THE ABSENT PRESENCE OF WHITENESS
IN 19TH CENTURY DIDACTIC TEXTS:
JULIA MCNAIR WRIGHT’S ‘HIDDEN CURRICULUM’

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines how race, particularly whiteness, is imagined and articulated in select writings of Julia McNair Wright (1840-1902), a prolific, didactic writer and educator in the 19th century. Drawing from productive methodological crises that characterize inquiry in postfoundational moments, this study works within and against the contemporary terrain of Critical White Studies scholarship, using Critical Discourse Analysis to explore how the function of whiteness fluctuates in three genres of Julia's writings: 1) didactic texts directed at middle-class female readers; 2) a set of science and nature schoolbooks for children used in the public schools; and 3) Anti-Catholic treatises published during the late 1860s and early 1870s at the height of Irish immigration to the United States. Examining a select portion of this popular didactic work as exemplar may be indicative of the discursive manifestations of whiteness circulating at this time, and its production by a white female author in a professional identity category newly available to women may serve to further particularize and historicize notions of whiteness and thicken our understanding of the gendered investments in racial categories.

Significantly, Julia's work was published during the years school leaders began conceptualizing education as a way to establish Protestant-Anglo culture as dominant to the cultures of immigrant masses "infiltrating" American shores. This study suggests that the practice of constructing racialized beings in 19th century educational materials
contributes to the reproduction of whiteness in an era of xenophobic anxiety and the socialization of white children into their roles as privileged, future citizens of the state. Additionally, this project emphasizes Julia's didactic writing as "informal" education, one of the primary ways cultural messages were communicated to female readers outside institutional walls. This emphasis proceeds from the implicit assumption that women's educational history cannot be adequately explored without attending to varied forms of "informal" education as women (particularly poor women and women of color) were consistently excluded from formal systems of education until late in the 19th century.
Dedicated to my mother,
Carolyn Ruth Whitcomb Bailey

and

in memoriam to
William H. and Ruth Morrish Whitcomb
and
Isabel Whitcomb McNeill
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FIELDS OF STUDY

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PREFACE:

A TURN IN A STAIRWELL:
COMING TO JULIA “AND I”

Learn all you can about the authors whose books you read: this will give you a vital interest in your books, and help them to become your friends. Read with sympathy. Throw yourself into the age and race of which you read, make the past present, and the distant near; become, for the time being, part of what you are reading.

(Julia McNair Wright, CH 1879:211; emphasis in original).

My “way in” to this project was a result of a little genealogical slippage, of happenstance disclosure on my mother’s part. Julia was my great-great grandmother on my mother’s side and I learned of her writing efforts about 10 years ago when touring the Mormon leader Brigham Young’s historic home in downtown Salt Lake City. Pausing in a stairwell alcove as the line of tourists stalled, my mother glimpsed Julia’s massive best seller, The Complete Home, in a hallway bookcase laden with gilded texts. Startled, she said, “why, my great-grandmother wrote that book!” Disconcerted, as I knew of no such author in my family line, I looked at the thick book--several inches wide on the shelf--and asked her to elaborate. She responded, briefly, as I recall, “oh yes, her name was Julia and she wrote a number of books.” A number, indeed.
I learned more about Julia and her output when casually researching her later (before "she" incited my analytic impulses), which only seemed to underscore my mother's remarkable oversight (forgetfulness? disinterest?) in mentioning her existence previously. It seems she had ceased to think of Julia as particularly intriguing or unusual, simply one more character in the eclectic ancestry that constitutes her—and any—family tree. Although I later found this text displayed at the Women's History Museum in Seneca Falls, New York, perhaps the ultimate irony for a 21st century feminist researcher was that my initiation into Julia's writing was through a chance tourist excursion and a brief stairwell delay in the home of a patriarchal Mormon leader and polygamist.\footnote{This is a sweeping comment, because intriguing arguments have been made about polygyny as a feminist-imubed practice. If the caretaking demands of one man in a traditional household, for instance, are shared across a large group of women, more time becomes available for women to pursue their own interests. Also, relationships among women and the communal caretaking of children are foregrounded in daily experience.} Also striking was that my mother's fleeting exclamation, later shifting to nonchalance, came in my adulthood, demonstrating little inclination to romanticize her ancestor's accomplishments during my upbringing. Thus, my coming to Julia was not the result of a lifelong cultivation of ancestral devotion, but is due to a chance encounter in a tourist-filled hallway.

However circumstantial the introduction, one might argue that my "relationship" to Julia unquestionably influences how I interpret her work, my project, in fact, being a form of "homework,"\footnote{For a useful interrogation of this methodological term, see Elizabeth St. Pierre's article, "Nomadic Inquiry in the Smooth Spaces of the Field: A Preface." In Working the Ruins: Feminist Poststructural} and I have an ethical obligation to disclose this information because of its inevitable impact on my conclusions. If interpreting a text is a "dialectical process" resulting from the interface of the variable interpretive resources people bring to
bear on the text” (Fairelough qtd in Allan 69) then my own position as a descendant of Julia’s (as woman) stands to be a variable influencing my approach to and interpretations of her writings (as extensions of that woman). I would like to trouble this assumption, to speak against a discourse that romanticizes too readily the messy investments of genealogy, because, like approaching a research enterprise with the belief that race, class, and sex (among other analytics) are equally influential characteristics across varied research queries, the assumption that “genealogy matters” mobilizes too liberally an element whose significance can only be determined by the specific research context.

While I am grateful to have material remains of my ancestor’s writing life and have indulged in moments of great pleasure, as well as deep discomfort, in perusing her work, a presumption that this genealogical connection is more significant to my inquiry, than say, my historical location as a 21st century feminist, or my position as a doctoral candidate laboring through a dissertation, constructs a romanticized vision of bloodlines and cross-generational devotion that seems forced at best across one hundred years and five generations. While organizations like the Daughters of the American Revolution are certainly founded on such (racialized) sentiments (Smith 136), Foucault would ask what a romanticized construction of genealogy such as this enables and obstructs. Too much attention to Julia, or Julia “and I,” returns to a preoccupation with individualism and the

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3 I adore when Julia speaks of “dragonflies swimming in the air” (Sea Side and Way Side B2), when “her mind was greatly exercised about opossums” (B4), when she describes a “bookless parlor” as a “howling wilderness” (The Complete Home). Also, when I’ve felt amused at Julia’s sometimes absurd and often endearing textual excesses, I have often thought of Erica McWilliam’s piece, “Laughing Within Reason: On Pleasure, Women and Academic Performance.” She explores the concept of pleasure in women’s academic work, including its subversive potential within the disciplining rules of a proper feminism. To “constantly unsettle what it means for women to behave properly in the academy” (176) is a pleasurable and necessary act for McWilliam. It reminds me that laughter, and gravity, can coexist.

4 Anything from butchered sentences to her expression of, at times, horrific xenophobia.
humanist subject, foregrounding individual actors and detracting from the focus of the larger project which is to explore how whiteness is produced and how it functions in "her" didactic fiction purportedly directed toward other aims.

Julia herself championed reader autonomy, and although she could never have anticipated my application of her sentiments to this project four generations later in the wake of the linguistic turn, I draw from her didactic musings in the midst of *The Complete Home* an endorsement of the active relationship of individual female reader with her text:

Take the trouble to compare, to criticise, to generalize; feel when you are reading anything that *you are your own steward*, and that you will call yourself to account some day for these precious things that you are putting in trust.

(Julia McNair Wright, *CH* 1879:212; my emphasis)

I have been my own steward in traveling through this author’s 19th century imaginary. There was indeed a Julia, a woman who breathed, who desired, who, thankfully for me, birthed children, and who wrote and wrote. But in this project, I commit a research act upon and through the contingent foundation\(^5\) of Julia to explore racial constructions in which I am invested in understanding and undermining.

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CHAPTER 1:

WRIGHT-ING WHITE

Why is light not light? Why this absolute darkness among so many, many suns? It is simply lack of dust! There must be something to throw back and scatter the rays of light before it can be visible. . . Here on our own little globe the glorious sunbeams lighten us, thanks to the dust in our atmsosphere. The sunshine reveals to us the dust, but the dust makes the sunshine visible. Sunbeams and dust, each one invisible without the other!

(Julia McNair Wright, 1892: B4 45)

This dissertation examines how race, particularly whiteness,¹ is imagined and articulated in select writings of Julia McNair Wright (1840-1902), a minor, prolific, didactic writer and educator in the 19th century. Drawing from productive methodological crises that characterize inquiry in postfoundational moments, this study works within and against the contemporary terrain of Critical White Studies scholarship, using Critical Discourse Analysis to explore how the function of whiteness fluctuates in three genres of Julia’s writings: 1) didactic texts directed at middle-class female readers;

¹ Note that throughout this project I do not emphasize the suspect nature of “white” and “whiteness” with quotations given that part of my work is to demonstrate additional ways the fiction, the social construction, the fantasy of whiteness (with nevertheless staggering material costs) has been created and maintained. It should be assumed throughout that the racial identity fluctuates in meaning and significance and is therefore suspect and under interrogation.
2) a set of science and nature schoolbooks for children used in the public schools; and
3) Anti-Catholic treatises published during the late 1860s and early 1870s at the height of Irish immigration to the United States. Examining a select portion of this popular didactic work as exemplar may be indicative of the discursive manifestations of whiteness circulating at this time, and its production by a white female author in a professional identity category newly available to women may serve to further particularize and historicize notions of whiteness and thicken our understanding of the gendered investments in racial categories.

Significantly, Julia's work was published during the years school leaders began conceptualizing education as a way to establish Protestant-Anglo culture as dominant to the cultures of immigrant masses "infiltrating" American shores. This study suggests that the practice of constructing racialized beings in 19th century educational materials contributes to the reproduction of whiteness in an era of xenophobic anxiety and the socialization of white children into their roles as privileged, future citizens of the state. Additionally, this project emphasizes Julia's didactic writing as "informal" education, one of the primary ways cultural messages were communicated to female readers outside institutional walls. It is impossible to do justice to women's educational history without attending to types of "informal" education as women (particularly poor women and women of color) were consistently excluded from formal systems of education until late in the 19th century.
In this first chapter, I foreground the central methodological choices that propel this project, tracing some of the conscious\(^2\) decisions, investments, convictions, flaws and positionalities in the research process that led to the creation of this particular "tale" (Wolf 1993), thereby refusing what Donna Haraway calls the "god trick," the "view from nowhere" ("Situated" 189). I explore possible research trajectories and "tales" imaginable for "Julia" and her many writings and describe why in this project I abandon the quest for a "real story" and instead attempt to negotiate both the conceptual issues raised in the production of women's 19th century didactic writings and the theoretical issues raised in making meaning out of historical narrations in our postfoundational moment.

Second, drawing from my preface that describes how I came to Julia,\(^3\) I trouble too-tidy assumptions that might be made about my relationship to the subject of inquiry and its implications for my project. By positioning the project itself, and myself as researcher, within our current methodological milieu, one created in the wake of the crises of representation and legitimation that have shaken so fundamentally our foundations of knowing and thus necessitated different ways of coming to know, I engage

\(^2\) "Conscious" is a significant key-word as some views of the subject acknowledge unconscious and resistant impulses at work in students, teachers, and certainly, researchers, exceeding all that could be "consciously" claimed about a research enterprise. See Deborah Britzman, \textit{Lost Objects, Contested Subjects}.

\(^3\) Following Judith Mayne's model in her work on Dorothy Arzner, I address the writer by her first name rather than her last, even though the primary focus of this dissertation is not the individual humanist subject. While I realize referring to her in this manner has gendered implications because it might be misunderstood as patronizing or dismissive of the writer's significance because she is a female author, or that it may seem overly personal and inappropriate for academic work, because of my long term engagement with her writing, I am more comfortable with it. In addition, using the name Julia reminds us throughout this analysis of the very human, and very female, face of the writer who participated in perpetuating racist discourse. Racism is particular, it is gendered, and in this case, it was committed quietly, subtly, and often, unconsciously, over the course of a writing lifetime while at the same time seemingly bolstering a professional white author's identity.
with the politics of visibility, of refusing to relegate questions of method and subject position to a manuscript’s back pages as if the fingerprints of researchers are peripheral afterthoughts rather than constitutive of the results of inquiry.⁴

Third, I briefly track the construction of whiteness in the 19th century, particularly a gendered whiteness, and its system of inclusions and exclusions in citizenship discourses. I emphasize the ideological investments in this malleable identity category to underscore the relationship between textual practices and varied material consequences. Finally, I begin the larger task undertaken in this project by reading a brief, potent lesson from a children’s reader in Julia’s canon through a whiteness lens to suggest how assumptions of white racelessness function in her texts. Drawing from Joan Scott, my primary interest in this project is delineating a small part of the historical process of constructing textual whiteness. Fundamental to this task is considering how particular representations in her texts are not only imbued with circulating beliefs about race but their very production by a white middle-class female author racializes and genders them in particular ways. This specificity is useful for propelling understanding about the inextricable relationship of whiteness to other analytic categories as well as the utterly context-specific nature of whiteness production. Whiteness is not a universal phenomenon that takes the same form in all of its historical and textual manifestations but is instead, I would argue, shaped by the subject position of the author, the discourses

⁴ In a recent talk about her book-length project on women steelworkers (forthcoming from University of Minnesota Press), Mary Margaret Fonow describes her publisher’s request that the methodology section be placed at the back of the book as that material is thought to be less compelling than actual study findings. For a scholar whose specialties include the theoretical issues involved in methodology, this directive falsely separates content and process (“Women of Steel,” Brown Bag Lecture, March 12, 2002, Ohio State University).
writing her, and the extent to which her public performance of (white middle-class)
female authorship competes with her subject matter.

Productive Turns and Crises

'It's a riddle,' he said, 'a riddle, this nineteenth century life with its bad
and its good, its boasting and failing. A riddle.'

(Wright, Cardiff'347)

This historical inquiry project attempts to grapple with significant methodological
issues that have arisen from the linguistic turn and the crises of representation and
legitimation (Marcus and Fischer 1986). These issues have left many researchers
mourning the loss of authority and certainty that traditional research methodologies have
long appeared to offer and reaching toward “producing different knowledges and
producing knowledge differently” (Lather 2002). Suckled in liberal humanism, nurtured
in realist tales and victory narratives, and cultivated to desire tidy, authoritative assertions
from Those Who Know, researchers are faced with the question of how to endure
methodological inquiry in our postfoundational moment that rejects from the outset
illusory claims to total expertise and mastery and instead strives to work the ruins5 of
methodology striving for “partial truths” (Clifford 1986) and “getting lost” (Lather 2002).
Regimes of truth central to our ways of thinking and formerly perceived as stable—reason,
science, progress, the subject—have become suspect and troubled, enabling

5 The phrase “Working the Ruins” is Patti Lather’s and has been used productively by poststructuralist
feminists for close to a decade: Kate McCoy used it in a paper entitled “Inquiry Among the Ruins:
Uncommon Practices” at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association in New
Orleans in 1994. Although “ruins” implies a degree of hopelessness, of nihilism, Betty St. Pierre and
Wanda Pillow emphasize the productive implications of “Working the Ruins” in their edited collection by
the same name on feminist poststructuralist theories and methods in education (New York: Routledge,
2006). Lather works the phrase further in her 2002 article from Signs, “Postbook: Working the Ruins of
Feminist Ethnography” (27.1). Also, see Bill Readings’ poststructuralist analysis of foundational shifts in
the University, The University in Ruins.
poststructuralist^ work that has identified germination and possibility where others have seen only despair, paralysis and nihilism. Yet, how does one, constituted by humanism's knowings even if bathed in the glow of poststructuralism, embrace and proceed with a methodology of uncertainty? And what confidences can be fostered that the "knowledge" elicited from such a tentative enterprise is valid, legitimate, trustworthy, indeed, even "knowledge" at all?

The "turn to language" that has emerged in the past decade (Gill 323) has undermined the authority of well-entrenched research methods within the academy and shifted how scholars approach truth quests, their analyses, and their confidence in making assertive claims about the world. As Deborah Britzman expresses, attempts to "represent" must contend with awareness of the "slippage born from the partiality of language of what cannot be said precisely because of what is said, and the impossible difference between what is said, what is intended, what is signified, what is repressed, what is taken and what remains" ("Question" 28). Reflected here is sentiment central to the crises of representation, a disruption of the long-held belief that a direct relationship exists between the experience researched and its representation in text, smoothly conveyed through the sufficiencies of language.

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^ See Judith Butler's essay "Contingent Foundations" for a discussion of the frustratingly inclusive—and often inconclusive—mobilization of "poststructuralism" and "postmodernism" (1997). Early Lather provides her own working definition of these ideas, referring to postmodern as a temporal and economic shift in the material conditions of society wrought by the growth of transnational capitalism and information technologies; and poststructuralist as the working out of cultural theory within the context of modernity (Lather, "Post-Critical Pedagogies," 133). At times she uses the terms interchangeably. Elizabeth St. Pierre and Wanda Pillow use "poststructuralist" to refer to the academic theorizing of such concepts as discourse, knowledge, truth and the subject, and "postmodernism" to refer to broader cultural changes inspired by critiques of postcolonialism, racism and homophobia ("Working" 17). Although he never labelled himself as such, Foucault has also been enveloped under the umbrella of poststructuralism because he questioned how the liberal humanist subject came to function in authorizing narratives and instead of relying on a subject at all he focused on the processes that constitute subjectivity.
The inadequacy of language to capture and sustain the complexity of the world in which we live and labor leaves us with the responsibility of trudging forward to carry out these (necessarily) partial, flawed research tasks despite inevitable failure while bearing always already insufficient linguistic tools to capture and convey the weight of what we discover/construct. In addition, the crisis of legitimation has rendered long-established criteria for evaluating and interpreting data suspect because the goal of “trustworthy” and “generalizable” results no longer corresponds with the uncertainty of knowledge quests (Denzin and Lincoln 10-11; Marcus and Fischer 10). Given the enormity of the challenges, pitfalls, and unsettled knowings legible in our current historical moment, perhaps the most radical act a qualitative researcher can commit, as Lather expresses, is continuing to undertake research at all (2000).\(^7\) What might a useful investigation of Julia’s work look like in this fruitful contemporary methodological quagmire after (necessarily) abandoning the seductions of absolutes, of mastery, of redemption, and of cures and proceeding (necessarily) with the inevitable failure of language to represent faithfully or methods to legitimate confidently that which I encounter in the dusty pages of my long-deceased great-great grandmother’s writing?

**The Seductions of Tales**

*This sounds like a fairy story, but it is a true fairy story.*  
(Wright, 1887: B1 v)

*Neither of these tales of a tajii is true.*  
(Wright, 1892: B4 168)

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\(^7\) Expressed in Lather’s seminar on qualitative data analysis, Ed P&L 967, Spring 2000.
Many tales (Wolf 1993) could be told about an unknown 19th century female didactic writer who produced 117 texts across 46 years of her life. I could simply write a “realist” (Van Maanen 1986) biographical tale, a narrative of years lived, places traveled, books written, children birthed, accomplishments marked, a feminist “recovery” project that recounts and inventories what feminist interpretations of the auto/biographical genre have determined are the significant events that “constitute” a woman’s life (Stanley). At moments in the text I could tarry fondly over Julia as an individual, a woman who exceeds the written record she left behind. To fulfill desire for reports of women’s “experiences” I could describe the nightly card games and conversations she shared with her husband, her meditations on mothering, her meanderings in the natural world (Whitcomb 1939). At other moments I could emphasize the writer that exceeds the woman, a daily writing schedule and publication record that smacks of conviction, of perseverance, of professionalism (of avoidance of household drudgery?) that produced more tangible, lasting markers of a writerly self and life lived than many of our foremothers’ legacies. I might add a word or two about ancestral obligations, our responsibility to acknowledge and preserve the accomplishments of those who have tread before us, on whose wings we have been carried. I might celebrate a little, romanticize a little, chuckle a little.

But “Julia” lends herself to other tales as well. “She” could serve as representative of a generation of women writers struggling to be recognized for their intellectual and creative abilities. The sheer volume of words she expelled could be read as desperation for “voice,” as long-repressed eagerness bubbling to the surface, as
evidence of a woman coming to a creative, public and professional self after thousands of her sisters had been silenced through centuries of patriarchal oppression. Given brimming discontent and sufficient opportunity, Julia seized her pen and began to write. This rendering is a seductive one, a liberal feminist victory narrative that proclaims the triumph of individual female lives over social forces that have labored to constrain them. Consistent with some approaches to women’s history evident in 1970s scholarship, this useful interpretation notes “women worthies” in the historical record and weaves connections between their individual life experiences and collective social change.8

Julia also could serve as fodder for another kind of victory narrative, a vehicle for a subtly self-serving tale about the power of feminist historical research to “recover” exemplary women who have been lost to the injustices of time, to distorted and male-constructed definitions of what constitutes a successful life. Given her production record during this historical deluge of women’s scribbling, this project could simply devote itself to the task of analyzing her output, considering how her didactic messages differ from and converge with those of her contemporaries, positing how she and her writing “sisters” have been “lost” to history, and attempting, therefore, to “right” a distorted literary record and create a more comprehensive picture of women’s historical “contributions.” Such a narrative not only has the potential to romanticize Julia’s

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8 For more on “women worthies” see Manuela Thumer, “Subject to Change: Theories and Paradigms of U.S. Feminist History,” Journal of Women’s History 9 (1997): 122-146.
9 I call attention here to the constructed nature of what is defined as historical “contributions,” a legacy sufficiently-weighty to merit attention and analysis, to mark a life of value. Though the materiality of written texts necessarily tips the historical record because they are what remain to analyze, we must remember that the record is indeed being tipped, with significant race and class implications, privileging the literate and the published over other acts shaping the historical record. Implicit in this narrative is that Julia’s 217 texts are a significant “contribution” to historical development, more than, for instance, 117 ideas exchanged, 117 fences built, 117 songs sung. That we must celebrate fences and songs is not my point; rather, that embracing texts inherently functions to privilege some constructions and exclude others.
individual voice and particularize her contributions among female writers, but might function to glorify my own research efforts and my sensitive renderings of those silenced anonymous figures, thereby casting my work in a smug aura of self-righteous feminist labor enacted on behalf of the “voiceless.”

And yet, although I have not totally abandoned (my historically-specific, socially-constructed) desires for the recovery of suppressed female voices, tidy tales, and confident conclusions, I have chosen another story, one that attempts to acknowledge the power of these constituting discourses at the same time that it attempts to hold in play how the promise of tidy solutions and textual assurances, the seductions of “transcendental guarantees” (Butler “Contingent” 131), the Siren’s call of better, truer, more liberatory research practices function in the act of research, or what also might be called, the act of committing research upon. In other words, recognizing that our subjectivities and conceptual possibilities are always already constituted within the discourses available to us, we labor amid the (necessary) rubble of the humanist legacy while at the same time, as Judith Butler articulates, we “interrogate what the theoretical move that establishes foundations authorizes, and what precisely it excludes or forecloses” (“Contingent” 7).

Drawing from Derrida’s notion of “doubled practices” via Patti Lather (2002), the methodology I entertain in this project is one that attempts to undermine the very concepts it positions as necessary to proceed, a “‘double gesture, a double science, a double writing’” that “intervenes in what it critiques,” striving to “disable itself in some way, unmastering both itself and the pure identity it offers itself against” (Lather
“Working” 1). “Julia,” as well as “whiteness,” the grounding concepts enabling this study, are the very things I cannot think without and are the things I must, therefore, think against, attempting to dismantle these concepts at the same time that I, inevitably, reify them through the very act of mobilizing them as analytic sites. To explore processes of 19th century racial construction and the gendered investments in whiteness historically, I commit a research act upon and through the contingent foundation, the discursive site, the historical figuration, of Julia McNair Wright, a white woman writing White.

A Non-Subject With a Name

Unlike ethnography, my research act upon and through “Julia” can be undertaken without injuring a living being, without contributing to the palpable repercussions on a breathing life for which the discipline of anthropology and ethnographic practices have long been maligned. While it is freeing, even enabling, knowledge that the subject implicated in my musings and research acts cannot, first, feel wounded by, nor second, object to my interpretations, my historical inquiry is no less dangerous and no more innocent (Foucault, via Lather) simply because its “subject” inhabits The Past, the continuously unfolding Other to our historical now, The Present. As Avner Segal notes, history “participates... in the political management of reality,” (8), inhabiting, as Jean Wallach Scott claims, the “paradoxical position of creating the objects it claims to discover” (1). Just as Britzman argues is characteristic of ethnography, historical inquiry results in storytelling that “promises pleasure,” “new information,” or suggests a reader
can “step into” and “understand” a past world (“Question” 28). Perhaps Voltaire puts it most succinctly: “History is the tricks we play on the dead.”

Though “good history” has often meant striving to represent the past “as it was,” appearing as if “history rather than historians was narrating the past” (Segall 5), the fingerprints of poststructuralism are evident in “new” historians efforts to contest the absolutes preferred by positivist history.10 Contesting an historical “real” through postfoundational ways of seeing frees the gaze from resting permanently on the There out there that historical inquiry attempts to capture and convey to the ways historical narratives are constructed and the processes through which any author comes to tell the tales they do. How some narratives become legitimate history is embroiled with the knowledge produced and who produces it. Although poststructuralism’s implications for the practice of history are far from settled,11 I find useful Joan Scott’s call for historical narratives that both reveal information about the past as well as detailing the processes by which the tales of history get produced (Moyer 49).

The “Julia” through whom I investigate processes of racial formation in the 19th century is a construct, a fiction, a site of analysis, and not the woman herself who laughed, who wandered through the woods of Southeastern Ohio and the streets of Philadelphia, desiring, choosing, breathing (this, too, is a construct of Julia). Julia was a real person with a real life but, following Britzman, this project is not an attempt to

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10 Segall notes interesting fluctuations in historians’ perceptions of their work over time; early 19th century philosophers and writers who “did” history claimed that the work was just as “much a ‘making’ . . . as it was a ‘finding’” (3). The “history” that attempts to represent the past “as it was” is as much a historically-situated understanding of history as the “new” history influenced by poststructuralism and critical theory.

capture her authentic self ("Question" 31) nor study the contours of what we might define as her "life," but to use her didactic missives to explore how one "white" woman writer (and tentatively, perhaps, others) nourished the machinations of racial production and dissemination in the late 19th century.

Neither Julia nor her texts are the final objects of study, then, they are the vehicles through which one thread of the processes of historically-specific gendered racial formation might be examined. Following Foucault, because subjects are constituted by the workings of power, "we"—21st century researchers or 19th century white female writers (homogenized groupings that likely erase more than they designate)—can never speak from an ahistorical transcendent position of "the real" or "the truth" but only within the discourses available to us at a given historical moment. My interest is to identify and trace lightly some of the historical processes by which 19th century women like "Julia" come to inhabit the subject position of author, and the discourses in which she is constituted, which, legible in her writings, contribute to her own self-invention and the invention of Others.

**White Women Wright-ing White**

*But how can a body so intensely bright be studied?*  
(Wright, 1892: B4 67)

Julia’s fictional gaze cannot be separated from her racialized role as a white middle-class woman in a nation deeply invested in Anglo-Saxon supremacy. As Vron Ware explores in *Beyond the Pale*, the British context of imperialism and colonialism in
the 19th century shaped the expression of even liberatory initiatives such as feminist 
ideology (119). While whiteness fluctuates in function and legibility throughout Julia’s 
fictional worlds, it is inextricably intertwined with, and mutually-constitutive of, other 
analytic categories such as class, sexuality and gender, reflecting at potent moments a 
particular middle-class, heteronormative, gender-imbued vision of whiteness. Specifying 
these inflections is crucial to the labor of identifying how a homogenous whiteness 
produces itself and working toward divesting it of some of its power. For Critical White 
Studies scholarship to be most effective, Mason Stokes argues that “yoking whiteness 
 studies to other normative structures” (187) is a way of refusing to re-center it in the 
critical act of interrogating it, of revealing how whiteness is never a totalizing force but is 
shaped by and imbricated in other analytics. To draw a potent example from Stokes, 
“queerness threatens whiteness, but whiteness makes queerness more palatable” (189).

And yet, to say that whiteness is inflected and shaped by class, gender, sexuality 
among an array of other elements, or that these are in fact, mutually-constitutive 
categories, is not to suggest that they are always equivalent in significance or 
mobilization. Or to position “whiteness,” in fact, as the transcendent category merely 
inflated by other analytics is to dismiss the utterly contextually-specific nature of the 
discursive production of identity. In Charles Gallagher’s ethnographic work in a 
working-class community, for instance, some white respondents who felt threatened by 
changing neighborhood demographics assumed Gallagher’s whiteness signified a 
“kindred spirit in racism” (72), while others found his education level and researcher 
status more suspicious than his whiteness was comforting. Also, the significance of
“class overrode color” as some respondents made sense of their social groupings (79). While Julia’s fictional contexts demonstrate moments of a strikingly gendered whiteness, an Americanized nationalistic whiteness is more influential as a conceptual force at other times. How and why whiteness is invoked in Julia’s work, how particular constructions of whiteness fluctuate in function and legibility, and when other analytics overshadow its potency, are all questions I entertain across select works.

Despite intensified scrutiny in recent years of this slippery, historically contingent, contradictory and disorderly racial fiction, insufficient attention has been given to the significant role white women have played in the battle to insulate and fortify whiteness or the gendered nature of various constructions of whiteness, today or historically. Yet as Sojourner Truth’s eloquent speech “Arn’t I a Woman?” attempted to capture over a century ago, and whiteness scholar Ruth Frankenburg’s argues in academic language in our contemporary moment, constructions of womanhood and of femininity have always been “racially and culturally marked” (“White” 10,77). The historical exclusion of African-American women from definitions of authentic femininity (Spillers 267) and the attempt to discipline Native women’s bodies into European-American expressions of femininity in U.S. boarding schools (Lomawaima 1994) are but a few examples of the way gender and race are mutually-imbricated (if not always equally inflected) categories.

Similarly, Ida B. Wells recognized the symbolic power of antebellum white womanhood, how a particular image of white femininity came to speak of virtue and

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12 Vron Ware’s Beyond the Pale is a significant exception. Also, Lorraine Kenny’s Daughters of Suburbia: Growing Up White, Middle-Class and Female attempts to draw connections between whiteness and femininity for white middle-class females in her ethnography. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, in press.
vulnerability in the post Civil-War United States at the expense of the lives of hundreds of black men who were accused of predatory masculinities and lynched to public applause. A quote from 1897 captures lynching as a site in which a vision of chaste white femininity was constructed and defended through the performance of a protective white masculinity: “if it takes lynching to protect women’s dearest possession from drunken, ravening beasts, then I say lynch a thousand a week if it becomes necessary” (qtd in Hale 109). The referent “women” here is wielded without racial specificity, but it is unlikely that women of color’s threatened virtue (were their “possessions” considered equally “dear”?) would inspire such virulent protective measures. A quote from a Lieutenant-Governor of Papua New Guinea accords with this analysis:

Doubtless there are native women who set the highest value on their chastity, but they are the exception and the rape of an ordinary native woman does not present any element of comparison with the rape of a respectable white woman, even where the offence upon the latter is committed by one of her own race and color.

(Hubert Murray, 1925 qtd in Ware 35)

Here a patriarchal governing power in an imperialist context constructs a chaste white femininity worthy of protection in opposition to an “ordinary” native womanhood, an assessment with potentially devastating, inadequately retributive, legal consequences for those “ordinary” women who were violated.

Questions about the construction of whiteness have yet to be applied to the massive body of didactic and domestic fiction women writers produced in the 19th century despite the prime terrain this literature offers for exploring how gender is whitened and whiteness is gendered because it is a discursive regime produced almost exclusively by women, imagined through female characters, and directed toward women
readers. And, as scholars Nina Baym and Susan Coultrap-McQuin have noted, the vast
majority of authors and readers were “white.” Particular racial constructions flood the
writings women produced during the 19th century, a previously-unparalleled period of
women’s publication efforts, which suggests provocative connections between the racial
imaginary and white women’s own work to establish their authority and identities as
professional authors. The toil of fabricating and reproducing whiteness was achieved in
part, I argue, through heavily gendered textual practice, words span by the racialized
imaginations of middle-class white women perhaps struggling to assert themselves as
legitimate professional writers in terrain long dominated by men. Overtly racialized
constructions may bolster writers’ own sense of white authority and superiority as
professionals13 in publishing territory only newly available to women.

Women’s appearance as professional writers accompanied the massive 19th
century economic and social shifts that rendered previous definitions of womanhood
untenable, and a women’s movement that left their social and economic roles profoundly
redirected and redefined. Amidst these changes women worked against persisting
questions of their right to speak, against discourses of gender inferiority, to sculpt
professional selves and advance their economic interests through publishing. Yet, at the
same time—and this is the precise, layered location Julia occupies—white women’s
publications also contributed to fabricating and disseminating versions of whiteness that
fortified racial borders and stifled the potential of the insufficiently-white. And this labor
was accomplished through works directed toward seemingly “raceless” ends: teaching

13 Coultrap-McQuin’s study Doing Literary Business argues that female authors did indeed see themselves,
and perform, as professionals in their relationships with publishers.
children about bugs and beetles; refining women’s culinary skills; and portraying the
dangers Catholicism presumably posed to Protestantism and national governance.
However innocent or raceless it may appear, writing has tremendous power to
manufacture, sculpt, and deploy narrations of race and racial identity, to translate
imaginary renderings of human beings into seemingly concrete yet always insufficient
entities, to freeze free-floating cultural sentiment into material and consumable symbols.
Writing didactic fiction in the 19th century, I argue in this dissertation, is a racial act.

Resting Briefly on Julia (As Contingent Foundation)

*But Cousin Judith is the center of this home. I am sure she
must write books. I have no doubt that these hours when
she is shut in her own room she is writing those wonderful
books

(Wright, 1876:183).

Julia (1848-1902) was a middle-class Presbyterian woman of English and Scottish
descent, merely one member of the “damned scribbling mob” of women writers that so
aggrieved Nathaniel Hawthorne in the 19th century. Scribble she did; between the years
1856 when she was 16 years old and 1902 when she died--quill and ink presumably still
clutched in her hand--this author published at least 117 books, 24 short stories and 11
articles on an array of topics. Just one of hundreds of female writers suspended in the
historical abyss yet unexamined by 20th century scholarship,¹⁴ Julia shares many

¹⁴ Liz Stanley’s *Auto/biographical* argues that the auto/biographical genre has reflected codified ideas of
whose lives are worthy of study--typically men, typically those deemed “great” men. Implicit in my
research “on” Julia may be the message that this, too, is a life worthy of study, and I do not wish to
discount this as a potential interpretation at some other time in some other work. My interest here,
however, is not to praise Julia’s individual “accomplishments” (and thus, concretize further what features
constitute a *female* life “worthy” of study) but to examine her work as a fertile site in which hegemonic
19th century discourses are vigorously expressed.
characteristics Coultrap-McQuin attributes to the majority of female fiction writers at this time. Born in the Northeast, specifically in Oswego, New York in 1840, Julia was raised in an middle-class family\textsuperscript{15} and benefited from a private education unlike many of her female contemporaries. Only a second-generation American citizen, Julia traced her native lineage to her paternal grandfather, Matthew McNair, who emigrated from Scotland as a young man in the late 1700s. The only ancestry she proclaims\textsuperscript{16} is Anglo-Saxon and Scottish and her public performance and textual endorsement of Protestantism was unwavering throughout her life.

Sharing many characteristics with her authorial cohort, Julia was unusual in terms of the number and variety of texts she produced (Baym "History" 3). She dabbled in the majority of the varied writing genres Baym argues female authors attempted as a whole in the 19th century: she published a series of science and nature, botany, and astronomy readers for children; temperance novels; didactic fiction; science and nature articles; historical fiction; religious tracts; "ethnographies;" Anti-Catholic treatises and housekeeping manuals.\textsuperscript{17} Julia wrote all morning, nearly every day for 46 years, publishing as many as 8 books in an individual year (1870) and leaving only 6 years in

\textsuperscript{15} One biographical source describes her family as "upper" middle-class but is an assessment I question; although Julia’s grandfather was a ship-builder, small business owner and town settler, and her father an engineer, these occupations might easily have placed her family in a middle to lower-middle-class status. Her father John’s home in Oswego was a solid, but unassuming dwelling near the waterfront that contrasts sharply with the grand homes of wealthy residents living in the hills above town. Also, scholars argue that female writers at this time, some the wives of clerics, were often driven by financial need. This seems plausible as Julia married a minister from a farming family who took small parishes during their early married years (Ryan 118). Coultrap-McQuin suggests that tract writers could earn around $1,200 a year for their works, while well-known writers like E.D.E.N. Southworth could earn as much as 10,000 (51;116).

\textsuperscript{16} Using "proclamts" here is a barb about fictional genealogies, the aspects of ancestry that are heralded--like "Scotch" and "Anglo-Saxon" in Julia’s case--over the unmentioned and unmentionable in one’s family line. For example, the "one drop rule" has had the power to shatter the ancestral fantasies of the most dogged of "Anglo-Saxon" purists.

\textsuperscript{17} The complete list of Julia’s publications is compiled in Lucy Bailey’s "A Plain Woman’s Story" Unpublished Master’s Thesis. The Ohio State University, 1997. Also see Appendix B.
her writing history bereft of titles altogether (1857-1859, 1861-62, and 1877). These gaps correspond with her marriage to, fittingly, a Presbyterian minister in 1859, the birth of her two children John and Jessie in the early 1860s, as well as a teaching position she held at a women’s college in 1877 (Whitcomb 36).

Although Julia notices race, this awareness is selective. For the most part Julia appears uninterested in “racial” issues, mentioning “race” only in passing in her texts, and predictably, when her characters are non-white, non-Anglo-Saxon, or sometimes, non-American. Perusal of her work has revealed only two texts thus far that engage overtly with social issues that she sees as explicitly regarding race. One is Among the Alaskans (1873), a descriptive tract that attempts to rally Presbyterian parishioners in the mainland U.S. for material support for missionaries working among the 40,000 Native inhabitants of the recently-purchased land mass now known as the state of Alaska. The second is a short story of social uplift published the year of her death entitled “Fiddlin’ Jim” (1902) that foregrounds a heavily racialized African-American female character. Unlike the work of her contemporary Harriet Beecher Stowe, the intricate domestic scenes Julia constructs are not skillfully-disguised political manifestos against the injustices of slavery nor treatises decrying the unjust treatment of Native Americans amidst energetic Manifest Destiny quests. In fact, Julia’s 1860s fiction fails to mention even the Civil War, despite the event’s historical weight, and more personally, her husband’s direct service as a chaplain from 1863 to 1864 (Whitcomb 1930).

Yet messages about race through constructions of racialized non-white beings are foundational undercurrents in Julia’s publications saturated with exaltations of houskeeping, protestations of inebriates, Protestant Proselytizing. Some short stories include peripheral African-American and Irish characters (a particular racial construction at the time I will return to), some children’s books use characters of (excessive) color to propel their moral lessons, and some illustrations of “whites” contrast sharply with those of non-white Others. Her “white-produced blackness,” for instance, envisions one-dimensional, time-blurred (Hale 1998) black figurations, mere tropes of servility—a hired hand, a mammyed nurse, a wizened old “Negro.” Overtly raced characters appear only occasionally and are always overshadowed by the usually Protestant, benevolent, middle-class female characters taking fictional center stage who wield ladles and pin-cushions with skill and grace. Like the tap-dancing black sidekicks in Shirley Temple films, fictionalized Others often provide “color, comedy and companionship” (DuCille 24) to the centralized whites. Although Julia tackles other pressing contemporary social issues directly such as ongoing Catholic/Protestant tensions—complicating “whiteness” in the process—she overlooks, avoids, or simply finds irrelevant to her writing goals issues like slavery, despite their presence on the national mind.20

Toni Morrison argues that the very act of “enforcing racelessness in literary discourse is itself a racial act” (46). The fictional worlds Julia attempts to construct primarily as raceless are just as revealing and no more innocent than texts which grapple overtly with “racial issues” or which centralize, demonize and colonize representations of

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20 I argue this based on in-depth study of many of her publications, but only skimming of others. Limited circulation in special collections, deterioration of texts, and sparse, accessible remaining publications has
people of color. And Julia’s occasional and by all surface appearances random insertion of characters whose bodies bear the heavy weight of her racial imaginary is, if we are to concur with Morrison, the very vehicle by which her assumption of white racelessness is made possible. Through pervasive dichotomies of lightness and darkness, the construction of flat, peripheral or thickly-racialized “repetitive tropes” (Frankenburg “Displacing” 11) of blackness, and the exoticization of foreign species, Julia mobilizes racial symbolism and characters of color to serve a fickle, yet tenacious, textured whiteness in her texts, consistent with Morrison’s argument.

Moreover, the accessibility of Julia’s prose and the relative transparency of her didactic messages facilitate investigating its role in delineating textual whiteness. At times whiteness speaks its own name in Julia’s texts, emerging in varied positions as if those places demand its articulation. Finally, as mentioned previously, to consider how these particular representations are not only imbued with historically-specific circulating beliefs about whiteness but that their very production by a white middle-class female author racializes and genders them in particular ways is useful for propelling our understanding about the connections between whiteness and other foundational analytics. Probing whiteness, teasing it apart, revealing its vulnerabilities, may inch us toward an “unsettled and disturbed whiteness” (Stokes 191) that is more about tentativeness than certainty, that rejects what Barthes calls the ideological supremacy of “statements of fact”

Left me with somewhat restricted access to her full canon; perusing the remaining texts may complicate my assessments.
(154), that refuses what Stokes sees as the utopianism of white abolitionism or the illusory comfort of a reinvented and more honorable whiteness (191).

The Slippery Terrain of Whiteness

_I sing an old song when I say that we are a nervous race and our children are more intensely nervous than their parents._ (Wright, 1888 B3:iii)

Limiting citizenship to “free white persons” in the American naturalization act of 1790 marked a significant shift in the social and historical construction of race by delineating and fortifying through law the slippery, mutable and yet mighty racial fiction now referred to as “whiteness.” In recent years the burgeoning field of Critical White Studies has had much to say about the phenomenon of whiteness and the social, historical, ideological and economic weight with which it has been invested, as well as its spectacular variability across contexts and time periods. It is intriguing, for instance, how the very monolith “white” could be asserted so confidently in the naturalization act, as if capturing an immutable and objective fact of nature, when only decades later, as immigration into the country increased dramatically, the terrain of whiteness became highly contested ground with Nordic, Slavic, Mediterranean and Celtic immigrants among others battling for membership in the exclusive “whiteness club” and for all of its corresponding benefits and privileges. Rather than questioning the legitimacy and epistemological certainty of the racial category itself, the recurring and anxiety-provoking debate was who deserved inclusion in the category white and who were merely swarthy unworthies (Jacobson 6).

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21 Stokes describes various approaches that grapple with the hegemony of whiteness including Noe!
Significantly, the ongoing struggle to delineate the boundaries of an authentic whiteness, and the height of Julia’s publishing efforts, occurred during the same period school leaders began conceptualizing education as an instrument for molding the thoughts and behavior of its future citizens. As social and educational historians Carl Kaestle (1983), Henry J. Perkinson (1968), and Joel Spring (1997) have argued, a central goal of the common school movement that later intensified during increased late 19th century immigration, was establishing Protestant Anglo-American culture as dominant to the cultures of the masses “infiltrating” American shores. Schools, those arms of the state, participate in creating citizens. Rights of citizenship, in fact, such as “universal white male suffrage” were seen to depend on “universal white education” (Kaestle 72).

The remarkable mutability and elusivity of this thing called whiteness, in fact, has been the source of some of its power historically as a social and economic currency and one reason the concept has been held under such scrutiny in recent years. A premise central to the 1990s explosion of Critical White Studies scholarship is that concretizing, historicizing, and contextualizing disrupts and displaces an entity that masquerades as biological and natural, that attempts to capture an illusory and preposterous homogeneity, and that has held at times invisible and almost mythological power (Frankenburg 1993; Fine 1997; Jacobson 1998). Shifting attention to the “center” rather than the “margin,” rendering visible the absent presence of whiteness in its varied conceptual and historical

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Ignatiev’s provocative “race traitor” camp, and Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg’s idea that we strive for less pernicious, more liberatory definitions of white identity.

22 Scholars generally identify CWS as a “new” phenomenon with nods of acknowledgment to the African-American writers and philosophers who critiqued whiteness at the turn of the century. Given this earlier scrutiny, the recent wave of scholarship might best be described as the second wave, as renewed interest, as a contemporary scurrying to critical whiteness. Describing the trend as a “new” phenomenon downplays
manifestations, and making explicit the utterly contingent relationship of “whiteness” to “color”\textsuperscript{23} reaches toward efforts to dismantle a category that has been vigorously defended in the United States for centuries.

As Elizabeth Ellsworth argues, whiteness is “unstable,” never truly “achieved or achievable,” and yet it is not “destabilized enough to be escaped, to collapse under the weight of its own paradoxes” (266). Demonstrating the socially-constructed nature of whiteness is inherent to the Critical White Studies enterprise, yet, drawing from Scott’s endorsement of researching the processes of conceptual formation in history,\textsuperscript{24} a more significant step toward diluting the potency of this at once meaningless and freighted concept is uncovering how and why whiteness comes to be created and maintained at specific historical moments, what that expression of whiteness signifies, and what labor it is mobilized to do. The fearful, at times desperate, frequently violent, labor that has bolstered and protected the bastions of whiteness from intruders deemed undeserving was accomplished through a variety of textual, legal and social means in the 19th century---with staggering costs both for those who struggled to maintain it and for those who were excluded from entry.

The Material Might of White

\textit{Unless far up in stellar space there is dust, star-dust ... \cite{Wright} throw back the light, then all must be very dark}. (Wright, 1892: B4 45)

\textsuperscript{23} Frankenburg argues that race is a “normative” and “relational” category that is given meaning “by the way it positions others at its borders” (“White” 271)
The discourses that construct the authorial subject and their writing intent shape the varied racial representations that flow from the writer's pen. In *The Color of Sex*, Mason Stokes rue the disappearance of texts he describes as white supremacist from the terrain of literary analysis, not because the content of the lost texts merit nostalgia but because a false picture—perhaps a kinder and gentler rendering of literary history—is created without them (5). Beyond the value of "righting" or thickening a "distorted" literary history, I would add, is recognizing how the prolific production of anti-black and xenophobic textual sentiment in the latter half of the 19th century reflected and nourished particular racial understandings that shaped definitions of American citizenship and the *material* experiences of "non-whites." Threads of a multi-stranded discourse, science, law, education, and popular publications often mirrored each other, reflecting similar ideological investments and cumulatively working to strengthen beliefs about racial categories, boundaries and hierarchies.

The conceptions of race produced and disseminated in popular publications, in fact, have influenced legal and social definitions of race with direct material consequences. In *White By Law*, for instance, Ira Haney-Lopez argues that one crucial measure for determining whiteness through the courts in the late 19th and early 20th century was "common knowledge," that is, popular, widely-held conceptions of races and racial divisions. Denying citizenship to a Chinese applicant in the well-known case *In re Ah Yup*, the court relied less on scientific evidence and more on the popular understanding of the term "white person":

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the words ‘white person’ . . . in this country, at least, have undoubtedly acquired a well-settled meaning in common popular speech, and they are constantly used in the sense so acquired in the literature of the country, as well as in common parlance (Haney-Lopez 5; my emphasis).

In this sense, popular publications and widely-distributed literature contributed to shaping “a well-settled meaning,” a common understanding of what constituted a legally-determined whiteness. “Asian” physiognomy was determined in this case unequivocally as not white, which became the basis of rejection for citizenship and its accompanying bounty. Drawing from Shawn Michelle Smith’s work on race and 19th century photography, one can ask, “when we find scientific and popular forms mirroring one another, what do we make of the ideological investments that inform those conveying practices?” (135).

The relationship drawn between whiteness and authentic citizenship is marked most dramatically, perhaps, by the naturalization act of 1790 that limited citizenship to “free white persons,” tying this leaky fabricated identity to discourses of patriotism, entitlement, and national belonging as well as the material advantages of American citizenship rights (Lipsitz 1988; Jacobson 1998). Consequently, whiteness as a racial category has been inextricably bound throughout American history to basic protections from violence, harassment and discrimination (in addition to an array of smaller, invisible daily privileges) as well as significant material entitlement such as economic advantage, educational privileges, housing access, geographical mobility, and political participation.

Definitions of authentic citizenship have been distinctly gendered as well. Political participation throughout the early Republic was tied to apportioned property ownership, a distinctly Western European understanding of land and an entitlement
dependent upon particular racial and gender identities. As Thomas Jefferson argued long ago, political involvement in American democracy has always reflected a restricted and particular vision:

were the state a pure democracy there would still be excluded from our deliberation women, who, to prevent deprivation of morals and ambiguity of issues, should not mix promiscuously in gatherings of men (qtd in Campbell 225).

Not simply a matter of patriarchal oppression, white women have perpetuated these narrow visions of citizenship, regardless of, or in reaction to, their own exclusion from participation. Although the patriotic genealogical organization, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), was forced to organize on October 11, 1890 because of women’s exclusion from its male corollary, the leaders of DAR perpetuated exclusions of their own in banning women of color from membership. In limiting membership to “white” women, women who possessed “the blood of Revolutionary Heroes in their veins,” they explicitly conflated the seemingly coherent racialized identity of Anglo-Saxon whiteness with authentic Americanness.

Fueled by eugenicist discourse gathering momentum in the late 19th century, their attempt to root American patriotism in a pure white racial bloodline reflects their investment in the native Anglo-Saxon body—particularly the female body—as symbol of legitimate American identity and thus worthy of grounding their esteemed organization (Smith 136-138). However probed and problematized the identity category “woman” has

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been in feminist theory, the story of the DAR's founding emphasizes anew the deeply gendered investments in racial categories historically--categories constituting themselves through (racialized) exclusions in which, Julia, too, as White Woman, participated in fabricating and buttressing.

**Blackened Sin and Whitened Salvation: A Taste of Julia’s White Imaginary**

*God made my soul white, and I'm trying to keep it so. I do not want a black heart, I can tell you.*

("Kate," Wright 1888:53)

As a gesture toward the analytics to come in this document and toward the usefulness of reading through a whiteness lens, I now turn briefly to a series of temperance readers for children to offer a taste of Julia’s didactic white imaginary. Julia employs pervasive images of lightness and darkness in her works to signify good and evil but these metaphorical techniques are conflated explicitly with race and gender in an 1888 text entitled, *The Temperance Second Reader*. This series of 4 readers, produced over a twelve year period and probably used in Sunday school classrooms, energetically combined moral lessons and cautions about the evils of drink with spelling lists to help young children develop basic reading skills. Lesson XXII, “Little MacDuff and His Nurse,” is two brief pages amid many lessons lacking explicit racial references. It contains a potent example of the mutually-constitutive filaments of race, class and gender operating in Julia’s white imaginary, as well as how her unspoken assumption of a white audience shapes her didactic maneuvers.

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Little MacDuff, the lesson's central figure, appears in a light sketch above the title wearing both a kilt and tam to accentuate his Scottish ancestry in case the reader somehow overlooked his marked Scottish surname. The rudimentary lesson unfolds as follows: MacDuff's new nurse was a "black girl named Kate" and though he had never seen a black person before, he liked her "soft voice, bright eyes, and kind smile."

MacDuff wanted to be "as good to Kate as she was to him," so when his bathtime arrived "he took a wet sponge and rubbed Kate's face hard" to try to remove the dark color.

After putting "soap on the sponge," and rubbing again, "still the black did not come off Kate's face." Perplexed, MacDuff needs Kate's help to explain the difficulty:

'why pet' said Kate, 'you can-not get the black from my skin. God made my skin that color. But God made my soul white, and I'm trying to keep it so. I do not want a black heart, I can tell you' (Wright "Second" 53).

MacDuff's confusion does not seem to trouble ever-gracious and benevolent Kate. Executing her role as nurturer/caretaker (mammy?) for this baffled white child, she simply explains her "difference" in skin color with affection and patience so he will better understand. MacDuff clearly associates blackness with dirt in this passage—and a tenacious type of dirt at that, since even soap and fierce rubbing cannot remove it—yet, Kate assures him that her skin shade is as God intended.

This simple moral lesson, rich for racial analysis, displays a tenaciously-present whiteness. Sculpted by a white woman's hands, a racialized gender is crucial to the lesson's enactment; the figuration of black woman in a bath-tub scene with a white child is not smoothly-exchangeable with a black male or white female trope. Race, class and gender function together to reverse standard age-based power relations between the
characters, expressed most clearly, perhaps, in Little (white male) MacDuff's sense of entitlement that, despite her adult age, he can touch (black female servant) Kate--twice--in the same way she touches him. Kate does not rebuke MacDuff's vigorous, repeated, and audacious face-rubbing that might well be painful but also highly inappropriate behavior for any child interacting with an adult authority figure. Indeed, the reference to Kate as a "girl," ("a black girl named Kate") and the lesson title, "Little MacDuff and his nurse," demonstrates a predictable fictional infantilization of African-Americans all-too-familiar outside the textual realm. Kate is not a fully autonomous adult woman; the use of the possessive term "his" emphasizes her subservient role as laborer and dependent to a small Scottish boy.

The conflation of skin color with good and evil occurring next in the passage illustrates how Kate's imagined black body functions as a springboard for a lesson about morality and righteousness for an unspoken audience of white children, a way of urging them that they must strive like Kate to keep their hearts "white." After insisting that her skin color is as God designed, Kate clarifies that she is laboring to keep her soul "white" to avoid a "black"--in other words, evil--heart. The blackness marked upon Kate's body that requires explanation to MacDuff accentuates her racial difference from the lad's own Scottish heritage, a specific manifestation of whiteness at this time heralded as authentic in citizenship debates. MacDuff's superior whiteness is signified in surname and image but requires no comment nor explanation in the text. Kate's skin color also stimulates an association with stain and sin that is contrasted with a whiteness in her heart signifying purity and salvation. Whether Kate's blackness thrusts her onto more precarious ground
than whites in her battle against evil is unclear, although the phrase “I'm trying to keep my soul white” suggests that she cannot let down her guard (53; my emphasis).

The presumed appropriateness of using a black female nurse’s body for the edification of a fictional Scottish male child about skin color and sinfulness is an utterly significant aspect of this brief but potent moral lesson. A servile black female body is subjected to public dissection and an evaluative gaze in these pages, functioning amiably and willingly as physical vehicle for a white child’s moral and social development—public scrutiny to which a white woman’s body would not, could not be similarly subjected at this time (a significant point I will explore in more detail in Chapter 4).

Further, Julia’s labor to address MacDuff’s baffled but supposedly charming conflations of dirt with blackness demonstrates the staggering degree to which this author assumes the universality of a white audience as consumers of her texts. No dark-skinned child of indigenous or African descent, certainly, would suppose Kate’s skin color, or their own, to be the result of haphazard hygiene and require a lesson to the contrary.

Educator Beverly Tatum describes a phenomenon she calls the “chocolate milk theory” that occurs among contemporary pre-school children in which white children commonly confuse dark skin with dirt or misunderstand it to be evidence of drinking too much chocolate milk (35-37). That Julia imagines an audience who would need this point clarified, and a black female vessel with whom to clarify it, demonstrates the absent presence of a racialized whiteness in this text created by an unmarked but influential white authorial imaginary. Ann DuCille’s essay on Shirley Temple remarks on a similar unspoken assumption among filmmakers and critics alike that the little “blonde goddess”
(19) with 56 perfect curls appealed universally to American filmgoing audiences. To argue that this early icon is "everything parents want their children to be---perfect" is to assume that these "parents" are white and desire their children to possess the signifiers of whiteness glorified through Shirley Temple's body. Little MacDuff's efforts to tease apart the difference between dirt/evil and Kate's skin color is similarly assumed to be elucidating information to all late-19th century readers.

That Julia presumes a white audience (undoubtedly the primary consumers of her texts) is less pernicious than the constructions created and messages delivered as a result of this assumption. The manifest goal of this Sunday School lesson may be to encourage moral behavior, but a "hidden curriculum" lurking beneath the surface is socializing a youthful white population into their roles as privileged, gendered, citizens of the state. A marked blackness enables an unmarked but tenaciously-present whiteness in the text; a white child's sense of entitlement to touch and question his adult black female caretaker about the "difference" her body represents is upheld without remark---even amiably encouraged; blackness functions as a metaphor for sin; skin color and status of servitude are conflated with blackness; racialized and historically-laden relationships like Black Woman as Mammy to White Child as bumbling but innocent learner become reified as natural, inevitable, and unquestioned. Representations like these, embedded in didactic texts and directed toward white middle-class children, perpetuate fictionalized white privilege in an endless, cyclical process. Black figurations are the victims in this discursive battle, falling to the pages in frozen caricatures as if content to be immortalized in benevolent servitude.
Project Overview: Let the White Analytics Commence

'Come,' said Helen, 'we expect to be packed full of learning which shall benefit our descendants at least to the fourth generation. Begin, Cousin Ann; time is not tarrying.'

(Wright, CH 1879:130)

This project, divided into 7 chapters, will explore the fluctuating function of whiteness in select texts across three genres of Julia’s writing. The second chapter contextualizes the eruption of Critical White Studies Scholarship within our contemporary historical milieu, foregrounding the palpable dangers in investigating this thing called whiteness that have been stressed by key theorizers in Critical White Studies. Chapter 2 also tackles the emergence of the “woman author” on the 19th century historical landscape and contextualizes Julia within that burgeoning professional identity category. It presents an Origin Story of Critical White Studies and its evolution through a review of the literature, including significant shifts in epistemologies of whiteness, economic rights and material consequences that have resulted from bearing a white identity historically. Finally, it reviews scientific discourses circulating in the late 19th century that undergird Julia’s texts.

Chapter 3 discusses the central methodologies and theoretical influences, primarily Critical Discourse Analysis. The processes, investments and positionalities in the research process, introduced in this opening chapter, are explored in greater depth in Chapter 3, including poststructuralism’s influence on the “new” history from which this study draws. Probing differences among approaches termed Discourse Analysis, Chapter 3 also clarifies the usefulness of the Critical strand of these analytics for a historical project committed to exploring discursive processes of racial construction toward better
understanding of how race comes to bear varied meanings at particular historical moments, and thus, accompanying material consequences as well.

Drawing primarily from a short story entitled, "Fiddlin' Jim," Chapter 4 explores how gender is racialized in Julia's didactic fiction directed toward middle-class white women and how it might function to bolster particular versions of white femininity. Tracing scientific, citizenship, and capitalist discourses legible in this brief yet rich text, I demonstrate how the textual performance of language, corporeality, Protestant uplift and the politics of naming are racially-laden constructions in Julia's work, serving a feminized whiteness at the expense of a excessive fictionalized blackness.

In a continuation of the analytics from Chapter 4, in Chapter 5 I delve into several other texts directed toward women readers to analyze specific manifestations of an Americanized whiteness. Drawing from discourses of philanthropy and imperialism, I explore how glimmers of a "white woman's burden" surface in these works. To underscore the gymnastics possible in the female white imaginary, I examine a missionary tract entitled Among the Alaskans and the author's best-selling domestic encyclopedia, The Complete Home, to argue that race inscribes itself in covert and surprising locations—including geographical terrain.

Chapter 6 turns to Julia's set of science and nature readers for children used in the public schools to suggest the presence of racialized citizenship discourses among her seemingly-innocent tales of insects and ants. Exploring how these texts function as socialization agents for young-white-citizens-in-the-making, I analyze in depth how whiteness is constructed as absent presence through boundary fortification across species.
and national borders. Central to this chapter is probing what difference it makes that a white woman wrote these nature readers, scrutinizing the preponderance of such figures as competent, nurturing human mothers and proper "heterosexual" female insects who take fictional center stage as evidence of a gendered middle-class white educational imaginary.

In the final chapter I close with an interregnum, an abeyance, rather than a conclusion. The traveling potential of the analytics of this study and the rich body of work yet to be mined is contradictory to the illusory permanence promised by termination. This chapter turns to Julia's Anti-Catholic treatises to touch on examples of a gendered xenophobia and indicate the richness of these works for future analyses. I argue that the texts rely on scientific discourses of racial difference among Caucasians to mark Irish-Catholics as excessively raced beings. Finally, I offer a hypothesis for why Julia might have written whiteness so steadily into the pages of her publications.
CHAPTER 2:

MAKING “JULIA” POSSIBLE:
CRITICAL WHITE STUDIES, FOUCAULT,
AND SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSES ON RACE

'The fact is, my dear girls,' I interposed, 'no one branch of study stands isolated; it reaches out and intermingles and takes hold of others.'

(Wright, CII 1879:33)

This chapter opens with the dangers of studying whiteness, a series of cautions and rather tortured misgivings that have become standard lamentations in Critical White Studies (CWS) scholarship, yet nevertheless, are palpable consequences of studying The Center that must be grappled with in research endeavors carried out in its name. Not simply a matter of genre compliance, probing these dangers is significant to my methodological approach in that I seek simultaneously to utilize and undermine foundational concepts like “whiteness” to foreground the non-innocence of scholarship undertaken with liberatory aims that may appear in the guise of rescuer but also works to reinscribe the very notions it critiques. Specifying hazards also acknowledges the legacy of injuries research projects executed for the seemingly benign purposes of “exploring,” “better understanding,” or even, of all things, “helping,” have left in their wake. Studying whiteness, certainly, is no Tuskegee (although Tuskegee certainly offers a potential study of whiteness), and the aftershocks building from this relatively “new” body of inquiry
are too embryonic at present for us to assume negligible harm or to assess their full implications. Yet, at the very least, directing analytic energy toward a hegemonic norm might channel it away from projects that position sexual minorities, people of color, and others Spivak identifies as comprising the subaltern, at the center of inquiry.

This chapter also lightly sketches the material and discursive shifts enabling the emergence of the “woman author” on the 19th century American landscape and contextualizes “Julia” as writer within that newly burgeoning professional identity category. In the process, I touch on foundational works that have explored various aspects of women’s 19th century writing efforts. Third, this chapter relates what might be called an “Origin Story” of Critical White Studies by tracing significant shifts in epistemologies of whiteness across key theorizers, policy formulations and economic rights. In doing so it attempts to render visible the threads and ruptures in the investigations that might be loosely enveloped within the Critical White Studies rubric and what otherwise might appear as a homogenous and unified field of study—the very critique CWS scholars themselves level against hasty and nonchalant uses of the term “whiteness.” I cull various elements from these foundational pieces as fuel for my own analytics. Finally, the chapter reviews scientific discourses on race palpable in Julia’s cultural milieu that undergird her texts and render them comprehensible.
THE DANGERS OF WALLOWING IN WHITENESS

*An identity is questioned only when it is menaced, as when the mighty begin to fall, or when the wretched begin to rise, or when the stranger enters the gates, never, thereafter, to be a stranger*

--- James Baldwin

Although I rely heavily on Critical White Studies scholarship, hazards exist to studying whiteness and this project is no exception. Despite the array of insights emerging from the cross-disciplinary proliferation of whiteness work—at least 40 books with whiteness in the title in the last half decade—the “critical rush” to interrogate the phenomenon of whiteness has *itself* become a subject of academic scrutiny as various “risks” and “dangers” of whiteness scholarship have become legible. Despite the intent of “marking” whiteness for the purpose of “decentering” it, the question arises whether scrutinizing whiteness only serves to “recenter” it, to fuel narcissistic self-gazing in the guise of liberatory aims, to shift attention back to the White Center where so many love to linger. Indeed, however noble or liberatory the intent, some argue that studying the contours and effects of whiteness reifies the very category CWS scholars strive to deconstruct as racial fiction, as an entity that functions to segregate and dominate through the ideological and material labor of human beings. In this critique, whiteness is not only inadvertently re-centered, but nourished anew through the well-meaning efforts of anti-racist scholars. Further, through the critique of whiteness the signified exceeds the signifier as “white” identity takes on a pejorative cast, used as if an epithet, as if inhabiting the slippery subject position of “whiteness” is *itself* the crime rather than the
pernicious acts committed by individual whites or the various meanings whiteness has accrued throughout history with at times, horrific consequences.

**White Studies as Redemptive**

What is dangerous about this current trend of demonizing "whiteness," Matthew Frye Jacobson, Ruth Frankenberg and Michelle Fine all note, is that it contributes to the fetishization of ethnicity—a tendency of "me-too-ism" in people previously-identified-as-white with all of the accompanying privileges to disavow their whiteness and emphasize their identities in terms of ethnic distinctions their immigrant ancestors once claimed. Thus, a hundred years after the desperate scramble to shed (at that time what were) racial distinctions made among Celts, Teutons and Nordic folk in favor of the homogenizing, comforting, and privileged blanket of whiteness, a panoply of Irish-Americans and Scots-Irish (among others) have begun championing their ethnic "just-off-the-boat" (Jacobson 258) distinctiveness and their distance from the white-er culprits of history. Women with primarily Scottish ancestry and one great-great Cherokee grandmother are springing to identify as Native American while descendants of Irish immigrants are decrying what they see to be unfair favoritism of affirmative action programs benefiting African-Americans because their ancestors, too, had experienced—and yet had overcome—the heavy weight of racialized economic discrimination. ¹ This dissociation from whiteness speaks legions about the evils the identity has come to connote, leading historian Jacobson to quip, "where have all the white people gone?" (257).

¹ I refer here to the common practice of discriminating against the Irish in the 19th century, cruelly captured in the window sign advertising jobs, "No Dogs nor Irish Need Apply."
A question we might ask of this scholarly trend is why Whiteness Studies? Why now? James Baldwin’s words seem compelling here, “An identity is questioned only when it is menaced, as when the mighty begin to fall, or when the wretched begin to rise, or when the stranger enters the gates, never, thereafter, to be a stranger.” The fervor attending Critical White investigations cannot be explained fully by its present academic currency although the fashionable status the subject has in some disciplines undoubtedly intensifies its attraction for scholars seeking publication niches for tenure and promotion efforts in our intensified publish-or-perish milieu. Yet the liberatory spirit infusing these studies transcends the material concerns of bleary-eyed, tenure-hopeful academics.

Indeed, much of the work in what might be called phase two of the “critical rush” to whiteness (see DuBois and Cooper for phase one) contains a “utopian cast” (Stokes 183) that hints at the potentially-redemptive possibilities of this resurrected and transformed field of study, a “way out,” perhaps, of what seems to be a staggering contemporary racial quagmire. A recent Harvard study reports, for instance, that despite the nation’s growing diversity, educational re-segregation has intensified throughout the 1990s contributing to an increasing gulf in quality between schools attended by white students and those serving minorities (Orfield 8). A certain appeal exists to seeing whiteness scholarship as redemptive, as a promising path to salvation, as a tentative balm aimed at soothing the wounds of past generations. If we mark whiteness, record its exhaustive labor, and explore the wrongdoing committed in its name, so the story goes, we might be freed from laboring so heavily under the weight of history.

And yet, other issues lurk behind this whiteness question. It is critical, I believe, to remind ourselves that whiteness studies have gained enormous credibility (in some
disciplines) in an academy overwhelmingly dominated by white faculty and administration, with full-time African-American faculty numbering 4.9% (over half employed at historically black colleges) and their numbers remaining stagnant over the last 20 years despite increased graduation rates of Ph.D.s (Chait and Trower A11).\footnote{Asian-American faculty rates have doubled to a current 5.5% with a rate of 2.6% for Hispanics/Latinos.} Debates about multiculturalism continue to thrive while student bodies become more racially diverse than the faculty who teach them. In addition to these institutional demographics, Elizabeth Ellsworth and others have argued that academic discourse, writing, and policy are inseparable from whiteness and even the production of anti-racist scholarship “gets caught in a double bind” of reproducing whiteness that indirectly bolsters a white academy (265). Consider this in tandem with the suggestion that whiteness scholarship may be contributing to the displacement of black scholarship on race and the implications of CWS seem even more layered. An element of standpoint epistemology seems operating covertly here as well, the long-debated question of who may speak for whom, who is entitled to produce scholarship on whom, and whether elements of shared subjectivity are necessary to allow one to speak for another. While some may see this scholarship as anti-racist labor, an example of Malcolm X’s call for whites to do “work in their own backyards” (Frankenberg “White” 242), the flurry of white-produced scholarship also may have ushered with it a sense of insider status so as for whites to more comfortably insert themselves into contemporary debates on race.

This historicized probing is less a dismissal of the potential usefulness of the Critical White enterprise, and rather, drawing from Judith Butler, a caution that we should be wary of what the theoretical move to establish foundations like “whiteness” in Critical
White Studies *authorizes* and what it precludes and forecloses ("Contingent" 39).

Assuming an innocence to whiteness scholarship is no less problematic than assuming the innocence of whiteness. Also, approaching racial phenomenon with a predetermined conviction of the invariant import of whiteness downplays the utterly-constitutive nature of historical, cultural and regional context for subjectivity and signification. Rather than assuming the ahistorical and unwavering significance of this racial entity now that contemporary light has been shed on its might, we could seek to deploy a critical white lens strategically alongside other analytics. Is whiteness salient in this context? How does it operate vis-à-vis other conceptual categories? Is it at times, per chance, utterly irrelevant? What insights into sexuality and gender are lost by privileging a whiteness lens? Context determines what whiteness signifies: its meaning in contemporary Southern Appalachia differs from what it conveys among the middle-class in 19th century New England.

More importantly, as introduced in Chapter One, to say that class, gender and sexuality inflect and are inflected by whiteness, that these are, in fact, mutually-constitutive categories, is *not* to suggest that they are *equivalent* in significance--race may be far less salient as a conceptual entity in some contexts than others. To paraphrase Ruth Behar’s self-reflections, "I have never felt more Jewish than when I am among Cubans; I have never been more aware of my Cuban heritage than when I am among Jews" (1995). And to return to a potent assessment by Mason Stokes, “queerness threatens whiteness, but whiteness makes queerness more palatable” (183).
The Usefulness of White Girls

The question becomes, then, how to do whiteness work that maximizes the usefulness of the concept in propelling inquiry while simultaneously undermining its epistemological certainty and authority so as not to reify its already burdensome hegemonic status. In other words, for Critical White Studies to effect its espoused goal, it must use whiteness to unthink itself—to strive for simultaneously articulating and dismantling what masquerades as a certain, organized totality, leaving it open as a site of permanent resignifiability. In Mike Hill’s words, *trash*ing whiteness must be the goal: “whether whitening Critical Race Studies turns out to be politically efficacious or just another takeover depends partly on its disarticulation—how thoroughly whiteness is trashed” (156). To undermine the authorizing power that comes from the unquestioned deployment of foundational concepts, constitutive notions such as whiteness must be left “permanently open, permanently contested, permanently contingent . . . a site of permanent political contest” (Butler 41). Deconstructing the subject of whiteness is not an act of censure, but rather, releases the concept into a “future of multiple significations” that cannot yet be imagined, and liberates it from the “ontologies to which it has been restricted,” freeing it to be a “site where unanticipated meanings might come to bear” (Butler 50).

We must not assume that development of more complicated, pleasurable and/or fashionable racial analytics releases us from the material consequences of racialized constructions. Even if whiteness is a slippery, historically-contingent, and disorderly racial fiction, the racialized stratification of power in the United States means that the various physiognomies signifying whiteness now and at the turn of the century have
garnered certain privileges whether or not its beneficiaries have sought them out. The new non-white ethnic American cannot extract him/herself at whim from the social, cultural and psychological capital whiteness accrues. This assumption, too, could be interpreted as a privilege of whiteness (Kincheloe and Steinberg 21).

It is here that the usefulness of gendering whiteness and the potential value of examining Julia's work from a gendered perspective becomes apparent. As Matt Wray and Annalee Newitz argue in their introduction to White Trash, scholarship on whiteness has probed insufficiently how class (and I would add, other analytics) complicate whiteness in ways that divest the notion of some of its power. "The difference within whiteness," they suggest, "may serve to undo it" (4; my emphasis). Thus, keeping in mind that constructions of womanhood and of femininity have always been "racially and culturally marked" with significant consequences to women of color (Frankenberg "White" 10,77), we might proceed with the (im)possibly redemptive practice of whiteness studies by probing the contours of a gendered whiteness, including a white figuration of woman that occupies simultaneously a contradictory location of gendered inferiority and racial superiority in stratified social arrangements. To draw from Valerie Lee's use of the first line of Toni Morrison's novel Paradise, rather than "shooting the white girl first," Critical Whiteness Studies might derive analytic fuel from the contingent foundation of white woman, a textured and potentially undermining difference within whiteness (Lee 2000).
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE (WHITE) WOMAN AUTHOR

‘If [a woman] knows how to lecture, she has as much right as a man. The question is, Can she lecture well? There is no boldness in it if she thinks of her theme and not of herself. I shall speak in public when I grow up. I shall be a lawyer like my father and then I must speak’

(Wright, CH 1879:14: emphasis in original).

To begin with the white girl, then, in this section, I examine elements of the historical processes constituting one of her many manifestations, the subject position of “woman author.” I describe the emergence of the “woman author” and her writing efforts in the 19th century literary landscape and contextualize “Julia” within that newly-available professional identity category. While my methodology chapter expands the theoretical apparatus introduced in Chapter One, my purpose here is to lightly trace factors contributing to the outpouring of women’s published writing at this time and position Julia’s work within that context.

Discursive constructs of race, class and gender speak the woman writer in her many manifestations, but the specific discourses circulating in the 19th century spoke “her” in particular ways; her textual creations, in turn, serving to construct Others according to her historical and racial imaginary—in Julia’s case, racialized foreign land and insects, masculinized black females, evil, lurking, darkened Catholic priests and innocent Scottish children. That canonical authors, performing as omniscient de-raced sculptors, have visualized a white audience when crafting their fictional landscapes has been critical to Toni Morrison among others, foundational for exploring the way fiction, too, has functioned to create and sustain a racial imaginary.
The Author Function

In his essay, "What is an Author?" (1979) Foucault describes how the "author function" has shifted through the centuries with the individualization of the writer fluctuating in importance according to era and discourse. Certain discourses are endowed with the author function, that "necessary" and "constraining" figure (119), while it is denied in others. In the 17th and 18th century, for example, the merit of scientific texts was weighed on the basis of their membership in a particular field of arguments, rather than on the authority of the individual scientist who produced them. Literary texts at the turn of the 19th century, in contrast, carried authoritative weight based on the circumstances, design, and individual status of the author. We ask of the literary work, who wrote it, from where and whence does it come, what were the circumstances of its production? And yet, Foucault argues, this author function does not sacralize other discourses: while a letter has a "signer," it does not have an "author." While an anonymous wall poster has a "writer," it, too, bears no author. "Literary anonymity." in contrast, is simply "not tolerable" (Foucault "Author" 108-109).

The author function in literature performs particular roles. Among them: 1) Its name in particular serves a classificatory purpose in delivering A Subject around which to group textual products ("Julia" and "her canon") and compare/contrast them to others ("other women writers" and "literature"; 2) through the historical context and particulars of the author's life, it provides a basis for explaining the appearance of particular events, changes, absences in a text (nicely feeding the Critic Function and her search for 'deep

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1 How Thomas Pynchon's dogged maintenance of mystique through a lifetime of authorial anonymity fits in to this construction is an intriguing question. Another nuance worth pondering is when a genre becomes unworthy to sacralize. Have "Harlequin Romances," for instance, ever depended upon the author function?
motives’ and textual ‘design’); 3) its placement in a socially-constructed system of property, of ownership, authorizes the discourses of a writing being but also subjects them to penal appropriation, *holding them accountable* for their writing acts, including “transgressive” and “dangerous” ones (108-113; my emphasis).

Foucault suggests that recent social shifts (1979) foreshadow a time when the author function will disappear and we will ask with a shrug, “what difference does it make who is speaking?” (120). Yet, recognizing the historical particulars and peculiarities of our investments in the literary figure, specifically the individualized author in the 19th century (“who wrote it matters”), is crucial context for probing the meaning of the identities in which female writers labored at this time. Julia, a 19th century-cultivated being, understood The Author functioned at this time to legitimize particular discourses of expression. By frequently signing her prefaces, “The Author,” she reveals her investment in this authorizing identity category and the importance of performing and promoting it to a reading public.⁴

**Popular Fiction: Other-Than-Man**

To the degree that racialized and gendered discourses constitute the writing subject, and in turn are circulated through their textual utterances so they constitute Others, situating the position from which a writer speaks/is spoken seems imperative given that woman author was a newly-articulated public formation. Although “her” texts saturate our current market, the construct of the woman author and the literary and

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⁴ In an earlier analysis of Julia’s textual prefaces, I argued that signing “Author” signifies her efforts to assert a proud authorial identity against the heavy invective currents dismissing women writers. Though I assumed in that analysis, problematically, that these prefaces represent “purer” access to Julia’s “real” attitude toward authorship (than, for example, more mediated expressions within the texts), prefaces do perform “authentic,” authorial selves in their direct communication with an imagined audience.
didactic products creating her had only recently, during Julia's era, become legible on the historical landscape. Historically, the writing subject has long been interchangeable with "male," the Author of things. The term comes from the Latin, "Auctor," which translates to originator, writer, historian, harbinger of news, acknowledged expert or founder. In fact, when Caesar Augustus proclaimed his "Auctoritas" to his Roman subjects he was not only declaring his authority to scribe but claiming his godlike right to control society, document facts, to judge and shape the fate of mortals. Indeed, that human history has been penned primarily by the male hand is testimony to how closely Augustus' vision has paralleled the term's denotation.

This subject position became possible in the late 18th and early 19th century through technological, social and political changes, embodying a host of significations about worth, status, femininity and morality, which served both to accentuate differences between canonical literature (Man) and popular novels (Other-than-Man) and to legitimate a hierarchy drawn from those differences. Foucault asks,

How is it, given the mass of things that are spoken, given the set of discourses actually held, a certain number of these discourses are sacralized and given a particular function? Among all these narratives, what is it that sacralizes a certain number and makes them begin to function as "literature"? (qtd in Taubman 38)

The same questions can be posed about popular novels and the "woman writer." What makes some narratives function as "popular" rather than "literature"? How do certain producers come to function as "originators" and others as "woman"? And within women's writing, how do some products come to be seen as "serious" and others as "popular"? (D. Williams 165). Deborah Williams argues that at the turn of the 20th century, even "serious" female literary figures like Edith Wharton and Willa Cather
began to distance themselves from 19th century models of popular female authorship such as "moral guide" and "inspirational leader" (2).

Julia herself, who could be tucked nicely into these "moral" and "popular" categories, made distinctions between "good writing, standard writing" like exploration literature (and perhaps tacitly her own work) and the less "interesting" and more suspect works of "Mrs. Southworth or the 'Ladies Journal of Fashion'" ("Complete" 200-204). "A production of low literary character," one of her characters insists, "weakens the mind" ("Complete" 204). Julia might have self-defined as Author, a title worthy of a producer of such "good, standard" writing, but others evaluating her then and now may consider the popular connotations of "writer" a more accurate label. This distinction suggests that her compliance to the conventions of female writing genres (temperance, religious tracts, manuals) might have smoothered any singular authorial contributions she made to the written record. Thus, even varied notions of female authorship have been enabled through differently-valued discursive inclusions and exclusions.

To return briefly to Morrison's guiding question in *Playing in the Dark*: "What has the assumption of a white audience⁵ meant to canonical authors and the "literary imagination"? This question posits the usefulness, the potential generativity, of considering a text in relation to a writer's raced, and I would add, classed and gendered, subject position, one that is constrained and enabled through historically-specific discourses. These various overlapping but not necessarily equivalent identity positions——

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⁵ To some degree, mobilizing the term "audience" in this manner freezes the reader into a falsely-homogenous grouping, just as occurs with "woman writer." Lumping imagined readers together, may, in the words of Peter Taubman, do "violence to the quirky and unique ways books move through our lives" and "flatten our private relationship to reading" (37). Although I wish to emphasize the "whiteness" imagined in this "audience" for analytic purposes, I would also argue that particular discourses become more and less meaningful depending on other aspects of an "audience" member's subject position.
just like “Author” vs. “Woman Author”---are then invested with particular raced and
gendered meanings.

The Sway of the Written Word

Of all the influences about us in the present age, perhaps none is so
largely educative as that of reading: the press even distances the pulpit in
its control over the minds of men; the paper and the pamphlet go where
the pastor and preacher cannot find their way.

(Wright CH 1879:199)

Julia’s pre-author self was nourished during a particularly sharp rise in the growth
of the publishing industry, with an accompanying shift in the weight and value invested
in the written word. Words achieved a level of social currency in the 19th century, a
legitimating power, transforming publications to symbols of knowledge and professional
authority which women may have gladly “cultivated” for self-validation (Bledstein 118).
As the above epigraph indicates, Julia certainly recognized this power. Ideas became
commodified symbols of class and erudition, circulated through an increasingly consumer
culture, and tied to market pressures.

The spread of literacy in the early 1800s (Kaestle 65), the rise in formal female
education, a shift from male to primarily female readers, and technological developments
ranging from the printing press to mass publishing facilitated the material expression of
the 19th century woman author. As early as the colonial period, reading and writing had
been considered vital skills for many New England families; in some areas, parents were
legally required to teach both reading and writing to boys, and at least writing to girls.
Biblical fervor and commerce demands necessitated that girls in religious and/or trading
families improve their reading and writing performance (Solomon 3). In fits and starts,
informal and formal educational opportunities for women became available in the mid-to-late 19th century in ways previously unknown. As early as 1824, public education was offered to young white women in select areas, although the majority of women—women of color and whites alike—did not have access to similar schooling until after the Civil War (Flexner 28, 37). Although 90% of white adults were listed at literate in the 1840 census and 94% of free males listed as literate in 1860 (Tyack and Hansot 29), scholars estimate that only about 50% of white females had achieved literacy by the 1850s.

Increasing literacy rates created more readers and therefore expanded the potential market for authors’ work. Literacy also dramatically impacted the publishing industry; greater demand and larger markets for books, periodicals and newspapers meant steady stimulation of the printing enterprise.

Technological improvements and changes in the structure of business also transformed publishing practices, facilitating the speedier and cheaper production of books (Geary 366). This had significant effects on the distribution of women’s words. By 1855, for example, Harper’s could produce 35 volumes a minute from a massive assembly line of machinery (requiring no less than 300 women to operate) (Ryan 116). Kaestle argues that the capitalist-propelled growth in the U.S. spurred long-distance trade, finance negotiation and the development of commerce centers in which learning, printing and commercial activity all took place. These urban centers necessitated communication skills and encouraged facility with basic arithmetic and writing, which over time influenced literacy rates. Between 1840, when Julia was born, and 1860, four years after

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6 The racial exclusions of early educational institutions are well-documented, a particularly limiting position for African-American females. Although African Americans were taxed in Ohio in the 1840s—money which fed the common schools—their children could not attend. Rare schools existed for Southern
she published her first text, the dollar value of books produced in the U.S. tripled, and the number of daily newspapers increased from 138 to 387 (Kaestle 65). Moreover, the genesis of advertising and mass-marketing techniques foreshadowing our present consumer age allowed publishers to proclaim the marvels of particular works of fiction to their readers and thereby stimulate sales (S. Williams 181).

The Scribbling Fair

'Some one,' said John Rocqueford, 'ought to write a book on the subject, and tell women how to do what they must do, so that it shall be most easily done . . . [so as to] spare themselves for better things and live out their rightful days'

(Wright, CH 1879: 338).

Julia was raised in this context, and in 1856, in the midst of thousands of other women with similar class, education, and ancestral backgrounds, she began writing and publishing at breathtaking speed. Christened anything from "Amazons" to "preachers of the fictional page," women novelists burst onto the literary scene in 19th century America, and with pens flying and morals flowing, they pummeled the reading public with their publications. They shattered conventional notions of what constituted an authorial subject in the process. During the 1800s, novels became the most popular literary form in the United States and the "domestic novel" which featured primarily

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* "Domestic" refers to 19th century writers' preoccupation with the incidents, daily activities and conversations that make up home life. A slippery category like most classifications, many popular works produced during this time embraced domestic themes but would not necessarily be classified as authentic examples of "domestic" or "woman's" fiction by scholars. For example, near the end of her groundbreaking work *Woman's Fiction* (1978)--the first sustained literary analysis of the avalanche of titles women produced during these years--Nina Baym comments, "A number of novels written during these years defined themselves as woman's fiction but were in fact propaganda novels for a variety of causes supposed to be of special interest to women" (264; my emphasis). A passing statement made primarily to clarify Baym's choices for study, this comment is nevertheless revealing about how scholars'
white women, was directed toward the white middle-class woman reader and was written primarily by white women, became the genre’s most popular representative. In the 1820s, publishers printed only 109 individual titles of fiction, but by 1840, the number had increased to one thousand (Ryan 116). The total volumes produced far surpassed even the number of literate people able to read them.

Though highly criticized in that century and in this for its feminizing pollution of the “noble art of letters” (Baym “History” 11), a single work of domestic fiction in the 1850s regularly sold more than the combined sales of male canonical authors of the same period, such as Hawthorne, Melville, Thoreau and Whitman (McFarland 38). Market demands necessitated that women continue to produce texts with oft-repeated themes of home and hearth (Ryan 11). Indeed, one newspaper editor recognized the power women’s writing had amassed by the early 20th century: “we poor men are having a really hard time . . . First you took our ballot from us; then you deprive us of our booze, and it looks as though you are going to rob us of even the alphabet” (White qtd in D. Williams 87). From 1820 until the close of the Civil War, an eager public just devoured these titles: while publishing 5,000 copies of a single book was considered successful prior to the 1850s, by the 1860s authors commonly sold as many as 50,000 or even 100,000 copies (Geary 366-367). In fact, some scholars identify Susan Warner’s Wide World (1854) as the work “that brought the very concept of the best seller into existence” (Baym “History” xi).

definitions of writers can differ from those writers make about themselves. The difference is a reminder that historical inquiry is imbued with power and “participates . . . in the political management of reality” (qtd in Segall 8).
Indeed, literary scholar Nina Baym suggests the literary profession may have been *opened* by women; as Julia commonly did in the prefaces to her books, most women writers unabashedly claimed the label of professional and author (Baym “History” 2; Coultrap-McQuin 7). In her groundbreaking work, *Woman’s Fiction*, Baym asserts that on the strength of domestic novels’ popularity, “authorship in America was established as a woman’s profession, and reading as a woman’s avocation” (11). The wide range of topics they addressed and their phenomenal output could easily be perceived as zeal, even frenzy, to enter a previously all male-preserve, but this interpretation neglects the material changes that made such massive text circulation possible as well as the symbolic power written words carried at this time to signify professional authority, enlightened intellect, and contemplative middle-class refinement. Rather than liberated voice, women’s cross-genre textual fecundity may indicate their efforts to amass evidence demonstrating their entitlement to the sweet discursive subject position of professional author. The Author, according to Foucault, does not precede the works (“Author” 119), but rather, is created by them. Thus, in this view, monographs on domestic science would yield female “experts” like Julia and consecrate as their specialized professional knowledge what might have been seen previously as mere housekeeping tasks, mere isolated daily drudgery (Bledstein 67).

**Breadth and Volume**

Baym describes the scope of women’s textual utterances at this time, many of which, like Julia’s, dabbled in the “empire of the mother” (Ryan 1982). Ryan identifies a

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9 Here Baym writes against a persistent interpretation of 19th century women writers as private, shy and retiring, with reticence about appearing on the “public stage” of publishing.
general split that occurred in the 1850s in writing about the family between specialized didactic instruction such as Julia’s domestic encyclopedias and the dramatic fictional playground of the domestic novel (17), while Baym conveys greater specificity among these domestic publishing efforts. Domestic advice produced as early as 1820 had been directed to women (Ryan 19). In terms of fiction, women wrote didactic novels and short stories about female character formation and middle-class etiquette; they published polemical novels advocating varied social and religious positions; they created Catholic conspiracies and missives on temperance, slavery and immigration; they waxed rhapsodic on domestic bliss; they printed sensationalist dramatic tales and adventure stories; they debated woman suffrage, baptism by immersion and dress reform in fictional plots (Baym “History” 3).

Their non-fiction output was equally strong. Women wrote children’s books and school textbooks to nourish children’s intellects; they published cookbooks and household manuals with tips on matters from childrearing to managing finances; they sculpted biographies; they translated texts from German, Italian and French for American audiences; they produced elaborate poetry on topics from “philosophy to sewing;” they shared their opinions in editorial columns; they wrote advice books; they proselytized in religious manifestoes; and they recorded local, national and world histories. The extent of women’s written contributions (and the list goes on) is likely unknown to most modern

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10 Julia was a prolific Anti-Catholic author; from 1869 to 1873, she wrote 5 mammoth Anti-Catholic tracts that had a surface appearance as fiction, with titles exuding mystery and narrow escapes such as Secrets of the Convent and Confessional; Priest and Nun; and Almost a Priest. See Chapter 7.
11 Another favorite genre of Julia’s. See compiled list in Appendix B.
12 Julia’s bestseller was a creation of this kind, The Complete Home, 1879.
audiences and much is left to mine in this rich terrain of texts (Baym “History” 3-4). The range of Julia’s work alone begs further analysis of what is meant by “woman’s” writing. Also, the fictional elements and fantasy characters her entertaining “non-fiction” nature accounts display raise questions about blurred boundaries and the gendered dismissal of genre prescriptions.

Publishing of this magnitude in tandem with a narrative of blossoming feminine professionalism may make it “appear” that women simply woke up one day and---seized by creative whim---began to write. Yet we must be tread cautiously here, as Judith Butler emphasizes that an array of material processes, historical ideas, and institutional arrangements make “subjects”--in this case, the “woman writer”--possible: “The subject is itself the effect of a genealogy which is erased at the moment that the subject takes itself as the single origin of its action” (“Contingent” 43). Useful to any consideration of the “advent” of the “woman writer” and her accompanying cavalcade of texts is acknowledging that the writing subject, like any other, is constituted by an array of discursive practices that are “concealed, covered over” and “excluded from view” (45) so that “she” appears to be an independent, autonomous being who simply decided to write.¹⁴ Yet, increased literacy, the development of the publishing industry (building from the 15th century appearance of the printing press), the shift in the significance of the written word, the advent of mass publication and circulation, the women’s movement, the cultivation of a culture of professionalism, and the constitution of a middle-class white

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¹³ Another of her intriguing creations was Patriot and Tory (1876), a publication marking the American Centennial that draws from, apparently, her own great-grandmother’s ancestral diary. The lines blur here between history, biography and fiction.

female educated subject within that culture, are all significant historical processes whose threads coalesce to produce individual female authors like Julia.

**AN ORIGIN STORY OF CRITICAL WHITE STUDIES**

"No one was white before he/she came to America" ---James Baldwin

Constructing the research subject that is Julia relies heavily on analytics from the interdisciplinary field of Critical White Studies. In this section, I trace some of the major shifts in the development of CWS scholarship to demonstrate that research analytics, too, are fragmented and constructed tools that are socially and historically specific despite their frequent mobilization as omniscient, cohesive and homogenous instruments. Rather than arguing that CWS is “the best” research lens, or claiming it as a tool that will reveal the most “authentic” insights, I emphasize differences among the strands of CWS and pinpoint the ways particular elements of White Studies theory contribute to my rendition of Julia and her work.

Historically, we have tended to think of race as *real*—as an incontrovertible, tangible entity. Difficult to pin down at times, certainly, but a matter of biology, of genes, of families, of lineages, of substance residing in the fibers of the body, carried from one generation to the next, perhaps with a little flavorful mixing as new ingredients are added. “Race” informs our perceptions, identities, relationships, our sense of group membership; it influences where we live, work and travel; it delivers some of our opportunities, erects some of our obstacles. We sometimes believe we can see this thing called race marked clearly on each other’s bodies, in each other’s faces. Yet “race” is a
relatively new concept in the scheme of things, only a few centuries old. Humans have always classified and ranked each other according to an array of fluctuating characteristics, including nationalities, physiognomies, tribes, state of servitude, religion, and beliefs, but this ranking did not occur on the basis of a "racial category" until after the 17th century. If discourses constitute subjects, Julia would not have known herself as a “white” woman, a member of the Caucasian “race,” before Johann Blumenbach’s scientific pronouncement on this category of people in 1775.

The First Critical White Wave

Although Toni Morrison sometimes uses whiteness interchangeably with European-American, she treats this term as metaphorical in her literary analyses rather than biologically meaningful, as a vehicle for exploring how race functions to stand in for events, forces, economic divisions, and “expressions of social decay” (63).15 Julia, similarly, uses blackness as metaphor for sin in “Little MacDuff.” Understanding race as metaphor, as construct, as signifier, reflects larger discursive shifts in racial theories over the last century. Frankenberg, drawing from Michael Omi and Howard Winant, argues that (roughly) three seismic shifts in racial epistemology are discernible in recent history. Although these paradigmatic shifts are not absolute and elements of each persist to present day, the flurry of recent whiteness scholarship, and the current project, must be situated in these larger discursive trends.

First, most significant for considering Julia’s context, race was primarily understood in the 19th century to be biological, immutable, and hierarchical with
assignation of rights and values corresponding to strata position. Scientific and
citizenship discourses converged to bolster the presumed biological inferiority inherent to
"non-whites" and create whitened beings who began to perceive themselves in terms of a
racial category, as possessing a series of biologically-rooted, inheritable and noble
elements conferred through generations.

This coming to a racialized whiteness is particularly legible in 19th century
citizenship debates. Although European immigrants may have aligned themselves
initially with nation of origin, identities maintained "across the pond" (Ignatiev 11), the
massive influx of human beings clambering up American shores (Jacobson 6-8) were
allowed entrance and citizenship based on a racial membership, on the understanding that
"European" was generally interchangeable with "white." The unforeseen panoply of
variegated whites ushered in by the now realized as far-too-inclusive Naturalization law,
according to Jacobson, created an "epistemological and political crisis" (44) for native-
born Americans about what constituted a self-governing and authentic whiteness worthy
of participating in the polity. Because whiteness has often meant what can be seen---an
"enchantment with skin tone" (Transitions 5)---a "new visual economy" became
necessary in sorting white races (now plural) in their varied peach to honey hues, one that
scrutinized bodily cues such as physique, physiognomy, hair/eye color, and facial angle
for signs of a true whiteness fit for self-government (Jacobson 46).16

15 Whiteness has been seen metaphorically for "civility" in Ghandi films (Frankenburg 24), for goodness
(hooks 169), for terror in black consciousness (hooks 175), for "assimilation" into dominant culture,
language and schooling (Chabram-Dernersesian 115).
15 Although the second discursive shift (1920-1960), less relevant here, rested on a less rigid foundation of
biological determinism, identifying difference in terms of "ethnicity" rather than "race," attention to the
behavioral and cultural distinctions among ethnic groups was still a significant aspect of this period.
Most recently, in the wake of the Holocaust, convictions about race as biological have largely been downplayed or negated in favor of championing difference as a cultural and social artifact that nevertheless significantly shapes the fabric and spirit of people’s lives (Frankenberg “Displacing” 14). Differentness is the mantra, constitutive of identity and chanted in nationalistic terms. As Theodore Allen argues, the white “race” did not exist until after the 17th century when black and white became coded as biologically “racialized” through the institution of slavery, potently “fixing the meaning of blackness” (Hale 5) and by extension, whiteness. Before the era of colonialism and travel writings, in fact, “race” itself was not a common referent for difference (Daniels 12). White slowly came to signify an elite racial group through the next two centuries (Kincheleoe and Steinberg 9).

Attention to the epistemological machinations of whiteness and its various socially constructed guises has blossomed in the academy over the last decade. Although African-American authors like W.E.B. DuBois, James Weldon Johnson and James Baldwin have written about whiteness throughout the 20th century, only in recent years has the phenomenon of whiteness become a sustained academic topic, appearing across an array of disciplines, from literature to law to sociology. Whiteness, we might say, has been in the eye of the beholder. As DuBois remarked at the turn of the century, “the discovery of personal whiteness among the world’s peoples is a very modern thing, a 19th and 20th century matter indeed” (qtd. in Hale 21). DuBois’ theorizing wavered across his lifespan between refuting and asserting the reality of racial difference; regardless, this wry comment reflects his perception of whiteness as a recent historical
development, a modern discovery/creation, as well as whites’ only recently-attained clarity that they, too, possessed a marked racial identity.

With a similar knowing nod, Johnson suggests, “I believe it to be a fact that the colored people of this country know and understand the white people better than the whites know themselves” (*Transitions* 5). bell hooks also believes whites tend to be ignorant about race and racism, including their own racial identities (hooks “Feminazi” 156). Although glimmers of the contentious concept of epistemic privilege surface in these comments, they suggest that subject position influences the fluctuating visibility of whiteness. Indeed, whiteness has often been called akin to blindness (Twine 148), an entity most visible, perhaps, only to those it excludes (Frankenberg 227).

Indeed, not only does Julia remain silent about her own racial identity, her creation of characters of color suggests the implicit belief, in contrast to Johnson, that whites are the ones who best understand Others. One might argue, of course, that blindness is an option available only to the privileged; when survival depends on sight, as hooks suggests has been true historically for African-Americans, whiteness must be watched with a “critical ethnographic gaze” to evade its “terrorizing” power (hooks “Representing” 167,175). Indeed, optional blindness and silence may demonstrate the hegemony of this racial norm as Russell Ferguson remarks: “in our society dominant discourse tries never to speak its own name (qtd. in Aanerud 35). Similarly, George Lipsitz suggests, “a silence about itself is the primary prerogative of whiteness.”
Surfing the Second Wave

A useful work relevant to this project that post-dates these early sightings and precedes the most recent wave of whiteness scholarship is Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* (1957). This text has not typically been aligned with CWS, yet, as Chela Sandoval argues, this text is the "first critique of white consciousness" by a white European critical theorist that emerged in the post-empire era. Barthes strives to offer a detailed inventory of how the rhetorical forms he sees as constitutive of white, middle-class and supremacist consciousness conjure up processes of thought and behavior that come to be experienced as natural by 'good citizen/subjects' (Sandoval 86-87; Barthes 150-152). Horrified that these supremacist "states of consciousness" (fascism among others) are experienced as normal states of being, Barthes' aim was to trace the processes of production that become buried in systems of meaning so as to undermine their appearance as seamless and uncontrived.

Barthes' ideas are significant for this project in that they emphasize the pernicious, cumulative effect of particular racial constructions and unexamined white hegemony in social artifacts like didactic fiction on the thoughts, feelings and actions of those who construct them. While this post-empire conceived work concentrates on a particularly destructive large-scale manifestation of whiteness specific to its age, it foregrounds processes of social construction that constitute consciousness and its material effects. I argue that works like Julia’s contribute to such a process—public development of a white supremacist consciousness that is experienced as natural, inevitable, unquestioned. According to Sandoval, Barthes’ methodology, called semiosis, was the first "analytic apparatus" developed to methodically challenge white supremacist thought.
and its construction (95). And it predates by 40 years contemporary whiteness critiques that call for such analyses.\(^\text{17}\)

The present trappings of CWS are rooted in 1970s critiques of the legal system for its role in constructing race (Lee 2000; Haney-Lopez 1996). A standard Origin Story is that Critical Legal Studies begat Critical Race Studies which then begat Critical Race Feminism and its kin, Critical White Studies. Although no progeny entitled Critical White Feminist Studies has yet been birthed, feminist scholars have taken up the whiteness question with sufficient vigor to suggest further subdivisions in future.\(^\text{18}\) Legal scholars such as Patricia Williams, Kimberle Crenshaw and Ian F. Haney-Lopez have continued to analyze the law’s role in fabricating race while explorations of whiteness have broadened throughout the 1990s to become a multi-disciplinary endeavor involving educational theorists, literary scholars, sociologists, anthropologists, and historians.\(^\text{19}\)

The present study moves away from the legal origins of CWS and instead emphasizes the processes by which whiteness comes to be constructed in popular forms that, inevitably, contribute to its appearance in discourses like law. Similarly, although the earliest and most oft-cited feminist work to call attention to the daily privileges of whiteness may be Peggy Mcintosh’s “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack” (1988), this reflective CWS essay is less useful to the current work than other pieces which complicate whiteness with gender, ethnicity or class. Usefully, Mcintosh argues that whites accrue unacknowledged, often invisible, advantages as a result of their

\(^{17}\) Its usual exclusion from Origin Stories of CWS reminds us of the production processes of origin narratives themselves.

\(^{18}\) In a recent talk, Crenshaw suggested that Critical race theory may have exhausted itself and become unproductively fragmented. The Ohio State University, 2002.
whiteness. Intended to raise the consciousness of white audiences about the implications of their racial identity, the essay closes with a list of scenarios that reverse situations people of color might face daily. Among these racial scenarios in "whiteface" is: "I can choose blemish cover or bandages in ‘flesh color’ that more or less match my skin." An often eye-opening introduction to whiteness as "race," this essay has also been criticized as insufficient for others who see white privilege as more pernicious than easier access to melanin-coordinated band aids.

That McIntosh bases her argument on hypothetical comparisons of homogenous groupings of "people of color" to "whites" reifies a deeply entrenched and oversimplified racial dichotomy and suggests that access/obstacles to privilege is uncomplicated by gender, ethnicity, sexuality and class. A white working-class laborer, for instance, may not be "pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area that [she] can afford and in which [she] would want to live" (35). Further, McIntosh implies that the privileges whites experience that are (apparently) unavailable to people of color are universally desired, while a greater range of bandaid hues, for example, might pale in significance with the wish for, say, economic equality. Still, what McIntosh offers is a marking of whiteness foundational to this project, a naming of racial terrain often experienced as invisible, neutral, normative, and devoid of cultural content, leaving whites with the impression that issues of race and racism are "external to their sense of selves" (Frankenberg "White" 6).

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19 For a detailed list of recent publications on whiteness, see Mason Stokes, The Color of Sex, 180. For a useful sampling of studies across a range of disciplines, see Michelle Fine et. al, Off-White (1997) and Ruth Frankenberg’s Displacing Whiteness (1997).
White Imaginings

Were I to state here, frankly and categorically, that the primary object of this work is to write the Negro out of America, and that the secondary object is to write him (and manifold millions of other black and bi-colored caitiffs, little better than himself) out of existence, God's simple truth would be told.

(Hinton Rowan Helper, 1867)

Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison’s scrutiny of literature for racial imaginings is a more nuanced framework for investigating similar maneuvers in didactic fiction. Her remarkable work, Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination (1992), investigates what the assumption of a white audience has meant to American canonical authors and the literary imagination. In the preface Morrison reminds us, “for reasons that should not need explanation here, until very recently, and regardless of the race of the author, the readers of virtually all of American fiction have been positioned as white” (xii).

It is no small matter that “American readers” have been positioned uncritically as “white” in the history of our national literature—Literature has been considered a primary site for developing a national identity, for teaching students what it means to be French, German or American--in fact, for creating the very idea of a nation (Readings 16, 77). Fiction has functioned to write (and desired to write out, as Helper’s quote above indicates) particular versions of identity. Bewildering to Morrison is an assumption she observes in authors, literary historians and critics alike, that the traditional canonical American literature is free of, uninformed and unshaped by the four-hundred year old presence of first, Africans and then African-Americans in the United States. It assumes that this presence—which shaped the body politic, the Constitution, and the entire history of the culture--has had no significant place or consequence in the origin and development of that culture’s literature. Moreover, such knowledge
assumes that the characteristics of our national literature emanate from a particular “Americanness” that is separate and unaccountable to this presence (5).

Again we see what has been called a privilege of whiteness: the ability to not speak its own name; and to overlook, or deem superfluous, human contributions that fall outside of a dogged un/conscious defense of white supremacy. Despite celebratory, rhetorical claims to the Melting Pot ideal, this literary imaginary coupled with legal and economic systems reinforcing white advantage conjures up a disturbingly narrow vision of what “national citizen” has meant in American history. If “nation” is an “imagined community” (Anderson 1997), America seems to have been imagined as white.

Yet Morrison’s text is no vitriolic assault on whiteness, no manifesto for dismissing all things Anglo. In applying her analytic lens to didactic fiction, a popular genre that constructs a particular vision of “woman,” I follow her tendency to deemphasize issues of blame and focus instead on processes that create privilege. Morrison’s primary goal is to shatter the myth of white racelessness in American literature and demonstrate how, despite little authorial awareness, an Africanist presence has indeed saturated canonical texts. Like blackface, Morrison argues that an Africanist persona has served as playground for acting out the forbidden in American culture, offering a “safe route into meditations on morality and ethics; a way of examining the mind-body dichotomy; a way of thinking about justice; a way of contemplating the modern world” (Morrison 64).\(^{20}\) Just as Africanist figurations in canonical texts function in crucial ways to propel plots, elaborate whiteness, and in some cases, humanize
relations among central characters (80), Julia’s characters of color serve particular pedagogical functions. Little MacDuff’s lesson, for instance, uses Kate’s black body as a vessel for elucidating matters of race and righteousness for a Scottish child, enabling an innocent youthful learner to understand distinctions between skin and sin.

Enter Gender: Giving The Muses Back Their Own

Muse: Any of the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne who presided over The Arts.

While Morrison provides a crucial framework for approaching Julia’s work, neither she nor McIntosh centralize gender, an intersection useful to particularizing the machinations of racial construction evident elsewhere in the CWS compendium and essential to the project at hand. Vron Ware’s study Beyond the Pale (1992), for example, explores the significance of feminism’s development as a political movement within racist societies, arguing that the cultural context of Colonialism and Imperialism shapes political movements with even progressive intentions. Ware takes feminism to task on its racist history, interrogating the sources of ideological meanings in notions of white femininity in a colonial context (29). In fact, gender, she argues, organizes ideas of race and civilization, becoming a potent symbol for men’s “most valuable property” (38), the “sanctity of the home” (32), “purity” of the white race (32), and “guardians” and “conduits” of the empire (37).

Similarly, Ruth Frankenberg’s qualitative inquiry White Women: Race Matters (1993), complicates whiteness with gender in exploring how race shapes the material

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20 Indeed, no more compelling fodder for contemplating the rights, self-government and liberation accompanying white citizenship may exist than the contrasting conditions of servitude and bondage that have been the plight of many African, Native American and Asian people in the United States historically.
conditions of white women’s lives, how whiteness speaks (and whispers) in individual
women’s perceptions and relationships. Frankenberg argues that race may be a biological
fantasy and social fiction but it is real in terms of its effects (11). Her participants tended
not to organize their experiences in terms of race (36); most did not see themselves as
“raced” beings, and other than occasional class, regional, or religious descriptors, referred
to themselves in homogenous, non-racial terms. Yet these white women’s lives reflect an
“enormous social distance” (40) from people of color in terms of self-identity, daily
interaction, residential patterns and personal understanding.

Both Frankenberg and Ware’s efforts to root general claims about whiteness, such
as those McIntosh inventories without attention to gender, in specific women’s
experiences particularizes the investigation of this phenomenon and its gendered,
geographic, class and religious expressions. In these studies “white women” becomes a
distinct, non-innocent social location, a “difference that makes a difference.”\(^\text{22}\) For the
present study, I find several useful alliances with and departures from these works. First,
the connection Ware draws between the ideological constructions of gender and women
and their material impact on women’s lives resonates with my guiding assumption that
didactic fiction, however poorly wrought, contributes to discursive formation with
concrete material effects. Second, orchestrations of whiteness disseminated in texts like
Julia’s are threads of the historical, ideological and discursive forces that construct
understandings of “whiteness” one-hundred-odd years later in the psychic and material

\(^{21}\) This line is adapted from the final line of a David Rodriguez song, “Ballad of the Snow Leopard and the

\(^{22}\) An extreme example of the way this “difference” can make a “difference” in our contemporary moment
is in white supremacist discourse which champions whiteness rather than a guilt-stricken response to being
white which some display or a sense of obliviousness about having a racial identity at all as bell hooks has
experiences of women like those Frankenberg studied. Contemporary racial understandings must bear the imprints of a past history utterly enmeshed in our cultural and epistemological milieu. Third, just as Ware rejects the "innocence" of white women's liberatory movements, arguing that, they, too, reveal the influences of their supremacist cultural context, I argue that racist constructions can surface in what seem to be the most well-intentioned of movements, the most innocuous of tales.

What is insufficiently palpated in these works on "white girls," and a point I wish to push further in the current analysis, is that "white women" appears substituted for "whiteness" as homogenous essence. Although Frankenberg furnishes a textured whiteness and suggests its intertwined material and discursive dimensions--simultaneously a location of structural advantage, a standpoint from which white people perceive the world, and a set of unmarked, unnamed cultural practices (4)—her study's methodological focus to "understand" rather than challenge "real" women's racial perceptions threatens to reify "white women" as an essential real. Without a steady prodding and undermining of the whiteness these women inhabit, an aggressive interaction with her very findings of "the difference within" the category that render it fluid, contextually-specific, fragmented, suspect, whiteness never appears "destabilized enough to be escaped, to collapse under the weight of its own paradoxes" (Ellsworth 266). Whiteness feels, at the end of the study, like a real thing only with a female face—-an essential and solidified racial category, much as it was seen in Julia's day.

More consistent with the direction of my analysis is an object of inquiry that has recently surfaced in CWS—white supremacist female identity. However disturbing, the
probing of this identity category nevertheless effects a fracturing of a homogenous scholarly construction of “white woman.” Both Jessie Daniels’ _White Lies_ (1997), an analysis of white supremacist written propaganda, and Kathleen Blee’s “White on White” (2000), a methodological rumination on a larger ethnography, investigate shifting definitions of “authentic whiteness” across varied white supremacist organizations. Much like the citizenship battles among immigrant “shades of white” in the 19th century, what constitutes an authentic whiteness to 20th century white supremacists is a contentious and violent issue. Daniels teases apart gender, class, and sexuality inflections in supremacist articulations of whiteness, while Blee explores how women aligned with varied supremacist groups construct white self-identities vis-à-vis one another.

While these works threaten to emphasize “extremist” racist rhetoric over more insidious, daily forms of white racial construction such as those in popular fiction, the act of probing different views of what constitutes authenticity usefully shatters “white women” into “white supremacist women,” and then further into, “white supremacist women.” Scholars discovered that at times racist acts indicated a purer, more authentic whiteness while at other times group alignment dictated true belonging. What is significant about this for my work is less the increasing particularism of each category and the specific debates about authentic whiteness than the significant irregularities across cherished racial identity definitions that demonstrate cumulatively a “disturbed and unsettled whiteness” (Stokes 258). Significantly, this thorough fracturing of racial

absolutes occurs in organizations designed to uphold its very stability as a cohesive and superior racial identity.

Nevertheless, my concern is that scholars’ focus on “extremist” racist expression may detract attention from the potential harm of less sensationalist articulations of daily racism that may seep into consciousness unnoticed because their vehicles are neither clearly branded nor as fraught with marked disapprobation as is the pariah, “white supremacy.” Extremists become scapegoated, demonized, while passive racists (Tatum 1997) and unmarked white privilege (McIntosh 1988) slip by unobserved. Although Daniels in particular draws examples from popular media to stress white supremacy’s consistency with “mainstream” racial rhetoric, we must ask what type of work is accomplished by drawing distinctions between supremacist and “mainstream” thought: us and them? I prefer to mark the lurking and subtle appearance of racial constructions in more “popular” realms to underscore their continued, dogged presence and staggering array of guises.

In a final example of the productivity of a gender-imbued analysis of whiteness for this project, Angie Chabram-Dernersesian analyzes how whiteness is constructed within a cultural and racial context other than Anglo, specifically Chicano/a discourses. Of the complicated gender and whiteness imbrications she explores, several provocative figurations are raised relevant to my own study that underscore the usefulness of contextually-specific analyses of whiteness and the rich potential intersections between whiteness/gender in varied discourses. The author both 1) contrasts a gendered whiteness as masculinized Gringo with a Mexican American brownness as feminized and 2)
analyzes the appropriation of brown female others as masculinized so that they
"masquerade as politically-dominant masculinities" (143).

This analysis is useful because it suggests the malleability and conflicting
significations of racial tropes in systems of meaning, allowing racialized figurations like
Brown Woman to be gendered hegemonic white male and embody a masculinized
whiteness at odds with the inherently feminine signifier of Woman. Similarly, in Julia’s
textual fantasies, white women may stand in as white masculinized authorities when
positioned against brownemasculated others. The traveling potential of Chabram-
Dernersesian’s analytics does not translate to equivalent signification across discursive
contexts; whiteness produced in a marginalized context cannot be cavalierly extracted and
appropriated for use in the very hegemonic discourses she uses whiteness to critique.
Yet, her study suggests the pliancy of this signifying construct and its variable
expressions within discourses sustained by white women who simultaneously occupy a
privileged racial, but subordinated gender, position.

Cashing in on Whiteness: A Few Choice Dividends

The pleasures of whiteness could function as a 'public and psychological
wage.'

(David Roediger, 1991, drawing from W.E.B. DuBois)

In this section, I touch on the rich economic analyses offered in CWS scholarship
to foreground the material effects of racialized constructions. While fictionalized insects
and black nurses named Kate may seem relatively harmless in the grander scheme of
injustices, my project and the CWS enterprise proceed from the belief that discursive
constructs of race have concrete effects. A significant strand of CWS, the economic
import of whiteness has received due attention from an array of scholars (including Ignatiev, Roediger and Jacobson), articulated most concisely, perhaps, in the title of George Lipsitz’s book, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness* (1998). These investigations by labor and immigration historians have been concerned less with the discursive production of whiteness than its persistent purchasing power. Both public policy and individual prejudice, Lipsitz argues, converge to create a possessive investment in whiteness in which being white has a “cash value,” a financial currency, in the economic and social world (xi).

Americans have been encouraged to invest in sustaining a white identity, that, with or without conscious intent, delivers resources, power, opportunity and jobs. European settlers supported laws that made blackness synonymous with slavery and authorized attacks on Native Americans and the appropriation of land to bolster the economic bounty available for whites. Haney-Lopez and Jacobson delineate legal entitlements such as naturalization rights granted to millions because of national origin and possession of physiognomy deemed sufficiently white. More recently, federal housing policies, discrimination in lending, education and hiring, and the abysmal environmental orchestrations that have positioned toxic waste dumps, incinerators and prisons disproportionately near reservations and in low-income neighborhoods collectively demonstrate a profound governmental investment in shielding and bolstering whiteness. We are willing to invest, it seems, in that which we value.

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Lipsitz’s “possessive investment” is a multi-layered, textured phrase to capture the associations between whiteness and economics. The term “possessive” conveys a vigilant attitude, a standing watch, a personal investment in safeguarding whiteness, while also gesturing toward the accumulation of property—of land, of capital, of material goods. “Investment” connotes both financial and psychological capital as well as the significant time involved in shoring up this racial category—the human energy, the days, the laws, the literature, the lifetimes, the generations invested in keeping the ideology and idolatry strong (Lipsitz xv, 2, 8, 14). Indeed, Daniels argues that maintaining the very concept of whiteness as “natural” demands tremendous rhetorical time and energy (133). This is purposeful labor, propelled in part by economic insecurity and by well-entrenched legal, educational and social systems that encourage an unchallenged and uninterrupted recycling of power.

This consanguinity between economics and whiteness has also had striking class implications; labor historian David Roediger’s text The Wages of Whiteness (1992) probes the connections between working-class formation and developing a sense of racial whiteness (8). Racializing difference across the 19th century came to rest more firmly on categorical distinctions between “blacks” and a homogenized grouping of “European immigrants” who had heretofore been segregated into regional, nation-of-origin, or religious categories. A sense of whiteness became defined through a negation of blackness, coming to mean, significantly, “nonenslaved,” which nourished identification with an imagined community of labor. Indeed, a phenomenon evident in Julia’s work, “class markers” are often “read as inborn racial characteristics,” leaving members of the working-class constructed and perceived in more racialized terms than the upper-class.
Such discursive shifts were marked linguistically. For example, in the early 19th century, whites bristled if "servant" was used to describe their jobs because the term smacked too heavily of the servitude under which African Americans labored. Similarly, later in the century, the term "white slavery" fell out of favor because it resonated with language used primarily to describe enslaved African-Americans (Frankenberg "Displacing" 10). Clearly, blackness so saturated "slavery" in this phrase that "white" was necessary to qualify difference.25

Ignatiev also details the massive assimilation of the racialized Irish in class terms constructed in opposition to blackness. He argues that although nativism and Protestant-based anxieties about Catholics posed significant obstacles to absorbing Irish immigrants into the category white, including hiring distinctions made between whites and Irish in merchandising and industry, it was "gratifying" to the Irish to "have a class lower than them"—African-Americans—in their struggle for acceptability (165). The "white race" began to include those who did "white men's work," another category defined by active negation, by work that excluded African-Americans (111). Ignatiev explains,

to be acknowledged as white, it was not enough for the Irish to have a competitive advantage over Afro-Americans in the labor market—in order for them to avoid the taint of blackness it was necessary that no Negro be allowed to work in occupations where Irish were to be found (112).

Thus, in the 19th century, whiteness became inextricably bound to a type of wage labor that by definition excluded blacks, thereby strengthening the association of production and labor to whiteness and providing yet one more justification for maintaining slavery and racially-based economic stratification. Pacification for low financial wages may have

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25 Roediger notes that the term "white slave" effected an outraged "call to arms" to end the oppression of
been accomplished, according to Roediger, by the ‘public and psychological wage’ paid by envelopment into whiteness (12,13).

Another connection between economics and whiteness is that, as Lipsitz and Jacobson suggest, political standing on the basis of race translates directly into economic rights (Jacobson 13,21). Race is intimately connected to “who can own property and who can be property” in this country historically and owning property has been central to determining entitlement to participating in the polity. Also, intriguingly, Jacobson uses economic language to describe the anxiety racial passing has evoked; as if successful racial fraud represents a tangible “threat” to a “stable system of value.” It is almost as if racial “counterfeiting” by swarthy imposters has seemed all the more egregious, all the more duplicitous, because these racial unworthies have attempted to tap unjustifiably into the most esteemed of whiteness properties--its financial reserves.

What remains unexamined in the rich economic analyses described above as well as Matthew Jacobson’s cogitations on blanched notions of national alignment and community is the utterly-constitutive role of gender in these machinations both in constructing the foundational vision of an “American” citizen and the American “worker.” A gendered whiteness operates as absent presence in the histories these studies relay. This complicates interpreting a homogenized whiteness as an award sufficiently-placating to justify low wages, as an identity category sufficiently-seductive to coax all dusky-hued, citizen wanna-bes to membership when only some of America’s new inhabitants, in fact, could attain these glorious heights at all. These are masculinized constructions, citizenship was initially a propertied-male entitlement, and white,
productive worker was a conceptualization perhaps as dependent upon its opposition to femininity and woman (and, perhaps, upper-class woman) as its opposition to non-white, dispossessed, or enslaved Other. Gendered inflections of economics, citizenship, and discourses of national identity in relation to this thing called whiteness demand further scrutiny. Julia's work provides one filament for pondering elements of these alliances.

**The Scientific Fabrication of Whiteness**

Caucasian Variety. *I have taken the name of this variety from Mount Caucasus, both because its neighborhood, and especially the southern slope, produces the most beautiful race of men, I mean the Georgian; and because all the physiological reasons converge to this, that in that region, if anywhere, it seems we ought with greatest probability to place the autochthones of mankind... That stock displays... the most beautiful form of the skull, from which, as from a mean and primeval type, the others diverge... Besides, it is white in color, which we may fairly assume to be the primitive color of mankind, since... it is very easy to degenerate into brown, but very much more difficult for dark to become white.*

(Johann F. Blumenbach, 1775).

This chapter's final section touches on scientific discourses on race prominent in Julia's historical epoch that are legible in her textual imaginings and facilitate their comprehension in a 19th century context. This is a significant strand of what makes Julia possible given the primacy of scientific discourse in her social milieu and its constitutive role in the establishment of racial categories. Theories like Evolution and Eugenics contributed to creating an Anglo-Saxonist mythology and the racial hierarchies Julia absorbed and perpetuated while supplying additional authoritative ammunition for discriminatory legislation, citizenship exclusions, xenophobic sentiment, and larger national projects such as imperialism significant to this age. Julia's didactic work, particularly her set of Science and Nature readers for children, exhibits the heavy

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authorizing treadmarks of scientific discourse and its racialized and hierarchical pronouncements.

**Hark, Science Finds The Caucasian**

Blumenbach, an 18th century scientist, was the originator of the scientific classification, “Caucasian,” a discursive construction whose appearance in the late 1700s would have enabled Julia to recognize and pronounce herself a biological white a mere half-century later. He based the term on Mount Caucasus because residing there was what he believed to be the “most beautiful race of men” (Haller 5). Caucasian was not used commonly in public discourse until the late 19th century and was primarily a scientific term for beings known at the time (often interchangeably but at other times with significant nuances) as white, Anglo-Saxon, and European.

Carl von Linnaeus incorporated Blumenbach’s “discovery” into his taxonomy which became the basis for categorizing natural species, including humans, from this point forward. Blumenbach’s classification is significant not only because he establishes Caucasian as a biological race signified through physiognomical features such as “white skin,” but that he positions the “white man” as the “Primitive” version of mankind, the (beautiful) foundational stock from which other varieties spring. Although anthropologists today tend to reject the notion of race as biological and inheritable and archaeologists have rooted the “origin” of humankind anywhere from Africa to the Middle East, Blumenbach and Linnaeus’ scientific categorization of humans positions Caucasians as the progenitor and pinnacle of human development. Not insignificantly, the scientists included themselves in this category.
The publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) and Frances Galton's *Hereditary Genius* (1869) marked a turning point in social discourses on race. Evolutionary theory, and later, eugenics, became central vehicles through which scientists, social scientists, and consequently, public citizens, sought to determine the value of the varied races of humankind, pinpoint their differences, and to justify arguments for restrictive, discriminatory, racially-based legislation (Haller 1971; Smith 1999). Historian John S. Haller summarizes the common belief of laypersons and naturalists alike when he says that America had to be made "safe" before it could become democratic." Biological discourse became central to conceptualizing the nation; its citizenry constituted the very blood, the sinew, the muscle of the national body and was thus a determinant of its health and vigor. Those representatives of human species\(^{26}\) who would not regenerate healthfully and provide a solid physiological and moral citizenry for America's political mission were considered inappropriate for assimilation (xiii).\(^{27}\)

This sentiment emerges in the treatment of the racialized Irish before their assimilation into whiteness, as noted in Chapter One, but the Other-than-Anglo peoples most affected by scientific theories of racial inferiority were those who had crawled ashore perceived as having *more* color to begin with—Africans and Asians. Indigenous Americans also found themselves ranked low in the scientists' racial hierarchy despite a presence in the Americas that obviously long predated Anglo-immigrants with a well-established and satisfactory system for self-categorization. Significant for Haller is that

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\(^{26}\) I use "species" here to indicate the belief that certain races could not co-mingle and reproduce viable offspring, a definition of species. See Harriet Ritvo's *Platypus and the Mermaid* for an interrogation of the Herculean efforts specialists have extended to delineate and fortify borders across slippery animal and human groupings.
even for reasonable, educated Anglo-American citizens who found prejudice on the basis of race distasteful, scientific authority was mobilized to verify the assumed inferiority of the “lower races” of man and the vehicle by which sorting and categorizing could legitimately be done. The sophisticated, seemingly-objective scientific language used to argue for disfranchisement and segregation was likely comforting as well because it allowed emotional distance from what otherwise might seem messy, unjust, or at the very least, subjective, decision making that effected dramatic limitations on individual lives.

Darwin’s theory of evolution, that species are not immutable, but rather, evolve through developing and modifying traits that increase their ability to adapt and survive, became a central scientific discourse for understanding species development and race in the late 19th century. Although his original thesis in *Origin of Species* applied only to non-human species, Darwin later expanded his evolutionary ideas to include humans in *Descent of Man*. His central tenets are that similarities exist between mankind and lower animals and among human races; although races reveal distinctions, to go so far as to call them different “species” (which he defined initially by the inability to procreate) obscures the fact that human races “graduate into each other” (Haller 86).

Referring to the difficulty of delineating the terms “species” and “race” (Ritvo 86), Darwin rejected absolute species difference and preferred instead to emphasize gradations among beings. Despite the interrelationship of all human species, and this is an aspect of his theory frequently seized upon (particularly by Herbert Spencer and the Social Darwinists), Darwin believed significant differences existed among their mental,

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27 Also see Richard Hofstadter’s classic *Social Darwinism in American Thought* for arguments for Aryan supremacy in history and government, including the “Teutonic Theory of Democracy” (176). Boston: Beacon P, 1945.
physical, emotional and "intellectual faculties. In fact, "The American aborigines, Negroes and Europeans are as different from each other in mind as any three races that can be named" (qtd in Haller 87). Confirmation for distinction among white races, a point I explore further in Chapter 7, turned to Evolutionary theory as well.

Galton’s science of heredity, later christened eugenics, emerged in the late 19th century and resonated with Josiah Nott’s mid-century arguments that races displayed essential biological differences. Perhaps absorbing Darwin’s increasingly circulated notions of species hierarchy and progress, Galton argued that nine biologically-reproduceable and distinct races existed on a hierarchical scale, each with its own particular defining physical characteristics, intellectual potential, and "mental peculiarities" (Galton 23). Anglo-Saxons, predictably, sat at the apex of this imagined hierarchy, bearing a hereditary genius worthy of protecting and promoting through disciplined, organized procreation.

Galton’s science of heredity had a practical purpose to improve racial stock through breeding: "The improvement of the natural gifts of future generations . . . is largely, though indirectly, under our control" (xvii). His arguments were propelled primarily by his fear that the reproductive impulses of Anglo-Saxons were insufficient to maintain their numbers against what he saw to be the encroaching prolifically-propagating darker-hued masses or to prevent Anglo-Saxon racial demise over time. This implicit call, essentially, to "breed, whites, breed" obviously had significant implications for the imagined roles and individual potential of middle and upper-class white women.
Scrutinizing the Racialized Body

*The rough head became tidy; the soiled shawl, the torn gown and dirty shoes passed away. The great strength of the woman, put to honest work, won wages, which by degrees clothed her properly . . . The busy hands of Fiddlin' Jim whitewashed the room walls . . . illuminat[ing] her soul*  
(Wright 1902:139-140)

Increased scrutiny of the landscape of the body for its revelations about human capacity turned again and again to the language of evolution in an effort to link physiognomy with competence, morality, degeneracy, progress, and extinction. The significance of the turn to anthropometry, or anatomical measurement, to document the visual differences among the races and solidify their varying levels of competency was that it both added authoritative weight to scientific hypotheses through quantifiable measurements but it also reflected the belief that the surface of the body accurately displayed the internal, psychological, moral and intellectual constitution of its bearer.

Perceptible differences found in arm length and body length between “full black” and “mulatto” African-Americans, for instance, provided fodder for the argument that miscegenation would weaken the pure races. In fact, the product of a mixed-race relationship was considered “physiologically inferior to the original stocks (Haller 28;65). Galton was concerned with interracial reproduction between, specifically, the superior and lower-ranked races because of its potential to pollute the quality of pure ancestral stock. One potent conviction was that African-Americans (among others) suffered from what Spencerians called “arrested development,” a limited evolutionary ability that meant the brains of the lower races could not evolve beyond adolescence. Though characterized by speedy development in early years, the “simplicity and regularity” of the adult
frontal lobes of African-Americans reflected their truncated growth, their "lack of mental complexity" and their corresponding "constant state of enjoyment" (Haller 34-35).

Moreover, when studying Caucasian, Negro and Anthropoid infants, a revealing undertaking in itself, some physicians interpreted signs of physical regression in the projection of the jaws (prognathism) and closed cranial sutures. The "Negro's physical peculiarities made him more susceptible to disease and death" (44), leading the Superintendent of the 8th census to assert in 1862 that the gradual extinction of the "Negro race was an 'unerring certainty'" (qtd in Haller 40). Some argued that importation to America had compromised African evolution (humanity?) because people of African descent were removed from their natural environment then further injured by emancipation which left them unprotected from the guidance of Caucasians (Haller 48).

Science Lurks in the Didactic Text

These racially-inflected discourses, which undergird Julia's texts and render them comprehensible in a number of ways, speak to deep ideological investments in notions of purity, pollution and boundary fortification and their implications for citizenship rights. First, the foundational understanding of species difference as biological and rooted in evolutionary principles of progress and deficiency is evident in Julia's constructions of insects, animals and human beings, particularly in her science and nature readers. Second, distinctions she draws among "whites" demonstrate her engagement with palpable biologically-based discourses of "white races," fueled by Josiah Nott and Herbert Spencer's writings amidst the immigrant "infiltration" of American borders. Caucasian was not always coterminous with common whiteness; Nott, a polygenist,
objected to the unified use of the term “Caucasian,” arguing that differences among the races were so pronounced that “nothing short of a miracle could have evolved all the multifarious Caucasian forms out of one primitive stock” (qtd in Jacobson 45).

In similar spirit, class-inflected racialized beliefs about varied biologically-based abilities among white races so apparent in scientific discourses were also legible in law, education, and literature. Civilization seemed to have retrograded among certain whites, it was argued, particularly “poor whites in the South” who have “degenerated into an idle, ignorant and physically and mentally degraded people” (qtd in Haller 32). Lower classes of Irish (legally white, but not necessarily Caucasian) were thought to actually benefit from immigration; like cattle, they have the capacity to “improve from diseased stock” once well fed on American soil (Jacobson 45).

Third, to address the natural inequities biology created and then transferred through generations, some philanthropic souls turned their efforts to “racial uplift” arguing “the problem of humanity’s inferior races was ‘the strong man’s burden’” (Haller 105). This rhetoric and sentiment fueled the 19th century Imperialist urge. The task of the enlightened races, knowing the laws of progress and casting a long shadow from their vantage point in the future, was to ‘lift the darker fellows to liberty’s plane as rapidly as the duller eyes can be trained to bear the stronger light’” (Haller 106).

A duty usually falling to white men, the burden of uplift depended primarily on moral strength, a characteristic woven into white middle-class women’s stalwart fibers as well. Married white women often participated as helpmates to their husbands in British colonies, served as missionaries themselves, or simply represented symbolically models
of reproductive and cultural refinement worth imitating (Ware 37-39). Julia’s work, particularly the texts I explore in Chapter 4 and 5, depends on such discourses of racial uplift and altruistic acceptance of the white “women’s” burden both within and outside of American borders.

Fourth and finally, according to Haller, many in the 19th century believed they lived in the “land of the Caucasian” (58). Regardless of the vast cultural, geographic, racial/ethnic differences among immigrants, the assimilationist imperative, glimmering in Julia’s work, meant that the panoply of pale peach to amber to cinnamon-hued immigrants must become “Caucasianized” once they clambered up America’s promising shores. There was no room for inferior races in the battle for survival of the fittest.

Such was the anxious discourse of Julia McNair Wright’s Anglo-Saxon childhood.

**Foreshadowing to Chapter Three**

This peripatetic examination has attempted to draw threads from multiple discourses to explain how I frame my object of inquiry and also to gesture toward the significance of an idiosyncratic methodology for resisting the coherent story and refusing to perform the role of omniscient authority. Perpetuating the illusory researcher role as absent presence is inherently contradictory to a project that has at its central goal to interrogate the absent presence of whiteness. Although I have credited the work and ideas of significant scholars in Critical White Studies and key discursive shifts within the field of study such as the increasing efforts to contextualize whiteness production,
necessary exclusions have been made, as with any study, that shape its contours and
claims. For example, I have concentrated on specific inquiries in labor, literature and
gender studies over other areas because of their relevance to the project at hand. Most
significantly, my larger framework---Critical White Studies, the emergence of the
"Woman Author," and Scientific Racialism---are but one combination of frames, only a
few of the possible constituting discourses for a woman writing race. I find them a
compelling analytic brew that coalesce to make Julia and her didactic imaginary possible---
and yet, there are other recipes.
CHAPTER 3:

TOWARD A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
OF WHITENESS

Your eyes will be worth many times as much to you as they now are, when you learn to observe with care and to think about what you see.
(Wright 1887 B1:v)

In this chapter, I begin with a small methodological matter particular to this project to illustrate the potential effects of even minute decisions in the process of carrying out “fieldwork, headwork and textwork” (Van Maanen 1995). A representational choice made at the outset of my transition to writing, to inscribing analytic meditations in the finality of text, emphasizes what can be lost, elided and concealed in the performance of seamless, authoritative research narratives and the texture that conscious disclosures can add to the interpretive and methodological process. Not “better,” more enlightened research, not a victory narrative, not a form of “vanity ethnography” that privileges researcher musings over an external object of inquiry, this negotiation between methodological self-reflexivity and external project acknowledges research as an inherently political, social and historically-constituted process and marks researcher maneuverings and assessments as determinative of investigative “discoveries.”
This chapter also relates the peculiarities and possibilities of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the central analytic tool mobilized in this dissertation. Tracing the various threads of what may appear to be a cohesive methodological approach, I clarify distinct strands most productive for my project that have been pragmatically collated under the falsely-homogenous umbrella term Critical Discourse Analysis. I describe the productive questions its theoretical underpinnings enable for my research. Like scholars associated with Critical White Studies, those who labor under CDA's purview represent varied research trajectories and emphases despite an authoritative title that parades them deceptively as a firmly-encapsulated methodological arsenal. Though attempting to sketch a theoretical body in one chapter (CWS, as well as CDA, for that matter) effects what might be called a "dangerous economy" (Fowler 9), the genre of the dissertation demands such reductions as methodological considerations are only one part of the project at hand. Finally, I touch on issues fundamental to historically-based research projects in the wake of the linguistic turn.

A QUANDRY OF SORTS

In refusing to relegate questions of method and subject position to a manuscript's back pages as if a researcher's methodological choices are meddlesome afterthoughts or a means to an end rather than constitutive of the results of inquiry, I engage with the politics of visibility increasingly commonplace in postfoundational academic terrain. Reporting methodological maneuvers is not simply token compliance to the dictums of the Academy. Qualitative researchers have increasingly tended to foreground their (conscious) methodological and representational choices, convictions, desires and
orchestrations in the process of carrying out research initiatives, or as I like to call it in this case, the act of committing research upon. Such a move (potentially) refuses what Donna Haraway calls the "god trick," the omniscient authority who floats in an amorphous, ahistoricized, genderless, transracial realm and sculpts cohesive Truths sans fingerprints, pesky subjective impulses, or a fixed social location.

I introduced this project, for example, with a brief preface describing the journey to my object of inquiry and then elaborated in Chapter One my reasons for refusing the straightforward genealogical story. This introduction made visible at the outset what some might see as a crucial, compelling or suspicious element of my project and clarified why I chose Otherwise in the telling of my tale. And yet, this decision posed a bit of a methodological quandary for me. Placing in the first few pages the very relationship this dissertation then goes on to disregard (refusing the hyphen)\(^1\) ran the risk of physically foregrounding and thus falsely reifying its importance to my project. Textual order and form could be equated to significance, leaving an initially acknowledged but then unjustly displaced "real" subject of Julia lurking as unrequited absent presence throughout the remainder of the text. As Lather and Smithies' intentionally disconcerting, fragmented textual display demonstrates in their qualitative study Troubling the Angels (1997), the form in which data is represented can be an effective method of conveying layered meanings, embodying methodological goals, and physically enacting conceptual moves undertaken in the body of the study.

\(^1\) This is a reference to Michelle Fine's rich methodological article, "Working the Hyphen," a concept that explores researcher-participant relations and their significance in the form, process, interpretation and outcome of qualitative inquiries. See Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, Eds. Handbook of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage, 1994. 70-82.
On the other hand, attending to this information in a preface—a genre which encourages inflections of the personal yet in form is separated physically from the document as a whole—dispensed quickly the pertinent data that seemed my methodological responsibility to present and allowed an immediate shift to what I saw as the thicker, more textured matter at hand: “her” textual products and their participation in the construction of raced subjects in the guise of benign (and in today’s gaze, naive) didacticism. The preface possibility was suggested to me and seemed a more palatable choice than dismissing the issue altogether, a sketchy power move that would have effected a covert shielding of messiness from reader scrutiny, or a third alternative of delaying discussion of the matter until Chapter Three, the official space designated for such particulars of process and procedure. Placement in the current chapter may have smothered the issue physically in the manuscript and again raised questions of how form relates to significance (why the delay?), perhaps also resulting in reader annoyance or a sense of betrayal (shouldn’t I have been told sooner?).

Thus, a host of conceptual issues, however speculative their outcomes, underlie what might have appeared without explanation here to be a seamless format choice—first, personal, descriptive preface; second, introduction to project, and so on—and yet for me was a somewhat sticky methodological dilemma in that my desires, responsibilities, theoretical interests, and the format implications around this one issue all had to be negotiated before the “real work” of representing/creating the data in text could commence. Refusing to acknowledge choices and elisions like these does an injustice to the complexity of methodological decisions and their constitutive role in the research process, enacting, once again, “the god trick,” or the “view from nowhere.”
Further, from the perspective of CDA, the workings of power saturate every aspect of a text (Fowler 4). According to Robert Fowler, theoretically, no aspect of form can be overlooked in analyses utilizing CDA, from rhetorical devices to formal aspects of textual structure because of the pervasive nature of power's deployment. Although my own text is not the central object of inquiry, it, too, is a document of a particular genre (dissertation) with accompanying rules and regulations (format, donnish tone, scope) constituted by discursive power (institutional, economic, academic) and in methodological good conscience could benefit from subjection to the same critical gaze. This point is particularly relevant in that part of my goal in this project beyond probing how race functions in one woman’s didacticism is to consider some of the theoretical issues raised in making meaning out of historical narrations in our postfoundational moment.

**Through the Looking Glass**[2] of Critical Discourse Analysis

‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.’ ‘The question is,’ said Alice, ‘whether you can make words mean so many different things.’

--Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

Moving beyond preface particulars to mightier methodological matters, this dissertation utilizes Critical Discourse Analysis[3] (CDA) (Kress 1996; Fairclough 1996;

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[3] According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough, this model is highly contested not simply for irksome definitional disagreements among practitioners but because the analytics are embedded in an array of charged theoretical and disciplinary arguments (7). Also, nary a book-length study yet exists on CDA and Fowler bemoans the lack of "anything approaching a standard, consistent apparatus" (8-9).
Chouliarakis and Fairclough 1999) to analyze the construction of whiteness in select texts across Julia’s writings which I cluster into three different genres (a specific CDA concept I will return to): 1) Didactic texts directed to adult females; 2) Schoolbooks for children; and 3) Anti-Catholic treatises. I sample from texts published in her most vigorous writing decades, the 1870s and 1880s, including what seem to be her most popular works, *The Complete Home* and *The Sea Side and The Way Side Nature* readers. The logic of my dipping here is to read for race in texts that purportedly have little to do with the topic. I also draw from the only two texts she wrote that foreground racialized constructions, “Fiddlin’ Jim” and *Among the Alaskans*, to demonstrate how its expression fluctuates across genres. Because my analysis is concerned with racialized discursive utterances borne of Julia’s historical moment rather than mining her texts for literary and linguistic gems or capturing an historical “real” at work in her didacticism, this project necessitates a methodology that approaches the language in her texts as social practice, as a system of representation and signification firmly rooted in social, political and historical processes.

Like the most recent wave of CWS, the theoretical apparatus of CDA has evolved in the midst of the linguistic turn that has significantly impacted social science research in the last fifteen years. Lewis Carroll may well have been forecasting the advent of a massive conceptual shift of this kind when he used Humpty Dumpty on the pages of *Alice in Wonderland* (above) to toy with the idea that language is a stable system of referents or an endlessly malleable tool of expression subject utterly to the whims of individuals. As Trin T. Minh-ha’s expresses, “words empty out with age . . . Die and rise again, accordingly invested with new meanings, and always equipped with a secondhand
memory” (qtd in Britzman “Question” 29). The layered cultural meanings embedded in individual words fluctuate across time and often exceed the signifier’s intent.

Although approaches vary, CDA extends from the assumption that language is more than a neutral, transparent vehicle for conveying a palpable real. Language and social practice are inseparable; language, in fact, always performs, both tacitly and overtly, varying ideological and culturally-driven functions rather than simply capturing and transporting meaning that is then deposited neatly in the final destination of text. As Theo Van Leeuwen suggests, “meaning belongs to culture rather than to language” (33). Linguistic features characterizing spoken and written communication are approached in CDA as “never arbitrary conjuncts of form and meaning” but always as reflections of larger cultural circulations of power and inequality. Shifting attention from Julia to the discursive practices that enable the intelligibility of her texts requires a methodology that exceeds superficial analysis of the linguistic symbols we call words and reaches toward the discourses that infuse such symbols with meaning.

This feature of CDA is particularly relevant to my project given the heavy criticism directed at many 19th century female writers for their erratic writing quality and dubious literary merit. The majority of women’s publications during this time do not fit long entrenched definitions of ageless, intrinsically valuable “literature,” a designation usually earned through evidence of such venerable qualities as inherent worth, spirit,

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4 Rosamond Gill’s application of discourse analysis to communication studies is a useful point of entry into the metamorphosing terrain of CDA. Her article, “Ideology, Gender and Popular Radio: A Discourse Analytic Approach,” whittles down the mass of those who claim a DA methodology into three loosely organized theoretical camps, a gesture toward the range of ways DA is invoked as an analytic strategy: Critical Linguistics, Speech Act Theory, and interestingly, Poststructuralism. Neither equivalent in scope nor implications, these theoretical divisions nevertheless all position language and discourse as foundational to inquiry.
timelessness, and an ability to embody the "western metaphysic." As Taubman argues, great books survive the test of time (36). That women's deftly-crafted literature often fails to meet this criteria has of course been a long-recognized and contemplated matter in contemporary literary scholarship, but the outpouring of energetic epistles also offered during this era of massive social change has left feminist scholars grappling with how to pay tribute to an avalanche of words--technically "bad" writing--that may symbolize women's advancement as well as a significant epistemic shift in women's history while still analyzing their work with a critical eye.

Scholars have approached this challenge in a range of ways: They have studied domestic novels as indicative of concerns particular to 19th century (middle-class, white) women (Baym; Ryan); the cultural work women's fiction accomplished (Tompkins); women's varied contributions to historical writing; the reading process (Baym); women's professional relationships with their publishers (Coaltrap-McQuin); (white) women's writing as expressions of public voice while maintaining a private femininity (Kelly); shifts in women's self-conception as authors (D. Williams); marketing techniques and their effects on sales (S. Williams; Geary); temperance novels as an expression of pre-feminism (Dean); the centrality of the mother figure (Ryan). This array of analyses attends to the cultural meanings in publications displaying varying levels of finesse without focusing inquiry on questions of literary merit.

**The Hierarchy of Badness**

Just as Hawthorne dismissed those "damned scribbling women" in his scathing 1855 quote, modern scholars have also characterized women's writing in this period as
didactic and repetitive, their characters as trite and predictable, their moral messages as transparent and droning. According to path-breaking literary scholar Nina Baym, for example, the "crude" and "inept" methods Augusta Evans, one of the most popular authors of the late 1800s, uses to craft her most popular novel *St. Elmo* reach almost epic proportions:

her learned protagonist cannot speak two sentences without dropping a dozen references, and dialogue often seems to consist of contests in pedantry... [it] has turned the experience of reading *St. Elmo* for many into unintended comedy ("Woman's" 280).

Interestingly, even crude and inept methods did not interfere with market value as this novel sold more widely than "any other single woman's fiction" in the 19th century (280). Certainly serious writers like Virginia Woolf (20th century) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (19th) have risen above these general criticisms, but, Julia, I'm afraid, was no Virginia.

Julia's work reflects these common contradictions between popularity and critique. Despite healthy sales, 19th century reviewers were at times particularly caustic in their commentaries and lapsed frequently into personal attacks. For example, a reviewer of *A Wife Hard Won* (1884) begins, "we cannot say much for Julia McNair Wright's story... it opens with an incoherent attempt at dramatic power which approaches bathos and it constantly runs into... affected stagy passages" (129). This sexually-unmarked reviewer's assessments become increasingly vitriolic as the survey continues: "there's a wild Irishism about the style of this book that makes it nauseous to a

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1 Sales figures from the 19th century should always be interpreted loosely: publisher pronouncements of grand circulation figures were often used to stimulate sales; Standards for calculating sales and circulation varied widely (Baym "Woman's" 12). Also, high sales figures should not be interpreted simply as audience desire for a good read, but also as evidence of a growing consumerist society and the influence of modern advertising techniques.
sensitive palate” (130). While other texts did not incite such gastrointestinal revolt in "sensitive" reviewers and many works were in fact praised for their moral messages, the significant point is that despite frequent critical dismissals, women’s ‘bathos’-saturated texts sold. By this review’s publication in 1884 Julia had been writing professionally for 25 years and had sold thousands of books, including over 100,000 copies of her best-selling domestic encyclopedia, *The Complete Home* (1879). This text, like many others, was reprinted until late in the century (Willard and Livermore 804).

From the stance of writing standards alone, Julia’s work⁶ does indeed take its place near the bottom of the literary hierarchy, yet even these levels of apparent dross warrant a closer look. A number of questions merit additional probing such as why categories of “didactic,” “domestic,” or even, “19th century women’s writing” continue to be relegated to a Canon’s Other, and perhaps more recently to a female literary canon’s Other, when these texts do not inhabit a genre that purports to literary heights any more than “authors” of modern Harlequin romances, for example, aspire for Pulitzers. What is it about a system of evaluating cultural products that necessitates hierarchical designations of genius and chaff to begin with? What do such appellations authorize and foreclose? (Butler “Contingent” 7).

Another question worth pondering is why this body of women’s work is so often homogenized as if displaying few distinctions in authorial intent, value, genre, or quality. As discussed in Chapter One, Julia herself discriminated among women writers at this time; the narrator of *The Complete Home* was contemptuous of E.D.E.N. Southworth for

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⁶ In this reference to “Julia’s work,” I, too, contribute to the homogenization of “women’s” writing, grouping her work around a Subject enabled by the Author function. I fail to specify that both across and within her texts, Julia’s writing quality, her intent, and her effectiveness vary. This is a discussion for another project.
her works of "low literary character" that "weakened the mind" when plenty of "good writing, standard writing" was available "for the asking" (200,204). While we may ask what work is accomplished through her act of distancing and differentiation from Southworth, we can simultaneously wonder what labor is accomplished through critical and scholarly acts of homogenization that do not probe such distinctions. How reductive is the assessment of homogeneity to begin with? Might authorial finesse, at times, exceed genre confines? How do writers, even if bumbling and awkward, approach genres differently and what significance might it have? Why did women putter in so many textual arenas? And a question that arises repeatedly, why on earth did these books sell so wildly?

A methodology that relies on CDA, therefore, provides another angle from which to productively consider the creations of "poor" and "erratic" quality writers like Julia. To approach women's writing and its subjects as effects of power, in fact, discursively-constituted through elaborate systems of value and control, is to underscore the sacralizing function of a Canon and to reach beyond judgments of caliber for glimmers of the larger cultural, racial and historical discourses at work in their productions. Such an analytic frame also escapes the reductive conundrum of considering women's work simply in terms of literary quality and therefore as stunning canonical failures or championing the scribbling fair7 because of their sheer magnitude of titles while sidestepping any sustained discussions of writing quality or value.

Further, this theoretical position refuses to view Julia's textual utterances as less culturally-revealing and valuable to probe than revered canonical works or scientific

7 This phrase, "scribbling fair," is probably not mine but I have been unable to locate a reference to it.
studies. Consistent with a Cultural Studies approach, CDA\(^8\) regards an array of conversational forms, language and texts as worthy of investigating for their constructive and constitutive role in particular (in this case, white middle-class 19th century female) versions of reality rather than as innocent vehicles for hauling and depositing an essential cultural real. Language in CDA is seen as a mighty deployer of power, a “major instrument of power and control” (Fowler 6). Focusing on the form, content, organization and expression of discourse evident in an array of texts, CDA attempts to bridge the linguistically minute with larger social fields.

**Theoretical Underpinnings**

Critical Discourse Analysis offers another compelling element for this project in that it impels readings toward what is not present, what lies unspoken, elided, silenced, suppressed or simply “backgrounded” (Van Lleuwen 38) in dominant narrations. Drawing from the field of Critical Sociology, Fowler argues that a central goal of critical analysis is to “render transparent the hidden” (4) and to “expose misrepresentation and discrimination in a variety of modes of public discourse” (5). Although this language problematically suggests that representational efforts can avoid “distortion” and work toward “accurate” depictions, the aspect I want to emphasize here is the effort to mark and probe textual absence—fundamental to critiquing whiteness. This openly ideological approach is consistent with Jennifer Terry’s call in “Deviant Historiography” to read dominant accounts for “sites of conflict, tension and resistance”\(^9\) (61) and Norman

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\(^8\) Kress emphasizes that CDA practitioners have been “eclectic” in their use of descriptive and diagnostic tools, drawing from a wide range of linguistic methods.

\(^9\) Terry makes her case for “deviant historiography,” that is, nodal points in texts in which a subjectivity resistant to dominant accounts emerge. What deviant subjectivities are possible to read in Julia’s textual
Fairclough's summons to read texts for silences, heterogeneity, fissures, gaps, contradictions and inconsistencies (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999).

The objectives of CDA resonate with the CWS enterprise. If whiteness mobilizes its power in part from its unmarked presence, its pernicious invisibility, the argument has been that reading for absences is necessary to make visible the maneuvers of this hegemonic racial category in order to undermine its omnipotence. Practitioners of CDA, by "denaturalizing the discursive practices and the texts of a society, treated as a set of discursively-linked communities, and by making visible and apparent that which may previously have been invisible and seemingly natural" intend to "show the imbrication of linguistic-discursive practices with the wider socio-political structures of power and domination" (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 73). Thus, CDA's aim to unearth the hidden and the falsely naturalized in linguistic machinations matches in critical spirit a goal of CWS to interrogate how an unquestioned homogenous whiteness is mobilized and reproduced in cultural products saturated with ideology.

In their survey of discourse and text analysis methods, Stefan Titscher et. al (2000), drawing from Wodak (1996), summarize the general principles of CDA. An interdisciplinary methodology, CDA is concerned primarily with how social and cultural processes are related to linguistic structures. In this framework, language, like the specific forms Julia produces, has a dialectical relationship with society and culture, both shaping and constituting power relations and in turn shaped by them through intermediary structures such as socio-cognitive and institutional processes. This dialectical relationship means that discourses, such as the racialized forms legible in imaginings is a useful issue to explore in future. It is useful to think that spaces exist for the subjects
Julia's texts, are historically and contextually-situated and the meaning of their utterances must be considered in relation to these constitutive elements as well as to other discursive structures. As such, discourse analysis is interpretive, explanatory, dynamic and always assumes new interpretations are possible as discourses shift.

The term "Critical" leading the title captures several nuances relevant to this project. According to Titscher, first, CDA is "Critical" in the sense of the Frankfurt School's argument that social science must be self-reflexive and consider historical and discursive context in its investigations (144). Critical implies a "reflection on constraints that are humanly produced, that form us," an interrogation of constructed forms and objects that "masquerade" as objectivity (Fowler 7). A second meaning embedded in the term gestures toward an interdisciplinary debate. Critical implies a philosophical stance against a linguistic framework called contemporary pragmatics that suggests conversational acts should be examined independently of social context. Instead, CDA emphasizes an inextricable, intertwined relationship between language and society that demands interrogation (Titscher 144). Another feature vital to some is that CDA is not mobilized simply for research's sake but for understanding issues to more adequately address social problems. Thus, CDA is overtly political with "explicit interests" that "prefers to apply its discoveries to practical questions" (Titscher 146).

The theoretical framework for CDA draws heavily from neo-Marxist thought and the Frankfurt School as well as Mikhail Bakhtin's linguistic theory of ideology,
Louis Althusser’s theories, and in some articulations, Foucault’s philosophy of discourse (Titscher 144). Its view of language as social practice relies on a neo-Marxist theoretical assumption that cultural elements as well as economic dimensions of a particular social system perpetuate power relations and see linguistic elements as constitutive of that power. Bakhtin argues in fact that “every instance of language use” is ideological. Class struggle, which is in part a dialectical process of negotiation about the meanings and significance of signs, is enacted through the linguistic realm. Although some practitioners do not assume that language is necessarily ideological and determine ideological inflections based on textual “interpretation, reception and social effects” (Titscher 145-146), linguistic acts are most commonly approached with this guiding assumption.

Bakhtin’s theory of genre and his view of the dialogic properties of texts is legible in CDA. Drawing from Julia Kristeva’s notion of intertextuality, Bakhtin sees every text as part of an extensive system to which individual texts speak, react, and then in turn, modify (Titscher 146). This systemic conception of textual production views individual texts as meaningful in comparison with and opposition to other texts, such as the relation of 19th century women’s writing to the Canon. It also accords with Julia’s attempt to distance “standard,” “good” women writers from what she saw as the frivolous prattle of scribblers like Southworth. Genre in Bakhtin’s sense positions all culturally-produced texts (a flexible concept that includes both images and written products) within particular predetermined and defined categories that dictate their form and boundaries. Genres can take the form of such things as, say, dissertations, or documentary films,

primarily referred to the production and articulation of rule-governed statements created within systems of power relations and enacted within a social context serving to constitute “the objects of which they speak” (Foucault “Author” 115).

For an extensive consideration of the concept “text” in linguistic methods, see Titscher, Chapter 2.
poems, journalistic reports, even shopping lists. Genres like advertising can also mix elements from other genres in varied ways.

**CDA Meets Julia: The Possibilities of Encounter**

Analyzing Julia’s work with CDA requires a strikingly different approach as well as different questions than one might ask using a literary, historical or standard social science methodology. Drawing on Fairclough, Titscher et. al, Mills, Gill and Weems, my project entertains questions such as the following: What is the genre of Julia’s writing? What circulating discourses make her texts possible? What discourses enable their comprehension? Within what configuration of practices are these discourses located? What material activity, relations of power, and expressions of desire are operating within and through her texts? How do Julia’s utterances reflect both dominant and alternative discourses circulating in the social milieu? What are Julia’s texts written within and against? What “regimes of truth” surface in her work? What are the structuring inclusions and exclusions of her texts? What subject positions are made available and desirable, normal and unusual, proper and improper in this text? What are the *musts* of these texts? What audience do her texts imagine and construct? And significantly for my project, how is whiteness imagined, configured, complicated and disseminated through these textual utterances?

In contrast, typical social science textual methods approach texts with a “predetermined structuring of the collection process” attempting to identify in advance the elements to be categorized and the procedures that will be utilized so data can be obtained in a tidy, orderly fashion (Titscher 9). In this framework, methods are viewed as
influential for, but separate from, the quality of the data accumulated, an element necessary to guide observations and ensure systematic, reliable rendering of entities. Out There in the world but not as utterly constitutive of those very “findings.”

Although research undertaken in a positivist epistemological framework may uncover data that fortuitously and indirectly effects social change, the purpose of research is not to change the world. Rather, it is to “augment the making of discoveries and to increase the complexity of science” (Titscher 17). Standard methods are often mobilized upon the assumption that an accessible real external to the research process exists that can be smoothly transported through the same stable system of linguistic referents on which Humpty Dumpty relied. “Results” in standard social science research, according to Titscher, are “obtained from reality.” Methods have “no other goal than to bring about a decision between what is true and what is untrue” (16). Language is the vehicle for transporting that truth.

In addition, this external real, these objective methods, are considered entities separate from the researcher herself. Data collection methods should allow the results to be verifiable and replicable when employing the same framework and procedures regardless of investigator, their social location, or individual preoccupations. While subjective impulses in the research endeavor are to some extent unavoidable, interpersonal aspects should be minimized and contained through a standardized, objective framework and organized methods (Titscher 11). When researchers become too emotionally embroiled in their investigative exertions, they should grant themselves a “chance for reflection” and “detachment” to “distance themselves” from the inquiry at hand (Titscher 17).
A Tale Told By an Idiot

Positivist characteristics stand in sharp contrast to my position in this project and the openly-political goals of this methodological arsenal whose proponents make no pretense to researcher objectivity or value-free systems of language and often yearn for their findings to impel social change. Approaching a text with CDA, Fowler argues, arms a reader with the “capacity... for demystificatory readings of ideologically laden texts” (6). Others view it as part of their “productive role to invest, reveal and clarify how power and discursive value are inscribed in and mediated through the linguistic system” (Fowler 5). This is an active political stance on the part of the researcher to search for orchestrations of power and acknowledge how their subject position and choices impact their own findings.

Yet it would be dangerous to position CDA as the fairy princess of methodologies against the evil stepsister of standard textual methods. While layered and textured readings from varied methodological and theoretical frameworks offer additional productive interpretations, I am wary of any claims of enhanced access to textual truths. The liberatory spirit and hopeful assessments of the “clarifying” and “demystifying” potential of CDA-propelled readings portray the Critical Discourse Analyst as a bit of a knight in shining armor, sweeping in to assess texts’ hidden ideologies and rescue simpleton readers who might otherwise sit duped and mystified. Its goals of

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12 This reference is to Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Act V, Scene V. “Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”
defamiliarization, its aim of making the familiar strange, run the risk of positioning it as a bigger, better methodological battalion for analyzing the social world.

My application of CDA moves beyond a critical stance in the Frankfort-school sense of the term and draws from Poststructuralist strands like Fairclough’s which analyzes process as it proceeds with social-change aims. Thus, I consider reading Julia’s texts through a CDA lens to be one potentially-useful analytic approach to pondering discursive maneuverings, not an act of unearthing the sole truth embedded deep within the bowels of her work that will hereafter alter the way didactic fiction is approached. In the words of Toni Morrison, this is not a story to pass on. This is merely one tale, a tale told by an idiot, partially self-serving and institutionally-bolstered, that her texts clamored for me to tell.

Inciting Change

Critical Discourse Analysis is both theory and method, a combination Fairclough considers imperative. Van Dijk summarizes CDA as a “theoretical, descriptive, empirical and critical framework in which discourse analyses and sociopolitical analyses are deeply integrated.” It aims to account for “intricate relationships between text talk, social cognition, power, society and culture” (qtd in Hoepper 252-253). In a late modern world ravaged by social problems, Fairclough argues that scholars cannot allow themselves to wallow in methodologism, methods for method’s sake without consciousness of theory, or theoreticism, indulging in theory ad nauseum for its own end.

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13 “Making the Familiar Strange” is a slogan used by the Peer Power Program through the Department of Women’s Studies at Ohio State University. Its original source is unknown to me.
14 Final line of Beloved. The connotations of this line shift with which word is emphasized: This is not a story to pass on; This is not a story to pass on; This is not a story to pass on.
Fairclough inflects this theory/methodology with a spirit of possibility, defining it against what he calls “extreme” versions of postmodernism (he names Lyotard) that he believes are imbued with cynicism and hopelessness.¹⁶

In this spirit, Fairclough argues that integrating micro-level text analyses with larger socio-political analyses as CDA attempts is a “resource” for social struggle (qtd in Hoepper 166). No linguistic system is autonomous and through careful analysis each has the capacity to reveal the larger discursive shifts and circulations of power in which it is immersed (Kress “Critical” 85-86). Fairclough locates CDA within a particular version of critical social science that draws on Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of “constructivist structuralism,” a way of “seeing and researching social life as both constrained by social structures and an active process of production which transforms social structures” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1; my emphasis). Advocates of CDA champion the overt nature of its political stance as if laying bare its political aims for all to see grants this methodology a modicum of trustworthiness in that there appear to be no “hidden agendas.” Though this smacks again of better, truer methodological procedure, CDA claims its own role as a producer of discursive meanings even as it scrutinizes the processes of others.

And yet, this project is not simply research for research’s sake. This methodology is a political choice. Although any number of methodologies could indeed be argued to have political implications, CDA candidly commits acts of critique for the purposes of social change. Because my project is concerned with reading race in texts considered

¹⁵ Again, I would argue these terms are far from static or agreed upon.
¹⁶ The suggestion that postmodernism and poststructuralism wreak cynicism and nihilism is a common one. See Elizabeth St. Pierre and Wanda S Pillow’s introduction to Working the Ruins for a critique and
simplistic, didactic and innocuous to identify discursive processes that contributed to shaping the material conditions of real people in the 19th century, it demands a methodology infused with a spirit of social change. Nuanced, quirky, varied analytic readings have the potential to make a difference in the way texts are interpreted and history is constructed.

Also useful is CDA’s mission to theorize social subjects and subjectivities. A perspective that theorizes social location and its relation to narrative production is critical to my exploration of how a white woman’s racial imaginary articulates whiteness in tracts aimed to influence society and advance her own interests. Because language users are socially located individuals, they “bring to bear different dispositions towards language, different knowledge of differently configured systems, and different knowledge of textual forms” (Kress “Critical” 86). The relations of participants who produce texts are often unequal and nuances with which texts are inflected vary based on the subject positions and the power relations of the central speaker/writers, such as Author vs Female Author/Writer. These power differentials shape the circulation of texts and their effects on the readers/receivers.\(^\text{17}\)

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\(^{17}\) Some proponents consider the “reader” undertheorized in CDA compared to the producers and agents of cultural texts, an element in need of interrogating in my project as well. They call for complicating approaches to audience subjectivities and their interactions with hegemonic narrations. The reader is often constructed as static and passive, imagined to “reconstruct texts as a system of meaning congruent with ideology” rather than actively interpreting meanings with varied outcomes (Fowler 7). My project also focuses on discursive production over reception, scrutinizing constructs channeled through Julia’s texts and their potential oppressive implications rather than the array of possible relations active readers might have initiated with this material. The “19th century reader” deserves further theorizing even if the nature of such an historical project poses pragmatic obstacles.

Further, I would argue that even discursive agents/producers are undertheorized; Julia may be a writer/producer but she is simultaneously a reader/receiver and in this project I consider her simply as a writer. Yet, writers must read to write. Steady intertextual references to Canonical works and popular authors indicate her own reading activities for, perhaps, pleasure, edification, or to better perform educated middle-class female subject when writing. In arguing that language is thoroughly social, CDA aficionados
Forms and Genres and Lexicalization, Oh My

That linguistic features in CDA are never considered "arbitrary conjuncts of form and meaning" is particularly significant for my project given the widespread critical dismissal of religious and didactic writers like Julia. Because proponents see language as social practice, as a system of representation and signification embedded in social, historical and political processes, the linguistic features that characterize spoken and written communication are never arbitrary but reflect larger circulations of power which in turn motivates producers' choice and form (Kress "Critical" 89). To Fairclough, texts are sites of contestation and struggle through which power, social control and domination are exercised--and significantly, resisted--and they warrant close attention because they provide evidence of "ongoing social processes" (qtd in Hoepper 164).

This point feeds my analysis because, first, what appears to be arbitrary in women's writing might be at times strategic arbitrariness for particular purposes, such as the performance of an acceptable public femininity; and second, that erratic writing quality may at times indicate interruptions from such things as recalcitrant children or scorching suppers; or third, demonstrate inferior literary skills. These latter two points suggest linguistic features and the textual vehicles in which they appear are never neutral and are characterized by opacity at every level of the text (Kress "Critical" 86). Meanings are constructed and reconstructed as readers/hearers interact with texts and the writers/speakers who produce them. Therefore, meanings like "reader" are never fully determined and are always open to unintended interpretations, unpredictable outcomes, and liberatory potential (Kress "Critical" 90).

16 "Text" is a far from absolute term, often mobilized to refer to written work like advertisements and literature, but Norman Fairclough defines text as "a contribution to communicative interaction which is designed for travel, so to speak—which is designed in one context with a view to its uptake in others... generated in mediated interaction and in mediated quasi-interaction, but not in face-to-face interaction, though face-to-face interaction may be transformed into text for specific purposes... as when linguists transcribe and analyze conversations" (Choiouaraki and Fairclough 46). Fairclough acknowledges that "text" carries with it the connotation of written material but he uses it in a much wider sense to include
gesture toward larger power inequities such as women’s imbalanced domestic caretaking responsibilities and their limited access to formal education historically which certainly would have impacted their prowess with wielding words.

Combining close scrutiny of form, structure, and language organization with concern for the larger social implications of an individual speech act reflects some of the central concerns of CDA (Kress “Critical” 84). Because the workings of power are imbricated in even minute textual features, Kress argues that (theoretically) no aspect of form should be overlooked in the CDA model. He delineates four textual forms that are useful to understanding where critical linguists look for textual effects: genre, the “rhetorical strategy of statement,” lexicalization, and word order. Genre is wielded differently in CDA than in Bakhtin’s sense, or in literature, for example, which utilizes formal “transcendent” categories like “epic” and “sonnet” to classify different types of writing. Genres are usually presented as relatively stable, non-contentious categories in that which writing belongs in which category is the pressing question but not the validity and informational value of the genre form itself (Kress “Critical” 84).

In contrast, what I label as Julia’s genres in this study refers less to categories in which the books languished and more to my analysis of the ways her varied texts were positioned within particular discourses and as a result accomplished different textual labor. In CDA genres are viewed as the “linguistic products of particular social occasions” which encode the social organization and structure of those occasions. Genres

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spokes forms, combinations of speech, image and sound like those appearing on television, as well as visual images like photographs and advertisements.

10 Theo van Leeuwen goes further in his analysis of form, offering a slew of ways social actors can be represented in discourse. The significant point he stresses is that agency is not tied directly to the expression of particular textual forms (active/passive) but can only be determined by the particular textual utterance. See “The Representation of Social Actors,” 1996.
are not ends in themselves---so that a writing form is identified, categorized, analyzed a bit, and then the work is complete---but are seen as vehicles for understanding how society and culture are organized, including how genres come to be established in the first place (Kress “Critical” 90). This attention to genre resonates with Foucault’s preoccupation with the function of discursive structures, what they enable and disrupt, rather than the contours of the discursive elements themselves.

The second form Kress identifies is rather laboriously named “The rhetorical strategy of statement via a presuppositional structure.” This textual form is a type of coding through which contentious or controversial material is “smuggled” into a text in ways difficult to identify and therefore protest. For example, speech intonation emphasizing particular words over others in a sentence can cloak an accusatory tone or a contentious point (“Critical” 91). In their edited collection Feminist Messages, folklorists Radner and Lanser identify characteristics such as intonation and passive/active voice as “coding strategies” that women and other disadvantaged groups use in situations in which direct expression could have dangerous consequences. Julia frequently demonstrated passive voice, a particular feminine form of speech, in her publications. In The Complete Home, for instance, she used authoritative characters like male doctors rather than female housewives to make more contentious claims about women’s rights to education.

Considering this technique as a coding strategy borne of particular historical circumstances, in this case a limited middle-class vision of femininity, suggests the

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20 See her chapter on health in the household, The Complete Home. 1879.
multiple meanings that may be embedded in what appear to be relatively innocuous statements.  

Lexicalization is the third form Kress considers, which refers to the constructive power of language to shape reality, or in Foucauldian terms, the material effects of discourse. Language does not only represent but enables the possibility of “a large, perhaps infinite, set of verbal categories for which physical objects have to be constructed, or at least imagined” (91). Language produces labels for entities yet to be conceptualized or created and then naturalizes them through that very referentiality. We might argue, for instance, that scientists imagined and identified the entity of the “fetus,” then the “embryo,” and now the “genome” as the entity imagined to contain this thing conceptualized as the “foundation of human life.”

Fourth and finally, Kress argues that structure of word order is consequential for expressing particular perceptions. In Julia’s work, the title of the lesson, “Little MacDuff and his nurse” is an apt example. The wording grants a name and identity to a small white male child and positions him as the main character (he is first) while his (nameless) nurse is relegated to possessed black sidekick.  

Thus, from the tiniest example of sentence structure to the largest unit of textual genre, CDA’s stance is that “all aspects of form are always subject to the effects of social forces” (Kress “Representation” 15). Textual analyses must simultaneously consider linguistic features, textual features, as

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22 Similarly, the difference between active and passive voice that Tony Trew identifies in a newspaper headline such as “Rioting Blacks Shot Dead by Police” rather than “Police Shoot Blacks” dramatically illustrates how larger social value judgments about who is at fault can shape the way an event is articulated and interpreted. These two versions emphasize different social actors and value judgments about responsibility for the events reported. See Titscher, et al, 148.
well as socio-cultural context because these features coalesce to imbue the communicative situation with its layered and singular meanings.

**Playing Tricks on the Dead: A Touch of History**

The final methodological element I want to touch on is the implications of the linguistic turn for historical narrations like my tale about Julia. This is a rich theoretical body that has been probed in intriguing ways for the tensions arising when a discipline concerned with “real events” encounters a theory which argues that the reporting of those events is in itself constitutive of the ways history comes to be narrated and experienced. Although Joan Scott argues that historians are typically not trained to be theoretically rigorous about the implications of their work (“Gender” 3), what the crisis of representation has effected in historical research is a consciousness in some circles of the possibility that renditions of history are exactly that—renditions—rather than a vehicle to capturing the past.

Poststructuralist influence in a positivist historical project shifts attention away from “sacred archives” from which historical “facts” are culled (Scott “Gender” 8) to how concepts, processes—all those things that happened back then—as well as narrations of those things, come to be constructed and legitimized (Scott “Gender” 5). As Avner Segal expresses it, “neither the past nor history...tell themselves” (7). The Past and History are not the same thing, but rather, history is a discourse about the past. Historical narrations, always written with political ends, foreground certain interpretations vital to a historian’s psyche, social context, political will or historical moment, backgrounding
other possible analyses: "The historian's seemingly neutral attempt to learn about the truth of the past is merely a mask for the will to knowledge" (Segall 8).

The revolution in theorizing history that poststructuralism, particularly Foucault, has wrought, means considering the productive possibilities of the idea that history is in the "paradoxical position of creating the objects it claims to discover" (Scott "Gender" 8). Qualified assertions of A Past are substituted for the certainties and authoritative claims of The Past, stimulating other questions such as how history is written and why; how certain versions of reality come to be validated as truer and better (including feminist history); and what functions particular historical narrations serve. Samuel (1992), via Segall, argues that the reverberations of the linguistic turn invites us to see history not as a record of the past, more or less faithful to the facts, nor yet as an interpretation answerable to the evidence even if it does not start from it, but as an invention, or fiction, of historians themselves, an inscription on the past rather than a reflection of it, an act of designation masquerading as a true-life story. It asks us to consider history as a literary form, on a par with, or at any rate exhibiting affinities to, other kinds of imaginative writing--narrative or descriptive, comic or realist, as the case may be (Samuel qtd in Segall 6).

Although positivist historians may shudder at the suggestion here that history has no greater or enhanced access to past truths than the fanciful flights of literary narration, Samuel's quote captures a striking example of the significant epistemological shifts the "new" history has ushered in.

Other articulations of the "new" history might be (slightly) more palatable for positivists, such as Scott's preference to carry out historical projects that excavate information about past events as well as interrogate the process of making meaning out of historical events in postfoundational moments. In this rendition, historical accounts
should pay attention both to material information as well as capture how any account comes to say what it does and why, as I have attempted in this project. As Segall expresses, “history is always both already more and less than the past itself” (7).

How events are interpreted in historical work is significant because history remains a potent source of our subjectivities. To draw from Joan Scott’s meditations on gender history:

History figures in this approach not exclusively as the record of changes in the social organization of the sexes but also crucially as a participant in the production of knowledge about sexual difference. I assume that history’s representations of the past help construct gender for the present (2).

Narrations of the past come to figure in how concepts are understood and materially experienced in the present. As Grace Hale argues about the racialized Southern past and its persistent echoes in the contemporary South, the “‘burden of history’ is not the weight of ‘some other’ of a dark and distant place and time but as a burden we still carry and as a history that we have not agreed to face or acknowledge as a source of our subjectivities” (Hale 295). Texts, even histories, are social and political instruments “masterfully crafted to achieve a social end” (Segall 14). What the “new” history encourages us to consider is the inevitability and partiality of narrative inscriptions and how history participates in the “political management of reality” (Segall 7), producing and disciplining particular versions of what it means to be human.

The discomfort that arises from traditional history’s encounter with more recent poststructuralist-imbued versions raises intriguing questions about what issues are at stake in this conceptual shift. If poststructuralism is accused of erasing the past, one wonders what is occurring in this particular moment that incites varied levels of angst at
the idea of such erasure. How does the past as it is currently narrated comfort and soothe? Why does the new history inspire a girding up of disciplinary boundaries, a clinging to particular epistemologies and methodologies in historical work? In the same vein, what is currently inspiring our hearty interest in reconstructing the past?

These questions should be directed to my project as well. If scholars construct histories for particular purposes, what is my purpose in choosing to mark whiteness in the texts of a woman who wrote books on everything but that topic? What can you read about my own interests, my own historical period, in this extended soliloquy, this fantastical narrative yarn? It is dangerous, I believe, to position history as “Other,” to be seduced by the belief that The Past is a frozen entity that we can measure our current “progress” against. These texts provide ample opportunity to do social justice work with implications for present day (shifting conceptions of the innocence of didactic texts, for one) without dissolving into biographically-obsessive balderdash or an idealistic celebration of “how far we’ve come.”

How tales come to be legitimate history and translated into knowledge is inextricably bound to who produces them. Those with political power in the past to name a world have composed the accounts we have carried into the present, the chronicles we have drawn from in our own musings about ancestral and national pasts, the stories that have contributed to our subjectivities. Having said this, I do not want to overstate the impact of the discursive effects channeled through Julia’s publications (or those of women like her) or downplay the possible role these texts played in perpetuating circulating discourses about race, privilege and inequality in a period of massive social
change. "Julia" had some racialized power, but she herself was constrained in particular
gender discourses that curbed her own full articulation of agency and subjectivity.

Thus, my project is not an argument about the amount of damage perpetrated in
the 19th century social landscape or a flailing of Julia for drawing from and channeling
the particular racialized discourses she did, rather than alternative abolitionist discourses
also available. It is simply an exploration of the possibility, drawing from Spivak and the
productive aftershocks of the turn to language, that this body of writing contributed to
wreaking epistemic violence on the lives of "racialized" Others through her heavily
racialized and fictionalized constructions of what it means to be human. Rather than
celebrating the genealogical or choosing to participate in a recovery narrative of forgotten
women, I choose to mark one white woman's written contributions to the historical
record while at the same time drawing from contemporary discourses that critique
hegemony, that mark absences, and that scrutinize performed innocence at work in her
texts. To close with Voltaire, if history is the "tricks we play on the dead," the question
for historians is simply, what are the kinds of tricks that we will choose to play?

What Lies Ahead

In the remaining chapters, I analyze Julia's writing for the absent presence of
whiteness in texts that primarily perform racelessness. Refusing the straightforward
recovery narrative, I complicate the introduction of an unknown, prolific woman author
who merits attention with analysis of a more potentially pernicious reading of her work
that foregrounds her position as a woman and her gendered contributions to racialized
constructions. I read for the varied ways whiteness is imbricated with other analytics,
including race, class and sexuality, toward undermining the performance of whiteness as a homogenous essence. Reading across varied genres of Julia’s work, I demonstrate how whiteness fluctuates in function and appearance to destabilize its illusory cohesion and might as a racial category. Drawing heavily from the theoretical underpinnings of Critical Discourse Analysis, I attempt to weave connections between the specific forms, presentation and lexicalization in Julia’s didactic language and the larger racialized discursive fields in which she lived and labored.

Finally, in the closing chapter I gesture toward the potential for these analytics to travel to other contexts through a reading of overtly racist and xenophobic texts in which gender matters in the ways difference is articulated. The weight of women’s work in this xenophobic literary terrain suggests that Protestant females were feeling particularly threatened by the perceived encroachment of Catholicism and its implications for women. Julia’s efforts to construct whiteness may have been a way of asserting a kind of privilege on the basis of race—of a superior Anglo-American whiteness—in the face of utter impotency on the basis of gender. This, too, is an example of the shifting, fluid function of whiteness in didactic texts.
CHAPTER 4:

FIDDLIN' WITH JIM: RACIALIZING GENDER

In all these questions of social life it is the woman who has most at stake and whose voice is least heard, her opinion is ruled out of politics, even out of her church affairs, and frequently the battle is waged to rule her out of the household destinies where the fortunes of the children, whom she represents, are to be made or marred.

(Wright 1895:236).

In this chapter I turn to Julia's writing at long last, using CDA to analyze a brief, yet fertile short story entitled “Fiddlin’ Jim” that she wrote near the end of her life. This text was published by the American Tract Society, one of the only pieces Julia wrote that features (colonizes, feeds parasitically on) an African-American female character who is named, significantly, Fiddlin’ Jim. I also analyze sections from other didactic materials directed to women that demonstrate how whiteness functioned to bolster a racially privileged middle-class femininity at the expense of a fictionalized color that may gesture toward white women’s efforts to write themselves. Whiteness is backgrounded throughout these texts, a persistent silent presence, and yet in the case of Fiddlin’ Jim, it is crucial to propelling the story’s moral lesson.
Racializing Gender

Julia’s textual shenanigans are accomplished through a particularly racialized and middle-class construction of gender informed by the swelling saliency of eugenics at the turn of the century and fears of the waning influence of Protestantism wrought by increasing secularization. The length and simplicity of “Fiddlin’ Jim” is useful precisely because it offers a compact, contained site for “thick analysis” (Hurtado and Stewart 8), to examine thoroughly the stew of hegemonic discourses saturating Julia’s work that render her narratives comprehensible. That such powerful manifestations of racialized gender can propel the briefest of paragraphs, the shortest of stories, reminds us to interrogate the minute as well as the mighty for the machinations of the racial imagination. An elementary, seemingly innocent tale falling into the genre of Christian benevolence and uplift, “Fiddlin’ Jim” reflects and fuels heavily racialized constructions of gender by emphasizing black female bodies as flawed and inferior in sharp contrast to bodiless, proper, married, middle-class Anglo women.

Creating a masculinized unmarried black female character whose soul is in need of saving by a higher-status Protestant woman reinforces what Shawn Michelle Smith terms “the racialized privilege of a white middle-class privacy” (47). A white middle-class femininity is animated as superior through subjecting an impoverished fictionalized black body to an evaluative gaze, to public survey and dissection, to boundless visibility and vulnerability that contrasts with white women’s right to privacy. Protection from public scrutiny is not distributed evenly across sex but is a privilege earned through a middle-class and white status. “Fiddlin’ Jim” is a rich site in which these swirling discourses are strikingly legible, evidence of the orchestrations of Julia’s authorial psyche.
at work to reinforce a tenuous reign on her own fragile female privilege in the antebellum United States through recourse to the entitlements of middle-class whiteness.

**Old Fiddlin’ Jim**

*She is the most saucy, lazy, untidy, no-account darkey alive*

*(Wright 1902:134)*

“Fiddlin’ Jim” appears in a collection of short stories entitled *Studies in Hearts*, which was Julia’s last publication, released in 1902, the year of her death. With no introduction, the story plunges immediately into dialogue between an unidentified character and a central figure in the story, Mrs. Dole, who is asked whether she is continuing to labor away at a Sunday-School for “colored people.” She replies firmly, “yes indeed.” Mrs. Dole is a Sunday School teacher working earnestly among the “long neglected colored population” (134) in an unnamed, unfixed geographic location. Religious labor “dear to her heart,” she ignores the skeptical comments of others in the story who believe that those inhabiting the “East End,” (the amorphous region where “coloreds” in this fictional world apparently congregate), particularly Fiddlin’ Jim, cannot be delivered to the Lord.

Fiddlin’ Jim, it seems, poses particular problems for messengers of God. A character named Mr. Ross remarks, “Half the folks in this town have had fits of trying to improve Fiddlin’ Jim. She don’t want to be better, and she can’t be better. She is the most saucy, lazy, untidy, no-account darkey alive” (134). Mrs. Dole rejects such pessimism, refusing, in her fervent Christian sort-of-way, to surrender the battle to save the souls of even those considered beyond redemption. “Why shouldn’t that poor soul be given a chance to hear the Gospel?” she asks the doubting Mr. Ross.
The story unfolds as follows. Somewhat disheartened by the conversation with Mr. Ross, Mrs. Dole pursues the issue with a woman who is working in her kitchen, “Sabrina, did your church people ever try to do anything for those colored folks at the East End?” Sabrina is aghast at the mere idea: “No, Mis’ Dole; we don’t associate with any such trash as that!” she responds with a toss of her head. She refers specifically to Fiddlin’ Jim, “I sh’d say not! I wouldn’t be seen speakin’ to her! Why, as for stealin’ an’ lyin’ an’ fightin’, Jim tops all” (134).

In just a few paragraphs, Fiddlin’ Jim is established as a lying, cheating rogue who is not worthy of the good Sabrina’s or the righteous Mrs. Dole’s time or energy. In fact, Sabrina strives to impart a modicum of cautionary advice to her overly-optimistic employer:

I’m older nor yo’, Mis’ Dole; yo’ take my ‘visement an’ turn Fiddlin’ Jim out . . . [if she attends the Sunday School] she’s only tryin’ to git yo’ off yo’ guard laik, an’ then she’ll whip out her fiddle an’ start a dance, or whoop out into a song, or suthin,’ to break yo’ all up--that’s the plumb truth (135).

Poised to erupt into reckless merriment at any moment, Jim in Sabrina’s rendition is a manipulative cad bent on troublemaking even while appearing earnest. She goes so far as to suggest that Fiddlin’ Jim has no soul: “Soul? Well, mebbe she has, ef yo’ say so, Mis’ Dole, but I nebber see no signs of it . . . she too lazy to keep clean, or to wuk. She nebber wuk ‘cept to earn her fiddle” (135). Save her fiddle, Fiddlin’ Jim seems to care for little else in the world.

Yet, by page four of the tract, glimmers of hope for Jim’s salvation appear despite being all but refused entry into the Kingdom of Heaven only a few pages before. During church one day, Mrs. Dole offers Sunday School papers but Jim refuses to take any
because she prefers to hear readings directly from the Bible, a seemingly purer and more unmediated form of religious power in her mind. Jim also voices her desire to own her own Bible, but when Mrs. Dole offers her one, Fiddlin’ Jim refuses the gift. Her refusal reveals another aspect of Jim’s potentially-redeemable moral character: “I’d ruther get it fo’ myse’f. I’ll keer mo’ fur it if I struggle to git it” (136). The moral message simmering here is that objects accrue value not simply through possession but through earned labor.

As the tale progresses, Mrs. Dole, that worthy woman, perseveres in her efforts, and Fiddlin’ Jim struggles to take the word of God to heart. It is an uphill battle, but she saves money to purchase a Bible, studies it regularly, and cleans her home so it becomes a domain appropriate for the Lord’s entry. Jim also seeks Mrs. Dole’s guidance on matters related to her beloved instrument: “say, Mis’ Dole, is a fiddle wicked?” Her question arises from being chastized for profaning holy words when she is overheard playing the song “Jesus Loves Me.” This is a clear moment of tension in the story because Fiddlin’ Jim, as her name indicates, is much attached to her fiddle. She saved for the instrument for weeks, plays it whenever she can, and keeps it tucked under her bed for safety because of her fear it will be stolen or damaged. But Mrs. Dole, a veritable expert on God’s desires, assures her that the fiddle can be used “for the glory of God and to sound his praise,” as much as any other instrument. She urges Fiddlin’ Jim to play all that she can because God will feel all the more welcome in hearts that long for him when ushered in with song. Fiddlin’ Jim’s eventual successful transformation from a “lost soul” to a godly being is accomplished through Mrs. Dole’s persistent and faithful efforts and Jim’s own response to open her heart and her life to the Lord.
CDA Descends on Jim

Analyzing this story through the lens of CDA necessitates a different array of questions. To revisit some of the questions introduced in Chapter Three: What is the genre of Julia’s writing? What circulating discourses enable this text’s comprehension? What configuration of practices are these discourses located within? What material activity, relations of power, and expressions of desire are operating within and through this text? How does “Fiddlin’ Jim” reflect both dominant and alternative discourses circulating in the social milieu? What is this text written within and against? What is “Fiddlin’ Jim’s” “regime of truth”? What are the structuring inclusions and exclusions of Julia’s text? What subject positions are made available and desirable, normal and unusual, proper and improper in this text? What are the musts of this text? What audience is constructed by this text? And, significantly, how is whiteness imagined, configured, and complicated in this text?

This simplistic religious tract, written at the turn of the century, cannot be understood as comprehensible and persuasive without placing it in its historical context directed to an audience steeped in discourses of meritocratic individualism, racial uplift, Protestant middle-class philanthropy and biological racialism and eugenics. It constructs an audience eager to hear simple, hopeful tales in which individual agency and faith in God translate directly to social change. The story presents itself as a straightforward, in fact, triumphant, fictional tale of salvation and redemption and yet its labor is dependent upon and accomplished through the excessively-marked body of an imagined “colored” character and a contrasting benevolent Christian racially-unmarked married woman.
That the primary figure is married, the only character in the tale bearing the privileged title of *Mrs.* Dole, is a minute, transparent, but utterly significant component of this act of Protestant Proselytizing. Its genre does not rely on specificity—attention to geography, time, individual and meaningful personality development—but on marshalling excessive and broad notions of racial difference and concepts of progress and enlightenment to weave its narrative of transcendence and transformation over the threatening material world of sin and vice. A fateful end is narrowly but triumphantly averted; the pessimism of the doubting characters who fill the tale’s first few pages is rendered impotent in the face of incontrovertible success; faith in God and diligent work by his subjects reign victorious.

Among the discourses that enable this text’s comprehension is meritocratic individualism, an enduring sentiment foundational to nationalist American rhetoric, which attributes personal growth and economic success to the efforts and intrinsic worth of individual actors. Textbooks used widely in the schools throughout the 1870s and 1880s such as the McGuffey readers portrayed industrious children as happy and prosperous and idle children as miserable and poor. Horatio Alger became an icon of moral virtue during the late 19th century; from 1867, the author of these popular rags-to-riches stories published 106 books for boys featuring various versions of the industrious, frugal “Horatio” who achieved material and moral success because of his careful, conscientious labor (Perkinson 113). This familiar and tenacious narrative insists that regardless of sex, race, disability, social class, status, the particular or challenging circumstances of one’s birth, the life obstacles one faces, with hard work and fortitude
any individual can become successful. And success in the case of women includes heterosexual marriage.

This discourse of meritocratic individualism continues to be quite legible today in contentious debates over welfare reform and Affirmative Action but in Julia’s time period was saturated by the additional discursive thread of Protestant individualism which attributed achievement not only to industrious labor but to dedication to the will of God. Success, in fact, was a marker that one had been saved (Weber 5). In “Fiddlin’ Jim,” Mrs. Dole, although despondent over the odds, continues to have faith that the smoldering souls of those in the East End will be kindled by the fire of God’s spirit. Jim, nearly a lost cause, achieves success through personal dedication (week after week she returns to Sunday School and practices songs for the Lord), hard work (she toils doggedly, exchanging her labor for money to pay for her Bible, and struggles against her “lawless, idle nature” (139)), frugality (she insists on saving to buy the Bible), and physical effort (she dedicates her body—her “busy hands”—to the task of washing and painting her room).

Consistent with Max Weber’s argument in The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism (1958), the disciplined labor of Jim’s body is suggested as a sacred act. A foundational component of modern capitalism, Weber argues, has been its reliance on citizens embodying the Protestant ethic, with disciplined and self-controlled bodies who think of themselves as producers and consumers. Workers that imagine their worldly labor to be a “calling,” the highest form of moral duty for an individual, thereby ties their bodies’ production in a capitalist society to righteousness and religious duty (Weber 4-5).
Read through this lens, Jim's desire to earn her Bible reflects behavior appropriate for a godly subject as well as the capitalist marketplace. Significantly, Fiddlin' Jim's physical surroundings and life potential are transformed not solely based on her industry and dedication consistent with meritocratic individualism but because she submits to the word of God and pleads for His aid. For example, while surveying her chaotic domicile and struggling against her "idle nature," she cries out for God's help, "'Oh, Lord, won't you help me to stick to tryin' to do better? If yer don't, I'll give up, shuah!'" (139).

Here, success is imagined through diligent labor as well as faith in the Lord. Referring to Jim's nature as idle also essentializes, roots in biology, her abilities and developmental potential. One is left with the impression that Jim's "success," while testimony to the power of progress, will never amount to much.

Racialized Corporeality

This narrative of salvation and redemption is also made intelligible through discourses of racial inferiority and uplift similar to those Haller synthesizes in *Outcasts From Evolution* (1971) and Richard Hofstadter's classic *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1941). To return to several of their significant points, although 18th century classificatory systems provided tools to make distinctions among races, the rankings among human sub-groups did not become naturalized, marked on the body, intertwined with lacks and absences, and used to justify social stratification until the 19th century (Haller 15-30). Before this time racial identity was not absolute; one distinction drawn between groups was enslaved vs. citizen, categories tied to servitude and autonomy that exceeded firm racial lines (Hale 4).
As Haller expresses, "originally race vocabulary was neutral, but 'in time the hypothesis of evolution and the factors of variation and survival of the fittest gave added scientific sophistication to the heritage of the naturalists' racial characterizations" (95). Anthropometry, a tool put to the service of scientific racism, facilitated scrutiny and measurement of exterior body particulars as a way to map differences across groups.

Fiddlin' Jim's body is excessively racially-marked in Julia's text; no provisional, probationary whiteness status is granted here like the racial limbo non-black non-Indian immigrants sometimes inhabited until their exact racial configurations were sorted out in continuously evolving 19th century classification systems.

The attention to racialized corporeality in this brief tale reveals the legibility of racial discourses that seek exterior characteristics as evidence of interior essences (Smith 1999; Pratt 1997). Reading exterior elements as indexes of interiority originated in part from the work of an 18th century minister, Johann Kaspar Lavater, who attempted to pinpoint character essences through detailed facial study (Smith 48). In the 19th century, phrenologists, craniologists and polygenists like Nott elaborated on this belief with more specific scientific study related to race. According to Nott,

However important anatomical characteristics may be, I doubt whether the physiognomy of races is not equally so. There exist minor differences of features, various minute combinations of details, certain palpable expressions of face and aspect, which language cannot describe: and yet, how indelible is the image of a type once impressed on the mind's eye! When, for example, the word 'Jew' is pronounced, a type is instantly brought up to memory, which could not be so described to another person as to present to his mind a faithful portrait (qtd. in Smith 49).

This reference to physically-determinable racial types, a racial epistemology rooted in visual evidence, is a belief Galton shared as well. He insisted that each racial category
had its own innate intellectual and moral character that could be made visible through composite photography.

Despite dogged recourse to physiognomy, to external visual clues, to the surface of the body, to determine racial types, physical evidence proved to be a frustratingly unreliable marker of authentic racial essence. The figure of the middle-class black in the antebellum south, for instance, conveyed a worrisome mutability because their markers of clothing contradicted their deserved racially-determined location (Hale 33). Racial determinations frequently relied on science. In the quest for confidence “that the eye could reliably discern inner character from outer appearance,” Smith describes elaborate measurements taken of criminal bodies as well as eugenicist Francis Galton’s composite photographic portraits taken of individuals to capture the “central physiognomical type of any race or group” (Galton qtd. in Smith 89).

And yet, the risk of social passing remained among those with physically-ambiguous racial cues. Fiction can mark and accentuate racial difference where science fails, sustaining racial absolutes and hierarchies through performing textual certainty. Julia does not risk racial ambiguity by constructing a provisionally “white” body on which to enact her lesson about Christian uplift and enlightenment. Fiddlin’ Jim is not only incontrovertibly non-white she is excessively “colored.” Julia’s lesson is mobilized through the inherent inferiority Jim’s blackened body signifies.
Gendering Race

"Fiddlin' Jim" draws on this palpable discourse of interiority and infuses it with an additional gendered feature. As Hazel Carby (1987) has argued, black women in American history were subjected to the threatening, objectifying gaze of the slave marketplace and the evaluations of male consumers preceding ownership. Sexualized and unrestricted exhibition of black women's bodies during slavery trapped them in a perpetual public gaze, relegating them not only to the world of commodities but to a ceaseless visual vulnerability where they existed at the mercy of aggressive masculine evaluation, touching, possession and injury. Black female bodies were invested with a sexualized and inferior interiority, a particular construction of racialized womanhood, entitling an endless stream of potential purchasers to scrutinize and evaluate them. This lived reality contrasts sharply with the protection and privacy from public scrutiny that middle-class white female bodies were granted.

Traces of this historically-entrenched assumption, that it is appropriate, in fact, unremarkable, for black women to be objects of invasive gazes and evaluation, linger in Julia's treatment of Fiddlin' Jim. A few decades after Emancipation, the features of Jim's fabricated body are mapped in ways never detailed for the faceless, formless yet oh-so-not-black Mrs. Dole. Physiognomically surveilling and objectifying Fiddlin' Jim reveals spiritual and moral deficiencies nowhere evident in the bodiless and racially-unmarked characters Julia also parades through the text.

Fiddlin' Jim's head is "rough," her facial expression is "saucy," her clothes are rumpled and soiled. Significantly, she bears no recognizable markers of sex or gender whereas non-black characters are ascribed sex through their titles "Mis" and "Mrs."
Jim’s lack of title, her sullied clothes and her masculine name, communicate a *severely flawed femininity*—a femininity that necessitates scrutiny, intervention and alteration. Jim’s femininity fails *precisely* because it rests, unearned and undeserved, on an unmarried, uneducated and unsaved black woman.

**Infantilization and Merriment**

*She’ll whip out her fiddle an’ start a dance, or whoop out into a song, or suthin’, to break yo’ all up—that’s the plumb truth.*

(Wright 1902:135)

References to Fiddlin’ Jim’s inferior corporeality are magnified by Julia’s choice to include a grotesque sketch of a dark black figure on the opening page of the story devoid of gender markers (See Appendix A). Assumedly this is Jim in the flesh (of Julia’s 19th century white literary imaginary), yet this is certainly no pipe.\(^1\) The figure is sitting on steps next to a sewer grate in public view,\(^2\) wearing colorful patterned clothes, and grinning with an open mouth and a cocked head. Gender is ambiguous; the figure has a trim, medium build; no jewelry is visible; a twisted cloth covers the head, hiding hair length; and the elaborate, patterned and minstrel-esque costume has wide flowing legs rather than a skirt. She sits with her feet placed apart, her knees spread, and a fiddle positioned against her neck. The pose is decisively masculine, yet the grinning expression renders the masculinity impotent, conveying instead a jubilant, carefree,

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\(^1\) This phrase refers to Michel Foucault’s article, “This is Not a Pipe” which analyzes a picture of a pipe that appears and is read as if it is a pipe, but significantly, is not. It is a *representation* of a pipe. *Aesthetics, Method and Epistemology*. Ed. J. Faubion. Trans. R. Hurley. New York: The New Press, 1998. 187-203

\(^2\) This is suggestive of Fiddlin’ Jim’s “urban” environment which marshals the city/rural binary often used in 19th century fiction as metaphors for decay and purity. Julia does romanticize country living in other
childlike spirit. This image is consistent with a long history of racial discourse infantilizing and emasculating African and Native American male images and masculinizing those of females.

The ability for Julia to mobilize this comic, jovial, childlike vision of Fiddlin’ Jim as a pipe, as a representation of authentic blackness, depends on the discursive prominence of scientific narratives of black racial inferiority as well as the popular constructions of blackface minstrelsy as vehicles for accessing some elements of a “true” black character. Jim’s image suggests a performer in black face; an exaggerated racial configuration made possible in part by the rise of black minstrelsy in the late 1800s. Initially only whites performed minstrelsy, but black minstrelsy began around 1881 when P.T. Barnum, to prevent his white audience from the affront of knowing a black person was on stage, blacked-up through face paint a black dancer in his minstrel revue to deceive whites into believing he was a white man performing a minstrel act (Davis 38). Ellison argues that blackface “fed a more conscious white identity,” allowing white men’s border crossings so they could “play with images of blackness” (Hale 153-154). Leroi Jones argues that the “drag” performances of blacks and whites in black minstrelsy, although undertaken for vastly different reasons, were parodies and exaggerations of some aspects of actual black life in America and some aspects of perceived black life and character (Jones 85).

The elements of perceived black life and character represented in the opening illustration of Jim are an excessive, irrepressible, minstrellesque blackness that grounds the reader’s absorption of this didactic tale. The reader is aware the sketch represents the
central character before turning the first page. Significantly, no equivalent image exists of the charitable Mrs. Dole. White femininity remains racially-unmarked and protected, while Julia’s rendering of Jim reflects a racial imaginary infused by widespread minstrel representations and performances. Jim, like the black nurse named Kate, is a vehicle for moral lessons. She is a racialized fantasy being whose appearance clamors for an instrument of merriment like a fiddle, an entertaining and subservient countenance, and an exuberant, preposterous costume. Submissive “slave-like behavior” (Hale 61) and a jubilant spirit is romanticized as God’s desire.

**Whitening Jim’s Blackness**

The preoccupation with Fiddlin’ Jim’s racialized body continues by marking Jim’s moral transformation on the surface of her body and in her home, displaying evidence of an improved and enhanced interiority. As Mrs. Dole proudly observes her disciple,

> The rough head became tidy; the soiled shawl, the torn gown and dirty shoes passed away. The great strength of the woman, put to honest work, won wages, which by degrees clothed her properly and provided her room with the comforts of a home. The busy hands of Fiddlin’ Jim whitewashed the room walls and painted the wood-work. Her Bible was as scrupulously kept as her fiddle; and, used as zealously, illuminated her soul” (139-140).

In this passage, the unmarked white middle-class overseer, entitled to a privileged gaze, watches chaotic, stained and ragged blackness slowly give way to order. Julia mobilizes the intimacies of the home as extensions of the female body, marking an enhanced feminine interiority through an increasingly civilized expression of domesticity. Fiddlin’ Jim’s honest, hard-working hands purge her body and her environment of its soiled
elements: “certain unwashed utensils for cooking,” “dirty windows, with flour sacks pinned across them for curtains,” “a ragged bed,” and “some untidy clothes” in a heap. An omniscient evaluative gaze is activated throughout the story, dissecting the contours of Jim’s body and home, seeking evidence of the impact of altruistic whiteness.

The audience observes Mrs. Dole observing Fiddlin’ Jim, who, in some passages, observes herself. Subjecting her own body to the same (historically-laden) evaluation to which Julia’s racial imagination, Mrs. Dole, and the turn-of-the-century reader subjects her, Jim looks in a mirror “given her as a joke.” She remarks to her image and the reader, “Well, you are a bad-looking lot!” (138). That Jim was given a looking glass “for a joke” is striking given that her dirty and disheveled appearance has already been sufficiently established by this point in the tract. While the phrase might serve as a mechanism to underscore Jim’s disarray before finding the Lord, it seems excessive, another marker of Jim’s preposterous femininity and an exceptionally cruel gift to include so cavalierly in the tale. Only the most physically-flawed of creatures would inspire the gift of a mirror for the sake of emphasizing the absurdity of their desire to gaze at themselves. Jim’s image would not enkindle narcissistic self-gazing, but rather, would accentuate her failed femininity.

Once Fiddlin’ Jim appeals to the Lord for aid in her travails, she proceeds to transform her body and environment to a “scrupulously” clean realm worthy of pride where the Lord will desire to enter. We see glimmers of whiteness in the text, symbolizing the celestial heights for which Jim will always strive but never fully attain: Her Bible and fiddle are cleaned to a “shine” (137), her room walls are “whitewashed”
and her (assumedly brown) wood-work is covered up with light paint. Illumination and salvation are the end result. The simplistic, yet potent and repeated constrasts between light/dark, sin/salvation, and chaos/order carried out on Jim’s fictional blackened body enable Julia’s lesson about whiteness to progress.

**A TOUCH OF CLASS**

Integral to Julia’s textual construction of Fiddlin’ Jim and specifically, her salvation, is a class-inflected vision of whiteness. Although class, gender and sexuality simmer together in Julia’s racialized worlds, Mrs. Dole’s philanthropic, middle-class status is a particular character construction key to the legibility and necessity of Jim’s dependency and uplift. As Frankenberg emphasizes, power relations are inherent in any charitable act as the givers control the interaction (“White” 59). Moyer discusses how “charity” served as a form of surveillance in the case of Jane Addams and the settlement movement, allowing middle and upper-class white women entitlement to enter and scrutinize the homes of the poor and the working-class (30).

The story proceeds from the tenuousness of Jim’s moral and economic status and Mrs. Dole’s relative security and ability to facilitate her “uplift.” Here we see the fingerprints of racial discourse as well, as 19th century scientists often conflated perceived weakness and need with particular racial groups: it is an instinctive and “ancient disposition of the weak man to lean upon the strong,” and that the “firmest bases for hope” we have “lie in [the Negro’s] strong imitative faculties” (Haller 182; my emphasis). Crucial to Jim’s spiritual advancement is her ability to imitate Mrs. Dole.

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1 Whether Julia would use this fictional technique so cavalierly if the character were white is a question
Jim wiles away her time, spiritually bereft, until she encounters Mrs. Dole’s strong, secure character. She is thus inspired to abandon her mischievous ways, follow Mrs. Dole’s example, and learn the word of God.

Although Jim is capable of limited spiritual and class mobility through dogged labor, her potential evolution is innately circumscribed. The deep blackness of Fiddlin’ Jim’s imagined skin and her “great strength” put to “good work” all acquire enhanced meanings when read alongside 19th century racial discourses. Bodily markers indicate that Jim, like many others with limited resources, while partially salvageable through Christianity, can not, will not, share Mrs. Dole’s social position nor evolutionary strata. She can strive to read the Bible effectively, improve her home, and aid others in their quest for salvation because these are all tasks that correspond with her limited “mental evolution” (Haller 182). But the tale offers no promise for Jim’s equality with Mrs. Dole. No hints of prospective suitors, no alterations in neighborhood or social status, no possibility of intellectual competency surface in the text. Her racially-determined class lot can be improved, but it can not be overcome. The undercurrent operating here is that Jim must be cleaned up sufficiently for acclimation to her inevitable class position.

The intractability of Jim’s status emphasizes the significance of class to Julia’s construction of whiteness in this text. Jim’s character at the story’s onset resonates with the same “indolent” manner and “laxity of morals” often attributed to African-Americans in the Antebellum United States (Haller 15-30), yet Jim benefits from Mrs. Dole precisely because she exemplifies a superior and secure whiteness worthy of imitation. Class is constitutive of a gendered whiteness in this tale; Mrs. Dole’s philanthropic spirit and her

worth pondering.
ability to facilitate Jim's growth rests on her class station, one that enables benevolent acts among the poor in the "East End," one sufficient to inspire Jim's religious salvation. Jim's blackened and Sabrina's lesser class status, in fact, are what allow Mrs. Dole to still be a "lady."

**The Materiality of Difference**

The extreme discoursing of difference between the bodies, manners, and social positions of Mrs. Dole and Fiddlin' Jim also sheds light on an intensifying climate of racial marking and boundary fortification. Significantly, the publication of this story followed only a few years after the Supreme Court ruling *Plessy V. Ferguson* (1896) that upheld "separate but equal" facilities after Homer Plessy challenged a Louisiana law requiring segregated streetcars. This case signifies an aggressive turn toward African-Americans again after some improvement forged by the Freedmen's Bureau at the close of the Civil War. It marks the onset of a half-century of Jim Crow laws that embedded in law a host of physical and social limitations on African-Americans.

Perkinson, for instance, notes the separation of races on all public carriers and the massive drop off in black voters after Plessy: in 1896, 130,334 blacks voted and by 1904 that number had plummeted to 1,342 (38). As Jacobson has argued, perceptions of fitness for self-government have always been tied closely to race. Blackness has signified bondage, a condition antithetical to citizenship (Hale 15). Fiddlin' Jim exemplifies a partially-redeemable racialized being who still needs white guidance. Without massive modification, she is not capable of self-government.

Julia's construction of difference is also facilitated by what Ruth Frankenberg calls the "social geography of race," the way space positions raced bodies differently
(Hale 50) and the resulting feeling of “enormous social distance” between people of color and whites (Frankenberg “White” 39). Historically, segregated street cars and drinking fountains, and more recently, neighborhoods and schools, reflect spatial boundaries drawn along racial lines. Fiddlin' Jim lives on the “East End” and Mrs. Dole “travels” there to do her good deeds. The two women are not only separated by skin color, language, education, class, and facility with God’s word, but they also inhabit different areas—essentially different worlds—within the same fictional town. In fact, Sabrina the cook dismisses all of the “East End” as “trash” not worthy of her association.

**Whiteness as Absent Presence**

Drawing from Morrison, racial difference and boundaries are fortified through the absent presence of whiteness. Whiteness is legible in what is *not* said in the story’s opening line. The question, “Still going on with that Sunday-School for colored people, Mrs. Dole?” foregrounds racial difference while also establishing the main character as a married Christian woman who is not “colored.” With only a few added lines, through Mrs. Dole’s references to the “poor creatures” and their regular “improvement,” readers learn she is a middle-class woman who has higher status *through opposition* to the unsaved “creatures” she is seeking to “uplift.”

The harsh juxtaposition of Jim’s surveyed body and Mrs. Dole’s unmapped one suggests the main characters’ *lack* of race, a lack that Morrison and other race scholars claim is the universal signifier for the persistent yet invisible presence of whiteness. There is no physiognomical surveillance that renders the respectable white female middle-class body visible in the text, no excessively-racialized illustration equivalent to that of Jim’s, no description of necessary alterations to the white body. Whiteness
functions in this tale as an unspoken, unmarked, unremarkable norm created against Fiddlin’ Jim’s black body and “poor dark soul” (135).

That Julia imagines a white female rather than male character as champion of the underprivileged might suggest a progressive undercurrent in this text, a gesture toward alternative discourses of female faculty and cross-racial gender alliance. And yet, race complicates this interpretation, for to imagine Mrs. Dole’s white body engaged in intimate fictional interchanges in the home of a blackened male character is impossible given the heavy taboos against cross-race mixed-sex interactions (Carby 1987; Smith 1999; Wells 1900). The choice of an African-American female is significant because she performs particular functions in the text. Carrying out moral lessons upon the body of an excessively-blackened female caricature succeeds in branding more strenuously the racialized privilege of white middle-class females symbolized through the racially-unmarked body of Mrs. Dole. This symbolism works against the encroachment of unspecified cross-race gender entitlement in the wake of Emancipation and social uncertainties dawning in the new era.

**Linguistic Black Face**

*I’m a might bad lot, an’ it takes what’s rale pow’ful to get hol’ o’ me.*  
(Wright 1902: 136)

Particularly important from the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, the dialect that both the African-American servant and Fiddlin’ Jim use is caricatured and highly racialized and further crystallizes the extreme difference between these black and white characters. As Grace Hale puts it, dialect can function as the “linguistic equivalent of black face paint” (56). While Mrs. Dole competently uses “proper” English, wielding
words like “indeed” and “appointed” with precision, Jim relies on a phonetic-based fictional slang in which words are not fully enunciated and are often mispronounced:

I’m a might bad lot, an’ it takes what’s rale pow’ful to get hol’ o’ me.
‘Peared like when I hear you read the Bible, the fust day I come here; it was the pow’ful’est readin’ I ever heard (136).

The use of “rale” rather than real and “pow’ful’est” rather than powerful in this line (that, incidentally, praises Mrs. Dole for her compelling reading) are obvious examples of toying with textual speech to present it as inferior to “proper” English.

Harshly juxtaposing a glorified “proper” vocabulary spoken by the Anglo-Protestant with a caricatured and rudimentary (imagined) “black” dialect attributes this linguistic contrast to inherent biological difference. Because no metamorphosis in speech accompanies Jim’s corporeal and domestic alterations, her style of speaking cannot be explained by unequal levels of education and experience. Although she improves her reading skills, develops a fondness for study (“‘I likes to study up things’”), and displays research interests in the lives of John Baptist and Peter at the end of the tract, her fictional speech remains unaltered. Julia mobilizes and marks discourses of difference and inferiority through this speech pattern as well as naturalizing speech as inherently, persistently racial.⁴

The Politics of Naming

This phenomenon is in further enacted by Julia’s (remarkable) choice of the name “Fiddlin’ Jim” for a female character. This masculinized name, coupled with a slightly masculinized, but more significantly, de-feminized, bodily representation in the

⁴ In American Archives, Smith explains the common tendency for the English of blacks and recent immigrants to be caricatured in fiction and in the press (36).
illustration accompanying the story, succeeds in bolstering an invisible presence of white femininity. Julia addresses the unusual name choice in the story itself. A brief interchange explains that Fiddlin’ Jim received her “absurd” name because her “real” name, Jane James, was too “quiet” and “respectable” for a woman who “fiddles” away all of her time. “James,” with its biblical connotations, is deemed too proper for such a personality so her name is shortened to Jim (135-136).

Again apparent in the text is the entitlement to scrutinize and appraise black female behavior and dismiss it for its obviously inadequate femininity. Moreover, this failure is captured and publicly proclaimed in Jim’s name—a significant marker of subjectivity for blacks in the post-emancipation era—and not a name that (Jane) chooses for herself, one inflicted upon her by outside (white) evaluators. Masculinizing a black female character through an objectified name, a foundational referent for identity, is a powerful technique for distancing her from the central character and for underscoring the association of proper femininity with whiteness.

Racialized naming is a technique far from novel but it is potently orchestrated in this brief, seemingly-innocent tale of Christian uplift. Whether Jim can earn her femininity through godly acts, improved dress and attracting a decent man for herself is unclear, but the strong racialized speech maintained at the end of the story suggests Fiddlin’ Jim is destined for limited progress on the evolutionary path to proper womanhood. Her inferior moral feminine essence forever relegates her to inferior racial positioning. The prominence of these discourses is underscored by the fact that other textual choices would have revealed alternative possibilities. For instance, what if the semiotic structure of the tract began and ended with Jim, rather than Mrs. Dole? What
difference does it make that Mrs. Dole’s lurking whiteness frames Jim’s limited transformation? What if Mrs. Dole’s body or depiction had been inscribed in this text? What alternative discourses would have been legible if Jim was called Jane James at the end of the tale?

Julia’s profound textual and linguistic choices demonstrate her immersion in discourses of white supremacy and racial uplift. They also reveal the white female audience she imagines for her lessons about redemption and salvation. A racialized gender matters in this didactic tract. It would be incomprehensible to a (white) audience at this time to exchange the races ascribed to the central characters, having the benevolent female philanthropist bear black skin, precise speech and superior class status while the white female fiddle player wears a mismatched, minstrel-esque costume, a saucy, mischievous attitude, and sits with her knees spread on a front porch stoop. The possibility, like Fiddlin’ Jim’s name, seems absurd.
CHAPTER 5:

GENDERING RACE:
THE WHITE WOMAN'S BURDEN

*Take up the White Man's burden--*
*Send forth the best ye breed--*
*Go bind your sons to exile*
*To serve your captives' need;*
*To wait in heavy harness*
*On fluttered folk and wild--*
*Your new-caught, sullen peoples,*
*Half devil and half child.*

*Take up the White Man's burden--*
*In patience to abide,*
*To veil the threat of terror*
*And check the show of pride*
*By open speech and simple,*
*An hundred times made plain.*
*To seek another's profit,*
*And work another's gain.*

*Take up the White Man's Burden--*
*The savage wars of peace--*
*Fill full the mouth of Famine*
*And bid the sickness cease;*
*And when your goal is nearest*
*The end for others sought,*
*Watch Sloth and heathen Folly*
*Bring all your hope to naught.*

(Rudyard Kipling 1956)
In this continuation of the analytics of Chapter Four, one meriting a physical separation from its antecedent, but so closely related it necessitates the proximity of placement and the affiliation of title, I turn to several additional examples from didactic texts aimed at informally educating white middle class women. Dipping into two works, one that performs racelessness and one that foregrounds it, I explore how a racialized whiteness shifts in function and becomes conflated with a nationalist identity.

Applying a “thick analysis” (Hurtado and Stewart 309) to one brief paragraph from Julia’s massive best seller, The Complete Home (1879), and exploring more pervasive examples in her missionary tract, Among the Alaskans (1883), I demonstrate the discourses of imperialism and philanthropy legible in this particularly female genre of didactic texts. My point in juxtaposing a paragraph with an entire ethnographic tract is to emphasize the presence of racialized discourses in the briefest and most extensive of textual forms. White writers symbolically embraced and disseminated a “white woman’s burden” in both overt and surprising ways, including a racializing of foreign land that gestures toward the sinuous racial visions percolating in Julia’s white imaginary.

AFRICA GROWS DARK

In his article “Victorians and Africans: The Myth of the Dark Continent,” Patrick Brantlinger describes how Africa, as a continent and a concept, grew dark as a result of Victorian exploration. A relatively colorless continent like any other before the English abolitionist movement, Brantlinger describes how earnest abolitionists, missionaries and explorers fabricated visions of both the noble, innocent primitive and the barbaric savage, one who needed to be rescued from slavery’s horrors and the other who desperately
needed civilization to be saved. This process resonates with the “Orientalism”
phenomenon that Edward Said documents on the Asian continent. As a result of these
philanthropic efforts, the African continent slowly grew dark. The construct of the
savage, embellished and circulated in abolitionist literature, paved the way for British
imperialism, articulating African people’s pressing need for domination and guidance.
Africa—as Victorians envisioned it—practically cried out to be saved.

Julia’s fiction contains glimmers of this massive movement to explore and
circumnavigate the globe, one of the subtle ways whiteness is inscribed into her texts.
Her domestic encyclopedia The Complete Home (1879)—a veritable manifesto for the
private sphere—includes a chapter entitled “Literature in the Home” that urges
housewives to regulate their children’s reading habits and materials. Hester, Julia’s
narrator and fictional housekeeping goddess, outlines an appropriate reading hierarchy for
the eager throngs gathered around her, and, by extension, the reader: First, children
should read history, followed by biography, to provide them with a “solid foundation of
thinking, judging and comparing” (199). The third category on her list is travels:

Oh, glorious possibilities opened to us in books of travel! We follow
Kane into Northern seas; we rush with Irving along the untrodden West;
we plunge with Livingstone into the heart of Africa...China opens to us
its immense domain, and its singular promise. India reveals worlds of
mystery. Along the sands of Arabia, and in stony deserts, we follow
where once moved a pillar of cloud and flame. Tell me, are you so
deprieved in taste as not to enjoy travels? (Wright “Complete” 200).

This intriguing passage, embedded in the center of a mammoth, 600-page domestic
manual, reads like an advertisement for travel and for travel literature.
Passages such as this may have been enticing to the imaginations of white women engaged primarily in performing the staggering array of domestic duties necessary to keep their 19th century homes from erupting into chaos. Addressing the middle-class housewife who had only limited travel opportunities either domestically or abroad, Julia stresses the world of “possibility” travelogues offer. She invites female readers to expand their intellectual horizons through travel narratives at the same time they are helping develop the minds of their children. The interjection “oh” which opens the passage implies a profound satisfaction awaiting the woman who plunges into this genre of literature; her adjective “glorious” suggests that an almost spiritual peak might be attained; and her enthusiastic punctuation urges the reader to seize these texts so their journeys, and their fantasies, can commence without delay.

**Eating the Other**

Yet, in addition to encouraging women’s travel fantasies and promoting their informal education alongside their children’s, other, less laudable discourses are legible in this passage. Julia does not simply report on the availability of travelogues but constructs the “world” as Other, as ripe with mystery, intrigue and possibility, as “immense” and “untrodden,” waiting to be investigated and consumed by American housewives hungry for adventure. She refers directly to 19th century explorers like David Livingstone, a leader of the British London Missionary Society, who “plunged” into the “heart” of Africa (Wright “Complete” 200) and struggled to “civilize” the “savages.” He then “provided a narrative fascination” of his journey entitled *Missionary Travels* that titillated readers worldwide, becoming a repeated best-seller (Pratt 40).

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Julia suggests that penetrative accounts like Livingstone’s offer readers the opportunity to experience vicariously the pleasure of foreign travel without ever leaving the comfort—and safety—of their armchairs. Interestingly, Julia’s account emphasizes the vastness and mystery of the land rather than the people who inhabit it. No human beings dot the landscape, no interactions between explorers and indigenous peoples are described, no customs or traditions are narrated. In fact, it is Kane, Livingstone and Irving who take center stage in this passage and Africa, India and China that appear simply as exotic, fetishized locales offering conquerable fodder for the white colonial imagination. In this way, Julia encourages readers to become voyeurs of white male voyeurs, participating in Eating the Other in the guise of Coming to Know.

A Whitened Americanness

In darkening the African continent and constructing it as a textual Other to be observed, interpreted, and digested, Julia draws on and disseminates widespread discourses of travel and imperialism. She was only one popular writer among thousands engaging with such racialized discourses about foreign land. In fact, this passage is so brief that the most vigilant of readers might easily overlook it amid the domestic manual’s avalanche of cheery instructions for brighter carpets and tastier calf-head’s soup. Yet this passage is significant in all of its brevity precisely because it appears in text like this—a domestic manual whose overall purpose could not deviate more strikingly from that of a travelogue.

Othering the land and coaxing readers to penetrate it is cavalierly placed in a housekeeping manual directed toward white women to guide them, in this section, to
educational materials for their children. Such a mission at first glance may appear apolitical, innocuous and devoid of any circulating commentaries on race, yet a closer look at this tiny paragraph reveals one instance of a subtle conflation of Americanness with a lurking and tenacious whiteness. We can ask, where else might such racially-laden discourses surface? Undoubtedly there were other paragraphs doing the same work using different topics. Were any of the middle-class women eagerly scanning the pages of this mammoth text for household tips aware of or influenced by this tiny racialized paragraph? And what difference does it make that a (white) woman was creating a world such as this, ripe with possibility, ready to be penetrated by eager (white) readers? What difference does it make that she is drawing on and disseminating racialized discourses for women's fantasies?

This passage is rendered comprehensible to the 19th century reader by its reliance on a range of racialized discourses. First, it reflects, as we have seen with the tales of Jim and Kate, the narrator's unconscious assumption of an Anglo-American female audience. Although whiteness is unspoken and unmarked, the narrator clearly imagines the audience as white Americans by their assumed distinctness from whoever might inhabit the "dark" and "mysterious" continent she urges them to explore with their reading gaze. At the same time, her use of pronouns like "we" and "us" adds an intimate touch suggesting the narrator's empathy for and connection to the reader in these vital child-rearing issues. She displays a chummy inclusivity in inviting these American women to accompany white male travelers in their exploration of the world.

Her exoticized, racialized description of the land and her contrasting establishment of a white female "we" also reflects the social geography of race. By
distinguishing between the author-reader as Self and the "mysterious" and "untrodden" land as Other (we must ask, untrodden by whom?), she demonstrates the perception of an enormous social distance between the two entities, so vast in fact, that the foreign land has the potential to open up "glorious possibilities" previously incomprehensible to a (female) domestic audience whose travel is likely limited. An irreducible foreign Otherness is thereby constructed and strengthened in a text directed to and consumed by white American middle-class females. It is significant, as well, that these racial fantasies become possible without the audience ever having to leave the safety of the domestic sphere, a feature of travel-writing that must have been particularly compelling for many white American women's vision of an interior and domestic femininity.

**Hi Ho Colonialism**

Reading through a white analytics also makes legible, at the very least, how widespread discourses of travel and colonialism were at this historical moment, so much so that "travel literature" becomes one genre an educated, cultivated young American-citizen-in-the-making should peruse. Acquiring and displaying geographic and cultural knowledge (read through the eyes of European explorers) signified in part, perhaps, what constituted the "erudite author" and the "educated American reader," roles middle-class white women were eager to perform. The narrator's suggestion that readers may be uncultivated or "depraved" if they cannot appreciate the value of such literature implies such a function.

In addition, this passage also mobilizes a subtle, nonchalant and unquestioned sanctioning of the colonialist mentality and the imperialist enterprise---using foreign land
for however European and American explorers and travelers saw fit. Travel? Sure.
Racial Uplift? Absolutely. Educational Fodder? Why Not? European women did participate actively in colonialism and imperialism (Ware 1992) but American women’s relationship with foreign Others was for the most part limited to missions abroad, middle-class leisure travel, and the consumption of colonialist and travel literature.

A heightened consciousness of American Nationalism is also legible in this embedded passage, which speaks to the role white female authors played in helping to shape Americans’ sense of themselves as a national community. In her study, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (1998), Grace Elizabeth Hale argues that “race became the crucial means of ordering the newly enlarged meaning of America,” of establishing borders between “us” and “others” (7). Developing modern technologies and establishing a mass consumer market made it possible to replace individualistic notions of “self” with notions of racial groupings and circulate them through expanding cultural venues like advertising and popular fiction. Didactic fiction in particular helped sculpt racial imaginaries for those unable to trek through foreign land in the flesh, for middle-class women stirring pots and nursing babes, who relied primarily on the travels of others to feed their nationalistic sense of self.

**Whitening Alaska**

In the opening paragraph of *Among the Alaskans* (1883), the narrator laments the paucity of information available to the 1850s (white) student of geography about the vast territory now known as Alaska. With a touch of humor, she suggests that students may have beheld this state simply as a peninsula on the Northwest coast, “one which, so far as
he knew, might have been trimmed off the mainland with much advantage to the
symmetry of the continent, and with small loss to creation in general” (10). If not for
Presbyterian missionaries who explored this land and realized its potential, the extent of
Alaskan knowledge may have been limited to meager descriptions of the terrain, its
central river, and a “few Indians with dog-sledges and skin canoes [who] wandered
hopeless as the unburied dead” (11).

Racializing Topography

As Julia’s chapters unfold, a racialization of the land similar to the travel passage
in The Complete Home becomes legible. This mysterious and desolate land dotted with
the walking dead is transformed into a land of possibility, of splendor and plenty, “of
skies adorned with gold and sapphire” (23). Julia details the size of the Yukon river, the
length of the Northwest coastline, the peaks of the snow-capped mountains—a subtle
foreshadowing of whiteness on the terrain—and the variety of life-forms in the forests.
Ferocious volcanoes become racialized, and intriguingly, benign in Julia’s account (a
point begging for analysis that I will return to): although “sixty-one volcanoes have
belched out smoke and ashes within the knowledge of white men . . . to be thankful for
volcanoes is perhaps to have an insight into the moral uses of dark things” (21).

Drawing from the theories of learned explorers, Julia imbeds intellectual
superiority and civilized behavior in the very fibers of topographical terrain. She argues
that deeply-indented and well-articulated continents are the “abode of the most highly
civilized nations” (19) and the unindented land masses which are the least accessible
“have played no important part in the drama of the world’s history.” This remarkable
assertion conflates a whitened civilization with geography, essentializing civilized
behavior, accomplishment and superior intelligence in the land as if they are qualities
interwoven with the very fibers of the earth. Drawing from discourses of manifest
destiny, the statement also suggests that Alaska is a natural and fitting addition to the
American nation.

These racialized geographical descriptions are not constructed so invitingly
simply for the edification and enjoyment of the untraveled female reader. Rather, they
function to persuade readers of the limitless possibilities of this relatively uncharted
terrain. Alluring rhetoric becomes apparent early in this text. Given the accessibility of
the extensive Alaskan coastline,

exploration and widely spread information now enable us to *clothe* it with
forests and grazing lands and to *people* its woods and its waters with
animal life; whilst, in addition to this the *prescient eye* discerns enormous
mineral wealth hoarded under the soil and in the rocks (19; my emphasis).

The discerning eye of the explorer identifies possibilities in desolation, both in terms of
potential wealth and in imagining future civilization. Further,

the coast is lined with commodious harbors; sites for manufacturing and
commercial towns abound; navigable streams give means of conveying the
enormous mineral, vegetable and peltry wealth of the interior to the sea,
and so to our commercial centers (27).

In these descriptions, Alaska seems a territory just clamoring for exploitation. The use of
"ours" presumably refers to commercial centers in the mainland United States, and
imparts the same sense of imagined community and shared concern between author and
reader that is suggested by the pronoun's use in *The Complete Home*. It all seems like a
friendly, innocent undertaking.
Potentially Exploitable Resources

Julia’s rendering of the possibilities of the African and Alaskan landscapes resonates with Mary Louise Pratt’s analysis of 18th century travel narratives and their relationship to the development of a planetary consciousness. Noting the tendency for naturalists to “Other” the landscape almost a hundred years prior to Julia’s professional life, Pratt asserts that the shift from maritime travel to “interior” exploration and the development of Linnaean taxonomy shaped the narratives writers produced. These informal educational tools, in turn, nourished Europe’s colonial imagination. She asserts, “scientific exploration was to become a focus of intense public interest and a source of some of the most powerful ideational and ideological apparatuses through which European citizenries related themselves to other parts of the world” (Pratt 23).

Late 17th century scientists wandered among the wilderness, located species, extracted them from their environmental context, and imposed a European epistemological ordering system upon them. They then used books as repositories for these elaborate narrations of nature. Like the middle-class housewives who read didactic texts from the confines of their parlors, middle and upper-class male bourgeoisie in England and Europe had to rely on the musings of naturalists for their information about Other worlds before travel opportunities became widely available during the next century.

Significantly in terms of Julia’s work, narrative accounts in the latter half of the 18th century that Pratt details demonstrate the increasing tendency to view land and people in foreign locales as potentially exploitable resources. Descriptions of African territory shifted between 1719 and 1770 suggesting that scientists were not merely capturing nature’s essence in their narratives, but rather, inscribing their own changing
desires through the language of taxonomy. These longings were then promoted to others through publication. Like Julia’s hopeful, hungry survey of Alaskan terrain, naturalists in Pratt’s analyses scrutinize the contours of the landscape and the exotic categories of flora and fauna they encounter. Their own authority as scientific observers stands in sharp contrast to the sadly inept and “scientifically uninitiated” locales (55).

Julia’s attention to the sizable, accessible coastline of Alaska and its “enormous mineral wealth horded under the soil,” reflects similar discourses of desire about Alaskan land. Race is embedded in the very soil to be exploited: ferocious rivers acquire agency and cause difficulties for humans attempting to cross, fires spontaneously erupt, land becomes more textured, more detailed, more intriguing. Human beings appear, as Pratt asserts, as mere “traces on the landscape.” Seizing the potential of print to nurture a colonial imagination, Julia embeds in geography her vision of a cultivated and profitable future.

The Pesky Indigenous Other

Significantly, the Presbyterian Board of Publication published this text during a period when massive recruitment and money-raising efforts were underway on behalf of missions among Indigenous peoples. (Rather than crossing the border to become Americans, so to speak, the border crossed them).¹ Indeed, this is a uniquely American expression of the White Woman’s Burden. This missionary tract exudes eagerness to participate in this effort of land improvement and racial caretaking. Near the close of her

¹ I draw this remark from Catriona Esquibel during a YWCA lecture on Latina Literatures and Cultures. Columbus, Ohio. May 1, 2002.
chapter, aptly named, “A Vision in the North West” (my emphasis), Julia coaxes her female readers to join the civilizing and developmental enterprise:

here, then, is a land, not too difficult of access, containing in itself material for food, fuel, lights, shelter and much of the clothing of men, abounding in sources of wealth—a land in climate suited to human life and human activity. The territory at which we scoffed as an unendurable waste of snow, a rocky desolation, promises to be a rich and noble portion of our wonderfully favored country. It waits for its inhabitants, for the alphabet and the ten commandments, for the Church, the common school and civil law (28).

Strikingly, it is the land that merits primary and detailed attention in this passage while it waits for its future (white) inhabitants. The original, at this moment invisible, inhabitants of this previously Russian, now American-owned territory, warrant no commentary by the author at this point in the text. They seem to be afterthoughts or of little consequence in comparison to the potential use of natural resources.

When Julia turns to the plight of Alaskans themselves, she draws from typical assimilation and Americanization discourses about Indigenous peoples to construct them as “ignorant and degraded” but, significantly for her purposes, with hope for improvement. This possibility of partial redemption (like Jim) is essential for her Protestant scheme to entice teachers, missionaries and currency to the Northwest Territory. Indeed, benevolent acts depend on the presence of needy people. Julia maintains that God has not abandoned these souls and a fortunate few are even aware of their own shortcomings: “this realization of God, of some infinite power in him and of an infinite indignation against them for their wickedness is remarkably present in the minds of the Alaskan tribes” (35).
To illustrate Native Alaskan's partially salvageable character, she describes them as a people "mad after education" (20), veritable little sponges, willing and eager to learn. She mentions their natural artistic flair that has been maintained stoically with the most "wretched" of tools. Some traits of the imagined Indian nature exhibit worthy cultural capital--noble warriors, eager learners, dogged artists who pursue their craft under trying conditions, while others, like drunkenness and uncleanness, demand extinguishing.

Julia also contributes to the long history of material and epistemic violence wreaked on Indigenous peoples by describing these "hyperborean" tribes as "slow and materialistic," prone to jealousy, with their mental degradation greatly aided by the "absence of written character" (34). Presented here as a lack, a shortcoming, the presence of oral culture is conflated with intellectual depravity, a pernicious and culturally-specific epistemological assumption that superior intelligence is marked by a written language.

**Whiteness Commodifies Difference**

*Among the Alaskans* could be read as an extended call to "whiten" Alaska. Class and nationalism are the significant elements inflecting this textual manifestation of whiteness; it functions as a benevolent Americanness, poised to take up the white woman's burden in foreign locales. Native Alaskans prone to jealousy and materialism are contrasted against invisible white middle-class American females carrying out charitable acts far from home. The Other, in this case, racialized land standing in as metaphor for foreign exoticized difference and the occasional presence of Natives themselves, is commodified in the pages of a didactic tract directed to white women.

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2 Hyperborean is a term from Classical Mythology, referring to a class of people who live in a land of perpetual sunshine. It also connotes those who live in frigid, arctic regions.
These representations are coopted, inserted, and circulated in a consumer market. As bell hooks indicates,

the commodification of difference promotes paradigms of consumption wherein whatever difference the Other inhabits is eradicated, via exchange, by a consumer cannibalism that not only displaces the Other but denies the significance of the Other's history through a process of decontextualization . . . the voice of the non-white Other [can] be heard by a larger audience even as it denies the specificity of that voice, or as it recoups it for its own use (hooks "Eating" 31).

A distant non-white Other is appropriated, extracted from context, and reinserted in a missionary tract to mobilize financial support, material goods and womanpower---and all for the very purpose of eradicating that group's culture.

I want to conclude this section by indicating how Julia constructs herself on the pages of this tract, a possible example of white women's work to write themselves. This narrative relates a moral crisis, encountering the uncultivated unsaved Indian, which is addressed through benevolent Christian missions and the tools of a Christian writer so that "progress" occurs. Indeed, such progress is metaphorically rendered in her tract through another reference to land. In her chapter entitled "Behold! Morning!" Julia asserts, "Over the intense darkness of this our most Western territory lifted slowly the faint light of dawn. It broke, as do all daysprings, from the East" (94).

This faint light of dawn rising from missionaries in the East constructs a narrative of enlightenment, uplift, and progress in which white women are the central actors battling for the souls of dark and atavistic Indians. Julia gestures toward her own role in shining light (oh these whiteness metaphors) upon the moral crisis in the Northwest territory, as with her comment: "To be thankful for volcanoes is perhaps to have an insight into the moral uses of dark things" (21; my emphasis). This remarkable statement
suggests that Julia and her missionary comrades have epistemic privilege, a remarkable clarity of insight, into the moral potential of dark things. This means not only volcanoes dotting the Alaskan territory, of course, but the as yet, unsaved, Alaskan natives.
CHAPTER 6:

SOCIALIZING WHITE CHILDREN FOR CITIZENSHIP: THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM IN JULIA’S SCHOOLBOOKS

*We can do little that is better for our children than to teach them that the world is law-full to the core.*

(Wright 1892: B4 vi)

This chapter analyzes the construction of race and the inflections of gender, class and sexuality in select schoolbooks Julia published in the late 19th century. Drawing from a popular set of four science and nature school readers circulating in the 1880s, I argue that the racial vision deployed in these texts reflects (and likely contributes to) potent racial anxieties revolving around issues of citizenship. Although these texts purportedly aimed to teach children in entertaining ways the “raceless,” classless and genderless subjects of natural science, botany, astronomy, and interestingly, temperance, they also contain subtle messages directed toward socializing young, authentically-white children into their future roles as privileged citizens of the state. The written word, according to Ryan, is one way of “stitching a mass of transients into a society” (15). Indeed, Castenell and Pinar suggest that the identities we create in curricular materials “are those we wish (as a nation) to become and to avoid as well as those which we are” (20). My goal in this chapter is to ask, 1) what identity, what racial imaginary, becomes visible by applying a Critical White Studies lens to the texts of an earnest 19th century
textbook fantasizer and how is such an imaginary tied to a “possessive investment” in an authentic white citizen; and 2) What difference does Julia’s position as a white female author make to this query?

Surface consideration of Julia’s readers suggests only innocuous, entertaining tales to facilitate children’s learning, but closer scrutiny reveals an array of less laudable discourses operating among her tales of friendly sea creatures, industrious insect societies and earnest temperance crusades. A fetishization of the “natural world” coupled with a scientific racialism that champions hierarchical social arrangements as natural and inevitable coalesce to produce a hidden—and at times not-so-hidden—curriculum that appears to normalize, and subtly bolster, white middle-class children’s sense of status and entitlement. The ideas saturating Julia’s textbooks demonstrate less innocent goals at work than simply attempting to coax “American” children into the wide wonderful world of nature. If the “American” audience envisioned in Julia’s racial imaginary is an unfailingly white, middle-class, and primarily male one, what sinister implications surface from the narratives her authorial fingertips spin? How does whiteness function in children’s schoolbooks? Although little attention has been given to its construction in school primers, where more appropriate than schooling and schoolbooks for young children to learn lessons about racial identity and whiteness?

1 “We can do little that is better for our children than to teach them that the world is law-full to the core.” Wright, JMNW, Seaside and The Wayside Nature Readers B4: iv. I repeat Julia’s epigraph here to emphasize the importance of scientific laws to her ordering of the natural world for children:

2 Current textbook publishers tend to define their “audience,” their market, as teachers rather than as readers so the use of “audience” here is complicated as the writer of textbooks is simultaneously attempting to sculpt a text to appeal to children as learners and to publishers looking for texts that will appeal to teachers. See Coser, Lewis A, Charles Kadushin and Walter W. Powell. Books: The Culture and Commerce of Publishing. New York: Basic, 1982.
THE RACIAL LABOR OF SCHOOLBOOKS

Curricular scholars have long argued that school primers, textbooks and cartoons function as socialization agents, as tools for inculcating children with the particular hegemonic cultural, economic and political values of any given time period or context (Dorfman 1983; Perkinson 1968; Kohl 1995; Castenell and Pinar 1993). Analyses of the phenomenally-popular McGuffey readers, for instance, published between 1836 and 1920, have argued that the readers sought to impart moral lessons and Protestant values, convey conservative social and governmental positions, model appropriate gender roles, and demonstrate proper political and economic behavior for future citizens (Mosier 1947). The characters in these didactic stories are primarily boys (in one reader, for instance, a ratio of 29 to 8) and they are of English, Scottish, or a recognizable, but geographically unspecific, white origin. The argument that texts perform socializing roles is consistent with a philosophy of curriculum that suggests ideologies circulating in textbooks reflect the beliefs of those who control social institutions and use curriculum to reflect dominant cultural and social values (Collins 1993; Anyon. 1979). In this paradigm, racist and sexist representations are not only distortions of the “real,” but serve to bolster dominant interests.4

Despite the argument that 19th century readers narrated powerful visions of nation, national identity and citizenship to American children through subtly articulating Protestant-based morals and values, this scholarship displays insufficient emphasis on the

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3 Between 1840-1924, Jacobson argues that whiteness became variegated into hierarchically-arranged stratas of varied “white” races. Although who fits the category “white” has clearly fluctuated through the centuries, Anglo-Saxon entitlement to the category was never in question.

4 Other theories of curriculum hold that this top-down model is too deterministic and simplistic to explain the complexities of authorial intent, publishing impulses and reader reception. I will return to these alternative theories.
ways gender and race, particularly whiteness, constitute the foundational vision of an "American" citizen. The positive appearance of Anglo children and the racist representation of people of color in schoolbooks have elicited steady commentary in the literature, but scholars tend to categorize these contrasting representations as racist, leaving uninterrogated the significance of these racialized, gendered constructions for notions of citizenship.

Elson's *Guardians of Tradition*, for instance, an early but comprehensive study, separates "racial" issues into chapters entitled "The Races of Man" and to "Nations and Nationalities." She reports that in these "fantasy" schoolbook worlds, biologically-infused conceptions of race combine with economic desires to construct American Indians as warring uncivilizables who inevitably must lose their land (67), African-Americans as jovial and governed by impulse (87), and Jewish people as penny-pinching money hoarders (83).⁵ Consistent with Frances Galton's emerging theory of eugenics, at the glorious pinnacle of this imagined racial hierarchy sit Caucasians who are represented as "superior to all others in intellectual and moral development" and as "the leaders of Christian civilization" (Elson 67). Examples in schoolbooks are stereotypical, often horrific, reflecting heightened consciousness of racial, religious and economic differences among the array of beings constituting the late 19th century Melting Pot.

Elson's objection to these rather predictable portrayals of "negroes," "indians" and "jews" in children's literature is their crudely racist and prejudicial nature, insisting that authors create "a world of fantasy---a fantasy made up by adults as a guide for their

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⁵ Elson's comments about Jewish representation gesture toward the distinctions made among white races in the 19th century. Although Jewish "difference" was originally constructed around the issue of religion, from the 1870s Elson notes a shift from anti-Judaism to anti-Semitism with Jewish people becoming part of
children but inhabited by no one outside the pages of schoolbooks” (337). Consistent with concern about racial injustice and discrimination evident in 1960s scholarship, Elson expresses her discomfort that “children’s” exposure to distorted images does not reflect the “real” world in which they live. In Taubman’s terms, this seems an objection to fictional identities that function as “artifice imposed on the plenitude of the individual” (288). Elson’s emphasis on the “fantasy” world of books implies that a “real” world does exist and that, while this world is indeed populated by an array of races, these beings take more noble, complicated, and humane forms in that “real” world than their unjust caricatures in children’s books. Elson does not argue that children’s books are deterministic, that is, that their absorption translates into adult racial ideologies, and she does acknowledge that “children” must inevitably abandon the “simple models” of his [sic] schoolbooks in order to “live in the real world” as adults in which “Catholics may be sincere, Indians gentle, Negroes intelligent and Jews generous” (337). Acknowledging the limits of schoolbooks and giving weight to human complexity, Elson softly attempts to correct what she believes are misleading stereotypes that limit children’s views of the world.

Although Elson’s critique of these poisoned racial constructions seems insufficiently strident, even more significant, I would argue, than the distortions

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the Semitic branch of the Caucasian race (82). Her explanation is that racial difference, unlike religion, is an immutable characteristic.

* The underlying definition of racism evident in Elson’s work is that it is an attitude to be changed, rather than, as Beverly Tatum (1997) defines it, an entire “system of advantage based on race,” or as Pinar and Castenell (1993) note, one product of the social relations of domination expressed in policies and institutions (25), or, as Alexander Sexton (1990) describes it, a Theory of History, a system of understanding who has come to belong and who has come to be excluded (14).
themselves and their potential damage to the “real” beings they appear to represent is how they functioned to convey to white children a sense of racial and material entitlement during a period of heightened anxiety over immigration and increased policing of racial borders. Also, Elson’s tendency to analyze racialized and gendered elements in the readers as distinct entities is significant because these themes were not discrete in children’s literature nor citizenship debates but in fact were mutually-constitutive of and integral to 19th century constructions of the authentic citizen. To return briefly to Thomas Jefferson’s pronouncement in the late 1700s,

Were the state a pure democracy there would still be excluded from our deliberation women, who, to prevent deprivation of morals and ambiguity of issues, should not mix promiscuously in gatherings of men (qtd in Campbell 225).

Although people of color are not “included” specifically in Jefferson’s “exclusions” from voting rights, this quote reveals how gender (and whiteness, significantly unmarked in this passage) has been inherently tied to notions of citizenship since the United States’ inception. Elson’s utilitarian and artificial chapter separations, such as “The Races of Man,” and “Social Reform Movements” which includes a subcategory on the “Position of Women,” suggest that race (meaning, in this case, distorted representations) and gender (meaning here, limited roles for women) were simply several of the relevant themes arising in the readers, separate from, but perhaps equal in prevalence to other central ideas. Analyses of children’s readers that describe their significant roles in “guarding traditions” without acknowledging the ways race and

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7 The author’s use of “distortions” reflects her assumption that language, if chosen carefully enough, can transparently and better convey a “real” out there in the world.
8 Jacobson reports that Irish migration into the country peaked at 221,253 in 1851; German migration at 250,630 in 1882; Italian migration at 285,731 in 1907; and Russian (primarily Jewish) migration at
gender constitute those very traditions provides a paradoxically race-neutral lens in making sense of the past. I am less interested here in an emancipatory progressive narrative that attempts to “correct” what some might argue as earlier “inadequacies” in scholarship than in asking how a shift in theoretical emphases might heighten the legibility of racialized discursive utterances in 19th century texts. My argument is that white children’s understanding of the meaning and hierarchies of race was key to their socialization into citizens and that gendered messages in children’s texts contributed to communicating that understanding of race.

In this chapter, I first contextualize Julia’s Nature readers and then describe some of the authorizing discourses legible in her narrations of nature for her youthful white 19th century audience. I describe how a dogged Authorial Anglo-Saxonophilia permeates her work and the taxonomic toying in which she engages to mark and reify notions of difference among species in the animal kingdom, consistent with the Post-Darwinian inflected taxonomies of the time. Analyzing how race is constructed in her work, I conclude with suggesting how her gendered white imaginary comes to matter in the ways nature is narrated for children.

**Wandering By the Sea Side and The Way Side: Julia’s Nature Readers**

*If we can open wide the gates of “the fairy-land of science,”—if we can bring the child near to the heart of nature,—if we can absorb his [sic] hours of leisure, and many of his hours of brain-work, in the study of nature out of doors, we shall have done much toward making him robust in body, sound in mind, cheerful of disposition, and useful in the future . . .*

(Wright, 1888: B3 iv)

258,943 in 1907. Clearly, foreign-born “whites” challenged governmental initiatives in terms of sheer number as well as existing racial categories of “whites” and Others (43).

*Which suggests the very enlightenment, progress narrative that I refuse in this project—a narrative of better, truer research.*

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Natural history readers for children appeared as early as 1730 with Thomas Boreman’s *A Description of Three Hundred Animals* (Ritvo 72). One estimate reports that by 1800 over fifty books had been published for children about the natural world. Although the majority of children’s zoological readers in the 18th century were indistinguishable from those created for adults, the 19th century marked a shift to books specifically targeted to children. Zoology and natural history were believed to be particularly entertaining topics for youth and therefore ideal vehicles for transmitting knowledge about animal particulars and their usefulness as sustenance and companionship for humankind. An 1882 vertebrate biology reader emphasizes the book’s purpose as awakening in “young minds a sense of the wonderful interweaving of life upon the earth, and a desire to trace out the ever-continuous action of the great Creator in the development of living beings” (qtd in Ritvo 77). The prefaces to Julia’s science and nature readers strike an eerily similar note; the introduction to Book One states “we have endeavored to impress upon the little heir of life, in one of its highest forms, a comprehension of life, and a reverence for it, even in some of its lower manifestations” (iv). Julia seems to recognize the potential benefit of entertaining children while teaching them about nature, but also, conveying through through the medium of natural science other vital life lessons such as a “reverence” for life in the natural world.10

10 Also, if Julia wrote primarily to earn money, she may have turned to children’s nature readers because she identified this genre as a potentially profitable undertaking.
Reader Particulars

Although attaining nowhere near the notoriety and success of the McGuffey readers and much more specific in focus, Julia’s series of science and nature readers, entitled *Sea Side and Way Side Nature Readers*, (1887, 1888, 1901)\(^{11}\) were used in primary and grammar schools in the Northeastern United States during 1880s and 1890s and reprinted for years after her death.\(^{12}\) In addition, Julia created an unusual series of temperance readers for children probably intended for use in Sunday Schools. These texts, *ABC for Temperance Nurseries* (1888), *Mother Goose for Temperance Nurseries* (1887), *The Temperance First* (1889), *Second* (1891), *Third* (1893) and *Fourth* (1895) *Readers*, combined cautions against the evils of drink with vocabulary lists, grammar, and spelling lessons to help young children develop basic reading skills. Julia also published what seems to be an energetic attempt to combine reading, math, and temperance lessons entitled *The Temperance Mathematics Reader*.\(^{13}\)

Each volume of Julia’s four-part nature series focuses on a different group of life forms and nature systems.\(^{14}\) She places an intriguing hodge-podge of creatures in fellowship within her readers, beings unlikely to interact much in their everyday maneuverings. Reader No. 1 describes Crabs, Wasps, Spiders, Bees, and some Univalve Mollusks; Reader No. 2 presents Ants, Flies, Earthworms, Beetles, Barnacles, and Starfish; Reader No. 3 has chapters on Plant-life, Grasshoppers, Butterflies, and Birds; Reader No. 4 includes Geology, Astronomy, and World-life. Because essences and

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\(^{11}\) The titles of these readers have been written as *Sea-Side and Way-side* and *Seaside and Wayside* as well as the spacing I use, *Sea Side and Way Side*, which appears to be the most common.

\(^{12}\) I am still seeking exact figures on the use of these texts in specific public schools. My understanding of their use comes from Jessie Wright Whitcomb’s reflections on her mother’s writing. *Recollections*. Unpublished Memoir, 1930.

\(^{13}\) I have been unable to locate this text. It may not have survived the passing of 100 years.
contours are necessarily built through exclusions, the species that do not populate these books are as significant as those who do: Julia specifically excludes domesticated animals such as oxen and sheep, she chooses mollusks over perhaps more mundane creatures such as turtles. Although she includes common birds like robins, owls, bluebirds, and orioles, scavengers like buzzards and crows, as well as caged "exotic" birds like parrots, she does not consider pigeons, turkeys, eagles nor chickens in her discussion. There are no sloths, no cockroaches, no dogs, no cats, no primates. We might also ask why Julia's foray into the animal kingdom begins with crabs to which she devotes ten lessons in contrast to only five on wasps. Is it chance? Convenience? A crab preoccupation? In terms of textual absence, what do crabs signify in the nineteenth-century scientific imaginary that mollusks, bees and ants do not?

Following the contours of the textbook genre, Julia's readers are divided into a series of specific lessons, accompanied by illustrations of the life systems described\footnote{Detailed on the inside cover of the first reader in a 1901 printing.} and ending with review questions for material presented in the text. In a 1907 advertisement in Book Three, the publishers describe the age-appropriate content of the series, as

*Readers*, not, however, modeled upon any pattern previously set, but full of useful knowledge so presented that it is within the receptive and retentive powers of children.

They tell of the homes with many rooms in them which hang in the branches of the trees; of the "little bugs" that hunt and fish, make paper, saw wood, are masons and weavers; of flowers and trees and how they

\footnote{The readers contain illustrations of plant and animal life to accompany Julia's instructional tales, drawn by Carrie S. King, a childhood friend of Julia's daughter Jessie. See Whitcomb, Jessie Wright. *Recollections*. Unpublished Memoir, 1930. Most are black and white sketches and some are brightly colored and attractive prints of crabs, spiders, wasps and birds in motion and imaginatively placed within their "natural" contexts. Thus we see bees in flight carrying out their industrious and necessary work of pollinating flowers; species of crabs crawling across sandy beaches seeking sources of food and replacement shells; spiders of varied bulk and girth spinning webs and swinging from their silken threads. Some detail aspects of the life forms under discussion. Doubtless constructed to illustrate textual points and to entertain young minds as they occupy themselves in study, the pictures and their captions gesture toward evolutionary theory as well.}
have gone into business with insects and birds as partners to feed the world; of the “Fin Family” in the brooks, ponds, rivers and seas; of the shells and curious treasures which the ocean waves bring to the shore; and of world life in its various aspects and periods... (B3 269-270; emphasis in original).

These readers, practically bursting with industry and activity, anthropomorphize insect and animal species and their relationships so as to render them comprehensible in the social systems in which young children were cultivated in 19th century America. The first reader of 120 pages uses simple language designed for beginning readers and primary grades. Book Two (192 pp) is designed for the third grade and progresses in difficulty; Book Three (288 pp) is intended for grade four; and the final reader, the most comprehensive and advanced of the series, is directed at grade seven with 371 pages.

In a 1907 reprinting, the publishers, D.C. Heath and Co, describe “the history” of the Nature readers:

[They] were pioneers in presenting Natural Science, pure and simple, in language attractive and comprehensible to the child mind. Many imitators have followed but none has rivaled them in merit or popularity.

Published in America, they were at once republished in England. They have been translated into Chinese and published in China. They have been adopted by Japan, by English schools of Rhodes and Cyprus, and are in use in many schools of France, Belgium and other European nations. They are used in numerous schools for deaf mutes, and have been issued in a raised-letter edition for the blind (B3:269; my emphasis).

These comments emphasize the pioneering spirit of the readers and the “pure and simple” language with which they communicate Natural Science to their young audiences. The enthusiasm of this passage is easily tempered with the knowledge they were created for advertising purposes. Yet, the publisher’s note does suggest the readers filled a niche and
had broad appeal; so much so, that publishers in other countries found them appealing and perhaps, profitable, to translate.

**Scientific Authority and The Establishment of Difference**

*Natural science seems to be pre-eminently the coming pursuit of the coming man, and [it] has been wonderfully popularized in books suited to those who without expecting to be specialists desire to... look understandably at the world which lies about them.*

(Wright 1892: B4 iii)

Julia’s work reflects the increasing weight invested in a 19th century vision of science that obtains its knowledge by way of experts trained in exacting, empirical, “objective”\(^\text{16}\) methods. Although much debate about the natural world was still carried out in the public arena as evidenced by the large number of popular publications on the matter, even as Julia’s titles added to these numbers, her writing also reveals ripples of deference to Natural Science as a mightier producer of knowledge than the methods of common men. The preface to the first volume of the *Sea Side* readers clarifies that they are not “text-books in Natural Science” but are designed for “beginners in reading” to learn about the natural world while they develop and refine their language skills. Yet Julia assures her audience that no anxiety about the veracity of the texts need arise:

> There is happily no uncertainty as to the scientific accuracy of the work. Every substantive statement has been verified by the observation of the author, or by those whose competency for such work is unquestioned (B1 iii).

Evident in the vocabulary of “certainty” and “verified statements” is the authority vested in science and the spirit of precision and measurement on which its authority rests.

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\(^{16}\) See Bruce Bower’s “Objective Visions” for a description of the way “objectivity” as a scientific construct have changed and the varied meanings it communicates: data produced through mechanically-produced devices, a state of neutrality, empirical reliability, procedural correctness, emotional detachment,
Also, apparent in the phrase, “verified by observation” is the increasing weight granted occular centricity and expert vision as the reliable channels for capturing scientific “facts” and establishing difference. As Nelia Dias argues, a shift occurred in the 19th century in which physical anthropologists’ investigations of difference began to be based on “observable” features captured through a “disciplined gaze” with the “assistance of instruments of observation and measurement” (38). Dismissing common sight as a fallible sense, physical anthropologists demanded that information “observed” in the world be filtered through trained authorities and instruments which, in a sense, became better “seers” than humans because they “extended the reach of the senses” and illuminated “features imperceptible to the human eye” therefore “making visible the laws of nature” (Dias 43, 47).

The utter conditionality of occular centricity as a vehicle for scientific truth has been tied historically to whose eyes are doing the seeing, and as Jacobson asserts, the eye that sees is “a means of perception conditioned by the tradition in which its possessor has been reared” (11). Donna Haraway’s feminist study of technoscience, Modest Witness (1997) describes how the dependent status of women in the 1600s and 1700s prevented both their epistemological and physical participation in laboratories and other significant arenas in which scientific studies took place. Women, and other dependent beings, could not testify as “witnesses” to scientific events (25-27). Also, Mary Louise Pratt’s study of travel literature, Imperial Eyes (1992), documents a shift across the 18th century in what constituted “legitimate” sight in constructing and transmitting knowledge, who was able


and entitled to see, and whose sight was considered reliable with significant racist, classist and imperialist connotations. For instance, "illiterate sailors" who had traveled the far corners of the globe and the inhabitants of the regions themselves nevertheless became unreliable seers in the late 1700s (Pratt 15) while Linnaeus' European students (serving as his eyes) became dependable seers, documenting specimens and narrating the "natural world," which then became the "sight" for Europeans who could not travel and "see" with their own eyes. Here the white Knower descends on unreliable Others, surveys their flora and fauna, and categorizes it decisively according to emerging Western scientific analytic modes.

Authoritative Vision

Although Julia does not identify herself as an "expert," she does emphasize her own sight and analysis as authoritative, following a tendency exhibited in "author notes" across her publications. An educated, careful observer, she bolsters that authority further through references to unnamed, amorphous "experts" with whom she has consulted on these matters. She also mobilizes the trappings of a white middle-class educated status by dropping recognizable signifiers of Western European Knowledge like Cicero, Linnaeus and Plato and including excerpts from canonical texts as epigraphs. In previous work I have interpreted this repeated pattern of strident authority assertions and performance of the educated subject as examples of women author's efforts to speak against the dismissal and heavy criticism of their writing (Bailey 1997).

Further, Julia takes pains to present her books as more scientific, substantive and weighty than mere didactic frippery. She includes footnotes in all of her readers, a form
which affiliates her work with weighty research measures of documentation and legitimation, and associates it with the genre of textbooks. Sometimes the footnotes refer to facts in her other volumes\(^\text{18}\) (mobilizing the authority of her own authority), at times they elaborate upon a grammatical or informational point. In her first reader’s preface, she dismisses as trivial the act of learning sentences such as “I had a plate of green corn to eat on the fourth day of July” and commends instead the teaching of “scientific facts.” Her explanation that “we bring no cat and dog stories, no tales of monkey antics” (B1 iv) to her nature series seems to speak against an over-emphasis on domestic animals evident in earlier primers, those creatures populating children’s everyday world who are therefore less fitting for narratives of an increasingly sophisticated “science” and “nature.”

Indeed, in an earlier children’s reader that Harriet Ritvo examines, thirteen pages were devoted to the horse, fourteen to the ox, seventeen to the sheep and a full thirty-nine to the dog (86). She describes the common practice of praising dogs in animal stories as devoted, shrewd, affectionate creatures and the “most intelligent of all known quadrupeds” with reasoning powers, at times, resembling their masters (84). Julia defines her more rigorous, scientific texts against commonalities of this sort by concentrating on sea creatures, barnacles, bees and astronomy, choices which suggest a penchant for more unusual, removed, minute, and at times, more exotic subjects.

Julia constructs a particular educatable child subject\(^\text{19}\) when she admits to taking certain liberties in adding “individuality and personality” to “irrational animals” (B1 iv). In almost the same paradoxical breath, she both nods to the scientific veracity of her texts

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\(^{18}\) This also might be read as a sort of subliminal gimmick to promote other volumes of her readers in the guise of cross-referencing, an interesting self-serving measure in the midst of botany lessons.

while also excusing her embellishment of insect personalities as a necessary sacrifice to the mightier goal of “fixing the wandering thought of childhood.” Children in her educational imagination are restless, preoccupied, but nevertheless promising learners who need creatively-rendered creatures with provocative human characteristics to coax them into the natural world.

While such forthright personality construction seems undertaken here for pragmatic, didactic and by Julia’s account, noble, reasons, Haraway reminds us that animals help humans tell stories about ourselves and the desire to watch animals and to make sense of our behavior through theirs—-or theirs through ours—-is never an innocent practice:

Nature is a topic of public discourse on which much turns, even the earth . . . In the United States, storytelling about nature, whatever problematic category that is, remains an important practice for forging and expressing basic meanings . . . my conviction [is]that people reaffirm many of their beliefs about each other and about what kind of planet the earth can be by telling each other what they think they are seeing as they watch the animals. (Haraway, “Otherworldly,” 67-69; my emphasis)

It is not surprising, then, that while discussing the activities of ants in Book Two, Julia’s narrator remarks, “It is odd to see how much ant ways and ant soldiers are like human ways and human soldiers” (23). Odd, indeed. This musing comment is followed immediately with the assertion, “the ants make war to get slaves, or servants” (23). Narrating the natural world for children as part of their socialization into adult patterns of understanding is a process inextricably woven with cultural beliefs and is never innocent, neutral or objective. Using human social relations to make sense of animal behavior reflects more than anthropocentric epistemology, it ushers with it the desires of an author,
the inflections of an historically-specific discursive field, the etchings of an era. Conceptualizing ants as warring, militaristic and greedy for slaves is a fictional chronicle that reveals as much about the author and racial discourses circulating in her epistemic field as it does about ants.

Authorial Saxonophilia

*A grand opportunity for studying the sun is afforded by an eclipse.*

(Wright, 1892: B4 69)

Julia’s texts also suggest much about 19th century racial epistemologies in that a dogged authorial Saxonophilia permeates her construction of characters, imagined audience, and supporting illustrations. Intriguingly, the announcement of an Anglo-Saxon whiteness—promoting a racial identity—as authentic and laudable is a tendency practiced interchangeably in Julia’s fiction with that of narrating the world through a seemingly unremarkable stance of racial neutrality. And yet, as Toni Morrison reminds us, the very act of “enforcing racelessness” in written discourse is “*itself* a racial act” (46; my emphasis). An Anglo-Saxon subject position appears to usher with it at times a degree of unquestioned racial normativity in which fluctuations between leaving the category unmarked at certain moments while championing it at others is viewed as neither an inconsistent nor particularly noteworthy practice.

The most discernable aspect of Julia’s dogged Authorial Saxonophilia, perhaps, is her unwavering assumption of a white audience as consumers of her texts, the significant pattern Morrison explores at length in *Playing in the Dark*. Although Morrison’s subject

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This is my phrase, and although the word “Saxon” has referred to Germanic peoples historically as well as English peoples because of the invasion and settling of England by people from the Saxony region of Germany in the 5th and 6th centuries, it now more commonly refers to descendants or emigrants of England.
is canonical fiction in her efforts to determine how the unquestioned presumption of a white audience has shaped literature, Julia's readers for school children demonstrate eerily similar ideological investments between her own "educational" imagination in matters of race and the literary producers of the time. This tendency is particularly evident in Julia's Sea Side illustrations. Nary a darkly-shaded child or adult rears its head in her textbooks; images scattered throughout this series reveal only neatly-dressed, curly-headed, pale-skinned youngsters, usually male, scampering alongside babbling brooks and flowering shrubbery. Even the mythical adult gnomes and water-sprites in Book Four appear white. Less an attempt to authentically represent Anglo-Saxon children, these creations seem like models in a fantasy world, providing images of what properly-behaved, appropriately-dressed, respectable young-citizens-in-development might look like.

A number of images demonstrate Julia's pictorial Anglo-Saxonophilia. Book Three opens with a sketch of a young child, clad only in its fair, smooth skin, sitting a mere foot from the incoming tide. A shell or two are its sole companions. Because of the child's nudity, it is significant that the infant, its head topped in detailed, loose ringlets that might easily belong to a female, is identified as male in the caption: "Nothing Left Him." His eyes are covered but he seems to be crying while reaching one arm out toward the water. The lesson it accompanies is a treatise on Mother Earth's resources and human life's dependence on all She provides. The white infant in his nudity embodies
dependence and innocence, sensing that he has nothing, can attain nothing, without the
gifts of the Earth.\(^{21}\)

Another sketch in Book Three, accompanying Lesson 28, "The Bird," emphasizes the
connection of whiteness to civilization by constructing a pictorial boundary between
the natural world and human dwellings. The sketch frames what appear to be a brother
and sister in a window, fair-skinned, neatly-groomed, and accessorized with bows. Only
their smartly-Adorned torsos, representing civilization, are revealed through the window
frame as they gaze from inside the house in respectful, restrained interest at the birds
perched on the sill. The sill outside the window is decorated in ivy to emphasize the
point at which this thing called "nature" begins. A final example appears in Book Two.
The spider lesson portrays a lad--yet another pixie with soft, seemingly golden, curls-
clad spiffily in knickers in the most restrained play imaginable. He swings quietly in a
lush garden without soiling his clothes or rumpling his hair. Wild foliage frames him as
he "enjoys" the "natural" world.

Although Elson's critique of distorted racial representations is relevant here, the
point I wish to emphasize is not that the normative and unmarked presence of whitened
images in Julia's texts reflect a pattern of discrimination, unfair exclusion, or unjust over-

\(^{21}\) And yet, though this lesson appears to pay homage to the Earth's bounty in its opening placement and
perhaps then encourage a spirit of reverence throughout the text, Book Three continues to emphasize earth as
abundant resource for the service of humankind, particularly evident in a matter-of-fact lesson entitled
"The Story of a Seal-Skin Coat" (B3 303). This lesson does describe seal behavior but its primary goal is
to explain to a small girl the history of her fur coat, including the slaughter of thousands of male seals
captured by "Indian experts" from the region who "know their work." Such a lesson constructs seal-skin
coats, a man made product, as an appropriate element for a "Nature" reader, betrays a middle-class
intelligibility as seal coats are available only to a select few, reports unemotionally the bleeding and murder
of seals for white children's warmth and fashion, and distances white Americans from the messy labor of
killing by positioning Indian Others as the primary actors in this life destruction.
representation of white youth that must be identified and rectified in modern day, but rather, this trend reveals a racial imaginary that considers only authentically-white (usually male) children relevant, perhaps even possible, in the orchestrations of this didactic world.

Thus, when addressing the reader, “no doubt you have often had your hands stained brown, for days from the husks of walnuts” (B3 45), her didactic imagination assumes a fair-skinned child upon whose hands walnut stain would noticeably show. In introducing a fossil lesson, the narrator describes the arrival of “Scoggins, our black boy,” who is “gesticulating” in disgust with a trespassing cow (B4 122; my emphasis). The Other, a possession of sorts, is stamped in his blackness while the narrator’s race lurks unnamed. The illustrations, the dozens of epigraphs citing European poets, explorers and historical figures, and the occasional notation of Others like Scoggins, “Danes,” “Indians,” “Mongols,” and “Hindoos” (B4 155) together construct a strikingly mono-racial and mono-cultural world in which exceptions merit notation against an unexamined white norm.

Whiteness as absent presence shifts to explicit marking when Julia names “Saxon” children as her audience in the opening preface to the Sea Side readers. The series, consistent with much of Julia’s work, commences with a “preface” addressing her adult audience of teachers and parents, followed by a note to the “boys and girls” to

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23 Of the dozens of illustrations across these texts, 5 represent “whites.”

24 Like Fiddlin’ Jim, this character’s language is also racialized. It is unclear from Julia’s description whether Scoggins is a child, or whether “boy” is a paternalistic racialized phrase for hired hand (B4 123).
entice them along their educational journeys. In the preface directed to adults she asks, “should not the first short, strong Saxon sentences be used to convey scientific facts rather than . . . trivial information”? Although the central point of this rhetorical question is stressing the need for useful knowledge rather than minutiae for young readers, at the same time, this utterance of racial specificity, “Saxon,” is significant precisely because of its seemingly off-handed and peripheral mobilization during a historical period in which whiteness, in all of its slippery transmogrifications, was a highly contested racial category in which only those sufficiently white, indubitably white, were granted inclusion. The only audience her educational imaginary identifies is native Anglo-Saxon children whose tongues are sure to savor the utterance of their first, short, strong—and preferably, science-imbued—Saxon sentences.

Julia’s deployment of “Saxon” in a preface directed to parents and teachers betrays her absorption and endorsement of the assimilation goals of 19th century education. As historians have explored, schooling was conceptualized during this period as an instrument for molding the thoughts and behaviors of future citizens and establishing Protestant Anglo-American culture as dominant to the cultures of immigrant masses “infiltrating” American shores (Kaestle 1983; Perkinson 1968; Spring 1997). Because rights of citizenship, such as “universal white male suffrage” were seen to depend on “universal white education” (Kaestle 72) schoolbooks also shared the role of inculcating immigrant and native children of color with English language skills and

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25 As mentioned previously, I read these epigraphs not only as evidence of Anglo-Saxonophilia, but also as a public performance of the educated female subject, affiliating her work with a genre of “appropriate” citations.

26 See Jacobson (1998) and Haney-Lopez (1996) for examples of the long history of legal contestations to the exclusionary Naturalization Act of 1796, revised to include African and African-Americans peoples in 1870, as people struggled to prove legitimate whiteness.
Anglo-Saxon values. Julia’s passing reference to “Saxon” sentences speaks to absorbing this vision of educational practice and authentic whiteness; it constructs Native English speakers, Anglo-Saxon children, as the audience for her elaborate narrations of the natural world while also assuming facility with the English language as an educational goal for Native and non-Native speakers alike. Also, that Juha includes the racial term in the adult’s preface (but not the children’s) seems significant as it appears only a few times elsewhere in her readers. This preeminent educational discourse of the day is legible here; perhaps she deploys it simply to perform authority publicly or perhaps to offer comforting insight into the educational epistemology framing her schoolbooks for parents and teachers seeking greater information about her allegiances.

**TAXONOMIC PLEASURES**

*Order out of Confusion*

(Wright, 1901: B4 321)

According to a “certain Chinese encyclopedia,” “animals are divided into: a) belonging to the Emperor, b) embalmed. c) tame, d) sucking pigs, e) sirens, f) fabulous, g) stray dogs, h) included in the present classification, i) frenzied, j) innumerable, k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, l) et cetera, m) having just broken the water pitcher, n) that from a long way off look like flies.”

(Juan Louis Borges, Other Inquisitions, 1952)

Harriet Ritvo’s probing study of taxonomic theory and practice in 18th and 19th century England, The Platypus and the Mermaid, describes how elaborating, refining and applying Linnaean taxonomy to the earth’s varied creatures has been a potent source of

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27 For a comprehensive history of the conceptual struggles of taxonomists (in which the subjectivities and uncertainties of this science are clear), see “Macrotaxonomy, the Science of Classifying,” “Grouping
intrigue, consternation and pleasure for taxonomists, naturalists, scientists, farmers, as well as the general public, for centuries. In societies that value boundaries of many kinds, identifying and classifying\(^{28}\) species,\(^{29}\) sub-species, order, family, genus,\(^{30}\) allow the seemingly haphazard products of the natural world to be captured and arranged in orderly human categories (105). Ernst Mayr puts it succinctly, “Classifications are necessary wherever one has to deal with diversity.” To make sense of a rich and diverse world full of perceived differences requires systems of taxonomy, it seems, and controversies arise only when considering how best to proceed, what criteria to use, and what the overarching goal of the classificatory enterprise should be (147).

The subheading to Ritvo’s text, “and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination,” suggests rather wryly the human investments and imaginings involved in classificatory labor; and the whimsical Borges quote above implies the arbitrary and absurd forms such systems can take. Indeed, anthropologists, among others, have long argued that systems of taxonomy teach us as much about the classifiers as the classified. Late 18th and early 19th century taxonomers, for instance, were heavily invested in devising precise terminology rooted in the classical tradition of Latin, an elite language

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According to Common Ancestry,” and “Microtaxonomy, The Science of Species” in Ernest Mayr, The Growth of Biological Thought (1982). Aristotle was considered the original “father” of taxonomy but Linnaeus’ System Naturae was more extensive, gaining far greater purchase and became the basis of today’s system.

\(^{28}\) Ernst Mayr (1982) draws a sharp distinction between “identification” and “classification” in taxonomy. The purpose of the first is to place an individual, based on weighting various characters, into an already existing classification. The larger scheme, classification, shifts populations into groups and makes use of large numbers of characters (147, 238).

\(^{29}\) The shifting meaning of species is a dissertation in and of itself. See Mayr’s chapter “Microtaxonomy, the Science of Species” for an origin story of this oft-used concept. Interestingly, Julia often uses “race” and “species” interchangeably, referring to a particular form of crab as an ancient yet dying “race” (B4 155).

\(^{30}\) Today genus implies the lowest collective category, but Julia likely knew it to mean “a class with a definable essence” able to be divided into species. Like species, this term has shifted dramatically in usage. (Mayr 175).
system accessible to few in the population (67). Much energy was expended over
"proper" classification and "appropriate" naming fitting for the sophisticated taxonomic
endeavor to separate it from the lay terminology of native people and non scientists.

Significantly, Ritvo argues that the drawing of boundaries that "lay at the heart of
taxonomy" resonated with "widespread concerns about stability of social categories" in
18th and 19th century Britain. *System Naturae* and its many subdivisions work to reify
notions of difference (122), reflecting an intense fascination, at times obsession, with
ideas of purity and hybridity among animals at all levels of the taxonomic hierarchy. The
study of diversity practically monopolized the field of taxonomy during Linnaeus' reign,
intensifying again in the post-Darwin period (Mayr 247). Ritvo suggests that
classification in the 18th and 19th century became "akin to ranking" because it combined
notions of the "chain of being" with "emerging rhetoric of progress and evolution" (122).
Linear sequencing is viewed as a practical and conceptual necessity in taxonomy and
although it is difficult today to specify the superiority of taxonomic sequences in one area
of the natural system in relation to those in another, in Julia's time the language of "more
perfect" or "higher" organisms from the scale of perfection was "simply given an
 Evolutionary ring" in *Scala Naturae* (Mayr 242). Drawing boundaries and assigning
hierarchical status\(^{31}\) was fitting given that "nature" was conceptualized as an orderly
series of interwoven and complimentary systems following organic laws yet to be fully
understood but eventually comprehensible through the persistence and tools of trained
knowledge-seekers. Therefore, although taxonomers wavered over the placement of

\(^{31}\) Hierarchy is a complicated concept in post-Darwinian taxonomy. Mayr refers to both inclusive and exclusive hierarchies, one that encompasses subdivisions within it, the other that maintains boundaries within a larger category.
organisms and whether labels captured adequately the distinctive nuances among them, the epistemological certainty of the usefulness of a human-imposed ordering system upon the workings of this thing called “nature” was never in question. It was simply a matter of getting it right.\textsuperscript{32}

Other human investments are evident in taxonomic struggles.\textsuperscript{33} Battles over the zoological classification of certain species were often linked to political geography, aristocratic pride and international rivalry, such as the “wild white cattle of Great Britain” which landowners claimed as a pure, unique strain of cattle originating in the English isle (Ritvo 72). Despite rhetorical allegiance to a supranational taxonomic science that surpassed the particulars of patriotism, the act of identifying and naming species (sometimes after their “discoverers” or “patrons”) became contested activities in which possessive nationalistic battles were played out (Ritvo 61). Another example that speaks of personal investments in taxonomies historically is the common reference to creatures as “wild” and “tame,” reflecting judgments about species based on their perceived relationships to human beings rather than their structural characteristics (Ritvo 41).

Indeed, investigations into 19th century taxonomic orchestrations could function as

\textsuperscript{32} Consider Mayr’s language describing present taxonomic struggles: “Honesty compels us to admit that our ignorance concerning these relationships [in this case, the major phyla of animals] is still great, not to say overwhelming. This is a depressing state of affairs considering that more than one hundred years have passed since the great post-Origin period of phylogeny construction. The morphological and embryological clues are simply not sufficient for the task” (218). His frustration that so many mysteries of natural relationships are yet unsolved despite “progress” (218) is apparent for this historian of taxonomy.

\textsuperscript{33} In fact, getting it right took particular urgency in social arenas such as animal husbandry which depended on conceptions of “pure blood” and “pure bred strains” for their economic viability. Breeder rhetoric reflected anxieties about tainted offspring, contamination of blood lines, and miscegenation that resonates with later eugenicist rhetoric. Hearty ideological investment in the notion of pure, inheritable descent (Ritvo 115) meant that those in the business of animal husbandry went to great lengths to purge perceived elements of contamination. The inevitable, repeated evidence of the impossibility of establishing “pure” lineage did little to dampen the fervor of commitment to the ideal. “Blood” became the “standard trope” for a “desirable and well-documented genetic package” (Ritvo 121).
informal anthropologies of the scientist because they reveal an array of classifier anxieties and obsessions.\textsuperscript{34}

**Drawing Borders**

Julia’s readers reflect these circulating concerns about pollution, purity and social stability. Categorizing and tracing distinctions among species are primary processes in her texts, and consistent with the taxonomers from whose work she draws, she expends tremendous authorial energy in demonstrating like with like and detailing to children types, varieties and differences among creatures in the natural world. Also, hierarchical organization is naturalized in Julia’s narration of the natural “kingdom” as a central method of establishing and maintaining difference. In relying on established taxonomic methods and vocabulary--mobilizing Classes, Order, and Family\textsuperscript{35} with ease--she casts her work in the pale glow of a scientific authority garnering intensified epistemological weight and performs the role of the educated middle-class authorial subject\textsuperscript{36} in the process.

\textsuperscript{34} Certainly these tendencies are not unique to the Victorian age; contemporary literary scholar Sander Gilman, for instance, was accused of replicating the voyeuristic sexualization of Sarah Bartman (the “hottentot venus”) in his academic writing, which is the very criticism he leveled against the 19th century medical professionals and scientists who examined her.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{35} In Book Three Julia clarifies, “We divide animals and plants into Classes, Orders, and Families, that we may arrange and study them more readily. A Class contains many objects with some great points of resemblance--as the Class of Insects. The Orders bring those together which have yet more points of resemblance--as the Order of the Straight-wings. Families contain those yet more closely related--as the Aphid family, the Frog-hopper Family” (B3 116).

\textsuperscript{36} In *The Culture of Professionalism*, Burton J. Bledstein argues that a system of connected ideas about appropriate pursuits and behaviors for middle-class citizens became apparent: formal education, personal management, career, character, and using words as social currency and symbols of professionalism (70, 97). Serious activities and ideas merited literary expression, the creation of legitimizing professional organizations, and associated journals (65).
Discouraging similarity and difference is a central preoccupation in Julia’s readers. Urging children to begin specimen collections, a popular 19th century practice, Julia directs, “place things of a kind together. Then put kinds which are nearest like next [to] each other. Put your insects together, and arrange them by their orders. Put the beetles together, the butterflies together, the wasps, and bees, and so on” (B3 88). At times her directions read like imperatives, “your crabs and shrimps must stand together” and “the spiders should stand between the crabs and insects” (B3 88; my emphasis). The creatures she describes in her pedagogical worlds stick doggedly to their own kinds: Mr. and Mrs. Crab build a home together and raise their offspring. Male and female whales go house-hunting. Mr. and Mrs. Beetle hunt and dine together. Along with a little romanticized heteronormativity, these dictums reflect existing knowledge of species relationships and distinctions and the desire to convey a rudimentary understanding of such systems to children.

Characteristics that signify difference within and across groups include shape, color, habits and appearance and creatures’ formal and informal names function to mark and reify those essential differences. Even as she encourages the grouping of crabs, Julia clarifies that “all crabs are not alike.” Their names reflect intraspecies analogies made by classifiers; thus, diverse representatives of the crab family include spider crabs, horseshoe crabs, king crabs, and hermit crabs. Similarly, an array of wasp varieties are distinguishable by perceived differences in appearance, behavior, and domiciles: mud

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37 A shift occurred across the 18th and 19th century to “accumulation”: accumulating capital, land, slaves, texts, specimens, and objects from the “natural” world that could be organized in massive private collections as well as catalogued in museums for the advancement of biological knowledge. See Pratt’s Imperial Eyes (1992) for details on this process among naturalists and pre-colonialists (27-30). Also, Mayr (1982) describes the profound effects the expansive private and public collections amassed during the late 19th century had on professional development and specialization in taxonomy (196).
wasps, lonely wasps, sand wasps, rust-red wasps, and white-face wasps (B1 41).

Elephants merit their own suborder because of their "peculiar" proboscises. Ungulates are separated into odd and even toed categories, including a suborder called the hyrax or coney. Winged insects are separated into "two great classes, Eaters and Drinkers" based on whether they consume food through their mouths or through a tube (B2 69). Beetles are members of the "great family of the ring-made creatures" (B2 70). Taxonomers might benefit from incorporating aesthetic judgments into naming systems as well because in the narrator's estimation crabs vary in attractiveness: "some are not at all pretty, and some are very pretty" (B1 18). 38

The fingerprints of evolutionary theory and its hypothesis of gradations and continuity across species are evident in Julia's attempt to describe "related" animals which serve as "patterns," those which exhibit "new forms," and those which come "in between." Although appearance is treated as the telltale marker of difference in many classifications, other distinctions rely on perceived phylogenetic relationships among species, becoming downright convoluted, such as in this description of worms:

Now each animal seems to have parts that are like some other animals, and some new forms of its own. Thus, next the worm, with his rings and hooks, comes another animal with rings and feet. Of all the ring animals, Mr. Worm is the pattern, and after him comes his cousin, Mr. Many-Feet. Then, while Mr. Many-Feet is like Mr. Worm, he is also like Mrs. Fly, and seems to come between the two, a little related to both (B2 46).

38 Julia operates here with a belief that exteriority marks interior essence and is significant for the identification process. Although exteriority matters in identification, the process is far more complex, as Darwin insisted that characters of organisms are "weighted" differently, meaning, they are not equally significant for determining phylogeny. If different characters contain different information content, the task of the biologist is to determine which characters matter for tracing common descent and which are simply "noise" (Mayr 222).
It is unlikely that this passage elucidated worm geneology for children. Yet, muddled writing aside, the author is clearly trying to convey a sense of gradation, relation, and distinction among species and the grander schema that determines their placement. As Darwin argued, one cannot make observations and attempt to classify organisms in the natural world without having a theory from which to work.\footnote{Evolutionary Theory became enormously significant for taxonomy because features of organisms are granted meaning within that framework in Post-Darwinian identification. Darwin’s theory also provided explanatory backbone for the Linnaean taxonomic structure and hierarchy. Some biologists have felt uncomfortable with a priori frameworks like this that determine how an organism is approached for}

This larger system hailed in the worm passage is naturally ordered, precise, comprehensible, and yet, is still mysterious and unfolding. As a result Julia’s assertions about organisms are sometimes tentative (“\textit{seems} to have parts,” “\textit{seems} to come between”), yet hesitancy does not compromise her authority because it conveys to children the staggering complexity of the classificatory enterprise. She discusses openly naturalists’ difficulties in classifying the vast numbers of species constituting our biological systems—the challenges, in other words, of getting it right. For example, she admits that white elephants, displaying a particular physiognomic difference from the common grey, were mistaken for a separate species until they were “correctly” identified as albinos (B4 347).

Hierarchy: The Age of Man

\begin{quote}
The mammals were late in their arrival upon the earth. They could afford to wait, for they had come to stay and to possess the kingdom of nature.\end{quote}

(Wright 1901: B4 148)

Julia’s reference to the “irrationality” of simple life forms demonstrates her allegiance to biological hierarchies and their function in establishing and maintaining
difference. She describes her current period as “the age of man” (B4 83), referring to Mankind as the “highest of all animals” while placing creatures such as worms as “nearly the lowest” (B2 48). She describes opossums as ancient animals, reaching to the Eocene age, yet they are one of the lowest of mammals (B4 175). As Ritvo argues, higher mammals (quadrupeds and beasts) were viewed as closer to humans on the human/animal continuum than reptiles and insects and were thus portrayed with more detail and affection. However fondly rendered, all animals are perceived as inferior to humans, which Ritvo reads as subtle reinforcement of the hierarchies central to 18th and 19th century biological systems: animals act instinctively, humans act with reason. Animals are incapable of complex judgment; humankind bears strength and intellect. Particular emphasis is given in Julia’s readers to imparting a “reverence for life” so children learn care and caution in their interactions with animals. Even in its compassionate didacticism, this dictum subtly conveys stratification in its message that superior species have the responsibility to treat lower life forms with due care.

Significantly, such inferiority, even in the beasts she constructs as most noble, necessitates that animal interests be subordinated to the service of humans. Imaginary boundaries created between this thing called “Nature” and the everyday world of humans are regularly traversed in Julia’s rendering for children as if the perimeters are inconsequential where human needs are concerned or so fluid that they can be invoked upon whim, when desired, or to serve a particular function. Although she comments on

classification, arguing that structural considerations of an organism should be given priority (Mayr 213-215).

An interesting exception to this tendency appears in Book 4. Julia recognizes the power of now extinct animals to have eradicated humankind: “man could by no possibility have debated with them for the empire of the globe. The battle would have gone the wrong way for man. It is well that various changes removed these creatures before man appeared” (81).
human greed (B4 167) and expresses discomfort in the preface to Book Three that humans are the “youngest of all living things yet all the rest serve us and are for our use” (B3 v), she demonstrates matter-of-factly throughout her books how animals provide food, oil, ornamentation, clothing and materials for human comfort, consumption and survival. Thus, the “business” of plants is “seed-growing” for the purpose of “feeding and clothing the world” (B3 53). Indeed, even evolution has bowed to human need: “late descendants of the old time . . . have . . . increased in beauty and in capacity for ministering in some way to humanity” (B4 116). Lesson X in Book One is devoted entirely to “The Uses of Crabs,” concluding with a reference to their fine, red color once boiled (3). Dissolving the nature/civilization boundary in an instant, the crab is plucked without remark from its “natural environment” frolicking along the coastline and thrust into a pot of boiling water to serve the human palate.41

To return briefly to Haraway, “my conviction [is] that people reaffirm many of their beliefs about each other and about what kind of planet the earth can be by telling each other what they think they are seeing as they watch the animals” (“Otherworldly”; my emphasis). This phenomenon is not new; as early as Pliny (A.D. 79), creatures were used to symbolize moral qualities. Ants symbolized “diligence,” for instance, while lions embodied courage (Mayr 153). Julia utilizes human hierarchical systems to make sense of what she thinks she sees in insect behavior, transferring those interpretations to children who then may learn to make sense of what they think they see in the natural world through these frameworks.

41 A little pink creature named Pea Crab suffers the same fate later in Book One. She tells the reader, “you
Racializing Nature

Julia, too, has her diligent ants, as armies have "sentries" who watch for danger, "soldiers" who fight bravely, and "captains" that rule and lead. Enlisted creatures seem a more unsavory bunch: more soldiers exist in ant hills than other ants, they "do not do much work" unless readying for battle, and they "eat much and love to sleep" (B2 24). She emphasizes bees' instinctive acceptance of role and strata differences: "the work bees know that some of the grubs must grow to be queens, others to be drones and others work bees" (B1 51). Such natural differences have corresponding material consequences as worker bee babies are fed far less plain bee-bread than the queen-grubs, while the grub of the new queen consumes as much as it desires (B1 52). Although bee roles seem to be relatively static, cross-strata movement is possible as queen bee shortages occasionally necessitate turning worker bees into queens (B1 58).

The Slave Ants

Julia's mobilization of taxonomic categories to establish difference among families, orders and species takes an intensely racialized turn in a lesson she entitles "Slave Ants." To Julia, like the taxonomists of her time, the art of comprehending distinctions among organisms depends on astute observation and careful interpretations of how minute creatures themselves perceive and relate to one another. Such observations are infused with meaning through historically-situated understandings of the relations among living beings. The "Slave Ant" lesson mobilizes quite matter-of-factly, racially-laden, historically-specific, and devastating human relationships to render ant

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may see this little crab in your oyster soup. He turns orange color when he is cooked" (26).
maneuverings more intelligible to white children. And it does so as if “slave” is an
unremarkable adjective, useful for what it conveys about ant roles and relationships, but a
term no different in connotation nor impact in this time period than the “Farmer Ants”
and “Wonder Ants” described in other lessons.42 Indeed, the striking assumption
enabling this lesson to proceed is that “master” and “slave” are terms, and a type of
relationship, with sufficient meaning for third grade children—such as farmers, for
instance—upon which to base a lesson about ant behavior without introductory
information. Interestingly, this lesson is published in 1888, a full 25 years after the
Emancipation Proclamation, yet a subtle abolitionist flavor emerges in the lesson (a point
to which I will return) that reveals competing discourses and complicates interpretations
of authorial intent and impact.

An intriguing interpretation of ant dynamics ensues in the 3-page lesson. After
asserting in the previous lesson, “Ants and Their Trades,” that “ants make war to get
slaves, or servants” (B2 23), Julia explains that when “strange” ants attempt to enter other
ant hills they are driven out, killed, or less often, treated kindly. Once, she put a “black
ant” into the gate of a city of “brown ants” and marveled, “You should have seen how
they drove him out! He ran as if he were wild with fear. Three or four brown ants came
after him to the edge of their hill” (B2 24). The creatures’ apparent lack of camaraderie is
attributed to a fundamental difference signified to the observer through variations in their
bodily hues. Children are left to conclude that the color of ants, in this case, “black” and
“brown,” matters in the little organisms’ potential to get along. Their bodies display
surface evidence of a more deeply-rooted essential difference between (assumed)

42 I emphasize “in this time period” because of the particularly racialized nature of this economic system in
disparate ant types that render them naturally incompatible, in fact, adversarial. The
speed of the black ant’s retreat is attributed to the perceived threat its “difference” poses
to the brown ants.

The preoccupation with color, shall we say, in this example is exchanged for more
explicit analogies to human racial systems in other ant dynamics in the lesson. The
“chief family” of slave-making ants (owners) is called “The Shining” because its “body
shines with a gloss like varnish.” Evidently, a well-orchestrated slave ant society is
comprised of several central roles: the slave-makers, the masters and the slaves
themselves. The bodies of slave-makers are not described, but masters, with utter
predictability, are of a “light or red color, with a bright gloss” while the slave ants are
“dark or black” (B2 25).

Ants of this type are an international phenomenon apparently as both slaves and
slave-makers are “found in many parts of the world” (B2 25). The roles and
responsibilities of owners, masters and slaves in ant communities, as might be expected,
differ dramatically. In areas where slaves are held, “masters never do any work. They
make war and steal slaves” and slave babies. The slave ants are the ones who “do all of
the work,” even in the case of war, at which point they, “fight for the hill and their
owners” (26). Though owners do “fight bravely” if a war comes, they are otherwise
pathetically lazy creatures. They

walk about their hill in an idle way... [they] do not build the house, nor
nurse their babies, nor feed themselves. Often they do not even clean their
own bodies. They leave all these duties to the slaves. The slaves feed
their owners, and brush and clean them, as a servant cleans his master’s
coat. When the ants are to make a move, the slaves pick up their masters,
and carry them away (B2 26).

the 18th and 19th century United States, unlike other historical and geographic manifestations of slavery.

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As we watch Julia watch the ants, it is clear she and the experts from whom she draws interpret ant behavior through a racialized and hierarchical lens in which interactions are judged in terms of servility, dominance, idleness and industry. Owner performance is condemned as idle, gluttonous and ineffectual while the survival of the ant community seems to rest on persevering, industrious slaves. Note here that the term “slave” gains additional explanatory muscle through a comparison to “servant” as if the term might be more familiar to white middle-class school children, implying in the process their roles are relatively synonymous, their duties sufficiently similar.

While the “master” role seems innate, based on an essential quality (articulated in body color, gloss, and strange ant status), circumstances as well as inborn characteristics seem to influence which ants become “slaves.” Thus, masters are able to “march to the hill of a tribe of ants which they wish to seize for slaves” then “carry off the pupa cases, where the little new ants are getting legs and wings” (26; my emphasis). Although the description of this system is by no means precise, a series of vague intrinsic qualities signify which ant pupae are deemed appropriate for slave life while the act of invasion and seizure determines their actualization as slaves. In an eerie similarity to the history of American slavery, slave ant babies are always seized and taken from their communities at larvae stage but once thrust into their new environment they are raised alongside owners’ young. Yet absolute difference is upheld even at death--and after--as “slave-owning ants do not bury the slaves with the masters” (B2 33). Dead slaves are buried in one locale and owners in another. In a firm but opaque attempt to clarify status, Julia emphasizes the impenetrable boundary between queens and slaves signified in egg placement: “no
slave-ant eggs are laid in a hill” because “the queens lay all of the eggs and the queens are not slaves” (26). The mother of the slaves and where exactly she lays her eggs if not in a hill, remain a mystery. Given the intricacies of these bustling little creatures’ relationships, it’s a wonder observers can keep track of them at all.

That Julia draws on racialized relationships, roles, and behaviors among humans to make sense of the miniature worlds of ants is consistent with her reflections on human and ant commonalities. To return to an analogy invoked earlier, “It is odd to see how much ant ways and ant soldiers are like human ways and human soldiers” (B2 23). The traffic between nature and culture (Terry 2001) evident in this statement is striking given the vast distance between insects and higher mammals on the human/animal continuum. Ant activities are infused with meanings drawn from human labor--workers, soldiers, captains--and the names themselves are derived from those comparisons. Is it merely coincidence, then, in the vision of nature channeled through Julia’s work that “worker” ants are smaller, darker and more numerous than soldiers and leaders? Might the relative darkness of any given ant be more likely to constitute it and its activities as a “worker” rather than “leader” to observers based on apriori racialized human frameworks?

Although ant interactions in a children’s book may be the last place on earth one would expect racial issues to be legible, the characteristics and color invoked here seem imbued with racialized undertones that mimic biologically-rooted conceptions of difference in the 19th century social milieu.

The stunning racial construction of the ant world in this brief children’s lesson has a potent hidden curriculum. Most importantly, Julia’s cavalier deployment of “slave” and “master” to convey insect maneuverings to her imagined audience of young-white-
citizens-in-the-making dismisses—or finds unremarkable—the historical specificity and significance of these hierarchical social roles and their devastating consequences for millions of seized, terrorized and enslaved African and African American people. It minimizes to white children, during the era of reconstruction, slavery’s shattering effects. Such a lesson seems possible only in a (white) racial imaginary whose actual or ancestral bodies have not borne the burden of legalized racial domination. In fact, the lesson romanticizes slave status as noble and enduring—the very backbone of the ant community—in contrast to the slothfulness of Masters.

Though this might be interpreted as critical commentary on the gluttony and idleness of slave owners, it also naturalizes labor in the slave ant body, conveying in the process its cheery necessity to the community. Additionally, Julia suggests that owners are “kind to their little slaves.” They “seem to do very much as they please” as they grow up. Rather than characterize owners in a consistently negative light, this passage suggests slave life, perhaps even in American history, was really not so bad. Or that “kindness” might be sufficient salve for abduction and domination. Or that domination is the inevitable articulation of differential status and that kindness at least demonstrates owner integrity. Remarkably, the patronizing phrase, “little slaves,” serves to infantilize slaves in the ant world just as has occurred historically in human relationships.

Yet the messages 19th century children carried from these fantastical narratives about the ant world may have been ambiguous in some ways as who is actually enslaved and who is liberated remains a murky issue. Although slaves are the overtly abducted beings, near the end of the lesson, Julia describes slaves as the ones who build new ant hills, “take” their owners to live in the new homes, and “drag” the mistress ant back if she
tries to “wander off her hill” and explore the wide, wide world (26). While striking that a female (mistress) is mobilized in this example as the restricted figure, slaves rather than the leaders seem to possess power and autonomy to determine some ant activities. Further, read through a 19th century Protestant lens that ascribes value to industry, Masters seem the more indolent creatures because they do not pull their own weight and require that slaves do all of the work. This assessment seems imbued with a subtle abolitionist undertone, a commentary, perhaps, on the injustices of slavery. And yet, this lesson is no mantra against slavery’s evils as an imbalanced work load among community members appears to be the greatest crime committed. Seizure evokes no narrator outcry and a lifetime of servility proceeds unrelentingly.

Whatever desire exists to find Julia’s readers innocuous vehicles for lessons about the natural world, including a chapter on “Slave Ants” clearly demonstrates these “pure and simple” readers have more complicated and pernicious messages than a surface glance allows. At the very least, the system of slavery that bloodied American history and rendered Africans and African-Americans subhuman is trivialized simply through its use as a metaphor for the orchestrations of an ant society in a children’s reader. And the strongest message conveyed to white children is that hierarchy and domination based on colorized difference is a natural, enduring phenomenon found at even the most minute level of the insect kingdom.

**Nation-Building through “Nature”**

A consciousness of national boundaries and a project of border fortification is also legible in Julia’s readers. An Americanized whiteness is constructed against racialized
Others in foreign locales, characterizing practices elsewhere as peculiar or distasteful, and exoticizing animals from other countries and continents such as Asia, Africa, India, Australia and Central and South America. As discussed in Chapter Four, Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes* describes the development of a planetary consciousness which led European naturalists and explorers to begin viewing land, people, and natural life in other parts of the world as potentially exploitable resources. Travelers in the 18th century surveyed, categorized, labelled and racialized the landscape according to their changing desires and paved the way for 19th century colonialism and imperialism.

This racialization and exoticization of the natural landscape evident in her didactic tracts also permeates Julia’s schoolbooks. In Book Four’s exposition on great reptiles, African terrain is infused with a dramatic, perilous flavor:

... we must go to the torrid zone. The hot breath of the desert smites us, as the sun’s rays are like fierce thrusts, the noon-day is scorching, still, breathless; the green of summer seems to have been burned away, as in a furnace blast. There, stretched his lazy length on the black ooze, beside the famous river of Africa, lying in the full glare of the sun, his little eyes sleepily shut... lies the monster than was in ancient times worshipped as a god—the crocodile (262-263).

This dramatic rendering of scorching sun, black ooze and ancient monsters doubtless is created in part to sway children to reptilian charm, yet the tendency is evident elsewhere as well. While lizards are most colorful and exotic in “hot countries” (B4 257), her chapter on cage birds (again, note the shifting vision of “nature” constructed here) details the explosive color displayed by members of the parrot family (also from “hot countries”) such as parakeets and cockatoos (B3 210). She swoons, “Nothing can exceed the splendor of the plumage of these birds. Red, lemon, green, scarlet, blue, white, and a mixture of these colors... many of them have brilliant crests and... long gay tail
feathers” (B3 211). Their physical wonder is accompanied by, interestingly, a docility and amiability that fits them for cage life. Though she characterizes them as “social” birds which live in “large flocks” in their natural habitat, they nevertheless have a “kind, gentle disposition” which is “easily tamed” allowing them to “live very happily in a cage” (B3 211). This passage constructs vivid, exotic creatures as content to be spectacles imprisoned for human enjoyment.

Creatures from other lands are demonized as well as praised, suggesting a filament of whitened American pride that functions to shore up borders and privilege the local over the foreign. The locust, another child of “hot lands,” is a particularly onerous creature (B3 102). The narrator explains,

His first home was, no doubt, in the great sandy plains of Asia. He is very common in Africa, but in Europe and the eastern part of the United States he is not very common. In the Western States he has done much damage (101).

Although these “great foreign locusts” are “splendid” to look at in their vibrant colors and fierce movement, they are “greedy” little “terrors.” Interestingly, unlike ants, their vast numbers are threatening. They travel in “hordes,” in “swarms,” their bodies coat the shores of Africa “for the space of fifty miles,” with the power to “hide the sun” (B3 103). She describes these amassed insects in a way likely to leave small children atremble:

Probably there is no living thing seen in such numbers as the locusts. We can scarcely believe or understand what we are told about the multitudes of these insects which appear in the East. They fill the sky like a great cloud, so that the day is darkened. When they see a green place, they settle to feed. In a few minutes the green is all gone. The place is as brown and bare as if a fire had swept over it. People hear with terror that the locusts are coming (B3 103).

43 Flowers in past ages, the Other to the present, are also romanticized and exoticized. See B4 92.
44 Julia purposely uses “swarm” here for its negative connotations and chooses “flight” for butterflies because it is more fitting for beautiful creatures: “A ‘flight’ of butterflies is a better name for many together than a “swarm” (B3 133).
This narrative of threat and invasion is accomplished with a foreign insect that travels in "darkened" masses so great they are capable of drain vibrant life and block light. The undercurrent of nationalistic border patrol operating here resonates with the possessive international rivalry evident in the battle to claim the "wild white cattle of Great Britain" as an indigenous species (Ritvo 72). The investment of unsuspecting insect bodies with patriotic pride is explicit elsewhere in the text. When praising beautiful creatures, such as the large, colorful moths of "tropic lands," the narrator quickly clarifies, "I do not think they are prettier than many of those in our own land" (B3 145; my emphasis).

National difference is marked and emphasized among people as well. Some practices of foreign peoples read pleasantly and are not necessarily naturalized in bodies even as they imprint (manufactured) cultural difference: "Little French children" fish for crickets using ants tied to pieces of string (B3 109), while in Spain people keep crickets in cages because they enjoy their singing (B3 110). Yet, Italians are essentialized as a "beauty loving" people, "Indian Squaws" tie their infants to their backs in papooses with the greatest "indifference" (B4 187) and African mothers frighten their children into docile obedience with tales of crocodiles that at times actually slink ashore and feast upon mother and child alike (B4 264). After describing a "dwarf cherry tree" from Japan, she asks, "are the trees of Japan then even more diminutive than the little, olive-skinned, and almond-eyed people?" (B4 209). The traffic between nature and culture here, within a sentence, associates the essentialized stature of an entire nationality of human beings with a fruit-bearing perennial. Like masters and their pets, it seems, a species of tree begins to resemble their national hosts if their company is kept long enough.
Julia frequently refers to the nationalities of laudable "English" and European explorers, scientists and historical figures like Pliny and Aristotle. Sir William Herschel, for instance, is identified as "the English astronomer" (B4 63; my emphasis).\textsuperscript{45} Also, an English trader, "the first white man" who had seen (authoritative vision) the Australian mallangong, is given credit for extracting the animal from the "domain of folk-lore" and "hand[ing] it over" to the venerable realm of science (B4 196) even though a "native" led him to the creature's domicile. In contrast, the Maoris of New Zealand are mocked for their "superstitious horror" and "abject fear" of Hatteria, a species indigenous to their own land (B4 163). Mexican women are romanticized, "No Spanish belle ever handled a fan more beautifully" than the swimming axolotl uses its gills, while the creature itself from that "warm southern land" is described as "mild, silent, unhandsome" and infantilized as "Nature's perpetual child" (B4 249). Some of the world's citizens eat alligator, yet, "to a civilized appetite no flesh could be more loathsome" (B4 270). These characterizations feed a racialized understanding of the world outside civilized American borders as intriguing and rich, yet significantly different, peopled by ignorant, superstitious natives, and cruel, indifferent dark-skinned mothers.

**Gendering Whiteness**

Julia's inclusion of flawed, darkened mothers and Others of their ilk is not incidental but gestures toward a larger pattern of racialized representation that reveals a strikingly gendered white imaginary. Authorial subject position comes to matter in the way nature is narrated for children's fantasies, I argue, making a difference that a white

\textsuperscript{45} References to learned Europeans is a steady practice of Julia's. See the preface to Book 4 for a barrage of learned folk, mainly men but some women, who have espoused nature's bounty.
woman has penned these tales in her work of cultivating future citizens. Most significant is the fact that amidst the creepers and crawlers, females maintain a steady, central presence, peppering the pages in their various manifestations as heterosexual insects, human wives, mothers, female teachers and “kind girls.” The mother/infant bond is a recurring topic in the readers and females demonstrate a variety of activities, pursuits and abilities that grant a modicum of texture to the meaning of female.

The discursive construction of gender legible in Julia’s readers is in some ways a predictable vision of white middle-class femininity in the 19th century but interesting glimmers of female faculty consistent with a brewing domestic feminism emerge to complicate the picture. In addition to positioning females as substantial forces, the readers communicate dictums of appropriate behavior, and privilege competent, white female knowers over contrasting constructions of bumbling blackened male masculinity.

**Queer-Less Capers**

"Oh, yes . . . all bodies have this attraction for each other"

(Wright, 1892: B4 53,54)

Wives and mothers take center stage in Julia’s narrations of “nature.” Her educational imagination is distinctly heterosexual and preoccupied with reproduction, a narrative consistent with the conclusions reached in analyses of plant and animal studies of sexual behavior. Londa Schiebinger, for instance, notes the tendency to describe plant reproduction in terms of human sexuality and a two-sex oppositional system as early as Linnaeus (21). Julia’s first chapter in Book One is entitled “Mr. and Mrs. Crab,” an

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46 This is a contemporary word-play on a picture caption in Book Two entitled “Queer Capers” which, at the time, meant unusual or odd. I also call this, “fun with great-great grandma.”

47 Although “heterosexual” is a historically-specific construction of sexual identity I use it here merely to indicate a copulation relationship (or as Julia says, “marriage”) between male and female species members.
obvious nod to God-ordained and state-anointed heterosexual unions, followed by "Mr. Crab and His House" which gestures toward the notion of masculine individualism and its connection to a European epistemology of property acquisition. Marital idealism is such a strong undercurrent in these readers that a wasp that lives alone is still granted the title "Mrs."

Varied lessons exist on Mrs. Wasp and her domestic activities. Offspring are mentioned frequently without reference, of course, to the particulars of the reproductive process. Thus, Mrs. Crab is reported to "lay eggs" in similar fashion to a hen, which she then puts in a long tube and carries under her body until the crabs "come out" (7). Similarly, Mrs. Conch "leaves" a tiny string of seed on the beach (99). No explanation is offered for how "eggs" came to be and how their presence might be related to the various married crabs populating the coast. A vague association is simply made between these married creatures, their homes, eventual egg production, and the cultivation of offspring.

Coupling and reproduction are central activities along the seaside and by the wayside. Sections exist on bee and sea babies and the description of almost every species includes the abrupt appearance of their progeny. The brief lesson on hermit crabs concludes with the comment that "they leave their eggs in the water to hatch" (24), a seeming addendum, as if the lesson is incomplete without a reference to the curiosities of egg laying and placement. Interestingly, Julia’s portrayal of heterosexual courtship among the lower species contains a coy edge at times that would surely elude children’s comprehension but would be understood by more sexually-savvy adults. Among Mr. Fiddler Crab’s array of charms is the ability to rub his big claw (his "fiddle") against the
edge of his shell to emit an appealing melody. Julia explains, “he uses that tune to call his mate. Mrs. Crab thinks it is a fine tune” (15). As Mrs. Crab is fittingly seduced by one of her own kind, one can almost imagine the adults’ indulgent chuckle at the promise of this heteronormative mating dance among the lower species.

The representation of competent femininity fluctuates. In some lessons, such as the Crab’s, utterly heteronormative gender messages dominate. Mr. Crab, the primary actor, is “very strong” and “can lift and carry things larger than his body” (B1 4). He forages actively for food, he battles vigorously with other crabs, he demonstrates industrious, productive shoreline behavior. Mrs. Crab, in woeful contrast, is mentioned only in passing in her role as partner to Mr. Crab. She has “small and weak hands,” she does not actively dig, and rather than protecting herself when threatened, she scurries and hides (B1 2). She gathers food for the pantry and bears a tremendous number of eggs.

Similarly, Mrs. Conch is included only in relation to the eggs she lays while Mr. Conch tracks down oyster beds, uses his “very very strong” foot to grip them, crushes their shells, and then devours them (B1 95). No mention is made whether Mrs. Conch feasts more daintily, or, instead, at all. In fact, both Mr. Conch and Mr. Drill merit individual chapters in Book One but their faithful partners garner no such starring roles. Gender role demarcation is emphasized in stag beetles as well; male stag beetles are fond of fighting with “strong horns” while Mrs. Stag Beetle stands by and watches. “Her business,” Julia reminds readers twice, is “to lay eggs in safe places” (B2 90; 95).

Gender prescription and inscription reach absurd proportions when Mrs. Crab “changes

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48 Spiders are handled the same way. They lay eggs, out of which come little spiders, who then grow to be big ones. The mysteries of fertilization remain unexplained.
49 “The Story of Mr. Conch” (94) and “About Mr. Drill” (101).
50 Mrs. Wasp is an exception; five individual lessons address aspects of her life in Book One.
her shell" while the ever-valiant male protector Mr. Crab "stays near her and tries to keep her from being hurt" (B1 10).

The portrait of female aptitude brightens when Julia turns to stinging insects, as Mrs. Wasp, though tenaciously married, is the central character in these lessons and an energetic one at that. In Lesson XI and XII, interestingly titled "What Mrs. Wasp Can Do," she kills insects to feed her young, she saws wood to make beds of "fine sawdust," she makes paper, wax, and varnish using all parts of her body. In fact, she is never "idle" because she has so many pressing tasks. The title of the lesson itself seems to speak against a narrative of female ineffectuality, "what Mrs Wasp can do" (my emphasis). In addition, queen bees inhabit positions of power in that they lay all of the eggs, rule the bees in their hive and do no work (B1 47). Mrs. Ant has the ability to make paper but hers is much thinner than that of Mrs. Wasp, who is the "chief of the paper-makers" (B2 22). Both Mrs. Bee and Mrs. Ant cut leaves for their nests and the Tower Spider builds a covering of sticks, straw and grass above her head (B2 22).

Females are not only capable of more masculinized characteristics like strength and industry but outright aggression. Mrs. Wasp embodies a particularly threatening femininity with a "long, sharp sting in her tail" that carries poison, but the author clarifies that "you need not fear Mrs. Wasp. She does not sting if you let her alone" (B1 36). The queen bee leaves the hive in a "rage" at the end of her reign while strong new young queen bees "rush together and begin to fight" for the privileged position (B1 54). The "strong" victor in these diminutive battles kills her opponent, then rushes to the hive cells, "tears off the wax lids," and stings each baby queen bee until it dies (B1 55).
Moms Matter

Mrs. Wasp, like Mrs. Crab, is privileged with numerous offspring, but as with the 
"indifferent" maternal practices of "Indian Squaws" (B4 187), the intensity of the 
mothering varies with the species. Some wasps build safe, comfortable beds for their 
babies, leave heaps of caterpillars to nourish them, and then abandon them forever (B1 
31). Some bees seem to function only to reproduce, dying after their homes are built and 
eggs are deposited (B1 62). Others, like mud daubers, do not desert their young but feed 
and nurture them once hatched (B1 35). Opossums demonstrate "extreme love" for their 
offspring (B4 178). Mother spiders, who produce as many as fifty babies at once, feed 
them for four to five weeks while they sit on her back (B1 84). Kangaroo papooses seem 
superior to Indian women's because they rest in front, "always within reach of its 
mother's hands and under her eyes" (B4 187). Julia introduces a "social wasp" in Lesson 
XIV who takes "good care of her babies," perhaps to reassure nervous young readers after 
exposing them to some mothers' mass exoduses. Yet she also complicates what motherly 
love means when explaining that nurse ants, perhaps the ant world's Othermothers, 51 
communally stroke, smooth and clean ant larvae while the queen ant who produced them 
does not participate (B2 5).

Moreover, in a deadly edge to motherhood, the narrator explains how old wasps 
kill all eggs, grubs and half-grown wasps living in the cells of their home before the frost 
comes. She asks the reader directly, "why do they do that? Do they not seem to love the 
baby wasps?" And she answers affirmatively: "Yes. They kill them quickly to keep them 
from dying of hunger and cold. Is not that [sic] a queer way to show love?" (B1 40).

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Such gendered renderings gather strength from a presumed connection between mothers and offspring across species so that wasp mothers who leave their babies or kill them inspire special remark and added detail of the care they take before leaving or the reasons for infanticide.

Gender prescription is also complicated by the class position one occupies in insect and animal hierarchies and Julia’s descriptions seem to offer a subtle critique of indolence displayed in upper social stratas expressed through reproductive duties. Despite her privileged status, for instance, the queen bee’s life is a circumscribed one with very small wings that cannot carry her far, no need to collect honey, and permission from the worker bees to leave the hive only twice in her lifetime. In Julia’s words, “All she has to do is come home and lay eggs” (B1 56; my emphasis). Julia clearly separates “work” from “laying eggs” in this instance, yet, reproductive labor is seen as real work in the case of the Queen ant, who at some point “settles down in life, to her work of laying eggs” (B2 12). But, like the bee, this task is her only contribution. When the reproductive process commences, the Queen ant’s movement becomes constrained like that of the Queen Bee: The workers no longer allow her to leave the hill, they remove her wings, discard them, and if she tries to walk away, they carry her back.

The personality transformation resulting from attaining the glorified position of Queen is far from desirable, however, as she becomes “idle” and “lazy” while the “kind” workers fawn over her. Significantly, the most telling example of her slothfulness is exhibited in her parturition as she doesn’t “even care to lay her eggs in a nice clean place” and wanders about “drop[ping] her eggs anywhere” (B2 12). In spinning this seemingly innocent web of words, the author attributes disparaging characteristics to the way
females most highly-placed in the insect hierarchy carry out what should be their most revered duties. In contrast, the workers industry and accomplishments are lauded as they rush to and fro to complete tasks that the queens fail to do. This resonates with class-inflected critique of human motherhood she slips into the opossum lesson: this marsupial does not, “like many human mothers, leave her children alone, or in the streets, or with a nurse, while she goes visiting, shopping or feasting” (B4 178).

Your Mamma Doesn’t Want You Acting Like a Worm

The difference it makes that a white woman scribed these tales is evident in more than just the “knitting-needles” children are asked to use to mimic planetary alignment in relation to the sun (B4 55). Authorial subject position influences who is granted fictional center stage to deliver the array of specific behavioral dictums for youth woven into her lessons about the natural world. Mothers are steady presences in Julia’s books, participating in the goal of smelting responsible citizens out of molten, still unrefined, young beings. In addition to their roles as helpers of learned men, women occupy positions of consequence in the books, they are fonts of knowledge, they enjoy studying, and they issue behavioral missives to imaginary, potentially misbehaving youth. In Book Two the narrator asks, “In warm summer days, when your mother tells you that it is too hot to run about much, what will you do?” (B2 30).

After a brief worm lesson the narrator posits, “suppose you should be sent for fruit, and turn yourself into a basket [like a worm]. Your mamma might find fault. She would not wish you to act like a worm” (B2 40). In Book Three, she directs a child to “Look at your mother’s roses” (B3 41), another to “ask your mother to show you some
indigo” (B3 44), and yet another to “Ask your mother or your teacher to tell you how... silk is turned into ribbons and dresses” (B3 140). Obedient youth, surrounded by the trappings of middle-class existence, are guided in these readers through the firm hands of knowledgeable, competent mother figures.

Admirable components of a healthy, responsible human life--cleanliness, nourishment, rest, obedience, and hard work--are also projected on to the bodies of little life forms. A caterpillar might slink into beehives to seek refuge but bees do not like him because “he is not clean; he is in their way” (B1 58). The poor caterpillar’s fate is not described but children may take caution from the mystery and clean themselves well. Ants, too, have lessons for future citizens’ lives. After describing ant activities at length, the narrator remarks, “Ants know how to work and how to rest. After a little hard work they stop, clean their bodies, take some food, and sleep” (B2 9). In Book One, Julia describes Mr. Crab’s efforts to shed his shell as it gets too tight. He pulls his legs, hands and back out of his shell, but he does this in “his house in the sand” (9). This caution about privacy is followed by the direct command, “you do not undress out of doors. You go to your room. So does Mr. Crab” (9). She also describes the crab as an emotional and volatile creature, “quick to get cross.” He is territorial, aggressive, and likes to fight. In that, Julia explains to the reader, “he is like a bad boy” (B1 11). The good child/bad child dichtomy is mobilized to evaluate behavior that is perhaps tolerable or instinctive in crabs but negative in children who need to learn to get along with others. Even after praising their industry, Julia describes some crab behavior in judgmental terms, such as their tendency to be “greedy” and spend “most of their time eating” (B1 20).
Value judgments about the natural world are anticipated in child learners and responded to by the amorphous, learned, female narrator with subtle behavioral directives. Three objections "some people" voice about spiders, for instance, are greed, their propensity for biting, and their downright unattractiveness. The narrator treats each criticism in order, explaining that spiders may appear greedy, but they must eat a great deal to sustain themselves because web-spinning is hard work. Secondly, she insists that spiders will not bite "if you do not hurt them" (79) for they bite only to kill insects for nourishment. The last criticism, that spiders are not pretty, the narrator acknowledges as true. Neither the spider's "shape" nor "long hairy legs" is pretty, but "his fine black or gold coat" and the products of his labor, such as his web, are certainly winsome (79).

A series of behavioral messages are legible in these responses. First, hard work explains, in fact necessitates, the spider's apparent gluttony. The familiar dictum of "work hard" in this instance carries with it a possible compensation of overindulgence in other areas. Second, the claim that spiders only bite when threatened (never unpredictably? never impetuously?) suggests that children are to blame if spiders retaliate against perceived harm. The message here is that nature (the spider) is ordered and patterned (only bites when threatened) so that children may deserve any nibbles they receive. To avoid spider wrath, wee ones must learn to control themselves.

Finally, comments about the cosmetic attractiveness of insects are included quite matter-of-factly as if aesthetic value judgments are part of the horizon of acceptable discourse about "science" and "nature." The author debates what is, and is not, pretty, yet never displays consciousness of such judgments as subjective, relative, or irrelevant to the survey of the natural kingdom. The narrator remarks, if the spider is not pretty, he is
certainly “wise and busy” (79). Industry, wisdom, and a certain prettiness (sans hairy legs) are clearly desirable entities in spiders and perhaps, other life forms as well.

“Uncle Tom” Finds Nature

The final example of gendered whiteness I want to touch on briefly in this chapter is a racist caricature named “Uncle D’rius” in Book Four, the sole character identified as “Negro” in these nature readers for white children. Uncle D’rius, an old man, is deployed for a brief page to (not) teach white children about, stunningly, opossums. Unlike Fiddlin’ Jim, this character is emasculated and the gendering functions to bolster the contrasting expertise of the amorphous white female narrator. Sitting in sharp relief against the backdrop of well-spoken, neatly-dressed Anglo children populating the readers, the character’s blackness, like Fiddlin’ Jim’s, is marked by a shift to phonetic spelling and an embellished, racialized, folk dialect. This excessive language imprints racial difference in the text against the normativity of a properly-wielded English lexicon.

The interaction between the unmarked racialized narrator and this marked racialized fantasy being unfolds as follows: The narrator, hearing that Uncle D’rius is a fountain of knowledge about these critters, seeks him out when her “mind was greatly exercised about opossums” (B4 174). She finds him sitting on his porch steps with “bleared” eyes (whether from age or hops is unclear). In response to her inquiry, he cries, “‘Possums! ‘Possums! ‘Possum am ‘bout de bes’ thing in des y’ere worl’, w’en h’it am roasted!” Frustrated that he answers in terms of cuisine, the narrator exhorts, “But tell me something about them alive” (B4 174; Julia’s emphasis). He replies,

‘Live? ‘possum am a mighty onconsideratin’ animal when h’it ‘live. An’ w’en a man kin ketch ‘possum any time he go fur him, he am a berry
sma’at man, fo’ sho! Dere’s ony one sech man in dese y’ere pa’ats, an’
h’it am Uncle D’rius w’en he was young an’ spry.

And these few comments about his youth, agility, and opossum-hunting street “sma’ats,”
is the end of his exposition on the lowly pole-cat. The narrator uses Uncle D’rius’s
silence as a transition to share her own knowledge about opossums with the waiting
reader, but not before levelling a few parting shots: “Certainly he knew much more. He
had hunted them, and eaten them, and brought home baby opossums to bring up for pets--
--but unluckily, [he] had not habits of observation, nor any gift for telling what he knew”
(B4 175). Her speech is refined, proper and uttered in full sentences.

Save its appearance in a nature reader, this racist construction shows little
originality, mimicking a long history of grizzled, Uncle-Tom-like caricatures used to
impart nuggets of wisdom on subjects for which they have a natural affinity. In this case,
Julia draws from a discursive association between blackness and back-woods critter
hunting, to construct a wise “negro” who functions in the narrative in part simply to add
flavor, as local color, if you will. The connection between blackness and opossums is
further inscribed in her comment a few pages later, “many a negro has brought home
from a “possum hunt,” a captive, which he has designed for his favorite feast” only to
lose him because the opossum was merely playing dead. Whites, in this fictional
landscape, exhibit no such hankerings for opossum meat.

Thus the not-so-hidden-curriculum 19th century white children are exposed to is
that fantasy blacks crave these odd, tasty mammals, hunt them down, and then are
frequently outwitted by their protective wiles--and this cunning from an animal already
described as the “second to lowest mammalian order” (B4 175). In dismissing Uncle
Darius' poor "habits of observation" and lack of "gift[s] for telling what he knew" (B4 177), she conveys that he doesn't pay attention, cannot express himself, and refuses to comply with the simplest of requests—a benevolent woman's query for information. What is most significant in this passage is that this recalcitrant fictional old "negro," supposedly introduced as an opossum "expert," is not used as the vehicle for the opossum lesson. He is introduced, then swept aside as bumbling and stubborn, and the narrator takes over. Thus, an emasculated blackened man who does not observe, who can not teach, functions to bolster the white narrator's own marsupial expertise which she demonstrates after his dismissal. Female whiteness, enabled and at the expense of a sadly inept fictional blackness, reigns triumphant.

A Possible Conclusion

It seems to matter that a white woman wrote these texts. The persistent presence of a gendered whiteness and the centrality of female figures suggests Julia's investment in discourses touting the special roles women play in nurturing future citizens. At one point in Book Two, Julia's behavioral dictums for youth directly address intellectual and behavioral improvement: "This seems just like a fairy tale. But it is quite true. All these things can be seen if you look out for them. But you must be patient and anxious to learn" (B2 30). In Book Four, eager pupils are described, enraptured with their teacher's fossil soliloquy (102). Embedded in these messages is that the educatable child subject must be conditioned and repeatedly nudged, swayed, or commanded toward learning. Julia, as a raced, gendered author, privileges white female authors in the text to guide
these citizens-in-process. Through the gentle hands of competent women, white children become.

Yet, these messages portraying a one-dimensional portrait of national interest cannot be interpreted as if they reflect a seamless process of production, appearance and consumption. Although some curricular historians have argued for the socializing potential of readers, others paint a more layered and contentious picture of textbook production, publication and its effects (Apple 147). Theorizing the reader is necessary for a fuller interpretation; individual subject position mediates textual interpretation while market demands as well as the interests of progressive editors and publishers mediate authorial intent. Applying a little CWS and CDA simply offers a possible interpretation of alternative messages inscribed in these readers--other racialized and gendered curriculums percolating at the same time white children were merrily absorbing the sights and sounds of "nature."

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CHAPTER 6:

GENDERING XENOPHOBIA:  
THE POTENTIAL OF A TRAVELING ANALYTICS

*Rome says she tolerates and loves her dear Protestant children--she longs to take and cherish them in her maternal bosom--*

(Wright 1868:12)

In this project I have refused the biographical tale, even the straightforward feminist recovery narrative, and complicated the introduction of an unknown prolific female author with analysis that offers a more pernicious reading of her work. Reading for gender and race in works primarily performing racelessness complicates our understanding of the possible work women’s didactic fiction accomplished in the 19th century and the array of guises in which racial constructions have appeared historically. In Julia’s case, both whiteness and gender *mattered* in the worlds she imagined, in the worlds she worked to create and disseminate across five decades of writing.

In analyzing the varied inflections of whiteness, including gender, sexuality and class, across an array of her didactic texts, I have attempted to historicize and contextualize Julia’s racial constructions to work against the reinscription of whiteness as a homogenous, static, and essential entity. Thus, even in relying heavily on CWS scholarship, I have worked against an uncritical application of its precepts, choosing carefully the scholars on which I have relied and focusing on the process of how
constructions like whiteness are given life and come to be experienced as natural and authentic. For instance, despite the foregrounding of a heavily racialized African-American character in her 1902 tale of racial uplift, "Fiddlin' Jim," I have argued that an absent presence of whiteness undergirds this text, and the masculinization and infantilization of Jim actually fuels the creation of a contrasting construction of white middle-class benevolent females. A masculinized blackness, in this case, helps to create a feminized whiteness. In contrast, whiteness in children's science and nature readers functions to bolster the mission to socialize white children into behavioral roles consistent with the ideals of citizenship. This construction of whiteness, too, is a gendered one as it was middle-class white women at this time who were entrusted with this ideal, this labor of cultural reproduction.

In this final chapter, I move away from Sunday school books and children's nature readers and turn toward a series of overtly xenophobic and racialized texts Julia produced during the height of Irish immigration to the United States in the 1860s and 1870s. These sensationalist and dramatic texts offer a number of examples of a gendered xenophobia. To begin the chapter, I first relate scientific discourses that draw distinctions among the variegated white races appearing in the wake of immigration. I then explore how Julia relies on these distinctions among Caucasians created nicely by science to mark Irish-Catholics as excessively-raced and dangerous beings, particularly to Protestant women. Demonizing the Irish as sinister and ungovernable establishes Anglo-Protestant identity as synonymous with an authentic American whiteness. Whiteness shifts in function to signify a true Americaanness, drawn this time within the borders of the Land of Plenty.
I close the chapter with what I term a caesura, an interregnum, a temporary cessation rather than the artificial permanence suggested by a conclusion. In this refusal to conclude I gesture toward the work yet to be done and the traveling potential of the analytics of this study. Finally, I offer a compelling possible trajectory for future work, perhaps the next stage of this project not-on-Julia. Drawing from a suggestion I have made throughout, I tender one possible scenario for why Julia might have written whiteness so tenaciously into the pages of her publications.

**Shades of White: Delineating Authentic Whiteness**

It is no accident that phrases like “Anglo-Saxon” and “English” race began to replace the previously commonplace but increasingly too inclusive terminology of “whites” in common discourse during the latter half of the 19th century. According to Jacobson, the period of mass European immigration into the United States between 1840 and the passing of restrictive immigration legislation in 1924 “witnessed a fracturing of whiteness into a hierarchy of plural and scientifically-determined white races” (7). While general international migration patterns had ushered only 8,000 people into the country in 1820, for instance, by 1840 these numbers had swelled to hundreds of thousands each year.

Immigrants scrambled to the shores of the New Republic from all areas of Europe; some were coaxed to the United States by the hopes of a better life and the burgeoning economic opportunities wrought by industrialization, others were forced to leave their homelands by famine, economic and political strife. This massive global movement forced lawmakers to grapple with the impotency of the category “white”
asserted in the Naturalization Act to vigorously exclude undesirables. The question was who of these newcomers possessed incontrovertible and superior whiteness and who could be confidently ranked at the lower levels of the emerging variegated and hierarchically-arranged strata of “white races.”

**Irish-Catholics Run Amok**

Jacobson suggests that Irish immigrants were perceived to be particularly threatening to the boundaries of whiteness. From 1846 to 1855 as many as 3 million immigrants entered the U.S., including over a million from Ireland and close to a million from Germany--the two countries most represented in the first wave of immigration. One of the worst years of the Irish potato famine, 1847, brought 234,000 new immigrants to U.S. shores, of whom 105,000--almost half--were from Ireland (Jacobson 43). Of the thousands of newcomers arriving throughout the century, the great majority were peasants or unskilled laborers and some were staggeringly poor. In addition, a significant point of contention between native-born Anglo-Saxons and Irish newcomers was radical differences in religious beliefs. Although America was founded upon the rhetoric of “freedom of religion,” and a clear separation of Church and State, many in the Protestant majority had little tolerance for “foreign” belief systems, particularly when they were perceived to threaten Protestant-based ideals of government.

Stereotyped as “savage” and “slaves of their passions” even in Colonial times, Irish immigrants were tainted by the long-standing conflicts between English and Irish that preceded America’s founding (Spring 80).¹ Citizens perceived Catholic allegiance to

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the Pope as evidence of divided loyalties that would prevent them from following
American principles of government (Dinnerstein and Reimers 61). These factors
accentuated the perceived social geography of race, again the perception of an “enormous
social distance” between the newcomers and old stock (Frankenburg “White”). Fears
circulated that an “army” of Irish Catholics had been sent to America to undermine
Protestant churches, and later, the school system (Spring 80-81). A slice of the rhetoric
exemplifying these Nativist fears was published in The New York Times:

If the Irish Catholics should happen, for instance, to control the Mayoralty,
the Controllership, and the Board of Aldermen, they would very soon be
able to reconstitute the Board of Education, to place Catholic Trustees
over certain schools, to put in Catholic teachers, to introduce Catholic
textbooks, to convey public funds to Church schools under some guise
which would elude the law, and, in fact, to Romanize our whole system of
public education (qtd in Dinnerstein and Reimers 60).

As xenophobic Protestant imaginations ran wild with notions about Irish plots to
overthrow their cherished way of life, phrases like “Anglo-Saxon” and “English” race
began to replace the far too inclusive terminology of “whites” in common discourse.

The Smoked Irish

Jacobson, drawing from Dale Knobel, reports that the pejorative language
describing immigrants began to be racialized most explicitly when referring to the Irish.
Beginning in the 1840s—Julia’s formative years—discourse on the “Irish character” began
to be more firmly rooted in racial typology in which their “depraved” traits were thought
to be part of a fixed set of inheritable qualities (qtd in Jacobson 48). Irish “difference”
from “whites” was attributable to an affliction called ‘Irishism:’ “an alleged condition of
depravity and degradation habitual to immigrants and maybe even their children” (qtd in
Jacobson 48). It was believed that these characteristics were manifested in a distinct
“Celtic physiognomy” visible in Irish skin and hair color, facial features and physique:
Irishmen were “low browed,” they were “brutish,” they had “small upturned noses” and a “black tint to their skin” (48).

In the effort to delineate differences among white-looking people, the reference to
“black skin” in the above quote is evidence of the author’s recourse to a long-standing
and more refined system of racial difference that had been worked out on the bodies of
Africans and African-Americans. Irish people were certainly not “white” even though
their range of paler-hued skin tones might make it appear so at first glance. But neither
were they obviously “black.” Therefore, one had to examine closely, study carefully, in
order to see blackness—the ultimate marker of non-whiteness—imprinted upon their
bodies.

Indeed, labor historian Noel Ignatiev reports that Irish were referred to in common
discourse as “niggers turned inside out” (40) as if their pesky trickster physiognomies
belied their true internal biological states as blacks. And blackness was perceived to be
the polar opposite of all that was authentically white; as Jacobson quotes from an 1855
publication, “[The Negro is] as absolutely and specifically unlike the American as when
the race first touched the soil and first breathed the air of the New World” (44). Note
that “blackness” here is posed against “American” in this instance as if whiteness and
Americanness are synonymous.

Indeed, Polygenesist Josiah Nott believed that “dark” races were incapable of the
self-government demanded in a democracy and only fit for “military governments” (qtd
in Smith 36). Similarly, the conflation of blackness and Irishness is evident as well in the
tendency at times to refer to blacks as “smoked Irish” (Ignatiev 40-41). Such desperate mobilization of the signifiers of blackness to bolster the divide between “true whites” and undeserving imposters speaks to the “possessive investment” (Lipsitz 5) in preserving Anglo-Saxon hegemony. Associating the Irish with blackness coupled with their “enslavement” to the Papacy led to the common conviction that Irish immigrants, as inferiors and non-whites, were incapable of participating rationally in the governance of the nation (Jacobson 48).

To return briefly to a point made in Chapter Two, polygenicist Josiah Nott certainly objected to the universal use of the term “Caucasian,” arguing that differences among the races were so pronounced that “nothing short of a miracle could have evolved all the multifarious Caucasian forms out of one primitive stock” (qtd in Jacobson 45). Entitlement to citizenship rights depended upon placement in the Caucasian hierarchy; many believed they resided in the “land of the Caucasian,” (Haller 58) a comment that conflates this racial category with Americanness. Regardless of where the riff-raff originated, the pervasive belief was that they must become “Caucasianized” once expelled upon American shores.

AN ANTI-CATHOLIC FICTIONAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Julia’s absorption of racialized Anti-Irish sentiment surfaces in a remarkable collection of books she published between 1868 and 1872. These texts display the most extreme forms of Nativist sentiment and fears of difference wrought by the floods of immigrants arriving in the late 19th century, but with a particular gendered edge. A proud Protestant promoter throughout her writing life, Julia frequently published in
Presbyterian Presses and Tract Societies in an effort to convert disbelievers, save souls, and dyke the rising tide of a distressing secularization. For four full years, she switched from championing Protestantism to demonizing Catholicism in her texts, taking vigorous part in a robust Anti-Catholic writing movement that accompanied the height of 19th century xenophobic sentiment.

These texts, sometimes fictional, sometimes didactic sermons, were bent on "warning" native citizens of the dangers these outsiders posed to a cherished (Protestant) way of life. The influx of Irish-Catholics and their differences were perceived as threatening to many Anglo-Protestants and tract societies rallied their (often female) forces to publicize the brewing peril. Consider this "Note to Publishers" in the opening to Julia’s Anti-Catholic treatise, *Priest and Nun*:

> The Board . . . impressed with the fact that by the increase of Romanism in our midst, there is a danger not only to the moral and spiritual interests of the people of the United States, but also to their civil and religious liberties, have purchased . . . "Priest and Nun" and now send it out to warn and enlighten its readers, concerning the system of Romanism, which has done so much, wherewith [sic] it has had the power, to keep in ignorance, oppress and degrade its subjects.

This passage reeks fear. There are no subtleties in mission, no particle of self-consciousness evident in the discriminatory sentiment displayed here. We see Catholicism posed as dangerous both to the "moral and spiritual interests" of (Anglo-Protestant) Americans and also their "civil and religious liberties." A veritable encroachment by the Papacy in all aspects of life is fantasized on the opening page of this text.

If mass is any indication of vigor, Julia was near obsessed with the Anti-Catholic cause. Daunting in their size, her treatises reach hundreds of pages, rivaling her domestic
encyclopedias, perhaps, in ratio of page count to emotional investment. *Priest and Nun*, for example, extends to 544 pages. Other texts whisper about Catholic dangers as only part of another mission, but five texts centralize the goal of educating the public about the lurking Romanist menace: *Almost a Nun* (1868), published by the Presbyterian Publication Committee; *Priest and Nun* (1869;1870), printed by The Western Tract Society; *Almost a Priest: A Tale That Deals in Facts* (1870;1871), released by a secular Philadelphia press; *Under the Yoke* (1871), another Western Tract publication; and finally, *Secrets of the Convent and the Confessional: Exhibition of the Influence and Workings of Papacy upon Society and Republican Institutions* (1871;1872) printed by National Publishing Company. All of these works appear to have been reprinted and seem to have attracted both Protestant and secular presses.

Julia’s treatises took fictionalized form, peppered with direct appeals to the reader to be wary of insidious and disguised Priests and Nuns. Publishers often included “facts” from newspapers and Protestant presses that related stories about Presbyterians beguiled into joining the Catholic Church and coerced into sacrificing their fortunes and self-government; Protestant ministers often added strident commands for parishioners to keep close to the bosom of the church. Interestingly, despite the horrifying motivation and the fantastical forms these fabrications took, these texts offer examples of some of Julia’s most creative writing efforts. This raises the possibility that the appeal of her xenophobic messages was enhanced by its sometimes appealing packaging.
Angelica Anglos and Blackened Nuns

A gendered whiteness operates in Julia's treatises through the employment of pervasive metaphors of lightness and darkness to signify good and evil. Julia demonstrates this tendency in other works, such as the lesson with Little MacDuff and Kate, but the technique is particularly marked in her tracts Priest and Nun and Almost a Nun. Consider this passage from Priest and Nun that describes a child on the verge of being Baptized into the Catholic church:

Lilly Schuyler was being dressed in a white costume, even more rich and elaborate than that of her youthful neighbors. She was a delicate-looking girl, with hair of the palest flaxen hue, shining and soft, and curling about her neck. She had the large, dreamy eyes, the transparent complexion and the mobile mouth of an enthusiast, looking more like the ideal of angel or fairy on the painter's canvas than a veritable being of flesh and blood (22).

This Anglo, and almost officially Catholic, girl is whitened through literary metaphors of purity and lightness. Lilly's innocence, youth and delicacy are emphasized to the reader on the brink of her "consecration to the Virgin Mary" against her Protestant mother's wishes. She has "dreamy eyes" and a "transparent complexion" with "hair of the palest flaxen hue, shining and soft" (1868:22), all corporeal characteristics that exude whiteness.

The description of Lilly's "dreamy eyes" and translucent complexion also suggests that she is not quite grounded in the material world, her misguided religious convictions perhaps preventing her development into a fully living, breathing mortal. Julia portrays her as an elusive "angel" or "fairy" on a painter's canvas who has been led astray, her inherent innocence underscored by what might be a halo encircling her head: "hair of the palest flaxen hue" (22).
In contrast, a few pages later, the reader encounters Saint Cecelia, the primary culprit attempting to wrestle Lilly away from the true, pure Protestant church and into the arms of Romanism. Saint Cecelia is a small, shriveled, clear-voiced woman, in coarse black dress, broad black apron reaching to the hem of her gown, a rosary at her waist, a kerchief about her colorless face and a black hood on her head, her whole garb being unsuggestive of the saintly (27).

Here, the color of the nun's religious costume is blackened, a literary metaphor that stands in for racial difference consistent with circulating discourses of "smoked Irish," who were said to be blacks "turned inside out." Cecelia exudes gloom and doom, her dress and "broad black apron" reaching all the way down to the "hem of her gown." She is bodiless, the articulation of individual limbs consumed by the expanse of her oppressive garments, and she is lifeless and shriveled, her bloodless, colorless face signifying her role, perhaps, as a harbinger of religious death. Julia chooses to emphasize how unfathomable it seems that this dreaded creature could be perceived as a messenger of God, "her whole garb being unsuggestive of the saintly."

Julia casts the contrast between good and evil into sharp relief once Lilly and Saint Cecelia meet. She emphasizes to the reader: "On went the child in white and delicate array, beside the Sister in rough black garb, thus symbolizing the course of Rome's proselyte, from the first fair allurements to the days of living death" (28). This histrionic description suggests that feminine, youthful and angelic Lilly is doomed to give way to the withered, sexless, sharp-voiced Nun if fate does not intercede. In a typical mobilization of binaries, the opposition of whiteness with blackness effects and
articulates the palpable danger of Romanism, signifying all that is pure and good in the world against all that is demonic and stained with sin.

Toni Morrison discusses how an “ideological Africanism” is used and extended in literature to function as an entire “aesthetics” through an “Africanist discursive practice and an Africanist mythology.” Africanism in this sense is the “fetishization of color, the transference to blackness of the power of illicit sexuality, chaos, madness, impropriety, anarchy, strangeness” and desire (81). Julia draws from and feeds on this larger ideological and racialized discourse worked out on the bodies of African Americans and then applied to Irish immigrants and characters so that they appear excessively-blackened. She uses blackness as a metaphor to signify death, darkness, evil and danger in the character of the Irish nun. Lilly’s fairness and angelic demeanor is nourished by the contrasting dark representation; without Irish Sister Cecelia, Angelic Lilly’s symbolic whiteness is rendered meaningless, impotent. Significantly, Julia seems to foreground signifiers of whiteness in these texts, such as those evident with Lilly, unlike other works explored in this dissertation which position it as backdrop or occasional presence. These tangible signifiers seem constructed to emphasize that whiteness is only a tentative possession in matters of religion, a pure and lofty essence tied to Protestantism, but one that is always threatened by Papal cooptation to give way to blackness.

The Papal Threat to Protestant Women

In an intriguing and textured plait of patriarchy, Catholicism, race, and state control in Priest and Nun, Julia targets a looming Catholicism as threatening to (white, Protestant) women’s already disadvantaged legal and personal autonomy. A gendered
inflection of xenophobia seems driven in this case by the perception that Romanism
posed particular dangers to women in a legal system that recognized them, if married, as
extensions of their husbands, and if single, as extensions of their father. Julia constructs
particularly feminized, emotional, and legally-impotent Anglo-Protestant female
characters at the mercy of a patriarchal Catholicism and social system.

In Priest and Nun, a character named Mr. Shuyler dies and bequeaths custody of
his fair daughter Lilly, not to her own mother—his grieving, Protestant wife—but to his
Parish Priest and his Catholic brother in law. Mrs. Shuyler receives a portion of the
estate, but no legal control over her own child. The injustice of a situation in which a
mother is cast aside in favor of male peripheries is underscored because it is the jaws of
Catholicism which threaten Lilly: “my heart is broken! My poor Lilly, with that priest
for her guardian, will be taken from her mother and be made miserable for life.” Despite
pleas to her brother-in-law, she is “completely ignored.”

Mrs. Shuyler’s reaction against what she sees as an obvious grievance is described
in terms of personal distress:

She had not been deemed a proper guardian for her child. Had her
husband dreamed of the cruel pain he was inflicting, he might have paused
as he drew up that will. Obstreperous in all matters of the affections as he was,
the judge supposed that, in leaving his wife a home and ample estate, he
was doing all for her that heart could wish. Men, thought the judge, are
the only persons fit for business. Men only should be the legal guardians
of a child. Mrs. Shuyler was overwhelmed with anguish (166).

Her appropriately-feminine feelings of “pain” and “anguish” are emphasized in this
passage, along with a desperate sense of her own impotency to influence the men around
her or shape her daughter’s fate in the face of a prowling Papacy. Rather than railing
against a patriarchal state that positions male guardians over women’s inherent rights to
the custody of their natural-born children, Mrs. Shuyler's middle-class femininity is preserved by hedging her criticism through indirect wording and emotion. Yet the last few sentences emphasize her disagreement with the legal decision that has wrenchd away her only child: "Men, thought the judge, are the only persons fit for business" and "Men only should be the legal guardians of a child" (166). This view is supported by her brother-in-law's patronizing comment that women know nothing about business matters.

Thus, in spite of their whiteness, an innocent female child and her legally-impotent and emotional mother are characters positioned at the mercy of a patriarchal and looming Catholic authority. Xenophobia is justified in Julia's racial imaginary because male, Papal control poses a particular threat to even Anglo-Protestant women's autonomy and natural roles as mothers. It is Mrs. Shuyler's Catholic husband, a judge, who made the decision, a Catholic brother-in-law and Priest that uphold it and dismiss her worries as fanciful, and a state that dictates their right to make such decisions in the first place.

A female subject position is constructed here as a particularly fragile and worrisome social location; an Anglo-Protestant woman and her as yet religiously unfettered daughter, are the characters who fall prey to these coalescing machinations of state, male and religious power. The resulting message of this tract is that Anglo women, bearers of authentic whiteness, have reason to fear an encroaching Catholicism that in male hands could wreak havoc on their social roles.
EPILOGUES SMELL LIKE FREEDOM: A CAESURA

One could also say that conclusions have this aroma. To commence a caesura, an abeyance of these analytics, I draw, yet again, from the creativity of Mason Stokes in The Color of Sex: “Epilogues Smell Like Freedom.” But I have no freedom to offer as I move to conclude, only a temporary reprieve, a welcome interim. For there are more texts to peruse, more evidence to amass, more nuances to explore in this avalanche of popular and didactic writings that Julia and her scribbling cohorts hurled into the 19th century publishing terrain.

A number of analytic trajectories lurk in the future. First and foremost, to better explore connections and divergences between Julia as writing woman and her textual products, it would be useful to delve into archival data like Julia’s diaries, letters, writing notes if locatable. This would provide more information about Julia’s awareness of circulating discourses on race. Though didactic genres perhaps lend themselves more easily to a conflation of the performance of Author with individual woman given the consciousness-raising and political purpose of their texts, Julia tried too hard to create stories to assume Author and and Woman were always one and the same.

Also, more work is needed in teasing apart where “women writers” end and “women authors” begin, where the individual author function is able to exceed the generalities and anonymity of genre. Julia’s religious and tract writing, for instance, may have been evidence to her of an individual professional status as author, but contemporary analyses tend to amass her cultural products under general categories of genre. A better sense of her work in relation to other didactic writers also seems

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2 A Caesura is a term used in poetry to describe a break, a pregnant pause, near the middle of a verse, and

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imperative: how earnest were they in their whiteness labor? Is a gendered, racialized subject position as legible in the writings of other white women?

Further, recent findings suggest that lightness is as compelling a marker for higher status internationally as whiteness. Although this does not change the particular privileging of whiteness in the 19th century context, lightness and whiteness frequently overlap in descriptions and metaphors that suggest additional nuances with which to undermine the hegemony of whiteness. Also, Jacobson claims that Nativism was a "response to the overinclusivity of whiteness law" (68). Because he discusses a revision of whiteness between the years 1840 and 1920 (68) it would be useful to examine how the legibility and function of whiteness fluctuates across Julia's writing life. Her work spans five decades in the late 19th century which allows for such speculations.

The final research trajectory that I find compelling to mention is the one with which I would like to close. I have suggested repeatedly throughout this dissertation that Julia's gendered efforts to write white functioned in part to cling to a racialized privilege in the face of unsettling social change. In this sense, writing allowed females to "Author" their own visions of themselves. I am interested in investigating more widely how female authors are imagined in their own didactic texts to explore the importance of this newly-available identity category to women's sense of themselves as gendered, racialized beings.
The White Woman Author: Writing The Self

And we shall find when all the years are told, that nothing has so moulded and fashioned our inner lives--so made us what in the end we shall be--as reading.

(Wright 1879:199)

As she concludes her essay on the well-known voyeuristic scientific investigation of Sarah Bartmann’s genitalia, biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling turns sharply away from references primarily to scientific research and inserts a stunning quote by Toni Morrison:

the fabrication of an Africanist persona is reflexive; an extraordinary meditation on the self; a powerful exploration of the fears and desires that reside in the writerly conscious. It is an astonishing revelation of longing, of terror, of perplexity, of shame, of magnanimity. It requires hard work NOT to see this (Morrison 1992: 17; qtd in Fausto-Sterling 1995:41; her emphasis).

Fausto-Sterling’s use of this quote follows her analysis of the doctor’s study in which she argues that efforts to probe, scrutinize and document the contours of Bartmann’s raced and exoticized body reveal more about scientists’ desires than about Bartmann herself. Their scientific rendering of Bartmann, like Morrison suggests of the Africanist persona in literature, is an elaborate meditation on the Self in the appearance--and often deep conviction--of investigating Others. When the narrator of The Complete Home encourages women to read travel literature of mysterious, distant, locales; when Julia calls for financial and material resources to exploit Alaskan land and civilize Alaskan people; when she describes missionary efforts among Alaskans as “finding the moral use of dark things;” when she imagined a fictionalized black woman’s body as a vessel for moral lessons to white schoolchildren, Julia was producing far more than innocent didactic missives for an increasingly literate female public. She was producing an extraordinary meditation on The Self.
The 19th century developments chronicled in Chapter Two such as the popular press, increased literacy, valorization of the written word and the professionalization and specialization of occupations made the advent of the professional female author identity possible, allowing women of Julia’s ilk opportunities to craft and circulate different sorts of public selves than had been available to them previously. Middle-class white women had fewer public avenues for the articulation of racism and the performance of Self than their male counterparts whose cogitations were conveyed through scientific publications, political treatises, acts of law, and public speeches; whose identities were forged at greater rates in professional and labor capacities outside the home. Domestic fiction, housekeeping manuals, religious tracts, and didactic texts solidified the reign of the Woman Writer and gave her, courtesy of technological production, expansive canvases to paint and circulate versions of her newly-emergent Self.

The imagined racialized figurations of Self and Other that Julia constructed in didactic missives might easily be overlooked, dismissed as trivial, or mistaken for innocuous feminine dabblings in ink because their transparent and often droning messages frequently overshadow their textual grace and finesse. Nor do these texts carry the authoritative weight in present day as do their literary counterparts and the scientific writings male comparative anatomists and anthropologists produced during this period which modern scholars have heavily dissected. Yet, threads of a multi-stranded discourse, Julia’s didactic texts were conceived and produced amid the same heavily-racialized discourses of Science, Imperialism, Meritocratic Individualism, and Protestant Uplift and helped to channel and sustain the energy of such discourses in a specific direction—among middle-class white women. This audience hungrily absorbed popular
publications, in women's own efforts, perhaps, to construct themselves as educated middle-class reading subjects.

The particular ways race is articulated in Julia’s texts is a telling commentary on the forms of racial discourse appropriate for middle-class white women to discuss in publishing venues. The dissection of Sarah Bartmann's genitals—a terrain unquestioned in its suitability for scientific investigation, for instance—or mixed-race fraternization and reproduction, commonly discussed among physicians and scientists, would likely have been taboo topics in women’s domestic and didactic writings due to their potential for compromising the public performance of 19th century white femininity and the middle-class authorial Self. Julia’s articulations of white femininity and racism were particular to her female authorial imaginary and her targeted audience, nestled snugly among lessons to children, domestic encyclopedias, and tales of benevolent female acts of social uplift.

I want to return to an argument Foucault makes in “What is an Author?” He asserts, “I believe that it is better to try to understand that someone who is a writer is not simply doing his work in his books . . . but that his major work, is, in the end, himself in the process of writing his books” (Foucault “Author”; my emphasis). In other words, Foucault’s choice of pronoun aside, the work is a Technique of the Self: “the work is more than the work: the subject who is writing is part of the work” (qtd in Schaafsma 265). This statement is particularly compelling when considered in tandem with the shift in author function that occurred at this time in which who was speaking became significant for the authenticity and reliability of what is spoken. Women’s writing may not only have fractured the construct of Author as Man but may also reflect large groups
of women’s efforts to write themselves—and to write different sorts of selves than those that had been available to them previously.

Although this sounds like an empowering victory narrative, a tale of silenced women coming to voice, this brief foray into Julia’s fiction reveals its pernicious side. As Comaroff and Comaroff suggest, “there will be people who stand to suffer from the way in which social memory is fixed” (15). If white women’s writing was in part “an extraordinary meditation on the Self” this professional Self was partially advanced and concretized through the epistemic violence it wreaked on discursive constructions of racialized Others.

Julia’s final line from “Fiddlin’ Jim” is a relevant point on which to close. Mrs. Dole, the benevolent Christian woman with whom the tale begins and ends, has succeeded in bringing Fiddlin’ Jim to the Lord, and she is filled with gratitude. The story closes, “. . . the teacher who had wrought in faith and humility in a dark place gave thanks to God who had added such jewels to her crown” (141). Mrs. Dole’s (white) luminescence, her bejeweled crown, her solidified relationship with God, all became possible by saving “the dark place” that was Fiddlin’ Jim. If we entertain Cameron McCarthy’s suggestion that “racially dominant identities depend on the constant ideological appropriation of the other” as he asserts in The Uses of Culture (137), the construction of a gendered blackness in this tale is an essential element for the construction of the white female imaginary. To combat their own Otherness from Male Author, these “women” seize and appropriate Others to create themselves.
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---. *A Plain Woman's Story*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1890.


---. *Patriot and Tory*. Cincinnati: Jones Brothers, 1876.


---. *Under the Yoke and Other Tales*. Cincinnati: Western Tract and Book Society, 1871.

---. *Priest and Nun*. Cincinnati: Western Tract and Book Society, 1871.

---. *Moth and Rust*. Boston: Henry Hoyt, 1870.

APPENDIX A:

FIDDLIN’ JIM
APPENDIX B:

JULIA’S PUBLICATIONS
1850-59
1859. Freddy, the Runaway. Philadelphia.

1860-69
1860. George Miller and His Mother. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication.
1863. Life and light, or, Every day Religion. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication.
1865. The Little Norwegian and the Young Wood Cutter.
1865. Marion Through the Brush.
1865. The Path and The Lamp. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication.
1866. Mabel and the Turn of the Southwest.
1867. The Cabin in the Brush.
   1. The Little King [Jehoash]
   2. Good Louise [Scheppler]
   3. Our Class.
   4. Story of a Prophet [Elisha]
   5. Three Seats Full [St. Peter]
   6. Richard Knill
   7. The Story of a Tinker [Paul Bunyan]
   9. The Indian’s Friend. [David Brainerd]
12. Tom Scott


1870-79
  1. George W. Shart
  2. John Knox
  3. Martin Luther
  4. Queen Margaret
  5. John Calvin
  6. William Farrel
  7. Renee [of Ferrara]
  8. William Tyndale
  9. Richard Baxter
  10. John Huss
  11. Philip Melanchthon
  12. Admiral Coligni.

1870. The Ohio Ark and Where it Floated. Philadelphia.
1874. The Life-Cruise of Captain Bess Adams. New York [1876].
1879. Twelve Noble Men: Stories for Young People. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication. [1880]

1880-89
1881. Practical Life; or, Ways and Means for Developing Character and Resources. The Individual Considered in regard to domestic life, common sense, physical culture...the world's wedding day. Boston: DL Guernsey.
1883. Among the Alaskans (Map and Illustrations). Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication.
1884. Mr Standfast's Journey; or, the Path of the Just. Boston.
1885. Roland's daughter: a Nineteenth Century Maiden. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication [1886]
1885. Bricks from Babel: A Brief view of the Myths...of races, with concise studies in ethnography. New York, J.B. Alden.
1886. The Story of Rasmus, or the Making of a Man. New York.
1887. A Made Man: a Sequel to "Rasmus; or, the Making of a Man." New York.
1889. Rag Fair and May Fair, The Story of "Me and Benie." Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School work.

1890-99

1899. A Bonnie Boy.

No Date
A Boy of Today
The Field of Fortune.
Tales for the New Century
My Five Wards, or, Aunt Huldah's Homilies. Dayton, Ohio.
Two Boys. Philadelphia, PA.