkamp, Iris. *Leo von Klenze: das Leuchtenberg-Palais in München*. München: Kommissionsverlag UNI-Druck, 1992.
- Lockwood, Charles. *Bricks and Brownstone: The New York Row House, 1873-1929*. New York: Rizzoli, 2003.
- The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion*. Ed. Mary E. Adams. Norwalk, Conn.: The Lockwood Mathews Mansion Museum, 1969.
- Logan, Thad. *The Victorian Parlour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Lovejoy, David S. "American Painting in Early Nineteenth-Century Gift Books." *American Quarterly* 7 (Winter 1955): 345-61.
- Mansell, Jeff. "Souvenirs from the Grand Tour." *Alabama Heritage* 29 (Summer 1993): 21-25.
- Martin, Mary Ellen. "Nineteenth-Century Salem on the Grand Tour." *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 116, no.1 (1980): 1-20.
- Martinez, Ann Katherine. "'Messengers of Love, Tokens of Friendship': Gift-Book Illustrations by John Sartain." In *The American Illustrated Book in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Gerald W. R. Ward, 89-112. Winterthur, Del.: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1987.
- Matthews, Donald G. *Religion in the Old South*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.
- May, Bridget A. "Advice on White: an Anthology of Nineteenth-Century Design Critics' Recommendations." *Journal of American Culture* 16, no.4 (1993): 19-24.
- McCarthy, Kathleen D. *Women's Culture: American Philanthropy and Art, 1830-1930*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- McCracken, Grant. *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- McDannell, Colleen. *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
- McGarry, Molly K. "Haunting Reason: Spiritualism and the Cultural Politics of Nineteenth-Century America." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1999.

- McInnus, Maurie D. "Cultural Politics, Colonial Crisis, and Ancient metaphor in John Singleton Copley's Mr. And Mrs. Ralph Izard." *Winterthur Portfolio* 34 (Summer/Autumn 1999): 85-108.
- McInnus, Maurie D. "'Picture Mania': Collectors and Collecting in Charleston." In *In Pursuit of Refinement: Charlestonians Abroad, 1740-1860*, edited by Maurice D. McInness, 39-54. Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1999.
- Mellown, Robert O. "Nineteenth-Century American Attitudes Toward the Nude Figure in Art." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1975.
- Merish, Lori. *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth Century American Literature*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Mielke, Laura L. "Domesticity and Dispossession: Removal as a Family Act in Cooper's *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish* and *The Pathfinder*." *ATQ* 16 (2002): 9-30.
- Milan, Sara. "Refracting the Gasolier: Understanding Victorian Responses to Domestic Gas Lighting." In *Domestic Space: Reading the Nineteenth-Century Interior*, edited by Inga Bryden and Janet Floyd, 84-102. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999.
- Miller, Daniel. *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Moss, Elizabeth. *Domestic Novelists in the Old South: Defenders of Southern Culture*. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1992.
- Nineteenth-Century Architects: Building a Profession*. Ed. Anne M. Bolin. Norwalk, Conn.: Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum, 1990. An exhibition catalog.
- No More Separate Spheres!* Eds. Cathy N. Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002.
- Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture*. Ed. Christopher Reed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1996.
- Nord, David Paul. "Religious Reading and Readers in Antebellum America." *Journal of the Early Republic* 15 (Summer 1995): 241-271.
- Norman, Geraldine. *Biedermeier Painting 1815-1848: Reality Observed in Genre, Portrait and Landscape*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1987.
- Pacini, Marina Elena. "Randolph Rogers' *The Lost Pleiad*." MA Thesis, University of Delaware, 1988.

- The Parian Phenomenon: A Survey of Victorian Parian Porcelain, Statuary and Busts.*
Ed. Paul Atterbury. Somerset, Eng.: Richard Dennis, 1989.
- Papashvily, Helen Waite. *All the Happy Endings: A Study of the Domestic Novel in America, the Women Who Wrote it, the Women Who Read it, in the Nineteenth Century.* New York: Harper, 1956.
- Parsons, Kermit Carlyle. *The Cornell Campus: A History of Its Planning and Development.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968.
- Perspectives on American Sculpture Before 1925.* Ed. Thayer Tolles. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003.
- Phillips, Mary Elizabeth. *Reminiscences of William Wetmore Story, American Sculptor and Author.* Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1897.
- Pyne, Kathleen. *Art and the Higher Life: Painting and Evolutionary Thought in Late Nineteenth-Century America.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- Rable, George. *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.
- Radway, Janice. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
- Ramirez, Jan Seidler. "A Critical Reappraisal of the Career of William Wetmore Story (1819-1895): American Sculptor and Man of Letters." Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1985.
- Rasmussen, William M. S. and Robert S. Tilton. *Pocahontas: Her Life and Legend.* Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1994. An exhibition catalog.
- Rave Reviews: American Art and its Critics, 1826-1925.* Ed. David Dearing. New York: National Academy of Design, 2000. An exhibition catalog.
- Reynolds, Donald M. *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture.* New York: Garland, 1977.
- Reynolds, Donald M. "The 'Unveiled Soul': Hiram Powers's Embodiment of the Ideal." *Art Bulletin* 59 (September 1977): 394-414.
- Robertson, Samuel A. and William H. Gerds. "Greek Slave." *The Newark Museum Quarterly* 17 (Winter-Spring 1965): 1-30.
- Rogers, Millard F. *Randolph Rogers: American Sculptor in Rome.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1971.

- Rogin, Michael Paul. *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*. New York: Knopf, 1975.
- Romero, Lora. *Home Fronts: Domesticity and its Critics in the Antebellum United States*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Ross, Marvin Chauncey and Anna Wells Rutledge. *A Catalogue of the Work of William Henry Rinehart Maryland Sculptor, 1825-1874*. Baltimore: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, 1948.
- Rotundo, E. Anthony. *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*. New York: basic Books, 1993.
- Rowland, Benjamin Jr. "Popular Romanticism: Art and the Gift Books 1825-1865." *Art Quarterly* 20 (Winter 1957): 365-81.
- Rubin, Stephen and John K. Howat. *American Watercolors from The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New York: Abrams, 1991.
- Rusk, William Sener. *William Henry Rinehart, Sculptor*. Baltimore: Norman T. A. Munder, 1939.
- Sabatos, Terri. "Images of Death and Domesticity in Victorian Britain." Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 2002.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.
- Saisselin, Remy G. *The Bourgeoise and the Bibelot*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1984.
- Savage, Kirk. *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Schafer, Deborah Anne. "Fashioning and Ideal of Intimacy: British Family Portraits, 1730-1790." Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 2004.
- Scheckel, Susan. *The Insistence of the Indian: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Culture*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Schiller, Joyce K. "Nydia: A Forgotten Icon of the Nineteenth-Century." *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Art* 67, no.4 (1993): 36-45.
- Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

- Schofield, Mary Anne. "Romance Subversion: Eighteenth Century Feminine Fiction." In *Sexuality, the Female Gaze, and the Arts*, edited by Ronald Dotterer and Susan R. Bowers, 75-86. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1992.
- Schulz, Suzanne. *Horace Greeley: A Bio-Bibliography*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1992.
- Scobey, David. "Nymphs and Satyrs: Sex and the Bourgeois Public Sphere in Victorian New York," *Winterthur Portfolio* 37, no.1 (2002): 43-66.
- Scott, Anne Firor. *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1900*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Seale, William. *The Tasteful Interlude: American Interiors Through the Camera's Eye*. London: AltaMira Press, 1995.
- Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture*. Eds. Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Severa, Joan L. *Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900*. Kent, Oh.: Kent State University Press, 1995.
- Sherwood, Dolly. *Harriet Hosmer, American Sculptor, 1830-1908*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991.
- Silverman, Robert J. "The Stereograph and Photographic Depiction in the 19th Century." *Technology and Culture* 34 (October 1993): 729-56.
- Smith, Frederick Kinsman. *The Family of Richard Smith of Smithtown, Long Island: Ten Generations*. Smithtown, New York: Smithtown Historical Society, 1967.
- Smith-Rosenberg, Carol. *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Snadon, Patrick Alexander. "A. J. Davis and the Gothic Revival Castle in America, 1832-1865." Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1988.
- Soltis, Carol Eaton. "'In Sympathy with the Heart;' Rembrandt Peale, an American Artist, and the Traditions of European Art." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2000.
- Stebbins, Theodore E. *The Lure of Italy: American Artists and the Italian Experience 1760-1914*. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1992. An exhibition catalog.
- Stevenson, Louise L. *The Victorian Homefront: American Thought and Culture, 1860-1880*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991.

- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Sweeting, Adam W. *Reading Houses and Building Books: Andrew Jackson Downing and the Architecture of Popular Antebellum Literature, 1835-1855*. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1996.
- Swinth, Kirsten. *Painting Professionals: Women Artists and the Development of Modern American Art, 1870-1930*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Thomas, George E. *Frank Furness: The Complete Works*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991.
- Thompson, Ralph. *American Literary Annuals and Gift Books, 1825-1865*. New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1936.
- Thorp, Margaret Farrand. *The Literary Sculptors*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1965.
- The Three Graces*. Eds. Hugh Honour and Aidan Weston-Lewis. Edinburgh: The National Gallery of Scotland, 1995. An exhibition catalog.
- Tilton, Robert S. *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Tolles, Thayer. "Modeling a Reputation: The American Sculptor and New York City." In *Art and the Empire City: New York, 1825-1861*, edited by Catherine Hoover Voorsanger and John K. Howat, 135-167. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000. An exhibition catalog.
- Tompkins, Jane. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of America Fiction, 1790-1860*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Trachtenberg, Alan. *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.
- Tracy, Susan J. *In the Master's Eye: Representations of Women, Blacks and Poor Whites in Antebellum Southern Literature*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.
- Tuchinsky, Adam-Max. "Horace Greeley's Lost Book: 'The New York Tribune' and the Origins of Social Democratic Liberalism in America." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2001.

- Tucker, Louis Leonard. "Hiram Powers and Cincinnati." *Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin* 25, no.1 (1967): 21-49.
- Upjohn, Everard M. *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939.
- Van Deusen, Glyndon G. *Horace Greeley: Nineteenth-Century Crusader*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953.
- Van Hook, Bailey. *Angels of Art: Women and Art in American Society, 1876-1914*. University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996.
- Veblen, Thorstein. *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*. New York: Macmillan, 1902.
- Wallach, Alan. *Exhibiting Contradiction: Essays on the Art Museum in the United States*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.
- Warbasse, Elizabeth Bowles. *The Changing Legal Rights of Married Women* (New York, Garland, 1987).
- Ward, David C. *Charles Wilson Peale: Art and Selfhood in the Early Republic*. Berkely, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2004.
- Wardin, Albert W. Jr. *Belmont Mansion, the Home of Joseph and Adelia Acklen*. Nashville: Belmont Mansion Association, 2002.
- Webster, J. Carson. *Erastus D. Palmer*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1983.
- Welter, Barbara. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly* 18, no.2 (1966): 151-174.
- Whites, LeeAnn. *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia 1860-1890*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995.
- Williams, Ronald John. *Jennie McGraw Fiske: Her Influence Upon Cornell University*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949.
- Winkler, Gail Caskey and Roger W. Moss. *Victorian Interior Decoration: American Interiors 1830-1900*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986.
- A Woman's War: Southern Women, Civil War, and the Confederate Legacy*. Eds. Edward D. C. Campbell and Kym S. Rice. Richmond, Va.,: Museum of the Confederacy; Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996. An exhibition catalogue.

- Women on the Verge: The Culture of Neurasthenia in Nineteenth-Century America.* Stanford, Ca.: The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for the Visual Arts at Stanford University, 2004. An exhibition catalog.
- Wood, Kirsten E. "Broken Reeds and Competent Farmers: Slaveholding Widows in the Southeastern United States, 1783-1861." *Journal of Women's History* 13 (Summer 2001): 34-57.
- Woolard, Annette. "Nineteenth-Century Delawareans and the Grand Tour." *Delaware History* 22 (Spring/Summer 1987): 125-157.
- Wright, Nathalia. *Horatio Greenough, the First American Sculptor*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963.
- Wunder, Richard P. 2 vols. *Hiram Powers: Vermont Sculptor. 1805-1873*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989-1991.
- Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*. London: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Yarrington, Alison. "The Three Graces and the Temple of Feminine Virtue." *Sculpture Journal*, 7 (2002): 30-43.
- Yarnall, James L. and William H. Gerdts. *The National Museum of American Art's Index to American Art Exhibition Catalogues Before the 1876 Centennial Year*. 6 vols. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1986.
- Yount, Sylvia. "Give the People What they Want: The American Aesthetic Movement, Art Worlds, and Consumer Culture, 1876-1890." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1995.

Lauren Keach Lessing
6740 Granada Lane
Prairie Village, KS 66208
816-751-1317
llessing@nelson-atkins.org

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Art History, July 2006, Indiana University
Dissertation: "Presiding Divinities: Ideal Sculpture in Nineteenth-Century American Domestic Interiors"
Advisor: Sarah Burns

Master of Arts in Art History, 1995, Indiana University

Master of Library Science, 1994, Indiana University

Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art, 1991, Earlham College, with Honors

EMPLOYMENT

Research Associate in American Art
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, September 2002-present

Lecturer, Department of Art History
University of Missouri Kansas City, January 2006-present

Senior Reference Librarian, Ryerson and Burnham Libraries of the Art Institute of Chicago, July 2000-July 2002

Reference Librarian, Ryerson and Burnham Libraries of the Art Institute of Chicago, July 1997-July 2000

Visiting Assistant Professor of Art History, Earlham College, August 1996-June 1997

PRESENTATIONS, PUBLICATIONS, AND EXHIBITIONS

Author or co-author of fifty-two catalogue essays in Margaret Conrads ed., *American Paintings at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (The Nelson-Atkins Museum and Marquand Books, forthcoming Spring 2007).

Paper, "Dirty Laundry: Dark Humor in Raphaelle Peale's *Venus Rising from the Sea—A Deception*," in panel session "What's So Funny? Senses of Humor in Nineteenth-Century American Visual Culture," College Art Association Annual Conference, New York, February 14–17, 2007.

Book Review of Mary F. McVicker, *Adela Breton: A Victorian Artist Amid Mexico's Ruins* (University of New Mexico Press, 2006) in *Aurora* 7 (2006), forthcoming.

Co-chair, panel sessions, "Representations of Death in Nineteenth-Century Art" and "The Culture of Death and Mourning in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," WAPCC Organization, Constructions of Death, Mourning and Memory Conference, Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey, October 27-29, 2006.

Paper, "Being and Seeing: Tableaux Vivants and Gendered Responses to Nineteenth-Century American Ideal Sculpture," Conference of Women's and Gender Historians of the Midwest, Maryville University, St. Louis, MO, June 3, 2006.

Gallery Talk, "Zelda Fitzgerald's Expressive Paintings," Guldner Gallery, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, MO, July 21, 2006.

Paper, "Sentimental Christianity on a Southern Plantation: Adelia Acklen's Collection of Ideal Sculpture in Belmont Mansion," Southeast College Arts Conference, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, FL, October 15, 2004.

Paper, "Looking and Longing: Re-viewing Randolph Rogers' *Merope, the Lost Pleiad* in a Domestic Context," 11th Annual Art History Graduate Student Association Symposium, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, November 9, 2002.

Paper, "Captives in the Parlor: Hiram Powers' Ideal Busts in their Domestic Context," Graduate Symposium on Women's and Gender History, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL, March 8, 2002.

Paper, "A Spirit So American: Consumption and Rebellion in Eastman Johnson's Painting *The Reprimand*," Interdisciplinary Children's History Conference, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA, February 21, 2002.

Paper, "We Tremble for their Future Health and Morals: Adolescents and the Culture of Display in Seymour Joseph Guy's Painting, *Making a Train*," Society for the History of Childhood and Youth Conference, Marquette University, July 2001.

Paper, "From Member to Curator: Tailoring Instruction for the Spectrum of Museum Library Patrons," Art Libraries Society of North America Annual Conference, Los Angeles, California, April 3, 2001.

Article, "So Blessed Now that Accustomed Darkness: American Women's Response to Randolph Rogers' Sculpture *Nydia*," *University of Michigan Art Museum Quarterly* 13 (2000-2001), 53-73.

Article, "The Problem of Provenance: Searching for Looted Art in Museum Collections," *Art Documentation* 19 (Fall 2000), 48-51.

Co-chair, panel session, "The Problem of Provenance," Art Libraries Society of North America Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, March, 2000.

Exhibition, "Beautiful Soup: Lewis Carroll in the Collections of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries," Ryerson and Burnham Libraries of the Art Institute of Chicago, July-August 1999.

AFFILIATIONS

College Art Association, Association of Historians of American Art