

## Regional Nationalism and the Ends of the *Literary World*

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What we now call antebellum American literature emerged from a tangle of conflicting attachments to overlapping scales of cultural geography. America was both more and less than a nation in the 1840s; imperial in regard to expansionism and provincial in relation to England, it was also a collection of regions loosely bound by disjointed networks of production.<sup>1</sup> The *Literary World* (1847–53), an influential weekly trade journal edited by literary kingmaker Evert Duyckinck, illuminates how nationalist discourse within this contested cultural landscape was often not about the nation at all but rather about one or another of the regions jostling for cultural space.<sup>2</sup> As its “Introductory” prospectus prefigures, the *Literary World*’s vision of American literature was refracted through a distinctly New York lens: “Here may there be . . . something of the countenance of nature; something of the thoughts and influences of a great city; something of the free breath of the republic.”<sup>3</sup> The passage voices a seemingly familiar assertion of literary nationalism by invoking the republic and a distinctive literature to represent it. But this rhetorical thrust is hijacked by the “great city” that mediates between nation and nature, and that the “Introductory” confidently assumes its readers will recognize not as Boston or Philadelphia but as New York.

New York was indeed a metropolis, but the city’s codependence on networks of material, cultural, and human circulation that extended beyond it also made New York a region in competition with other regions.<sup>4</sup> This slippage allows “New York”—printed in the *Literary World*’s masthead and again above the “Introductory” without the delimiting

“City”—to double as a region of the nation. Following work that has taken a more processual than static approach to cultural geography, I take “region” in this broader sense to refer to a cultural group united by common political, economic, and artistic interests and structures unique to a particular geographic space smaller and more internally consistent than a nation but larger and more variegated than a local community.<sup>5</sup> Regional belonging was one of the most pervasive forms of cultural identification in the antebellum period because it served as a productive shorthand for these spatial alignments of interests. As such, multivalent textual objects such as the *Literary World*—which as its “Introductory” suggests was concurrently invested in economic (publishing), political (Van Burenite), and aesthetic programs—are vital for understanding how these discourses developed, intermingled, and came to be defined geographically. By refusing to subsume New York into the nation, however, the “Introductory” implies that their interests are interchangeable: that New York has a special ability to represent the nation and vice versa.

The relationship between region and nation has long been central to scholarship on nineteenth-century American literature. Two major approaches have structured this discussion. The first is the argument that the representations and print cultures of smaller scales of cultural geography, such as region, were circumscribed by the nation and served to consolidate its hegemony.<sup>6</sup> This is how Duyckinck is typically understood: as a locally situated proponent of literary nationalism who, for better and for worse, laid the groundwork for the institutionalization of American literature through his editorship of the *Library of American Authors* and his support of Edgar Allan Poe’s and Herman Melville’s careers.<sup>7</sup> The second approach to region and nation contends that uneven integration, variations in participation, and forms of resistance persist within and indeed structure the broader scales of cultural geography, such as the hemispheric or global, privileged by the transatlantic turn.<sup>8</sup> From this perspective, Duyckinck would be a minor figure if discussed at all because his regional advocacy, oblique and inextricable from abundant discourse about the nation, doesn’t fit our expectations of explicit regional advocacy. Far from being the paradigmatic mouthpiece of either literary nationalism or regionalism, the *Literary World* entangles these two discourses, productively blurring the distinctions that have structured scholarly approaches to them. The *Literary World* deploys nationalist rhetoric rather than decentering the nation but in doing so consolidates regional at the expense of national attachment.

It is most regional when it invokes the nation and in the manner in which it does so. The *Literary World* requires us to rethink the function of nationalism by dislocating it from the nation and to rethink the purview of regions by looking beyond discourses explicitly about region.

I argue that, rather than consolidating a national imaginary, invocations of literary nationalism produced regional authority and cultural practices. Indeed, the model of geographic inclusiveness typically identified with antebellum American literary nationalism uniquely flourished in New York, making it one regionally particular nationalism among many. This model functioned in the *Literary World* much as the “great city” did in its “Introductory”: it privileged the literary community centered in New York as the embodiment of geographic inclusivity, thereby equating the nation’s literary aspirations with New York’s. For the *Literary World*, the nation is primarily a rhetorical inflation, a projection of regional literary interests that belies rather than represents something like a national literature. I will refer to this phenomenon as regional nationalism: a regionally distinctive invocation of nationalist rhetoric on behalf of regional interests. The term “regional nationalism” has been used by political scientists and economists studying nineteenth-century Italy, twentieth-century Southeast Asia, and contemporary India to describe peripheral subnational groups that act against national centers to achieve national status. What these accounts have in common is a focus on the national aspirations of regional groups; in my usage, “regional nationalism” instead denotes a strategy for consolidating regional culture in contradistinction to other regions that is largely apathetic toward nationhood.<sup>9</sup>

Making sense of how and to what ends writers invoked regional nationalisms requires not only that we revisit the periodicals in which they did so, but also that we recognize how periodicals were shaped by geographic exchanges between them as well as between editors and subscribers. Recent approaches to thinking about regions, whether as distinctive sites of literary practice or as tools of nationalization, have primarily focused on literary texts’ representation of cultural geography.<sup>10</sup> I expand on this work by showing how such representations were developed and maintained through geographically uneven patterns of circulation and reception. Region, I argue, is a space of cultural identification that emerges precisely through this dialectic between geographic imaginaries and conditions of circulation, between textual representations of cultural geography and the way those texts traversed actual geography.

This essay moves between discourse analysis and circulation history to elucidate the mechanics of cultural geography during the antebellum transition from a regionally disjunctive field of circulation to a nationally unified one. In the first section, I explore how writers and editors promoted a distinctly New York regional nationalism through the interregional exchange of poems, reviews, and editorials. In the following section I use archival records from the *Literary World* to show that this concept developed within a feedback loop of regional subscription, in which the periodical's position in/on literary culture was negotiated through an exchange of weekly issues and yearly dues that reinforced the regional affiliation of periodicals and readers alike. My final section follows this process to its logical extreme by examining the *Literary World's* decline, tracing how the periodical's attempts to mitigate accusations of regional bias left it less nationalist as a result, ideologically adrift and without subscribers.

#### **The Ends of Nationalism in the *Literary World***

Exhortations to literary nationalism—the idea that America should have a distinctive literature representative of the nation—are common in the *Literary World*. Most famous of these is Herman Melville's pseudonymous review, "Hawthorne and His Mosses," which argues that critics', publishers', and authors' first priority should be to foster the conditions for an American literature to emerge: "Let America first praise mediocrity even, in her own children, before she praises . . . the best excellence in the children of any other land."<sup>11</sup> Melville regards Hawthorne as a step toward this goal, but the review relies on geographic allegory to model the scope necessary for American literature as a broader project. Written from the persona of "a Virginian spending July in Vermont," "Hawthorne and His Mosses" is suffused with eroticized language of national unification: Hawthorne "shoots his strong New-England roots into the hot soil of my Southern soul," an act perhaps responsible for the "men, not very much inferior to Shakespeare, [who] are this day being born on the banks of the Ohio," described earlier in the review.<sup>12</sup> In this allegory the nation is ambiguously imagined as at once the union of regions and their product.

Despite the firmness of its nationalist assertions, the comic tone of the eroticized unification passages in "Hawthorne and His Mosses" playfully belittles its regional parts: the Southerner is effete, the New Englander is domineering, the westerner is a baby. It is significant then that New York, where both Melville and the *Literary World* were based, is at

once absent from this ambivalent geographic allegory and everywhere around it. References to New York are even more common in the *Literary World* than references to the nation. Regular correspondents are often introduced as roving New Yorkers, sections on the theater and society news are focused on New York, and authors from the state are frequently given longer reviews.<sup>13</sup> This association is best described as regional because it depends on state authors residing outside of Manhattan; James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving, its two most-mentioned authors, are vital to the *Literary World's* conception of New York literary production. Amid this jumble of geographic signaling, the ends served by regional nationalism become most evident when the regional and the national are brought into tension through the weekly exchange of notices and reviews.

The *Literary World's* review of Bostonian Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem *Astraea: The Balance of Illusions* was one such occasion that forced the periodical to hierarchize its conflicting geographical allegiances. Delivered at Yale on August 14, 1850, Holmes's poem was also a literary product of the same Duyckinck-organized Berkshire outing that inspired Melville to write "Hawthorne and His Mosses," an event at which several prominent Boston and New York writers met (most notably, for the first time, Melville and Hawthorne). Holmes's reaction to the Berkshire outing stands in sharp contrast to Melville's, presenting a critique of the state of America's literary journalism rather than a celebration of its literature:

The pseudo-critic-editorial race  
Owns no allegiance but the law of place;  
Each to his region sticks through thick and thin,  
Stiff as a beetle spiked upon a pin.<sup>14</sup>

These lines argue that it is excessive regional allegiance, and not simply cliquishness or favoritism, that has caused the rampant partiality and puffery decried by the *Literary World* and others.<sup>15</sup> Defining such advocacy in terms of cultural geography, *Astraea* asserts that puffery is bad not because it is insincere but because it overestimates texts of merely regional significance. But the region against which the poem levies its harshest criticism is that of New York:

But Hudson's banks, with more congenial skies  
Swell the small creature to alarming size;

...

Strings of new names, the glories of the age,  
 Hang up to dry on his exterior page,  
 Titanic pygmies, shining lights obscure,  
 His favored sheets have managed to secure,  
 Whose wide renown beyond their own abode  
 Extends for miles along the Harlaem road[.]<sup>16</sup>

Mocking the slippage between geographic scales found in the *Literary World's* "Introductory" as "swell[ing]," *Astraea* uses comic overstatement to accuse New Yorkers of unwittingly doing the same. The poem earlier characterized the proper influence of New York as a geographic space extending beyond Manhattan by invoking the Hudson, which also passes through Albany (an important node in the antebellum network of literary distribution), as well as the state's motto "EXCELSIOR" and mountain "hamlet[s]."<sup>17</sup> Because New York critics are especially loyal to their region, however, they have developed an inflated opinion of its position in the cultural geography of the nation. *Astraea* contests this process by reversing it, demoting the radius of New York's authority from the national scale to mere "miles along the Harlaem road." The poem critiques New Yorkers' aggrandizement of their city, state, and region under the auspices of promoting a national literature as laughably antithetical to the accompanying claims of impartiality and inclusivity.

As the publisher of some of New York's foremost literary commentators, the *Literary World* was clearly a primary target of *Astraea*, which circulated widely as a pamphlet and as excerpts in reviews over the following months.<sup>18</sup> Yet, rather than supporting Holmes's attack on regional bias, the *Literary World's* review of *Astraea* objects instead to what it considers the poem's unjust slander of New York.

We are not disposed to accept the Doctor [Holmes] as our honest chronicler. If General Scott, whose gallant form has risen daily on our vision in the streets of Manhattan be not our "first soldier," who is? General Scott is a resident of New York. If Mr. Bancroft is not our "first historian," who is? Mr. Bancroft is a resident of New York. If William Page is not our "first painter," who is? Page is a resident of New York.<sup>19</sup>

The logic of this passage (which continues to name several additional figures) is meant to be synecdochic: because the nation's representative

figures reside in New York, New York can itself stand in for the nation. What the review rejects is not Holmes's accusation of New York's regional bias but rather the assumption that such bias is unjustified. In other words, the *Literary World's* response is to assert that New York is uniquely immune from the need to restrain its regional bias. By piling up its "strings of new names" and aggressively adhering to "the law of place," however, the review ultimately confirms Holmes's characterization of New York critics.<sup>20</sup> Under the strain of such insistent localism, the *Literary World's* attempted synecdoche is unable to fulfill its referential capacity and instead obscures the national whole to which the regional part supposedly corresponds. The result is regional nationalism, in which the nation functions primarily as a rhetorical extension of perceived regional characteristics and interests.

Holmes's accusation of regional bias and the *Literary World's* distinctly regional response to it were part of a broader discourse on the regional reputations and characteristics of literary periodicals. For example, an article called "Schools in American Literature" in the *New Haven Church Review* identified the *Literary World* as exemplifying the "New York school" of American literature. The *Literary World's* reply to this article, published just one week before its review of *Astraea*, exhibits its anxiety concerning the compatibility of region and nation as well as its own conflicted investments in both geographic scales. With passing reference to opposed critical preferences, the piece agrees with the *Church Review* that "the division . . . of the Literature of the Country, into two Schools—the New York and Boston—has much of plausibility." It nonetheless concludes that "we cannot accept" this division, asserting the *Literary World's* cosmopolitan openness to all corners of the country as a means of surmounting regional difference.<sup>21</sup> This move would seem to fit the general scholarly characterization of literary nationalism, which Meredith McGill describes as advocating an idealized "reciprocity of art, land, and nation."<sup>22</sup> Yet the argument for cosmopolitan nationalism here and in "Hawthorne and His Mosses" was itself highly regional in character. The *Literary World* represented one program for national literature among many; as "Schools in American Literature" recognizes, the ongoing debate in which these textual exchanges took part was not about whether there should be a characteristically American literature but what it should look like.

Contesting nationalisms reflected the cultural and political concerns of the region from which they sprung. As Benjamin Spencer observes, "Southern editors were demanding sectional works of their own to

counteract the 'smuggled literature' which was slipping into Southern firesides."<sup>23</sup> They, much like their western counterparts, understood the terms of their inclusion in a program of supposedly national literature as subordination to the powerful publishing centers of the Northeast.<sup>24</sup> Angered by reviews and anthologies that they believed discounted their region, western editors argued that the nation's literature must arise naturally—without the artificial training and promotion apparatuses they attributed to Boston or New York.<sup>25</sup> New Englanders, by contrast, tended to develop nebulous literary nationalisms that relied little on national unity. These included assertions that the literature of America, as a nation formed from many nationalities, should be uniquely international in scope, and that all great authors in English, as a shared linguistic heritage, were as much a part of American literature as they were of British literature.<sup>26</sup> Yet such formulations actually favored New England, with its more established universities, its closer ties to European cultural production, and its entrenched class of social elites who supported its literary scene. What these differences reveal is that literary nationalism, far from being a consistent (let alone coordinated) position, took significantly different forms in accord with the regional concerns that motivated them.

The cosmopolitan embrace of all regions was, paradoxically, an equally regional enterprise that uniquely flourished in New York. An 1847 *Literary World* article entitled "The Two Everetts," for brothers Alexander and Edward who had edited Boston's prestigious *North American Review*, argues that New England is "more English and as decidedly sectional, perhaps more so, than either the South or the West."<sup>27</sup> New York alone, the passage implies, exists outside regional interests. As an earlier editorial professed, "How different from [other publishing centers is] New York, which is cosmopolitan."<sup>28</sup> National literature, according to this logic, should follow the model set by New York, yet the rhetoric in these pieces inevitably slides toward portraying New York's inclusivity as proof of its regional dominance. This is evident in the reply to "Schools in American Literature," which promises that "we shall endeavor to keep the windows of our writing-chamber open, North, South, East, and West: and this we take to be the best province and happiest good fortune of our metropolitan position. While jealousies and heartburnings are indulged elsewhere, New York stands central."<sup>29</sup> What initially appears to be a profession of equality quickly begins to resemble Holmes's image of the swelling beetle on Hudson's banks, whose size subordinates the rest of the country. The



claims to cosmopolitan inclusivity fundamental to the *Literary World's* nationalism are regional because they presume the ascendancy of its own region as a center that will hold the fringes together.

The domineering position the *Literary World* assigned to New York is just what James Russell Lowell criticizes when turning to Duyckinck in his 1848 poetic satire of the American literary scene, *A Fable for Critics*:

“Good day, Mr. D——, I’m happy to meet  
With a scholar so ripe, and a critic so neat,  
Who through Grub Street the soul of a gentleman carries;  
What news from that suburb of London and Paris  
Which latterly makes such shrill claims to monopolize  
The credit of being the New World’s metropolis?”<sup>30</sup>

Rechristening Newspaper Row as “Grub Street” and reducing the city to a “suburb,” Lowell belittles the model of a would-be “metropolitan position” that “stands central.” But *A Fable for Critics* goes a step further, satirizing the well-known, aggressively nationalistic rhetoric of Duyckinck and the *Literary World* by associating their aspirations with foreign models. This critique was appropriate, given that mere months earlier the periodical suggested that “New York, already the Paris of America, is henceforth not unlikely to become the Paris of the world.”<sup>31</sup> In a parodic reversal of this boast, Lowell renders New York litterateurs as un-American and, on that basis, subservient. The result is that the poem contests, like *Astraea*, the *Literary World's* claim to speak on behalf of the nation. Though the New Englander Lowell had his own geographic allegiance—New York and Southern reviewers pointed out that the poem spontaneously praises Boston more than once—*A Fable for Critics* identifies the crucial point on which the *Literary World's* advocacy of new literature for the “New World” hinges: in making New York a model for national literature, it also apotheosizes the source of that model, namely, the city itself. The thrust of Lowell’s critique lies in its recognition that New York’s literary nationalism was a regional nationalism ultimately indifferent to the (rest of the) nation.

These explicit exchanges help illuminate how the *Literary World's* attachment to the literary preferences of New York shaped its critical practices on a week-to-week basis. The periodical’s second rebuttal of Holmes’s *Astraea*—that the poem and its writer were “artificial”—indicates how deeply rooted the periodical’s criticism was in the norms

of an intellectual tradition based in its metropolis.<sup>32</sup> The charge of artificiality belonged to a critical vocabulary used to identify, evaluate, and even berate works of other regions considered foreign to America-as-New-York. The same article on “the two Everetts” that accuses New England of being excessively regional makes this interpretive framework explicit: “*New Englandism* has certainly made our writers imitative, constrained, tasteful, and timid.” Writers of this school “are accurate and neat, but cold and superficial. They have no passion, not much enthusiasm, nor any marked individuality.”<sup>33</sup> This vocabulary at once insists on the subservience of New England’s critical tastes to those of old England and discredits the formal training facilitated by New England’s greater number of cultural institutions: “We had no Harvards.”<sup>34</sup> The charges attached to “New Englandism” are found even in a review of Duyckinck’s friend Hawthorne:

It may be a searching, conscientious operation on rare occasions to take our spirits out of their bodily cases and look at them nakedly, even in the thin, dry atmosphere of New England speculation; but we are convinced that, for the ordinary entertainment of life, such spectacles are, to say the least, unprofitable.<sup>35</sup>

Readers familiar with the *Literary World* or its New York peers would have recognized this as language deployed specifically against New England works. Charges of artificiality and coldness point to a thoroughly articulated critical apparatus by which the *Literary World* defined the boundaries of other regions and located itself in New York.

The emergence of these critical practices and the *Literary World*’s regional nationalism were mutually reinforcing: to identify another region’s literature as other was to at once affirm the distinctiveness of one’s own and to paint the other as improperly or insufficiently national. These two outcomes are contradictory only if we take nationalisms at face value as representative of either the nation’s literature or its literary interests as a whole. But as I’ve been arguing, the *Literary World*’s regional advocacy under the guise of literary nationalism ultimately served to construct and reinforce the region as a site of cultural affiliation. Deeming this process national or nationalizing would ignore, as Edward Watts and Keri Holt warn, the fact that “integration or absorption was by no means a *fait accompli*” in antebellum America.<sup>36</sup> For this reason regional nationalisms weren’t antinational either: much as there wasn’t yet a national print culture in the 1840s, there was no form of antebellum nation-

alism that *wasn't* regional. Deeming this process only regional or regionalist, however, would overlook the very qualities that made it so potent as a rhetorical tool for elevating regional interests and contesting rival regions on a national scale. Regional nationalisms were an effective means of maintaining regional affiliation for the same reason they have been underexplored by scholars of region: their ability to signal content as regional without (except on rare occasions) explicitly announcing it or making it reducible as such. By participating in this discourse, then, the *Literary World* was embedded in a broader sociocultural relationship with New York that preceded and extended beyond the printed page.

### The Ends of the World: Region and Circulation

For New York's literary community, the founding of the *Literary World* in February 1847 was a much-anticipated event. The *New York Evening Mirror* said of Duyckinck that "we know of no literary man in the country of whom [editorial success] might be expected with more confidence."<sup>37</sup> The *Democratic Review* called it "the most important event of the month affecting our Home Literature" and guaranteed "the spirit, fidelity and honor with which it will be conducted."<sup>38</sup> The *Spirit of the Times*, also of New York, wrote, "We rejoice heartily to see a new paper, of so high promise as we consider the 'Literary World' . . . we wish it every success, and we believe that it will surely attain it."<sup>39</sup> Operating under the guise of puffery, these notices also emphasize the periodical's inevitable rootedness within preexisting discourse: from the start, the *Literary World* was beholden to the very cliquishness its "Introductory" satirized and vowed to curtail. Fraternal editorial tone further implicated the new periodical in a particularly regional literary community, as evidenced by the absence of similar notices in periodicals of equivalent standing elsewhere.<sup>40</sup> It was impossible to publish in New York without being registered by readers as participating in the regional network of publications signaled by these notices.

The multifaceted expectations of the *Literary World's* local peers reflect a broader shift in the literary landscape of the 1840s, when New York's rising population and wealth accompanied a growth in its cultural ambitions that translated into a burst of periodical publishing. According to data from the American Periodicals Series, eighteen literary periodicals were being published in New York City in 1831, placing the city behind both Boston and Philadelphia (figure 1).<sup>41</sup> By 1843, just twelve years later, New York City was home to forty-six, leading into a half decade of numerical dominance. In the same five-year period,

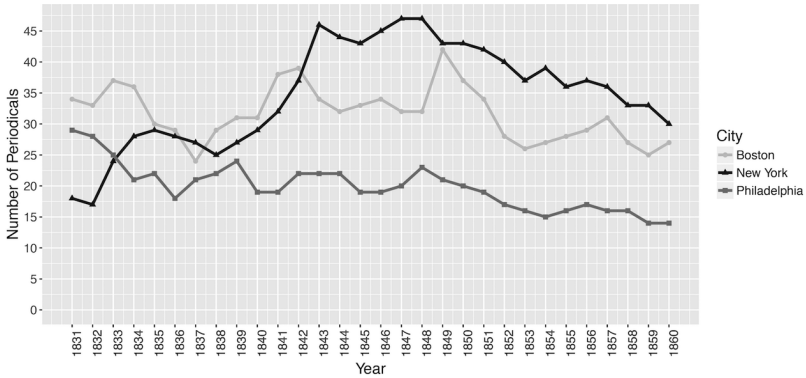


Figure 1. Active periodicals per year (1831–60) in the American Periodical Series published in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

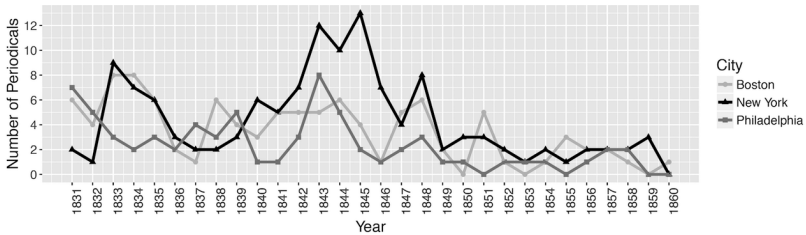


Figure 2. New periodicals each year (1831–60) in the American Periodical Series started in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

it would also produce more new periodicals than Philadelphia and Boston combined (figure 2). While of course incomplete, the APS collection's focus on literary periodicals makes it a useful measure of this movement.<sup>42</sup> New York had already been an important publishing center for decades, but this generation of periodicals marked a new concerted pursuit of cultural definition. Although Boston was still the nation's cultural capital and its periodicals retained this authority, New York of the 1840s was experiencing a renaissance of sorts that perceptibly shifted the regional balance of American publishing. To speak of recent editorial trends was thus to speak of a local phenomenon characterized by a new generation of periodicals that took its cue from New York. More importantly, to publish in New York during the 1840s was to partake in this movement.

The *Literary World* was a product of this regional movement. Indeed, plans for the periodical had already begun in 1845, New York's high-water mark for new periodicals.<sup>43</sup> Inspired by and benefiting from an environment unusually amenable to new print ventures, the *Literary*

*World* owed its existence to this burst of print production and the rising tide of literary New York more generally. The pages of the *Literary World* document this phenomenon, and its optimism reflects that of its region's cultural aspirations in the 1840s. The periodical's second issue professes that "the social spirit is gaining ground among the literary and artistic classes in the city," adding, in what is likely covert jab at the perceived elitism of Boston's literary circles, that "intellectual pursuits can be carried on in New York without the agency of champagne and oysters."<sup>44</sup> Regular columns on drama and society news were almost exclusively given over to those of New York, at times even insisting that the cultural institutions of rival cities like "Philadelphia, Hartford, and Boston" were "greatly inferior in extent to ours."<sup>45</sup> Advertisements, whether by the advertiser's choice or the *Literary World's*, follow a similar pattern. While publishers from all major publishing centers are found in each issue, the majority are from New York despite the fact that at the end of the 1840s Boston firms were responsible for publishing at least as many books.<sup>46</sup> The *Literary World's* distinctive regional nationalism and the critical practices that followed from it were produced within this broader cultural movement.

Cultural movements, geographic or otherwise, require producers and consumers. Leon Jackson and others have shown how personal favors and coterie collaborations were vital to the success of antebellum periodicals, but strong ties like these did not alone produce regional alignments like the *Literary World's*.<sup>47</sup> Archival records show that the New York region was the primary shaping force of the periodical's subscription network more broadly. A large chart, which appears to have been compiled during the periodical's high-water mark in late 1848 or early 1849, breaks down subscription numbers by state, listing an additional 943 subscribers from New York City alone, at the bottom (figure 3).<sup>48</sup> This is added to three other numbers—subscriptions sold through "agents out city" (1,086), "[agents] in [city]" (209), and the sum of the state-by-state list (1,588)—to arrive at a total of 3,808 subscriptions.<sup>49</sup> Combining the "City List" with the accounts handled by city agents, New York City alone was home to 1,152, or 30 percent of all subscribers. At 395 subscribers, New York State (the first listed) leads all others, meaning that New Yorkers constituted at least 40 percent of all subscribers. If we assume the proportion of New York State residents covered by agents was equivalent to the proportion of New Yorkers in the state-by-state list, the figure jumps to 48 percent, nearly half of all the periodical's subscribers. This may still be a conservative estimate; if totals for

State	Subscribers	Vol.	Price	Total
New York	212	78	293	595
Eastern States	16	25	64	166
New Jersey	17	2	23	32
Connecticut	19		3	5
Massachusetts	2	3	12	14
Virginia	1	5	14	13
North Carolina	12	31	55	78
South Carolina	8	11	60	149
Georgia	6	22	23	64
Florida	3	33	39	55
Alabama	4	29	65	129
Mississippi	10	16	47	73
Louisiana	4	3	25	32
Arkansas	1	33	39	42
Illinois	4	5	44	54
Indiana	12	4	22	38
Ohio	6	12	40	60
Michigan	1	4	27	34
Wisconsin	2	2	19	23
Minnesota	4	8	55	67
Iowa	2	5	26	34
Missouri	3	15	52	70
Illinois	2		18	18
Arkansas		2	13	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>1588</b>
Gents only				1068
City List				309
				943
				3808

Income of 1588 vol @ 5.00 each  
 1588 " " 3.50 " 495  
 209 " " 2.15

Figure 3. *Literary World* subscribers organized by state, compiled circa late 1848–early 1849.

agents are excluded altogether, New Yorkers comprised 53 percent of *Literary World* subscriptions handled by its own offices.

This regionally aligned geography of subscription cut across other demographic divides, encompassing an impressive range of social and economic groups.<sup>50</sup> The few surviving letters to the office of the *Literary World* show that its New York State subscribers included businessmen, rural readers, college libraries, and prisoners alike, as well as at least a few ministers and soldiers from the area who desired to maintain their subscriptions while stationed out West.<sup>51</sup> For readers with otherwise varied interests and investments, region proved a unifying cultural rallying point—evidencing, further, that editors' politics or class didn't necessarily correspond to those of their readers. Given the public association of the *Literary World* with New York and the centrality of New York regional nationalism to its appeal, readers from other parts of the nation likely subscribed because they sought a New York

perspective on literary news. Whether read inside or outside the state, the assumption uniting reader and editor was the literary preeminence of New York. Nor was region merely a negatively defined category. As the comparatively low total for the populous and well-connected New England states (108) suggests, the preponderance of New York subscribers cannot be explained as a consequence of limited means of circulation; by the late 1840s a robust postal system fostered a considerably integrated national field of exchange.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, the *Literary World* was available at communal institutions like colleges, libraries, and clubs even in states with few subscribers: readers in these states had access to the *Literary World* or even encountered it frequently but nonetheless declined to acknowledge the preeminence of New York and elected not to subscribe. Readers' choice of the *Literary World* constituted a volun-

tary association, reflecting the degree to which the periodical's regional affiliation as publicized in its own pages and those of its critics was public knowledge.

The circulation of the *Literary World* provides a model for understanding the contours of region as a scale of cultural identification in the antebellum period. As the strength of its representation in the *Literary World's* subscription data shows, New York State constituted the core of this region. But the region of New York, though with less consistency, stretched beyond the state. Michigan's connection to antebellum shipping made it as much a neighbor to New York as part of the emerging Midwest; outside of New York itself, Michigan contained the highest proportion of subscribers in 1848 relative to its state population. By contrast, populous states with active publishing centers and print cultures—like Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, and all of New England put together—have comparatively small numbers of subscribers relative to their populations, indicating where the region of New York encountered the strongholds of other regions.<sup>53</sup> The states immediately surrounding these regional centers (like Maryland, Indiana, and North Carolina, respectively) tend to follow suit with even fewer *Literary World* subscribers, as do more distant states like Wisconsin and Louisiana. States like Georgia, Mississippi, and Illinois have the next-highest proportions of subscribers relative to their populations (as well as some of its highest subscriber totals): that is, states generally associated with other regions but occupying a middle distance, not too close to their own regional centers and not too far from New York. These extended geographic circulation patterns “complicate the usual core-periphery formula,” as Patrick Collier and James Connolly have recently called for, by demonstrating that New York periodical publishing was neither uniformly national nor simply confined to a major publishing center and its immediate hinterland.<sup>54</sup> The collective importance of subscribers outside the metropolitan center affirms what antebellum commentaries like *Astraea* made perceptible: the scope of New York's interest and readers' affiliation with it were best understood as regional.

An address book from mid-1851 listing the town of residence for each subscription handled by the *Literary World's* offices helps illustrate its geography of subscription (figure 4).<sup>55</sup> Even though New York subscriptions were declining relative to the also declining total number of subscriptions by mid-1851, data from that year registers two additional patterns not captured in the state-by-state tabulation from 1848. First, Connecticut, especially Bridgeport and the western part of the state, had

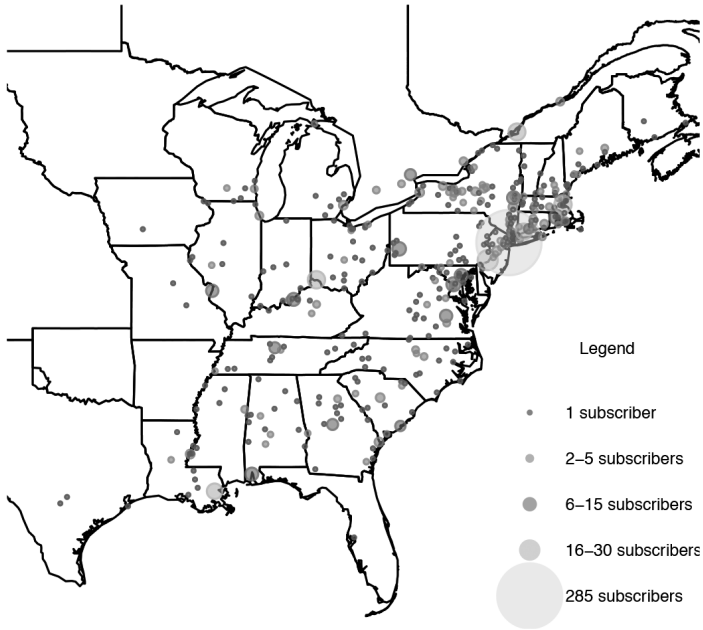


Figure 4. Map of subscription addresses for accounts handled by the *Literary World* mid-1851.

almost as many subscribers as Massachusetts despite having only a third of its population. Although part of New England, Connecticut's proximity to New York clearly made it contested territory. Second, Canadian subscribers in towns and cities near the New York border accounted for as many subscribers as did almost any other US state; Montreal had as many subscribers as the literary powerhouse of Boston with less than half its population. International borders may seem a logical limit for nationalism, but the networks through which regions cohere are not bound by nations, and as such neither was the *Literary World's* appeal. Of course, the small circulation typical of most antebellum periodicals and the absence of more specific information about accounts handled by agents make it impossible to infer a region's exact dimensions from any amount of subscription data from a single periodical. But this is precisely the point: subscription data reveals the manner in which regions were porous, partially overlapping, and diffuse at their ends—units within a contested patchwork geography shaped by spatial proximity and networks of circulation but neither exclusively nor smoothly. Patterns in the *Literary World's* geography of subscription nonetheless provide an outline of how and where the region of New York manifested spatially.



As its geography of subscription suggests, the *Literary World* was a vehicle for regional identification through which readers exercised affiliation with New York. Readers from the New York region disproportionately supported the *Literary World* because they recognized their interests in it, which in turn prompted the periodical to intensify its regional affiliation to further cater to its largest demographic. The converse is equally true: without the continued approval and support of regional readers, the *Literary World* would not have been viable as a distinctly New York literary periodical within an antebellum literary field flush with print. This underlying symbiotic relationship between production and reception conditioned the textual exchanges, in reviews and editorials, that constituted the *Literary World's* content. A periodical's navigation of cultural geography cannot be reduced to either authorial opinion or textual object: rather, editors and readers negotiated periodicals' content through the exchange of weekly issues and yearly dues. Mere attention is sufficient for belonging to a public, as Michael Warner has argued, but some form of participation is necessary to sustain a public.<sup>56</sup> Through subscription, readers took an active part, along with authors and editors, in reinforcing New York literary nationalism and the critical practices supporting it in the *Literary World*.

The *Literary World's* subscription data, which despite its gaps is unusually rich for an antebellum periodical archive, helps us better understand the history of regions in America because it shows how representations of cultural geography developed through the circulation of texts over physical space. Whereas Priscilla Wald has argued that Duyckinck's nationalism "reconceives the empire as a state of mind, as an ideological rather than geographic entity," the separation of ideology from physical geography—which remains constitutive of most scholarship on region and nation—idealizes both antebellum print culture and cultural geography.<sup>57</sup> While scholars such as Martin Brückner and Hsuan Hsu have increasingly engaged in "historicizing American literature through the everyday practice of geography," these efforts have still primarily focused on "the fictional worlds created by early writers."<sup>58</sup> The case of the *Literary World* suggests that geographically uneven reception was just as responsible for developing and maintaining representations of cultural geography as the writers who articulated them. For antebellum periodicals invested in cultural geography, then, the relationship between textual content and the geographic distribution of subscribers was reciprocal. As Warner argues, the "circulatory fate" of a particular discourse

“is the realization of that world” it describes.<sup>59</sup> By allowing readers to signal regional affiliation and participate in the development of regional practices, subscription was an important mechanism by which regions took shape in the world. In other words, a periodical’s geography of subscription physically instantiates the cultural space it articulates discursively. Regions emerge through the aggregation of many such circulatory relationships over time: the *Literary World* gives us a means of understanding regions as sustained practices of geographic exchange.

### The End of the *Literary World*

Since both the influence and geographic scope of regional affiliation were negotiated through practices of circulation and subscription, they were capable of increasing or decreasing. For all its humor, *Astraea* registers anxiety over this very possibility—that the region of New York might continue to “swell” geographically as a result of its swelling sense of self-importance—and contests it. As 1850 progressed, the *Literary World* faced another, more threatening assault on its regional authority and boundaries. On November 9, just two weeks after its review of *Astraea*, the periodical printed a glowing two-page review of a novella called *Chanticleer: A Thanksgiving Story*. While both book and review were unsigned, by the end of the month it was public knowledge that Cornelius Mathews, a regular contributor to the *Literary World*, had written them.<sup>60</sup> In the outcry that followed, the *Literary World* devoted multiple editorials to defending itself. The first, an ineffectual denial in the December 7 issue, was followed by two more on December 14 and January 4 that increased in length, explicitness, and promised concessions. The editors’ response to this debacle and the eventual demise of the *Literary World* illuminate the sea change in the relationship between nation and region that has continued to lead critics to misread and dismiss regional nationalisms as literary nationalism.

The *Literary World*’s second response, “Favors of the Press,” unsuccessfully though instructively attempts to elide the cultural geographic issue at stake by framing the *Chanticleer* debacle as merely indicative of the conflicting obligations inherent to the periodical press:

It may, on the one hand, be regarded as strictly an organ of public sentiment, or on the other as a purely personal property: in the one case acknowledging service to the community as its highest authority, in the other recognising no principle further than the . . . advancement of the single purposes of their proprietors.<sup>61</sup>

The editorial presents the *Literary World* as caught between the Scylla of irrelevancy and the Charybdis of insolvency, with no clear solution. The opposition between “public” and “personal” on which this assessment is predicated, however, naïvely presents the field of reception as a dichotomy rather than a series of concentric and contesting geographic publics, obscuring the intermediary position occupied by regions. Regions functioned in ways that were both collective and exclusionary, with structural characteristics resembling both “public sentiment” and invested “proprietors.” They relied on vocabularies and positions, like regional nationalisms, recognizable to all but fully understood only by members, and they consisted of readers concentrated in a few states but diffused across the nation. The framework and vocabulary of “Favors of the Press” are inadequate for describing this complexity. When the editorial ultimately asserts that a periodical must support “the interests of the community, irrespective of individual spites or preferences, as a community,” it is impossible to tell exactly what—or where—that “community” is.<sup>62</sup> As a result, “Favors of the Press” obscures region’s fundamental role in the conflict.

Under mounting pressure, the *Literary World* could not denounce bias abstractly as it had in “Favors of the Press.” Cutting against its regional nationalism and associated critical practices, two weeks later editors of the *Literary World* found it necessary to profess that “our charter is Human Nature at large” under the auspice of “a few ‘good’ resolutions.”<sup>63</sup> Even more telling, this third editorial goes on to promise that “in the distribution of praises and censures, we shall not think it necessary to consult the directory or the map to learn whether the subject of such judgment lives in our street, city, or State.”<sup>64</sup> The implicit confession here—that the *Literary World*’s criticism had hitherto been based on authors’ relation to New York—was unprecedented for the periodical. It is an acknowledgment that simultaneously embodying multiple geographic scales had become untenable. This concession, which finally allowed the *Literary World* to put the *Chanticleer* debacle to rest, clarifies the episode’s stakes in the American periodical press of the 1850s. The more drastic response in “A Few ‘Good’ Resolutions” demonstrates that the *Literary World*’s opponents, much like Holmes in *Astraea*, understood puffery not as isolated favors for friends or publishing houses but as implicated in a larger system of regional bias. This made puffery of the *Chanticleer* variety all the more affronting and threatening, precisely because it encompassed the larger scale of the periodical as a geographic entity: readers don’t belong to the

literary cliques commonly associated with puffery, but they do belong to regions.

Soon after "A Few 'Good' Resolutions," the *Literary World* made a series of changes that brought its practice significantly more into line with the impartiality it had preached. Starting in 1851, the Publisher's Circular segment, the content of which had hitherto been exclusively American, became international and even on some occasions wholly British. The advocacy of literary New York and the New York vision of literary nationalism that had defined the publication's early years largely disappeared. The *Literary World* picked fewer fights, printed milder reviews, and made fewer sweeping pronouncements. Even its treatment of international copyright, an issue championed by Duyckinck and Matthews and prioritized by scholars emphasizing their nationalism, reflects its attempt at remediation.<sup>65</sup> The periodical's arguments in favor of copyright law through mid-1851 continued to feature the protectionist logic and what Michael Everton calls the fiery "reform personality and rhetoric" that had been the Duyckinck clique's standard since the early 1840s.<sup>66</sup> Starting in late 1851, however, articles on the topic decline in frequency and feature a significantly more restrained tone, focusing on the damage inflicted by lack of copyright on all invested parties rather than just American authors. The character of these efforts as a whole—addressing charges of partiality by pursuing specifically geographic impartiality—again indicates that the *Literary World* interpreted its critics as primarily opposing its regionalism. More importantly, their result shows that it was precisely in ceasing to be regional that the *Literary World* ceased to advocate nationalism.

These changes may have made for a more impartial publication but one that was also markedly less exciting and ultimately of less interest to a New York audience.<sup>67</sup> If these changes satisfied the periodical's challengers, they were met with an ongoing decline in the New York subscribers that formed the backbone of its readership. This struggle can be read on the pages of *Literary World*, which from 1852 onward increasingly pleaded with its subscribers to pay their bills. At the close of 1851, an editorial admits that "it is a mistake to suppose that the Press, with all its power, so much spoken of, is self-sustaining," going so far as to say that "without money it must die."<sup>68</sup> This threat is equally apparent in structural changes. The *Literary World* shrank twice, to twenty pages in 1851 and to sixteen in 1852. Advertisements, likely a more reliable source of income, take up a greater proportion of these shorter versions. The 1852 decision to move two of the remaining

advertisement pages from the back of the periodical to its front two pages, once the prominent location of its spirited editorials, further evidences the periodical's flagging finances and declining subscriptions.

The decline of the *Literary World's* regional appeal is reflected in a shift in its subscription records. In the previously discussed subscription book compiled sometime in mid-1851 after the periodicals' major resubscription period of February–March, New York City accounted for 290 subscribers; the total with New York State added (129) amounted to 419, or 35 percent of all copies (1,175) sent out by the *Literary World* itself (see figure 4).<sup>69</sup> Lists of unpaid accounts “made out and sent” later in 1851 corroborate this proportion, with 665 bills sent to subscribers outside the city and another 187 sent to “city subs-,” roughly 28 percent of the total.<sup>70</sup> While these numbers exclude figures from agents, which aren't distinguished as in city or out of city in the existing records from 1851, they nonetheless reflect not just a fall in overall readership but a decrease in the percentage of those readers who were from New York. As such, the decline of the *Literary World* was led by waning support from its regional subscription base. The closer the *Literary World* came to embodying the impartiality of its “Introductory”—and the idealistic nationalism often attributed to its writers—the less popular it became. The *Literary World* ceased publication on December 31, 1853. By promoting no section, it appealed to none.

The shrinking of the *Literary World's* subscription lists corresponds to a wider decline in literary periodicals affiliated with New York. As the statistics from the American Periodical Series suggest, the mid-1840s boom of new periodicals in New York City had already ebbed by 1850 (see figure 2). The number of active literary periodicals in the database for the city also decreased, falling throughout the 1850s; by 1860 they had decreased by a third from the high-water mark of 1848/1849 (see figure 1). While New York City in fact was publishing more newspapers and periodicals (and books) than ever, there was a qualitative shift in the makeup of its print output that the APS data appropriately registers.<sup>71</sup> This is evident in the roughly contemporaneous collapse of two of the *Literary World's* illustrious New York contemporaries, the *Democratic Review* at the end of 1851 and the *American Whig Review* at the end of 1852. The folding of these two periodicals was not simply the result of the impending reorganization of the antebellum two-party system: with a foundation in the New York literary and publishing community, both were as much literary periodicals as they were political ones. As John Paul Pritchard has found, “there was a near cessation of literary thinking published in

New York periodicals” by the mid-1850s.<sup>72</sup> When the *Democratic Review* briefly reappeared under new editorship (1856–59), for example, it spurned artistic concerns entirely. Even the *Knickerbocker*, a veteran of New York’s literary landscape, found itself in financial difficulties.<sup>73</sup> Though the direct causes of the *Literary World*’s collapse were unique—bad press from the *Chanticleer* debacle and the changes that ensued—they were manifestations of this broader shift in the cultural geography of antebellum periodical publishing.

This shift corresponds to contemporaneous transformations in the publishing industry, which became more centralized as it transitioned from the reprinting of texts toward their distribution over the 1850s, as Charvat and McGill have shown. Comparison to the succeeding generation of New York literary periodicals is instructive. The new publications of the 1850s, most notably *Harper’s Monthly Magazine* (launched June 1850) and *Putnam’s Magazine* (launched January 1853), successfully achieved national circulation by remaining ambiguous about their location in antebellum cultural geography. Primarily publishing fiction, *Harper’s* and *Putnam’s* carried less of the regional baggage inevitably implicit in publications like the *Literary World* that theorized fiction and printed literary criticism, allowing them to avoid many of the pitfalls recently met by their New York precursors (though, as *Putnam’s* relatively short run shows, not all). Similarly, these new periodicals were less concerned with the goings-on of local literary scenes and literary news generally, which further allowed them to avoid expressing regional preference. Less tethered to specific regional communities and the conversations inseparable from them, magazines like *Harper’s* and *Putnam’s* were able to circulate more securely and more widely than those of the *Literary World*’s generation. American periodical culture could become national only once it ceased to be nationalist because appeals to literary nationalisms were always defined by regional interests and rivalries.

The *Literary World*’s editors’ decision to reorient the periodical and distance it from regional nationalism in the wake of the *Chanticleer* debacle shows that these shifts in the material conditions of publishing and regional cultural geography were intimately related. Regional nationalism was becoming less successful at engaging enough readers to sustain a periodical because the readership identifying with the New York region was becoming more difficult to address as a coherent unit. New York City’s notoriously divided response to sectional conflict, torn between Northern allegiance to the Union and strong ties

with Southern economic interests, made its readers a particularly unstable demographic in the decade leading into the Civil War.<sup>74</sup> The shift in New York publishing indicates that, even though more readers encountered texts published there from 1850 on than ever, fewer of those readers and fewer of those texts were invested in New York as a region. This parallels the inverse relation between circulation and national identity that Trish Loughran has argued characterized American print culture in the 1850s, as “new material conditions ultimately exposed the geographical incoherence over which the fiction of union had originally been written.”<sup>75</sup> New York regional literary culture, rather than consolidating either at the expense of national coherence or as a result of the nationalization of periodical publishing, underwent a similar process of fragmentation and abstraction. The phenomenon of regional nationalism suggests that fictions of national culture like those in the *Literary World* faltered in the 1850s not because the nation was fissuring into regions but because the regional networks of circulation from which literary nationalisms developed and whose interests they served were transforming. That debates over national literature diminished precisely as the print venues and networks of distribution capable of making literature national emerged is not a historical curiosity but a causal outcome: literary nationalisms had no purpose without regions.

In the decade that followed, as Duyckinck set about preparing the *Cyclopedia of American Literature* that would play an important role in establishing American national literature as a scholarly discipline over the next century, he revived one of the *Literary World*'s former subscription books.<sup>76</sup> Making use of the same alphabetized tabs that had once kept the addresses of the periodical's customers in order, he stored notes and newspaper clippings about the authors who would eventually be included in the *Cyclopedia*. In the unprecedentedly massive encyclopedia resulting from this work, Duyckinck came as close as anyone to encompassing the equally unwieldy literary production of the nation. He did so, however, only by extricating himself from the practical demands of periodical circulation, producing in the *Cyclopedia* a text that even laudatory reviewers admitted to having read only sporadically by necessity. Literally overwriting the regional cultural geography through which his own career had emerged, Duyckinck became the first of a long line of scholars to reinvent the antebellum literary field as national retroactively. Scholars have since emphasized regional and transnational frameworks challenging the dominance of such narratives, but doing so has inadvertently lent credence to the very idea of

a self-evident, homogenous nationalism and as a result overdetermined the place of the nation in print culture in America. Regional nationalism and its role in the ends of the *Literary World* illuminates how, to the contrary, many of these narratives were never primarily about the nation to begin with. Returning to these putatively foundational moments reminds us that invocations of national culture, then as now, have always been contingent upon where they circulate.

## Notes

With immense gratitude to Meredith McGill and Michael Monescalchi.

1. On disjunction of the nation's regional publishing centers, see William Charvat, *Literary Publishing in America, 1790–1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959); Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770–1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); and Meredith McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834–1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). On the influence of America's provincial relation to England on literary production and circulation, see Joseph Rezek, *London and the Making of Provincial Literature: Aesthetics and the Transatlantic Book Trade, 1800–1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); and Elisa Tamarkin, *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

2. Evert Duyckinck edited the *Literary World* under the proprietorship of John Wiley from February 6, 1847, until May 1, 1847, when he was replaced by Charles Fenno Hoffman. Evert and his brother George purchased the periodical themselves and regained editorship effective October 7, 1848. In this paper, "Duyckinck" in the singular refers to Evert. As this paper does not cite material printed under Hoffman's tenure, it will not discuss those editorial changes.

3. "Introductory," *Literary World*, February 6, 1847, 5.

4. See Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Sellers characterizes New York as a "region" on the basis of its port-hinterland relationship (20).

5. The body of scholarship loosely termed "critical regionalism" has been particularly influential in advocating for this approach to cultural geography. See Patricia Limerick, *Legacies of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987); William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991); and Douglas Reichert Powell, *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

6. Jennifer Rae Greeson's argument that the South is an "internal other" whose differentiation from the nation is constitutive of the nation has been an important recent addition to this first approach. Jennifer Rae Greeson, *Our South: Geographic Fantasy and the Rise of National Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1. See also Martin Brickner and Hsuan L. Hsu, eds., *American Literary Geographies: Spatial Practice and Cultural Production, 1500–1900* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007); Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); and Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

7. See J. Gerald Kennedy, "A Mania for Composition: Poe's Annus Mirabilis and the Violence of Nation-Building," *American Literary History* 17, no. 1 (2005): 1–35; Robert S. Levine, *Dislocating Race and Nation: Episodes in Nineteenth-Century American Literary Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting*; Perry Miller, *The Raven and the Whale: Poe, Melville, and the New York Literary Scene* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1956); Priscilla Wald, *Constituting Americans: Cultural Anxiety and Narrative Form* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); and Edward L. Widmer, *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). On Duyckinck's role in the institutionalization of American literature, see Kermit Vanderbilt, *American Literature and the Academy: The Roots, Growth, and Maturity of a Profession* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986);



and Layne Neepser, "Inventing Tradition: America's First Literary Histories," *Studies in the American Renaissance* 18 (1994): 1–19.

8. Loughran's argument that increased circulation extended rather than ameliorated inter-national differences has been foundational to this second approach. See also Christopher C. Apap, *The Genius of Place: The Geographic Imagination in the Early Republic* (Lebanon: University of New Hampshire Press, 2016); Martha Schoolman, *Abolitionist Geographies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); and Edward Watts, Keri Holt, and John Funcheon, eds., *Mapping Region in Early American Writings* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015).

9. See, for example, Michelle Benson and Gregory Saxton, "The Dynamics of Ethnonationalist Contention," *British Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 2 (April 2010): 305–31; Pritam Singh, *Federalism, Nationalism and Development: India and the Punjab Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2008); and Michael Keating, *State and Regional Nationalism: Territorial Politics and the European State* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988).

10. This is also true of recent uses of spatial theories, particularly those of Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja, to explore how antebellum Americans maintained identifications with multiple scales of cultural geography. See Hsuan L. Hsu, *Geography and the Production of Space in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Judith Madera, *Black Atlas: Geography and Flow in Nineteenth-Century African American Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

11. Herman Melville, "Hawthorne and His Mosses," *Literary World*, August 24, 1850, 145. Scholars have long debated the degree to which "Hawthorne and His Mosses" represents Melville's genuine feelings on literary nationalism, but the question of authorial intent is irrelevant to my point—all the more because the most convincing arguments distancing Melville from the piece's nationalism invoke the intervention of Duyckinck or Cornelius Matthews, a shared friend and *Literary World* regular. See P. Marc Bousquet, "Matthews's Mosses? Fair Papers and Foul: A Note on the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of Melville's 'Hawthorne and His Mosses,'" *New England Quarterly* 67, no. 4 (1994): 622–49. On Melville's inextricability from issues of literary nationalism, see Robert S. Levine, "Melville and Americanness: A Problem," *Leviathan* 16, no. 3 (2014): 5–20.

12. "Hawthorne and His Mosses," *Literary World*, August 24, 1850, 146; and "Hawthorne and His Mosses," *Literary World*, August 17, 1850, 126.

13. For example, the *Literary World's* long-running series "A Manhattaner in New Orleans" began in the October 28, 1848, issue and concluded, twenty-eight parts later, in the September 14, 1850, issue.

14. Oliver Wendell Holmes, *Astraea: The Balance of Illusions* (Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1850), 31.

15. On the anxiety over puffery and how it propelled discussions of a national literature, see Lara Langer Cohen, *The Fabrication of American Literature: Fraudulence and Antebellum Print Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

16. Holmes, *Astraea*, 32.

17. *Ibid.*, 33. On the role of Albany in the distribution of print, see Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), chapter 4.

18. Two editions totaling 4,500 copies were published by the end of October. See Jacob Blanck, *Bibliography of American Literature*, vol. 4 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964). Reviews with substantial excerpts include "Art. X—Critical Notices," *Southern Quarterly Review*, April 1851, 563–64; "Gossip with Readers and Correspondents," *Knickerbocker*, November 1850, 471–74; and an untitled review in the *New Englander*, November 1850, 656.

19. Review of *Astraea: The Balance of Illusions*, by Oliver Wendell Holmes, *Literary World*, October 26, 1850, 331.

20. Holmes, *Astraea*, 32.

21. "Review: Schools in American Literature," *Literary World*, October 19, 1850, 308.

22. McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting*, 192.

23. Benjamin Spencer, *The Quest for Nationality: An American Literary Campaign* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1957), 257.

24. See "Editorial Greetings, for the New Year," *Southern Literary Messenger*, January 1848, 1–2; and "An Article: After the Style of the—," *Southern Literary Messenger*, July 1849, 384–87.

25. See W.D.G., "Periodical Literature: A Periodical Literature for the West;—What Has It Been? What Ought It to Be?," *Western Literary Journal and Monthly Review*, November 1844, 1–9; Apap, *The Genius of Place*, chapter 6; and Walter Sutton, *The Western Book Trade: Cincinnati as a Nineteenth-Century Publishing and Book-Trade Center* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1961).

26. See James Russell Lowell, "Art. IX.—Kavanagh," *North American Review*, July 1849, 196–215; and Katie McGettigan, "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and the Transatlantic Materials of American Literature," *American Literature* 89, no. 4 (December 2017): 727–59. Spencer (*The Quest for Nationality*, chapter 4) and to some extent Miller (*The Raven and the Whale*) provide accounts of the interactions between these rival positions.

27. "The Two Everetts," *Literary World*, April 24, 1847, 271.

28. "Traits of American Authorship," *Literary World*, April 17, 1847, 245.

29. "Review: Schools in American Literature," 308.

30. James Russell Lowell, *A Fable for Critics* (New York: Putnam, 1848), 37–38.

31. "Parisian Retrospect," *Literary World*, April 8, 1848, 187.

32. Review of *Astraea: The Balance of Illusions*, by Oliver Wendell Holmes, *Literary World*, October 26, 1850, 331.

33. "The Two Everetts," 271.

34. *Ibid.*

35. "Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance," *Literary World*, July 24, 1852, 52.

36. Edward Watts and Keri Holt, introduction to *Mapping Region in Early American Writing*, 6.

37. Qtd. in Miller, *The Raven and the Whale*, 188.

38. "Notices of New Books," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, March 1847, 288.

39. Untitled, *Spirit of the Times*, February 20, 1847, 613.

40. For example, there are no notices pertaining to the founding of the *Literary World* in the Boston *North American Review*, the Richmond *Southern Literary Messenger*, or the Cincinnati *Western Christian Advocate*.

41. By "literary periodicals" I refer to religious, political, and arts periodicals, all of which discussed literature extensively: in the antebellum period these discourses were intertwined, and as such periodicals devoted to one were nonetheless invested in the others. This data is based on ProQuest's digitized version of the American Periodical Series, accessed on April 27, 2018.

42. Statistics from the more encompassing American Antiquarian Society collection, which includes a wider array of genres and more ephemeral circulating texts, nonetheless corroborates this rate of increase. Metadata accessed on April 27, 2018, through EBSCO coverage lists at <https://www.ebscohost.com/archives/aas-historical-periodicals-collection>.

43. Most notably, an early draft of the "Introductory" proposes "Nov 11 1846" as the periodical's start date. Red notebook, Box 59, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.

44. "Paragraphs of the Week," *Literary World*, February 13, 1847, 38.

45. "New York Historical Society," *Literary World*, February 24, 1849, 176.

46. Charvat, *Literary Publishing in America*, 36.

47. Leon Jackson, *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

48. "Subscribers," Folder 1, Box 59, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library. Though the document has no date, the closest match to these figures in extant records are the New York City subscriptions dated for 1848. "Subscription Book 1847–1851," Box 59, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.

49. An unlabeled notebook includes forty-six names under the heading "foreign subscriptions due the Literary World," Box 59, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.

50. The degree to which women read the *Literary World* is unclear. Only about 5 percent of its subscribers are explicitly listed as "Miss" or "Mrs.," but this does not reflect the number of individuals who read copies at home or one of the subscribing institutions (libraries, clubs, schools) that allowed women members—both of which were more common means of print access for women in the antebellum period. See David M. Henkin, *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Black readership is more difficult to speculate on, though Eric Gardner's *Unexpected Places: Relocating Nineteenth-Century African American Literature* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2009) reminds us that Black access to antebellum print included occasions and locations beyond abolitionism and New England.

51. Box 54, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.
52. By this time the US Postal Service could boast remarkable reliability and geographic coverage within the states of the Union; see Henkin, *The Postal Age*; and Zboray, *A Fictive People*.
53. New England and Pennsylvania (via Philadelphia) have already been mentioned as regional rivals to New York; on Cincinnati publishing and its regional network of circulation, see Sutton, *The Western Book Trade*.
54. Patrick Collier and James Connolly, introduction to *Print Culture Histories beyond the Metropolis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 6.
55. Unmarked pink-, green-, and yellow-marbled book, Box 59, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.
56. Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2002), 87.
57. Wald, *Constituting Americans*, 121.
58. Martin Brückner and Hsuan L. Hsu, introduction to *American Literary Geographies*, 13.
59. Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 114.
60. The *Knickerbocker's* account, composed of a long string of puns at Mathews's expense, is the most scathing. "Gossip with Readers and Correspondents," *Knickerbocker*, December 1850, 571.
61. "Favors of the Press," *Literary World*, December 14, 1850, 473.
62. *Ibid.*
63. "A Few 'Good' Resolutions," *Literary World*, January 4, 1851, 1.
64. *Ibid.*
65. See Michael Everton, *The Grand Chorus of Complaint: Authors and the Business Ethics of American Publishing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting*; and Miller, *The Raven and the Whale*. This roughly coincides with a shift in the politics of copyright, as McGill shows, but Duyckinck's position had always straddled party politics, as evident in the fact that he advocated copyright in both the *Democratic Review* and *American Whig Review* in the mid-1840s.
66. Everton, *The Grand Chorus of Complaint*, 111.
67. "Exciting" is indeed how the *Literary World* is described in several subscription letters from 1849. Box 54, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.
68. "Marks and Remarks," *Literary World*, December 27, 1851, 506.
69. Unmarked pink-, green-, and yellow-marbled book, Box 59, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library. A slip of paper in the front cover bears Duyckinck's own math.
70. "Cash Book Jan. 1848—March 1849," Box 58, Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library.
71. The American Antiquarian Society Collection shows continued though more irregular growth in periodical printing through the 1850s, but most of this growth is due to an increase in nonliterary religious periodicals, trade periodicals, and story papers. See notes 41 and 42.
72. John Paul Pritchard, *Literary Wise Men of Gotham: Criticism in New York, 1815–1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), 10.
73. An 1851 advertisement announced the *Knickerbocker* was forced to lower its yearly rate from five to three dollars, presumably to bolster declining subscription. Untitled, *Literary World*, November 15, 1851, 394.
74. On New York's complex responses to the approaching Civil War, see Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Michael Todd Landis, *Northern Men with Southern Loyalties: The Democratic Party and the Sectional Crisis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).
75. Loughran, *The Republic in Print*, 304.
76. See Neepser, "Inventing Tradition"; and Vanderbilt, *American Literature and the Academy*.