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IN TRANSITION

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Reading Societies (Philadelphia: Printed for T. Dobson, 1798), 290. Mary Chapman footnotes this in her edition of *Ormond*, p. 126.

28 Tobin Siebers, *Disability Aesthetics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010). It is worth noting, as long as we are focused on formal features of the novel, that the intersections of disability and the gothic remain more generally undertheorized. For what does exist, see Holmes, "Disability"; David Punter, "'A foot is what fits the shoe': Disability, the Gothic and Prosthesis," *Gothic Studies* 2.1 (2000): 39–49; and the recent special issue on "Disabled Gothic Bodies," ed. Stevi Costa, *Studies in Gothic Fiction* 6.1: 4–85. Unfortunately, these discussions mostly focus on twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature. Also see Mitchell and Snyder's discussion of Byron's *The Deformed Transformed* in *Narrative Prosthesis*.

29 Cathy N. Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 303.

30 For an excellent account of the diagnostic features of Brown's narrative in *Weiland* with regard to mental health, see Grubbs, "The Politics and Poetics of Diagnosis."

31 For a discussion of "crip" as an adjective, noun, and verb, see McRuer, who describes its "fluid and ever-changing" character, its challenge to compulsory norms, and its radical potential. Robert McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 34. Also see Carrie Sandahl's essay "Queering the Crip or Cripping the Queer?: Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 9.1 (2003): 25–56. Yergeau builds on this discourse of "cripping" when she suggests the transformative work of "neuroqueering" (*Authoring Autism*).

32 On the crisis of the insanity defense in the late eighteenth century – especially acquittal without confinement – see Richard Moran's "The Modern Foundation for the Insanity Defense: The Cases of James Hadfield (1800) and Daniel McNaughtan (1843)," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 477.1 (1985): 31–42; and Nigel Walker's "The Insanity Defense before 1800," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 477.1 (1985): 25–30.

33 See, e.g., Edith Sheffer, *Asperger's Children: The Origins of Autism in Nazi Vienna* (W. W. Norton, 2018).

34 See, e.g., Yergeau, *Authoring Autism*, 18–19.

CHAPTER 18

A Queer Crip Method for Early American Studies

Don James McLaughlin

> [T]he pleasure is in the fit – temporary and unburdened.
> —Travis Chi Wing Lau, "The Pleasure of Fit" (2019)

> Take back your hands. Hold out your dominant hand, palm up. Your other hand curls into a fist, except for your pointer and your middle finger. Rest those two fingers on your dominant palm. This is the sign for "lie," as in lying down. Imagine those fingers as your legs, your body.
> —Ross Showalter, "Night Moves" (2020)

In the early United States, Knickerbocker[1] poet Fitz-Greene Halleck became known for the intimate friendships with men that he documented in verse. Biographers have enjoyed illustrating this reputation by way of the candid, playful, though no less despondent resentment he displayed when his best friend and fellow poet Joseph Rodman Drake quit his bachelorhood to marry Sarah Eckford in 1816. Halleck never married. Nor did he try to conceal the betrayal he felt. To his sister Maria, Halleck grumbled:

> [Drake] has married, and, as his wife's father is rich, I imagine he will write no more. He was poor, as poets, of course, always are, and offered himself a sacrifice at the shrine of Hymen to shun the "pains and penalties" of poverty. I officiated as groomsman, though much against my will. His wife is good natured, and loves him to distraction. He is, perhaps, the handsomest man in New York, – a face like an angel, a form like an Apollo, and, as I well knew that his person was the true index of his mind, I felt myself during the ceremony as committing a crime in aiding and assisting in such a sacrifice.[2]

The poet's spectacular pettiness notwithstanding, the marriage was not as catastrophic as Halleck predicted. He and Drake kept writing poetry together, and their lives remain entwined in literary history. So great an impression did Halleck and Drake's relationship make on contemporaries that they are said to have inspired Bayard Taylor's *Joseph and His Friend*

(1870), a book frequently hailed as one of the century's most significant queer novels.[3]

While Halleck continues to be remembered for advancing a national tradition of queer love poetry, a key aspect of the erotics of his verse has consistently been glossed over. Halleck was partially deaf, and he wrote with attention to his deafness. He lost hearing in his left ear in 1792, at the age of two. Observing the toddler playing by himself one day, two inebriated militiamen decided it would be amusing to "astonish" the "little fellow" by "discharging their guns, loaded only with powder," next to his head; the practical joke terminated "the hearing in his left ear for life."[4] Surviving accounts indicate that his right ear was also somewhat affected, and his hearing continued to diminish in adulthood as his career progressed. Halleck sought and became disillusioned with medical solutions as a young man. Months prior to Drake's death, Halleck wrote to his sister, "My deafness has lately been accompanied with a dizziness and a constant pain in the head," leaving him certain "that the applications made by my quack doctor would not avail me."[5] A longtime churchgoer, Halleck grew frustrated with the inaccessibility of the service to the hard of hearing and eventually ceased attendance. Before abstaining from church for good, Halleck was known to occupy himself during a too-silent sermon by reciting "inaudibly" to himself "poems or favorite chapters of the Bible, which he had committed to memory."[6] Even when he possessed enough hearing to make out the sermon as a child, this had been his preferred style of engagement, "recalling some of his favorite poems, in lieu of listening to a dull sermon."[7] As with his fondness for handsome men, Halleck's hearing loss became an important facet of his celebrity, during his lifetime and posthumously. Still, scholars have yet to unite these formative elements – his queerness and deafness – to examine the way Halleck's poetry aestheticizes a composite queer disabled sensibility.

This chapter sketches a queer crip method for the study of early American literature and culture. Far beyond Halleck, queer and disability histories have too rarely combined forces. Queer historians have often predicated the politics of biographical recuperation on ableist logics of physical and intellectual meritocracy. Meanwhile, recent colonial and early national disability histories have situated the affordances of preindustrial familial work – that is, the revelation that disabilities tended to be actively assimilated into the division of domestic labor in earlier periods – within the narrow purview of heterosexist kinship. A critical question arises: What divergent intimacies and life histories become accessible when we break from these siloed schemas?

Intersections between disability and queerness have elicited greater consideration from scholars of contemporary media. In *Crip Theory*, Robert McRuer uses the term "compulsory able-bodiedness" to denote an ideology, akin to Adrienne Rich's concept of "compulsory heterosexuality,"[8] which presumes certain thresholds of physical ability (the capacity for heterosexuality included) to constitute innate ideals to which all bodies aspire.[9] Fault lines spread through the refusals of real bodies to acquiesce: "precisely because these systems depend on a queer/disabled existence that can never quite be contained, able-bodied heterosexuality's hegemony is always in danger of collapse."[10] From this vantage point, queer crip reciprocities have been understood to materialize through the work of critique – that is, the function of critique to refract social norms through prisms of deviant and extraordinary embodiment, thus making visible normativity's interior tensions and dependencies. This critical lexicon informs recent historical work as well. In his essential book *Novel Bodies*, Jason Farr shows how eighteenth-century British novels "establish queer, disabled embodiment as an ambivalent experience marked by the exquisite pleasure of transgression and the enduring social and physical pain of disability," thus evincing how "the British literary history of sexuality is thoroughly reliant on impaired bodies for its discursive contours."[11] Across this work, excavating the contingencies of normative discourse facilitates the denaturalization of ableist, homophobic, and transphobic regimes of representation.

This scholarship has developed an invaluable vocabulary around the common positionalities linking queer and disabled subjects. However, the task of historicizing disability, sexual difference, and gender variance introduces complicating quandaries that remain underexplored. One is the straightforward issue of anachronism. Are disability and queerness really useful categories of analysis for early American studies? Building on previous research, the present chapter maintains that both categories prove useful to the extent that they can be decoupled from presentist connotations. As Greta LaFleur explains, sexuality did not cohere in its modern post-sexological iterations in the eighteenth century; nevertheless, "there was still sex," including a science of sex.[12] Moreover, as Thomas A. Foster writes, "same-sex sex becomes more consistently and firmly, if still inconsistently, attached to personhood and identity" across the colonial and early national periods.[13] Likewise, Sari Altschuler and Cristobal Silva assert that while early American ideas of disability did not possess the cultural and legal cohesion the concept holds today, disability history may still address itself to the question of "which conditions were disabling in

the period," as well as to "how historical epistemologies and reading practices of disability can help us evaluate the period anew."[14] Interfusing these foci, this chapter takes particular interest in how people in the early United States posed deviating bodies, behaviors, and desires within, against, on the peripheries of, and beyond their sociolinguistic milieu.

A related impasse has been that intersectional work funneled through a multipurpose theory of social constructionism, which foregrounds norms to demonstrate how their dominance has been propped up by ideology, has sometimes risked ensnaring queer disabled subjects within the same prejudicial paradigms they challenge. For good reason, queerness and disability have been explored together in light of their subjection (and resistance) to what disability theorist Eunjung Kim has termed "curative violence," meaning "the exercise of force to erase differences for the putative betterment of the Other," which, in its insatiable appetite for conformity, "ends up destroying the subject in the curative process."[15] To be sure, the same medical model that distorts the meaning of disability in this way, as a state needing to be "fixed," is complexly imbricated with late nineteenth- and twentieth-century treatments of same-sex desire and transgender consciousness as psychopathologies in need of therapeutic correction. Yet this same chronological overlay begs the question: How should the constitutive reciprocities of queerness and disability be conceived of prior to the compounded consolidation of the medical model of disability with the field of sexology?

In making notes toward an answer, I chart a national iconography of queer disability in the early United States, which at once interacts with and exceeds the logic of pathologization. A word on the subject of American literature "in transition" becomes necessary. In disability history, the period 1770–1826 tends to be described across the Atlantic world as a shift from charity to the augmentation of medical and institutional powers – in Henri-Jacques Stiker's words, a purported "humanization of the lot of the aberrant," reified through "the realization of the medical profession's great dream to care for the ill and in so doing to become the adjudicators of ... norms of life and of health."[16] In the American colonies, diverse impairments confronted a range of responses. As Kim E. Nielsen writes, "bodily variations were relatively routine and expected – and accommodations were made ... to integrate individuals into community labor patterns."[17] Towns used almshouses to manage individuals without familial support; in the late colonial and early national periods, institutions used to confine the "insane" paved the way for the rise of the asylum. Nielsen emphasizes further how stigmatization took new shape in the early United States via "the legal and ideological delineation of those who embodied ableness and thus full citizenship, as apart from those ... considered deficient and defective."[18] Instructive as these generalizations are in establishing collective context, a queer crip historical method requires that we pursue also the embodied rebellions, kinships, and pleasures of figures who carved out spaces and livelihoods suited to their unique ambitions. Accordingly, the interlocutors at the heart of this chapter reveal departures unbidden across three domains: (1) the discursive tools of queer crip self-fashioning, (2) erotic built environments, and (3) the queerly disabled sensoria of early American letters.

1. *Early Americans laid claim to intersections between disability, gender variance, and sexual difference as sites of self-fashioning.* In May 1782, a man named Robert Shurtliff, roughly 5′7″ in stature, joined the Light Infantry Company of the 4th Massachusetts Regiment of the Continental Army. An elite troop, the Light Infantry Company selected members for their pronounced height and strength. Later in 1782, Shurtliff took two musket balls to the thigh and received a cut on the forehead. For reasons obscure to his compatriots, Shurtliff insisted on removing the musket balls himself. Allowing a doctor to intervene was too great a risk because of an undisclosed factor: Shurtliff served as a wartime alias for a person known elsewhere as Deborah Sampson.[19] Women took on numerous roles critical to the success of the revolution – in relaying intelligence, in service roles as camp followers, and on the battlefield in extenuating emergencies – but they were denied enlistment. Adopting a male persona constituted the only avenue to serve officially in combat. In and outside the army, for persons who took on the dress and identity of a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth, medical attention signified prohibitive perils. When Shurtliff became ill in 1783, it was a Philadelphia physician who discovered the cloth he used to bind his chest, first removed Shurtliff to his family's home to protect the patient's privacy, and at last broke confidentiality in a letter to General John Paterson, at which point Sampson was honorably discharged. Earlier, following his injuries in 1782, Shurtliff had succeeded in removing one musket ball from his thigh, just below his groin, with a sewing needle and penknife. Buried too far in to be retrieved, the second musket ball stayed lodged in Sampson's thigh.[20]

Because Sampson reassumed her previous name after the war, her orientation toward gender has attained significance in commodious and competing ways. Sampson has been hailed as a woman patriot who refused to be precluded from fighting for liberty, thus attesting to the

unfoundedness of sex-based discrimination in the military.[21] In their play with the changeable accoutrements that make gender legible and fungible, Sampson emblematizes a profound legacy of soldiers who have transitioned in military history and the barriers nonbinary veterans have faced historically.[22] Furthermore, LaFleur has revealed how Herman Mann's biography of Sampson implements botanical sexual science to supply a lexicon expressive of her romantic involvements with other women.[23] Alongside this scholarship, the injuries Sampson incurred during the war have tended to be interpreted, straightforwardly, as a sign of the soldier's bravery, rather than a concerted nexus of self-fashioning. In fact, much of Sampson's energy following the war was spent in efforts to obtain her place on the Invalid Pension Roll, a fight she became one of the first women in the United States to win in 1805. An important historiographical question surfaces at this intersection: Why has Sampson's decades-long investment in being recognized by Congress with the status of "invalid" been treated as separate from the complexity of her gender or, more precisely, been discussed as a fixed impairment effectively posterior to the gender variance that has made Sampson's story such a popular subject of recovery?

Historians have neglected to theorize an emancipatory dynamic: it was Sampson's unwavering resolve to earn recognition as a veteran invalid that, in turn, gave her an opportunity to maintain the identities of both Sampson and Shurtliff for multiple decades after the revolution ended. Mann's account insinuates that Sampson had mixed feelings on being discharged. Not fully prepared "to close the last affecting scene of her complicated, woe-fraught revolution of her sex!," Sampson made a detour. Retreating to a "sequestered hamlet in Massachusetts," they borrowed "the name of her youngest brother" Ephraim and "passed the winter as a man of the world, and was not awkward in the common business of a farmer."[24] This detail makes for a noteworthy caveat, suggesting a predisposition to live as a man disconnected from the apology of patriotic zeal.

Just the same, it would be a mistake to require this singular disclosure to acknowledge how Sampson's gender variance continued to unfurl following her time as a soldier. As Jodi Schorb has observed, Mann's biography itself represents a strategic reclamation of gender multiplicity. Early in her struggle to procure an invalid pension for her military service, Sampson – by then married to a man with the surname Gannett – sought out Mann, "a local editor eagerly hoping to build his reputation as a printer," to discuss the possibility of collaboration.[25] Convinced that Sampson deserved to be compensated for wartime injuries, Mann commenced interviews with the veteran by 1793. When *The Female Review* was

published in 1797, all 1,500 copies sold. Intent on proving the veracity of Sampson's honor, while also indulging in the sensational appeal of gender subterfuge, the narrative became indispensable to broadcasting Sampson's story.[26] Within just two months of publication, Sampson took off for New York City to seek the assistance of the poet and editor Philip Freneau in drafting her first direct petition to Congress. Freneau not only agreed to help; he published an ode to Sampson a week after the application had been submitted, proclaiming, "Now for such generous toils, endured, / Her day of warfare done, / In life's decline at length reward / This faithful amazon."[27] The poem took care to highlight the modesty of her request in comparison with her physical sacrifice: "She asks no thousands at your hands, / Though mark'd with many a scar."[28] This initial application failed, but the publicity laid the groundwork for a triumph in 1805. Throughout these ventures, an identity composed at the convergence of gender variance and disability became a lifelong project.

Invalid pensions for Revolutionary War veterans mark a founding moment in the development of a disabled American identity, defined as a status produced at the intersection of national belonging and physical impairment. Laurel Daen has demonstrated how this inceptive language of disability in the United States, inaugurated in the 1780s and 1790s, hinged on evaluating veterans' capacity for labor. "Federal invalid pension legislation authenticated the definition of disability as laboring incapacity and the assessment of disability by degree," resulting in a spectrum from full to fractional pensions, "and veterans and deponents molded the language of their applications to these specifications."[29] For Daen, the postrevolutionary bureaucracy erected to grant and deny pension applications based on one's capacity for labor reveals further how disability gained legibility in the United States as a requisite component of the nation-state.[30] Wartime service that impaired the viability of future work was understood to function proleptically, to constitute a hazardous labor on behalf of independence deserving of posterior remuneration. Sampson's ongoing efforts to garner recognition as a veteran invalid illuminate how she used this same constellation of disability, nationhood, and labor to disseminate records of a life story catalyzed by gender variance.

Sampson's recapitulations of her military past proliferated. One of her most efficacious exploits was the speaking circuit she commenced from 1802 to 1803. These productions – which spanned a dozen cities from Boston and Worcester to Albany and New York City, likely attracted between 1,500 and 2,000 attendees, and received mostly glowing approbation – combined oration with a sensational reveal she knew audiences

craved. The address sustained an artful defense of her decision to defy "the tyrant bands which held my sex in awe, and clandestinely, or by stealth, grasp. . .an opportunity which custom and the world seemed to deny, as a natural privilege."[31] Such lines formulate a poignant parallelism – the despotic subordination of the colonies coextensive with prejudicial obstacles she faced in the female sphere. Recounting scenes of service, Sampson also took care to disclose the lasting consequences of her injury: "A dislocated limb draws fresh anguish from my heart!"[32] Following the speech, Sampson would exit the stage and promptly return as Shurtliff. "Equipped" in "complete uniform," Sampson proceeded to perform "the *Manual Exercises*" they had learned on enlistment. In Boston this performance included being joined "by a company of officers," all "conclud[ing] with the song and chorus, *God Save the Sixteen States.*"[33] The pageantry and pathos of the spectacle gave Sampson an enviable platform for substantiating her claim to compensation.

The composite Sampson–Shurtliff persona featured on tour complemented the epistolary campaign she launched to make her particular narrative of veteran impairment convincing to Congress. The 1803 petition that first succeeded in begetting an invalid pension is not known to have survived, but an accompanying document did. One of the best avenues for understanding Sampson's self-fashioning is the way she built her reputability through a network of allies extending from her person: the effusive biographer she found in Mann, the poet-advocate Freneau, and, in coordination with the 1803 petition, the champion she secured in Paul Revere, whose 1804 letter in support of Sampson's claim became instrumental in winning her favor with the Boston congressman William Eustis.

In the essay "Getting Comfortable," writer Laura Hershey contemplates how a writing praxis developed in conjunction with her spinal muscular atrophy underscores the affordances of physical dependency. In Hershey's context, laying bare the "tedious" minutiae of communicating to caregivers what she needs to achieve a comfortable writing posture fortuitously illustrates the creative potential she derives from a "disembodied mind" and "discombobulated body."[34] Sampson routed her public persona through an analogous web of attendants. Revere's letter, for one, reads not just as a vote of confidence but as a calculated extension of Sampson's invalid form. "I have been induced to enquire her situation, and Character, since she quitted the Male habit, and Soldiers uniform," Revere writes. "Humanity, & Justice obliges me to say, that every person with whom I have conversed about Her, and it is not a few, speak of Her as a woman of handsom talents, good Morals, a dutifull Wife and an affectionate parent."[35] In essence, the letter frames Revere's evaluation of Sampson's eligibility as a series of movements undertaken to acquaint himself with and confirm her good character. Unquestionably, it was this hustle for an expansive advocacy that resulted in Sampson's victory: in the first judgment, $4 monthly, representing 80 percent of the $5 maximum.

Crucially, Sampson's efforts to solicit recognition as an invalid veteran transpired as an ever-unfolding recollection of Sampson's gender transgressions. In accounting for these interlocking aspects of Sampson's identity, a compelling phrase stands out from a follow-up petition Sampson submitted in 1818, designed to take advantage of the first general pension act providing annual stipends to any veteran who had served nine months and could prove they were in "reduced circumstances." "Deborah Gannett . . . maketh oath," she wrote, "That she served as a private soldier, under the name of Robert Shurtleff [*sic*] – in the war of the revolution, upwards of two years in manner following, *viz* – ." The "*viz* –" operates like a colon, commanding witness of her autobiography, a condensed account of her enlistment, military service, injury, and departure – days Sampson had described during her tour as the period she "became an actor in that important drama."[36] The language of performativity echoes a rhetoric of visual revelation Sampson used recurrently. "The curtain is now up," she told audiences on tour, "A scene opens to your view."[37] This is the literal meaning of the Latin shorthand *viz*, too. Generally used as a synonym of "that is to say," *viz* designates more precisely an abbreviation of the word *videlicet* (formed from the verbs *videre*, meaning "to see," and *licet*, meaning "it is allowed"), thus encapsulating candidly Sampson's tactical deployment of her public image: my audience *is permitted to see* (Figure 18.1). Sampson's play with an optics of exposure can be traced back to the start of her military career, where she went so far as to select a surname that seems quite obviously, however astoundingly, a brazen homophone for the very situation she guarded against, namely a "shirtlift," which turned out to predict the conditions of her discharge. Sampson's *viz*, her appropriation of the rhetoric of revelation – the showing of scars, her jarring juxtapositions of "manly elocution"[38] and traditional domestic duty – becomes in her postwar efforts a meticulous style of self-fashioning, choreographed to manage reception of her iconic status as gender-crossing invalid hero/ine.

2. *Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century built interiors provided material resources for the enactment of queer kinship.* For Sampson, an identity devised at the confluence of gender variance and disability found social intelligibility through the nation-state and bureaucratic assessment.

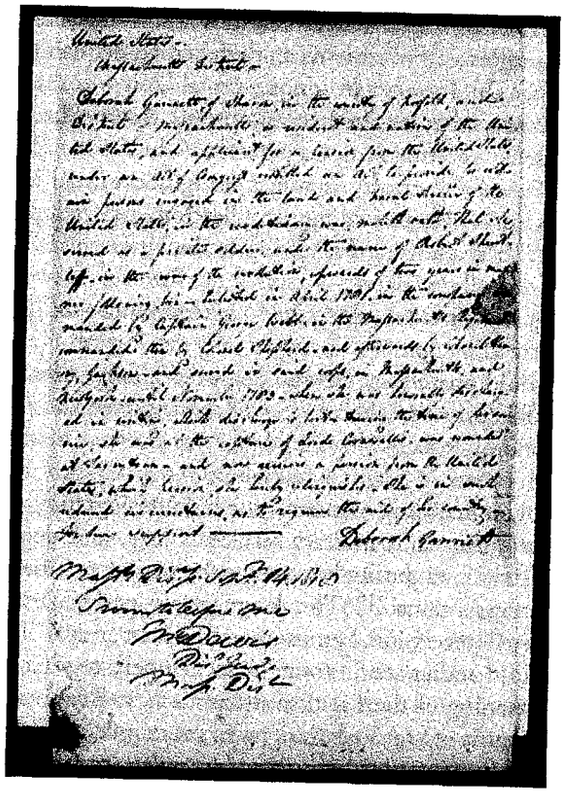

Figure 18.1 Deborah Sampson Gannett. "Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application File S32722. Deborah Gannett, Mass." https://catalog.archives.gov/id/54636851. Courtesy of the National Archives

Honing a queer crip historical method for early American letters requires that we dedicate as much attention to ontologies of impairment, debility, and chronic illness as states of being and becoming that create their own conditions for sociality outside the optics of medical and political authorization. In *The Matter of Disability*, David T. Mitchell, Susan Antebi, and Sharon L. Snyder observe how the social model of disability, used today to reconfigure disability as a "social disadvantage" constructed through environmental obstructions to access, has in some cases yielded adverse side effects.[39] In stepping through the distortive looking glass of prejudice to understand ableist ideology, the social model has, at times, essentially inverted that same object of critique: "Within this scenario of deviant

matter, disability has little to offer beyond functioning as a vehicle for exposing certain arrays of disadvantageous material expressions, or at most, an embodiment through which to know the world's exclusions, intolerances, and inhumane discriminations."[40] In its place, Mitchell, Antebi, and Snyder propose a posthumanist, neomaterialist disability studies, beginning with the premise that "the alternative modes of becoming that even the most severe impairments offer involve the promise of an alternative agency that reshapes the world and opens it up to the other modes of (non-normative) being."[41] A queer crip historical method extends this intervention by taking seriously the agential force of disability-as-materiality – meaning both the materiality of the body and the diverse animate and inanimate actors at work in a posthumanist redefinition of the terrain of disabled ontology – with the aspiration of resurrecting the amalgamative force of crip erotic becomings past.

Consider, as an example, the relationship of Charity Bryant and Sylvia Drake, two women remembered today for pioneering a long-term, same-sex companionship at the turn of the nineteenth century. In early 1807, Bryant met Drake during an extended visit to Weybridge, Vermont, the latter's hometown; by mid-spring they had developed strong affections for each other. By July, they were cohabitating. A brief 1844 memoir by Bryant recalls the advent of their domestic partnership straightforwardly: "On the 3rd day of July 1807," Sylvia "consented to be my *help-meet* and came to be my companion ~~in labor~~."[42] As biographer Rachel Hope Cleves observes, Bryant's use of the term "help-meet" serves to sanctify their devotion as a reverberation of the Hebrew story of creation, in which God fashions Eve from Adam's rib to address the dilemma of human loneliness.[43] In the words of the King James translation of Genesis 2:18, "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Cleves notes further that the crossed-out prepositional phrase "~~in labor~~" is evocative for the way it insinuates a prioritization of "love" over "economic need."[44] In January 1809, a year and a half later, Bryant and Drake moved into a new twelve-by-twelve-foot single-room home, erected in Weybridge especially for them, which they used as their living quarters and tailoring shop. The two women shared a bed, made structural additions to their home in the years to come, and became a revered couple (Figure 18.2). As Bryant's nephew, the poet William Cullen (of the same surname), wrote in 1850,

> If I were permitted to draw aside the veil of private life, I would briefly give you the singular . . . history of two maiden ladies who dwell in this valley. I would tell you how, in their youthful days, they took each other as

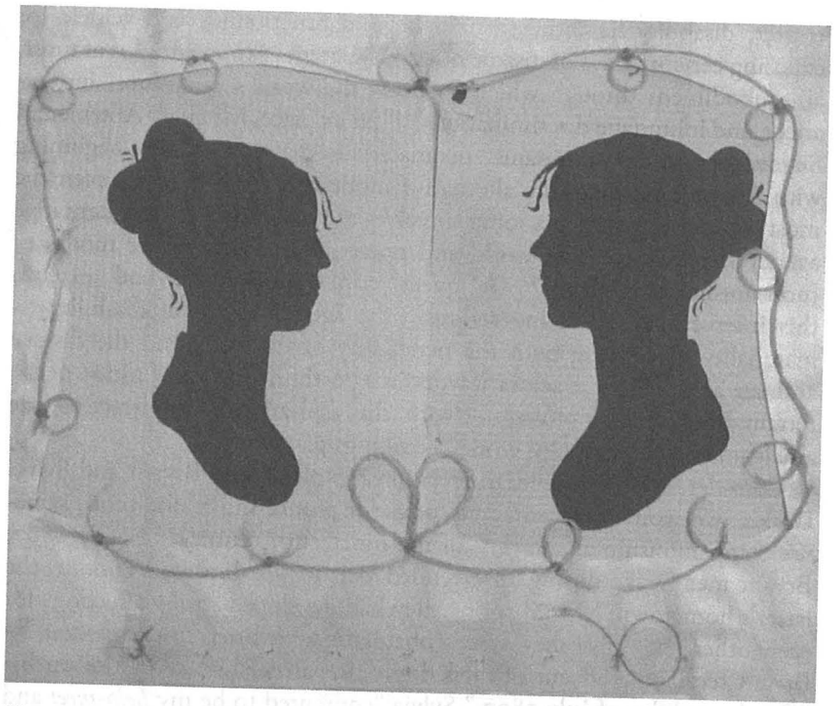

Figure 18.2 This double silhouette depiction of Charity Bryant and Sylvia Drake (circa 1805–15) represents a fashionable form of portraiture in the early United States, sometimes used to portray persons joined in marriage. The frame has been created from braided human hair, which unites in a heart between them. Courtesy of the Collection of the Henry Sheldon Museum, Middlebury, Vermont

> companions for life, and how this union, no less sacred to them than the tie of marriage, has subsisted, in uninterrupted harmony, for forty years, during which they have shared each other's occupations and pleasures . . . slept on the same pillow and had a common purse, and adopted each other's relations.[45]

Following Bryant's death in 1857 and Drake's death in 1868, Drake was interred next to Bryant, with a single headstone raised above them, Drake's name resting on Bryant's, their union commemorated through the transparent convention of a shared marital plot.

Two interlinked aspects of the Bryant–Drake partnership provide an opportunity both to supersede the presentist intrigue that has dominated recuperations of their story and to grasp how their companionship

nurtured an experimental union of queer and disabled ontologies. In her adolescence and adulthood, Bryant became known for having a dominant personality ("enterprising and spirited in temper," in William Cullen's words),[46] which became diversely manifest in her relationship with Drake, leading one contemporary to observe tersely, "Miss Bryant was the man."[47] Cleves proposes that Bryant thus shares certain traits in common with an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century social type known as the "female husband," a term historian Jen Manion defines as persons who, while "assigned female at birth," "assumed a legal, social, and economic position reserved for men: that of husband."[48] As Manion's definition would suggest, this concept is helpful but not fully adequate to the nuance of Bryant's self-presentation, considering the way she pursued a romantic partnership with Drake, legible as marriage, while also inhabiting a female gender. In addition to embracing a dominant personality characterized by masculine and feminine qualities alike, Bryant cultivated a selfhood enlightened by physical difference: a corporeal state troubled by the tuberculosis that steadily weakened her mother Silence Bryant's health at the time of Charity's birth, caused Silence's death when Charity was just one month old, and was understood to have passed on to Charity an enervated constitution, which she would write about and remain sensitive to across her life.[49] A poem by her older sister Anna shows this awareness was shared by relatives: "You drew in trouble with your earliest breath, / And liv'd the long expected prey of Death! / For wasting sickness nipt your infant bloom / And mark'd you out a victim for the tomb."[50] Indeed, the sickroom into which Charity was born foreshadows the domestic space she created with Drake, which evolved to normalize and shelter chronic illness. In William Cullen's autobiography, a reflection on the kinds of care customized at the Weybridge tailor shop immediately follows the equivalence drawn between their bond and the institution of marriage. Just as their "uninterrupted harmony" endured "in health," so was it enlarged in the way they "watched over each other tenderly in sickness; for sickness has made long and frequent visits to their dwelling."[51] As the "health" of the "head of the family" declined – beginning in 1824, especially, when Charity experienced an attack of severe pain in the left side of her head, which, with symptoms suggesting Bell's palsy, paralyzed her face on the same side – "she was tended by her gentle companion, as a fond wife attends her invalid husband."[52]

A piece of invalid furniture at the center of Bryant and Drake's home survives in the collections of the Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History. Stretching over five feet in length and painted olive green, the

Figure 18.3 Early nineteenth-century adult cradle owned by Charity Bryant and Sylvia Drake. Courtesy of the Collection of the Henry Sheldon Museum, Middlebury, Vermont.

object represents a fixture of the material culture of disability in early America known as an "adult cradle" (Figure 18.3). As foremost expert Nicole Belolan explains, adult cradles looked and functioned "like oversized baby cradles," featuring "two sideboards, a headboard, and a footboard," placed upon two rockers.[53] Popular from Maine to North Carolina from 1780 to 1840, adult cradles "provided comfort, therapy, and, most importantly, socialization" for people living with both "acute and chronic disability," from painful toothaches and headaches to "the disabling disease of gout," "the wasting disease of tuberculosis," and "open sores." Of the comfort they brought to their users, socialization was central. Sometimes built with handles at the head and foot, adult cradles were portable and often placed at the hearth, with sides low enough to survey the surrounding room. As Belolan explains, "they illustrate the point that in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries people with disabilities were not shut away from the rest of the family," but were instead "integrated" into "everyday life." Adding firsthand experience to her understanding of these objects, Belolan clarifies that, to be used

properly, adult cradles required collective participation: "I discovered that I could not rock myself unless I tried really hard, so even that requires another person to be there with you to help you rock." The dissatisfying stasis and contingent mobility of the adult cradle made it a nexus of mutual touch, an impetus to the recognition of discomfort and a reciprocal ritual of affection.

These properties of the adult cradle shed light on its purpose in the Bryant–Drake home. Built out of pine boards by Charity's cousin Asaph Hayward as a gift, the adult cradle sat before Bryant and Drake's hearth (at other times in their chamber)[54] with a magnetic allure, radiating a proclivity for pacifying motion emanating from the rounded base of its rockers. We know from a description penned by the Hagar family – who owned the land Bryant and Drake rented, came into possession of the cradle after Bryant's death, and subsequently donated it to the Sheldon Museum – that the bed held a "fat feather" mattress on a "straw tick."[55] Drake's diary reports that they allowed visiting friends to take naps in the cradle.[56] On August 25, 1823, Drake looked forward to resting her "aching face in the cradle as soon as I can leave the work."[57] On days of intensified sickness, such as September 23, 1823, Drake did not distinguish between work time and cradle time: "Feel quite sick have all that I need brot to the cradle."[58] Taken altogether, surviving letters and diary entries indicate that Drake and Bryant used the cradle in both positions, as rocker and recipient of the rocking, and that Charity rocked Sylvia while the latter did her tailoring work.

The Weybridge adult cradle concretizes the need for a new materialist disability theory. In conversation with Jane Bennett, Olga Tarapata has coined the term "unique mattering" to account for the ways in which "interactions with prostheses, wheelchairs, braces, and other devices" unfold as a "symmetrical, rather than hierarchical, interrelation between human and nonhuman actors," thus recasting disability as a relational dynamic of "agential embodiment."[59] Relatedly, in their "Crip Technoscience Manifesto," Aimi Hamraie and Kelly Fritsch call for a broad-based crip technoscience theory, which, against the banal appropriation of disability as "an object of innovation discourse" and curative consumption, takes for its starting point the reality that "Disabled people are experts and designers of everyday life" – "already making, hacking, and tinkering with existing material arrangements" in forms "committed to interdependence as political technology."[60] A relic of the vast genealogy subtending these commitments, Bryant and Drake's cradle stands out for its sensuality as a desiring actor in their company – "desiring" defined as a

state inclined toward interaction, which, in this inclination, seeks the convergence of neighboring bodies. Cleves proposes that Bryant and Drake may have consciously seen the domain of sickness as a special opportunity for intimate touch, a connection substantiated by Drake's reference in her diary to shared "lie-downs" they took outside of sleep, "perhaps leaving a cryptic reference to erotic encounters."[61] Whether or not rocking one another in the adult cradle itself provided a medium of explicit sexual gratification for Bryant and Drake, we should be willing to acknowledge this corresponding aspect of the cradle's resting potential.

Without a doubt, the adult cradle's capacity to facilitate sexual pleasure is imperative to understanding the object's latent affordances in the realm of invalid furniture. The adult cradle demarcated a prerequisite relationality, anticipating its proper experience, thus making it an object well-suited for early national iterations of what Tobin Siebers has called a "sexual culture for disabled people," meaning a set of practices channeled through the diverse sites of eroticism made possible by disability.[62] Most importantly, observing how the sensuality of the adult cradle surfaced through a triangulated cooperation of animate and inanimate actors opens an aperture onto a history of queer and disabled lovemaking, one where pain and pleasure cohabitated, their margins blurred – bodies pulled on each other, returned pressure, and assented – beyond the reach of identitarian validation.

3. *The knowledge and praxis of queer disabled intimacy shaped early American literature in the form of deviant sensory relations.* But how much sense can we make of the traces left by desiring bodies? What are the stakes of this work? And what ecstasies that spring from the fact of disabled intimacy remain stubbornly enigmatic under the gaze of the historian-interloper? One reason this historical approach can be difficult to put into practice is that it spawns a paradox inherent in the limitations it attempts to transcend: in unshackling responsible history-telling from the hard edges of naming, recovering the materiality of queer crip ontologies relies (partially but inevitably) on resituating the past from the vantage point of a certain transhistorical congruence. Acknowledging this constraint, one can still pursue methods of recovery based on both recognition and self-displacement. In its attention to the variable interface between stimulus and sensation (including the interface between the literary record and sensations imparted to belated readers at a distance), the history of the senses offers a particularly useful frame for seeking out both the resonance and unbridgeable differences of queer crip knowledges as they move between subjects over space and time. Your smells, tastes, are not identical

to my own. So much more removed am I likely to be from the smells and tastes of queer crip forebears.[63] Yet your words, their words, conjure for me a sensorial corridor in common and in so doing achieve a fresh synchronicity.

Enter Fitz-Greene Halleck. Despite the lack of sustained scholarship on the subject, the connection between Halleck's iconicity and his partial and, eventually, profound deafness has endured in popular recollections. In a recent, idiosyncratic tribute, a social media icon named Fitz-Greene Halleck the Deaf Cat, black with a white neck and muzzle, amassed 12,200 followers on Facebook from 2015 until he passed suddenly in 2018.[64] In another evocative recollection, Edward Miner Gallaudet, founder of the first college for the Deaf in the United States (known initially as the Columbia Institute for the Deaf and later Gallaudet University, renamed after his father Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, another pioneer of Deaf education), recalled seeking out the poet in his youth, while trying to find his own calling. Gallaudet was taken with Halleck's eloquence. The poet was born too early to have been given the option of learning a standardized sign language when he was young,[65] and little is known about the effects his partial deafness had on his style of communication as a child. However, Gallaudet treats the meeting as an impactful one. "[Halleck] showed the fire of genius in his conversation," Gallaudet noted, "and the interview was one long to be remembered."[66] Recorded by an activist who pledged his life to advocating for the necessity of accessible and separate institutions of Deaf education, the anecdote is significant for the way it deploys the nineteenth-century discourse of "genius," advancing a minority group's cause by citing evidence of that group's capacity for exceptional intellect and achievement.[67]

There is evidence to suggest further that Halleck has long been read for the way his poetry incorporates a hard of hearing sensorium. In 1911, founder of the New York School for the Hard of Hearing Edward Bartlett Nitchie published an essay in Alexander Graham Bell's journal *The Volta Review: A Monthly Devoted to the Problems of Deafness* titled "What Poetry Means to Me," which asserts for its central, unequivocal claim, "I have often thought of poetry as the special possession of the deaf."[68] In contrast to sonic music, Nitchie explains,

> The finer beauties of the music of poetry . . . are all mine. . . . I can conceive of no more haunting melodies in music than are to be found in the poetry of Poe, no more sublimity of rhythm than is to be found in some of the wonderful passages of Whitman, no more sweetness of tune than Tennyson gives us in "The Brook." . . . I verily believe that because I am denied the full

> enjoyment of other music, I enjoy poetry's music more than do those who hear. I concentrate the pleasures of both into the pleasures of one.[69]

In this insistence on a deaf music culture, carved out in the space where Deaf readerships and prosody meet, Nitchie's essay anticipates sites of reception being innovated by Deaf and hard of hearing listeners today, for instance, the deaf-accessible Good Vibrations Music Fest in San Antonio, Texas, which syncs vibrating Subpac backpacks and lightshows, or TL Forsberg's visual performances of music through ASL interpretive dance. Nitchie goes on to qualify that, even as poetry achieves its perfect reception in the deaf reader, lyric represents a humanizing medium, moreover, in the way it unites readers across divergent paths of access. It is here, in shifting to poetry's capacious commonality, that Nitchie turns climactically to Halleck. "All truly great poetry," he explains, "must answer to this test of Fitz-Greene Halleck's appreciation of Burns: 'His that music to whose tone / The common pulse of man keeps time.'" Taken from the poem "Robert Burns; To a Rose Brought from Ayrshire, Burns's Residence," the lines position Halleck not just as a poet who perfectly encapsulates the common music of poetry – the "common pulse of man," routed through metric time – but equally as an ideal reader: a poet who understood, like Nitchie, that poetry is the "special possession of the deaf." Nitchie uses the music of Halleck's iambic tetrameter to frame the essay's persuasive apogee: "No other art so genuinely expresses the universal feelings of the race, and by no other are our hearts made to beat in such perfect time with the pulse-beat of humanity."[70]

In this reading, Nitchie frames Halleck's verse as exemplary of a musical tactility liberated by Deaf reception. The deaf percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie puts it this way in the "Hearing Essay":

> Hearing is basically a specialized form of touch. Sound is simply vibrating air which the ear picks up and converts to electrical signals, which are then interpreted by the brain. The sense of hearing is not the only sense that can do this, touch can do this too. If you are standing by the road and a large truck goes by, do you hear or feel the vibration? The answer is both.... For some reason we tend to make a distinction between hearing a sound and feeling a vibration, in reality they are the same thing.... Deafness does not mean that you can't hear, only that there is something wrong with the ears. Even someone who is totally deaf can still hear/feel sounds.[71]

Reading poetry extends this musical tactility to the power of the written word to impart rhythm to the body, to impel the body's own rhythms to align or contend with the beat of meter, percussive consonants, and the

pace of punctuation. There's nothing to suggest that Nitchie saw Halleck as a queer poet simultaneously. Nonetheless, Nitchie's reading illuminates how Halleck transmitted romantic poetry to other men through a sensorial order informed by hearing loss. As Erica Fretwell reminds in her dazzling history of the scientific study of sensory perception, at such thresholds of communication the senses do not merely impart knowledge of the world; they "structure the ontological possibilities and pitfalls of becoming a particular historical body-subject" and "occasion further meditations on the perceptual habits and sensory ways of being that might be cultivated to instantiate alternative selves or social collectivities."[72]

The most famous poem Halleck wrote for Drake deserves reconsideration for the way it commemorates and grieves the loss of queer intimacy through an exquisitely orchestrated Deaf prosody. In 1820, the adoration that had once showed itself in the bitter visage of the groomsman adapted to a sadder occasion: Drake fell ill with tuberculosis and died at the age of twenty-five. In the elegy penned in the wake of that loss, "On the Death of Joseph Rodman Drake," Halleck combines a meditation on the failure of words to capture their object with an aesthetic grounded in musical tactility:

> When hearts, whose truth was proven,
> Like thine, are laid in earth,
> There should a wreath be woven
> To tell the world their worth;
>
> And I who woke each morrow
> To clasp thy hand in mine,
> Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
> Whose weal and woe were thine;
>
> It should be mine to braid it
> Around thy faded brow,
> But I've in vain essayed it,
> And feel I cannot now.
>
> While memory bids me weep thee,
> Nor thoughts nor words are free, –
> The grief is fixed too deeply
> That mourns a man like thee.

The wreath Halleck "should" be the one to braid – an abstract laurel the poem "essay[s]" "in vain" to weave – takes inspiration from the corporeal memory of arms and fingers braided together, the friend's hand "clasp[ed]" "in mine." The poem's ABAB rhyme scheme, conveyed through a

variation on common meter, carries the imagery of a braided laurel further, each rhyming strand broken by, because interspersed with, a partner thread. Halleck insinuates it is because their hands can no longer tangibly interlock that the braided wreath the poem begins to weave cannot be completed; untimely abridgments gesture to a love unfinished, such as the open-ended dash following the melancholic confession, "Nor thoughts nor words are free, – ." Halleck dreamed that a physical reunification would genuinely come to pass: he plotted their reunion in his will, requesting that he be buried next to Drake or that Drake's body be disinterred and buried next to him (a dream that came close to happening, but ultimately did not).[73] Most striking in the elegy is the foreshortening of, yet perpetual yearning for, a common meter, literary romanticism's preferred ballad form, defined by its alternation between iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. For the attuned reader, each of the first and third lines approaching tetrameter is revealed to consist of just seven beats, allowing one to interpret the lines' concluding amphibrach (a metrical foot taking the form ˘ / ˘) as, instead, a complete iamb followed by half an iamb, unpartnered. Having suspended his readers in the unfinished music of the first and third lines, Halleck proceeds by descending cathartically into perfect trimeter in the second and fourth lines, the companionship of the terminal iamb restored. The "common pulse of man" Halleck references in his tribute to Burns accrues significance in the elegy for Drake in this interweaving of forestalled completion and the dream of its return: the heartbeat that skips in the suddenness of loss – the lover's heartbeat silenced, the heart of the poet incorporating its absence – succeeded by an intermittent recovery of the lover's echo.[74]

"Still every feature I retain, / And every gesture trace"

This chapter has endeavored to outline a framework for a queer crip historiographical mode that departs from traditions preoccupied with either shoring up or reversing the terms of pathology. Elaborating such a methodology is necessary for the way it prioritizes embodied knowledge and simultaneously dismantles the presumption that early Americans would not have understood their lives in terms of disability or minoritarian iterations of gender presentation and sexual intimacy. Deborah Sampson/Robert Shurtliff, Charity Bryant, Sylvia Drake, and Fitz-Greene Halleck all took evident pride in the way they pioneered personhoods, routine affections, and sensorial literary aesthetics that melded disabled becomings with a defiant freedom in the making of queer and gender variant existence.

Nevertheless, in concluding, it will be useful to answer more intentionally the question of what it means to conceive of history using a dyadic queer crip analytic. As discussed earlier, disability studies scholars have pointed out a counterintuitive similarity between medical and social models of disability in recent years: if the medical model depends on circumscribing disability with the language of diagnosis, the social model turns the diagnosis outward, reading disability as a state of inaccessibility in need of repair. This shift has been immeasurably generative in theory and political advocacy, but it also foregrounds an orientation of negation, risking neglect of the way disability itself comprises world-making ontologies, often pointedly in spite of one's built environment. Reflecting on this limitation, Siebers has argued not for jettisoning the social model, but instead for rebuilding it through a frame he terms "complex embodiment."[75] Against a unidirectional rhetoric of diagnosis, Siebers defines complex embodiment as a model for theorizing "the body and environment as mutually transformative."[76] He explains,

> The theory of complex embodiment returns the social to the social model, but this theory does not conceal disabled subjectivity. Instead it places a premium on the disabled subject as a knowledge producer – and to such an extent that people with disabilities are identified as such by their possession and use of the knowledge gathered and created by them as longtime inhabitants of nondisabled society.[77]

I extend Siebers's intervention by proposing that this shift in perspective promises further to return the social to an embodied historicism, both informed by and irreducible to the tenets of social constructionism.

A queer crip method dedicated to centering the self-fashioning, material gratification, and aesthetic sensoria of historical interlocutors prepares us to consider how complex embodiment changes in dialogue with disparate contexts. It reminds that there is much we can learn by telling stories of local, microhistorical transition – what we might describe, borrowing the imagery of Drake and Bryant's vocation, as a focused tailoring of one's environment, associations, and resources. Untethered to diagnosis, a queer crip history of early American literature and culture demands an exploration of the way queer disabled subjects come into being and build community through their possession of knowledges generated wherever impairment and debility open new conditions for gender variance and queer relationality. Is this historiographical mode disabled and queer in content only? Hardly. In decisively inhabiting queer, disabled embodiment, it revels in theatrical disclosures of bodymind variance. It appreciates its own function as a desiring actor in the enabling of exploratory kinships. And it honors, concurrently,

the diachronically transmissible sensorial deviations and fiercely opaque lacunae that animate the experience of early American letters.

An early poem by Halleck offers a final example of what this method achieves in practice. Written to his friend Carlos Menie, a Cuban visitor to Halleck's hometown of Guilford, Connecticut, shortly after Menie returned to Cuba, the poem captures Halleck's effort to recover his friend's presence despite the distances, geographical and temporal, separating them. Straining to overcome their physical divide, Halleck employs a true common meter, situating the poem's sensorial order, once again, in a reliable pulse. The speaker recollects the sensation of his heart and his lover's beating in synchrony: "Ah, yes! that gentle heart I know, / At friendship's touch it beats; / I feel the sympathetic glow, / My breast the throb repeats." Halleck entwines this metrical tactility with an emphasis on visual memory, summoning mental recollections of the lover's body as an avenue for overcoming the obscuring effects of time's progression in the wake of Menie's departure.

> Time, whose destroying, wasting hand
> Bears all before its sway,
> As marks imprinted on the sand
> The ocean sweeps away –
>
> Yet hath its circuit rolled in vain
> Your memory to efface
> Still every feature I retain,
> And every gesture trace.

Here and elsewhere, Halleck imagines himself as a kind of steadfast historian, positioning his visual recall of Menie's face, and elsewhere his "pleasing form," as a defense against the sea's imagery of cyclical erasure, the "circuit" of the tide "rolled in vain." Halleck treats this historical work itself as ecstatic, the throb of the heart transfigured into pulsating ejaculation, at once orgasmic and exclamatory: "Oft in the stillness of the night, / When slumbers close mine eyes, / Your image bursts upon my sight; / I gaze in glad surprise!" The significance of the speaker's sensorial design becomes clearest when we contextualize it within an embodied knowledge spoken in concert with Halleck's hearing loss. In the poem to Menie, this embodied knowledge incorporates the writing of history itself. Halleck requests of the lover-interlocutor not just that he think back on their companionship in times of "solitude" but that he endeavor, moreover, to inhabit the lover's distinctive knowledge of him – a knowledge he imagines will "oft intrude" upon the consciousness of his reader, "When the calm mind is free."

Notes

1 Named after Washington Irving's pseudonymous historian-avatar Diedrich Knickerbocker, the Knickerbocker School comprised a cluster of early nineteenth-century authors based in New York City, known especially for their satire and romanticism.
2 Fitz-Greene Halleck, "Letter to Maria, Jan. 29, 1817," in *The Life and Letters of Fitz-Greene Halleck*, ed. James Grant Wilson (New York: Appleton & Co., 1869), 184.
3 See John W. M. Hallock, *The American Byron: Homosexuality and the Fall of Fitz-Greene Halleck* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 10, 151–174.
4 Wilson, ed., *Life and Letters*, 40–41.
5 Ibid., 235. Halleck's frustration with phony cures for deafness resonates powerfully with Jaipreet Virdi's account of the discourse generated by the myriad family remedies, patent medicines, and restorative tonics attempted in earlier periods: "Quackery and distrust ... characterized this commerce in deafness cures, as did hope and desire. Commercial processes were expressions of how to normalize hearing loss" (32). For more on this subject, see Jaipreet Virdi, *Hearing Happiness: Deafness Cures in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020).
6 Wilson, ed., *Life and Letters*, 562.
7 Ibid., 562.
8 Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," *Signs* 5, no. 4 (Summer 1980): 631–660.
9 Robert McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York: NYU Press, 2006), 2.
10 Ibid., 31.
11 Jason Farr, *Novel Bodies: Disability and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (Bucknell, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2019), 1.
12 Greta LaFleur, *The Natural History of Sexuality in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019), 10, 11.
13 Thomas A. Foster, "Introduction" in *Long Before Stonewall: Histories of Same-Sex Sexuality in Early America* (New York: NYU Press, 2007).
14 Sari Altschuler and Cristobal Silva, "Early American Disability Studies," *Early American Literature* 52, no. 1 (2017): 12.
15 Eunjung Kim, *Curative Violence: Rehabilitating Disability, Gender, and Sexuality in Modern Korea* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 14.
16 Henri-Jacques Stiker, *A History of Disability*, trans. William Sayers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 104.
17 Kim E. Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 39. See also Sarah F. Rose, *No Right to Be Idle: The Invention of Disability, 1840s–1930s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).
18 Nielsen, *Disability History*, 50.

19 In using pronouns for Shurtliff/Sampson, I have chosen to alternate between male and female pronouns according to their self-presentation in the contexts discussed, and to use a neutral pronoun when discussing both identities together.
20 As Alfred F. Young has discussed, accounts documenting Sampson's injuries are contradictory across a number of details. For a discussion of competing records, see Alfred F. Young, *Masquerade: The Life and Times of Deborah Sampson, Continental Soldier* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004).
21 "Mythbusting the Founding Mothers," National Women's History Museum (website), July 14, 2017, www.womenshistory.org/articles/mythbusting-founding-mothers.
22 See, for instance, Alex Myers's novel *Revolutionary*, which retells Sampson's story in the form of fiction.
23 Greta LaFleur, "Precipitous Sensations: Herman Mann's *The Female Review* (1797), Botanical Sexuality, and the Challenge of Queer Historiography," *Early American Literature* 48, no. 1 (2013): 93–123.
24 Herman Mann, "The Female Review (1797)," ed. Ed White and Duncan Faherty, *Just Teach One*, no. 9 (Fall 2016): 58.
25 Jodi Schorb, "Mann Seeking Woman: Reading *The Female Review*," *Just Teach One*, no. 9 (Fall 2016): 2.
26 Mann, "Female Review," 59.
27 Philip Morin Freneau, *The Poems of Philip Freneau: Poet of the American Revolution*, 3 vols., ed. Fred Lewis Pattee (Princeton, NJ: University Library, 1907), 3:183.
28 Ibid.
29 Laurel Daen, "Revolutionary War Invalid Pensions and the Bureaucratic Language of Disability in the Early Republic," *Early American Literature* 52, no. 1 (2017): 141–167 (144).
30 Ibid., 162.
31 Deborah Gannett, "An Address Delivered at the Federal-Street Theatre, Boston" (March 22, 1802), in *Weathering the Storm: Women of the American Revolution*, ed. Elizabeth Evans (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 322.
32 Ibid., 324.
33 *Columbian Minerva*, March 23, 1802.
34 Laura Hershey, "Getting Comfortable," in *The Right Way to Be Crippled and Naked: The Fiction of Disability*, ed. Annabelle Hayse, Sheila Fiona Black, and Michael Northen (El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2017), 130, 131.
35 Paul Revere, "Letter to William Eustis," February 20, 1804, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
36 Gannett, "An Address," 322.
37 Ibid., 323.
38 "A Correspondent," *Hampshire Gazette*, September 1, 1802.
39 David T. Mitchell, Susan Antebi, and Sharon L. Snyder, "Introduction," in *The Matter of Disability: Materiality, Biopolitics, Crip Affect*, ed. David T. Mitchell, Susan Antebi, and Sharon L. Snyder (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2019), 5.

40 Ibid., 6.
41 Ibid., 9.
42 "Account of Her Travels," Charity Bryant, April 9, 1844, Charity Bryant-Sylvia Drake Papers, Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, Middlebury.
43 Rachel Hope Cleves, *Charity and Sylvia: A Same-Sex Marriage in Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 101.
44 Ibid., 102.
45 William Cullen Bryant, *Letters of a Traveller; or, Notes of Things Seen in Europe and America* (New York: G. P. Putnam & Co., 1855), 136.
46 Ibid., 136.
47 Cleves, *Charity and Sylvia*, 132.
48 Jen Manion, *Female Husbands: A Trans History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 1.
49 Cleves, *Charity and Sylvia*, 3–5.
50 Anna Bryant Kingman, "A Sister's Farewell," qtd. in ibid., 5.
51 Bryant, *Letters of a Traveller*, 136.
52 Ibid., 136.
53 Nicole Belolan, "The Material Culture of Living with Physical Disability at Home, 1700–1900," YouTube video. Daughters of the American Revolution Museum, April 11, 2017, 16:46–23:31. www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPv9pzPrbRM&feature=youtu.be.
54 Sylvia Drake's Diary, entry for August 25, 1823. Courtesy, Henry Sheldon Museum, Middlebury, VT.
55 "Large-Sized Cradle Rocked Grown Poet Bryant to Sleep," *The Burlington Free Press and Times*, July 6, 1936.
56 Sylvia Drake's Diary, entries for March 9, 1821; October 30, 1822; and August 7, 1835. Courtesy, Henry Sheldon Museum.
57 Sylvia Drake's Diary, entry for August 25, 1823. Courtesy, Henry Sheldon Museum.
58 Sylvia Drake's Diary, entry fpr September 23, 1823. Courtesy, Henry Sheldon Museum.
59 Olga Tarapata, "Unique Mattering: A New Materialist Approach to William Gibson's Pattern Recognition," in Mitchell et al., eds., *The Matter of Disability*, 74.
60 Aimi Hamraie and Kelly Fritsch, "Crip Technoscience Manifesto," *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 5, no. 1 (2019): 4, 2, 12.
61 Cleves, *Charity and Sylvia*, 183.
62 Tobin Siebers, "A Sexual Culture for Disabled People," in *Sex and Disability*, ed. Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).
63 While editing this paragraph, I had the privilege of hearing Ben Friedlander's excellent paper "The Dandy's Dissent" at the 2020 Virtual C19 Conference,

which argues for interpreting the decline of critical attention to Halleck as a consequence of his refined, highly particularized taste, so essential to winning admirers in his day, which now leaves readers feeling unmoored. Unlike my usage above, Friedlander means "taste" in the sense of aesthetic acumen; nonetheless, the argument can be adapted to apply here, since Friedlander's point is that appreciating Halleck (his satires especially) often requires reckoning with the loss of an impeccable sensibility, once "world-building," which grips us with its passion, yet does not strike with the force of its prior cohesion.

64 "Fitz-Greene Halleck the Deaf Cat," Facebook.com, April 5, 2015–December 9, 2018, www.facebook.com/fitzgreenehalleck/.

65 Edward's father Thomas would establish the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817.

66 Maxine Tull Boatner, *Voice of the Deaf: A Biography of Edward Miner Gallaudet* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1959), 32.

67 For phenomenal work on early national and antebellum discourses of intellect and genius, see the scholarship of Rachel Walker and Ittai Orr.

68 Edward Bartlett Nitchie, "What Poetry Means to Me," *The Volta Review: A Monthly Devoted to the Problems of Deafness* 13, no. 1 (April 1911): 89–90.

69 Ibid., 89.

70 Ibid., 89.

71 Dame Evelyn Glennie, "Hearing Essay" (1993), January 1, 2015, www.evelyn.co.uk/hearing-essay/.

72 Erica Fretwell, *Sensory Experiments: Psychophysics, Race, and the Aesthetics of Feeling* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020), 26.

73 Hallock, *The American Byron*, 91.

74 Derek Mong has disputed the hypothesis that the iamb (iambic pentameter especially) originates in the human heartbeat, arguing that the postulation mistakenly "hears the heart, an organ we all share, through an Anglophone ear." While I respect Mong's point that the relationship between the iamb and the heart is not a singular metrical tradition (and that one should be alert to xenophobic claims to the contrary), the language of Mong's rebuttal neglects the relation's capacity for deviant alterity – in Halleck's case, the iamb's capacity to denote a deaf, tactile music of bereavement accessed not by the ear, but through queer touch – crafted through an oscillating sensation of beats withheld and sequentially fulfilled. For Derek Mong's article, see "Iambic Pentameter Has Nothing to Do with Your Heart," *Kenyon Review*, April 16, 2016.

75 Tobin Siebers, "Returning the Social to the Social Model," in Mitchell et al., eds., *The Matter of Disability*.

76 Ibid., 42.

77 Ibid., 47.

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